

## Disciple Survey 2023 Encouragements & Takeaways

At Grantham Church, we believe that being and making disciples is our central calling as Christians. We define “disciples” in this way:

*Disciples are people in community who – empowered by the Holy Spirit – are growing to love, follow, and lead others to the God who looks like Jesus.*

In October-November 2023, we invited our congregation to take a short Disciple Survey based on that definition to help us reflect on our development as disciples, celebrate progress, and identify areas of growth. We were grateful to have received 152 responses to the survey, which is about 40% of our congregation aged middle school and up. That’s an encouraging sample of our congregation and it gives us a helpful grasp of the culture of our church and overall direction of our congregation’s growth as disciples. Following are a few key takeaways from the survey.

### **TAKEAWAY #1: Many experienced growth in their Christian walk over the last year!**

One of the biggest encouragements we saw from the survey is that 82% said you were experiencing some or significant growth as a disciple of Jesus over the last year, with almost all survey participants (97%) saying you are experiencing God’s love and grace in your lives and regularly recognizing your need for God. This is something to celebrate!

### **TAKEAWAY #2: We are developing meaningful relationships with other Christians.**

Another positive takeaway from the survey is that 91% shared you are developing meaningful friendships with other Christians. And these relationships are vital for our Christian growth: About half (53%) of survey-takers commented in the fill-in sections of the survey on the importance of relationships with other believers – outside of the corporate worship service – for your growth as disciples, whether that be through formal means, like participation in a Small Group or Learning Community, or informal means like having conversations about faith, sharing life with other believers, etc.

One helpful piece you shared through the survey is that fewer of us (59%) are developing meaningful friendships with people who have *not* put their faith in Christ. This is good for us to recognize as an invitation to prayerfully consider who God has placed in our lives outside of our Christian networks for us to befriend and extend the love of Christ.

### **TAKEAWAY #3: We recognize prayer and Bible reading are important parts of our growth as Christians.**

Another encouragement from the survey is that the majority indicated you are experiencing a meaningful prayer life (63%) and regularly reading your Bible outside of Sunday worship (60%). At the same time, many expressed a desire to grow in these areas (with 20% wanting to grow in your prayer life and 13% in Bible reading), which are essential for us to mature as disciples as we pray and read Scripture individually and together. We hope to continue to cultivate that.

**TAKEAWAY #4: The most significant area where there is room for growth is in intentionally passing on our faith to others.**

While many (93%) shared that you are indeed seeking to live as a witness for Christ in the places God has put you, only two-thirds (65%) are *interested* in leading another person to live as a disciple of Jesus, with less than half (46%) saying you *feel equipped* to do so, and 44% who are *actively helping* at least one other person to live as a disciple of Jesus. We recognize that a survey like this is limited, so this prompts us to give more attention to things like the relationship between evangelism and discipleship, understanding more about what “witness” means and looks like, our call to make disciples, and considering how we can better empower and equip one another to be passing on our faith.

**TOP RESPONSES**

There were two fill-in questions of which we thought you might be interested in seeing the top responses.

**What has most helped you to grow in your relationship with Jesus and those who follow him?**

ANSWER	# of RESPONSES
Relationships with other believers (interacting, supporting, mentoring, etc.)	53
Bible reading/study	32
Corporate Worship	25
Small Group	24

**Is there a particular area where you’d like to grow in your relationship with Jesus and those who follow him?**

ANSWER	# of RESPONSES
Prayer & listening to God	30
Bible reading/study	19
Sharing the good news/witnessing	13

We know that surveys are not perfect and do not allow us to express all the nuance of our hearts and lives, but we are encouraged by how God is working at Grantham Church. Our Staff, Discipleship Commission, and other ministry leaders will continue to reflect on these survey results as we consider what practical steps we can take, both in the near future and in the long-term, to help us continue growing to love, follow, and lead others to the God who looks like Jesus.

Thank you again for your participation in the survey!