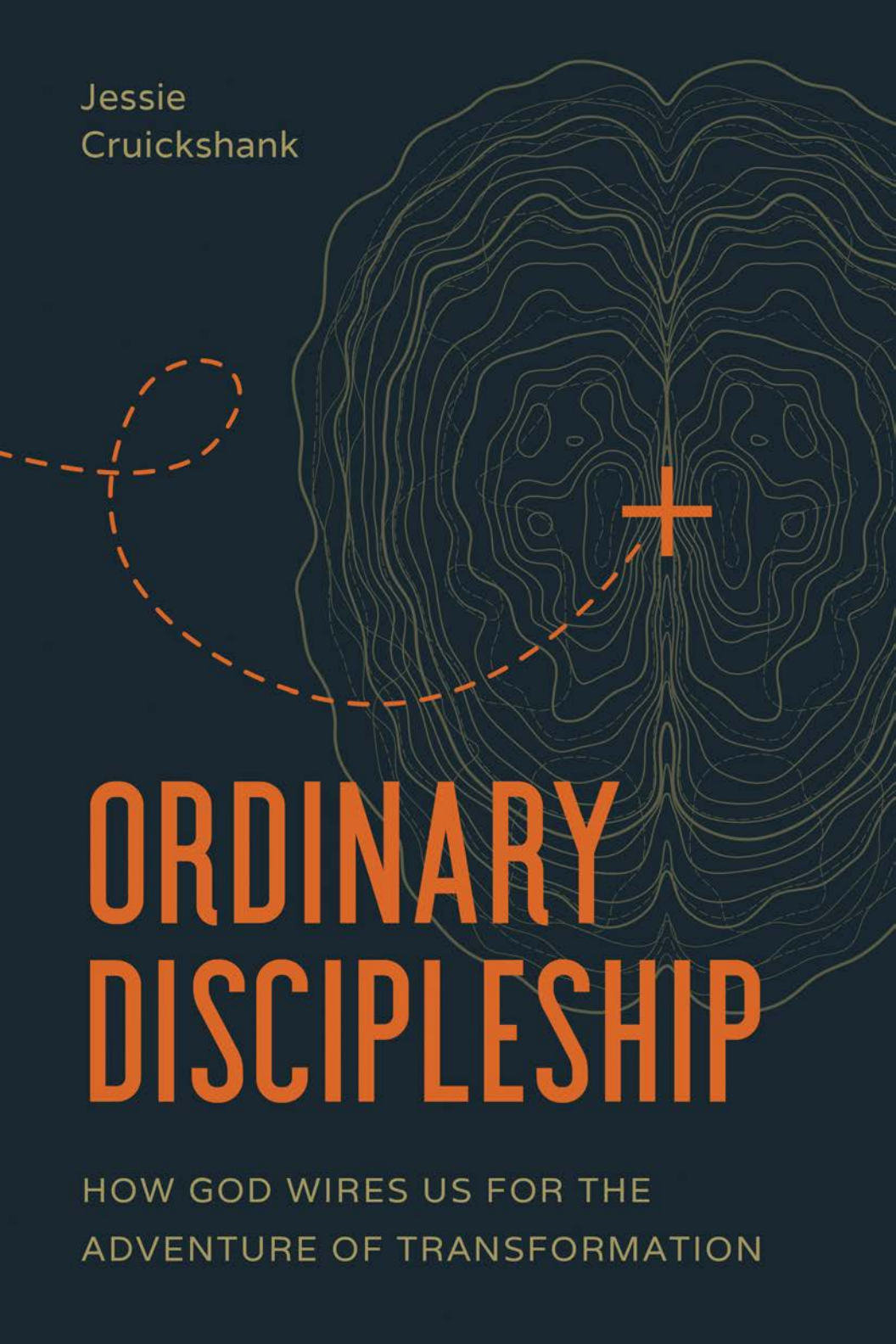


Jessie  
Cruickshank



# ORDINARY DISCIPLESHIP

HOW GOD WIRES US FOR THE  
ADVENTURE OF TRANSFORMATION

For Jessie Cruickshank discipleship isn't an outcome—it's a process. In this insightful book, Jessie fuses a biblical understanding of discipleship with the taxonomy of Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey* and shows us how spiritual maturity is an extended process of learning and unlearning, being broken and remade. Or to use her words, it is "climbing the mountain and coming back down again." Here's the guidebook to get you started on that heroic journey.

**MICHAEL FROST**, founding director of Tinsley Institute at Morling College in Sydney, Australia

So much of what we are seeing in today's church behavior in and outside of the building can be linked to discipleship (or the lack thereof). This simple, practical, and inspiring book is needed in this time to help ordinary people like you and me join in on an amazing opportunity and privilege that we are actually made for . . . that of making disciples of Jesus. Jessie provides helpful insights, stories, and even brain science to point the way for us to lean into a God-given invitation to be agents of transformation for lives around us.

**REV. DR. ELIZABETH RIOS**, founder of The Passion Center and Passion2Plant Network

*Discipleship* is a word that often haphazardly gets thrown around in the church. Definitions are numerous; achievement is rare. Though this book title uses the word "ordinary," it is an extraordinary call to the true north of the church . . . making disciples who also make disciples. Jessie does a tremendous job of serving as our guide through the journey of not only being a disciple but teaching others to be guides as well.

**ROWLAND SMITH**, national director of Forge America Mission Training Network, author of *Life Out Loud: Joining Jesus Outside the Walls of the Church*, curator/editor of *Red Skies: 10 Essential Conversations Exploring Our Future as the Church*

"Not biologically possible." The words leapt off the page as Cruickshank described the most common discipleship method I have seen attempted all my life. *Ordinary Discipleship* clearly guides us to change the way the brain learns the life of the Spirit.

**JIM WILDER, PhD**, neurotheologian, author of *Renovated: God, Dallas Willard, and the Church That Transforms*

My friend Jessie Cruickshank lives and believes what she writes. As a church leader, it has been a long time since I've read such a practical resource for those in discipling. The church needs this work. In fact, while this book is itself accessible and "ordinary"—the words here are paradigm-shifting and world-changing. You'll leave these pages equipped, encouraged, and ready to start your own adventure of ordinary discipleship. A must-read for all who want to lead others in following Jesus.

**AUBREY SAMPSON, MA** in evangelism and leadership, church planter and teaching pastor, author of *Known: How Believing Who God Says You Are Changes Everything*

Recently, there's been a lot of buzz around brain science and discipleship. What does this mean? How does it intersect? What can we do differently? In this book, you are going to find the answers to these questions, but it's not going to be in the way that you might initially think. Jessie offers a practical and accessible framework to easily help you leverage the insights from brain science into discipleship and discipling. It's amazing. Don't miss this important work.

**DANIEL IM**, lead pastor at Beulah Alliance Church, podcaster, author of several books, most recently *You Are What You Do: And Six Other Lies about Work, Life, and Love*

Jessie Cruickshank is the dangerous sort. She robs the intelligentsia of vital concepts they attempt to obfuscate and makes them visible and usable to everyday people. *Ordinary Discipleship* is a bit of sleight of hand. Jessie takes a hidden and seldom-used concept, priesthood of the believer, and makes it operational for the average Joe and Sally. Dare I say that it is a breath of fresh air to read not only because she uses her outdoor experience as metaphor from cover to cover but also because the ever-abiding references operate like superglue, attaching the concept to concrete, doable actions. I am roped up and ready to use this tool!

**ROY MORAN**, visionary of Shoal Creek Community Church, author of *Spent Matches*, chairman of New Generations

In this refreshing look into the hows and whys of discipleship, my friend Jessie Cruickshank brings some unique insights from brain science together with a spirituality of adventure to provoke everyday believers to hit the road of discipleship again. A very readable and engaging book.

**ALAN HIRSCH**, award-winning author on missional theology, spirituality, and leadership; founder of Movement Leaders Collective and Forge Missional Training Network

*Ordinary Discipleship* is the product of Jessie's heart as a genuine disciplemaker, her mind as a brilliant strategist, and her hands as a literal wilderness guide! Jessie helps you help others move from thinking of discipleship as just a boring pathway to seeing it as a lifelong, practical adventure filled with valleys and summits, as well as relationships and revelation.

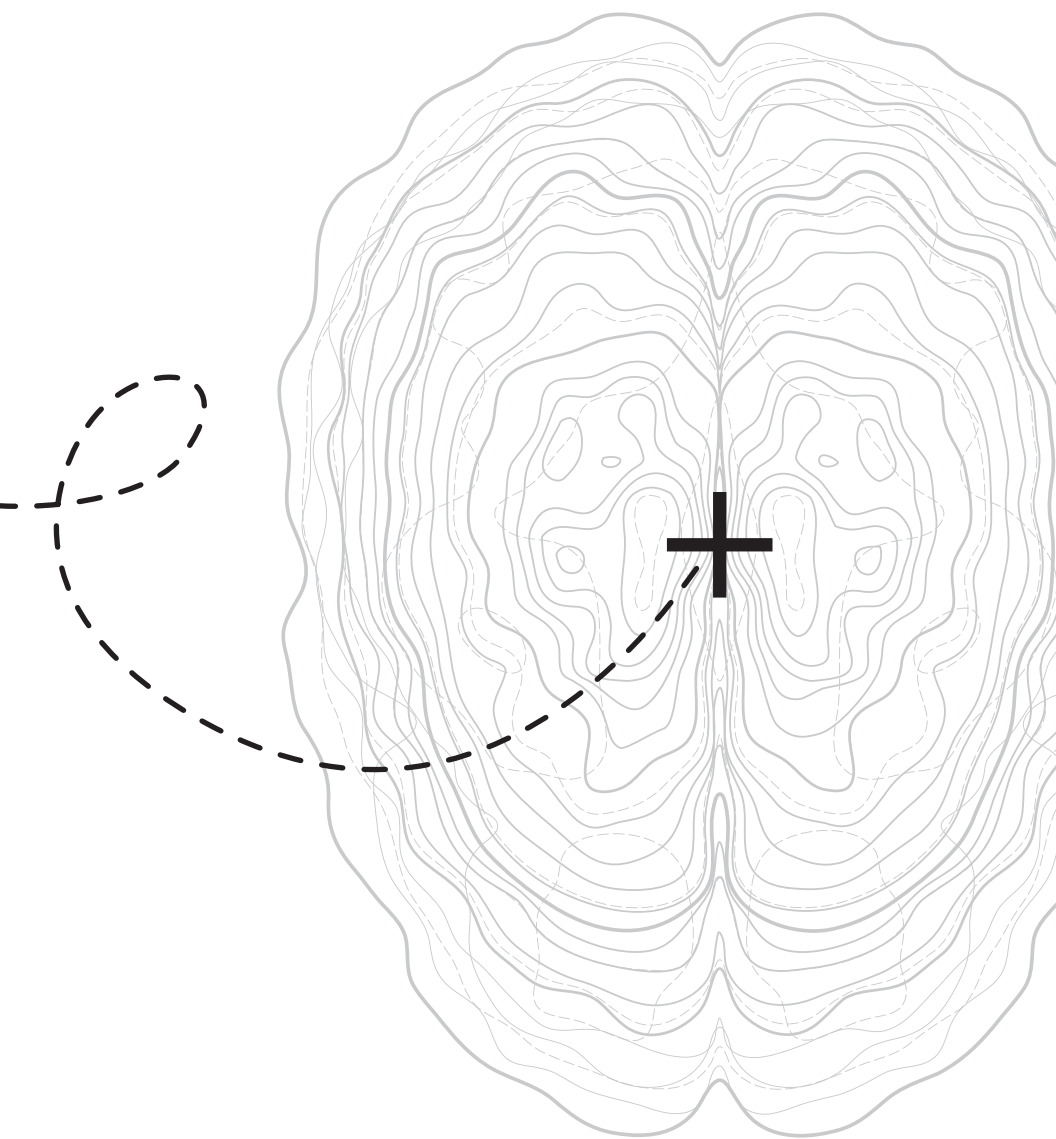
**DANIEL YANG**, director of Church Multiplication Institute at the Wheaton College Billy Graham Center

In *Ordinary Discipleship*, Jessie Cruickshank pulls from her years of experience as a wilderness guide to drive home this much-needed truth: that all of us are meant to be disciplemakers, and that we all have opportunities to do so no matter our place in life. *Ordinary Discipleship* is a much-needed guide for anyone ready to embark on this foundational adventure of discipleship!

**DAVE FERGUSON**, visionary leader for NewThing, author of *BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love your Neighbor and Change the World*

“We determine how much of the Kingdom we experience.” Jessie weaves the journey of transformational discipleship, explaining the critical waypoints between the relational Trinity calling all believers to make disciples and a disciple experiencing the Kingdom in community here on earth as it is in heaven. Jessie lays out strong practices and tools with anchoring principles applicable in a multitude of settings and contexts. This book is a wonderful field guide to disciplmaking.

**KRISTIE TURNER MONTEIRO**, mission director of Disciplemakers for Life at The Navigators



Jessie Cruickshank

# ORDINARY DISCIPLESHIP

HOW GOD WIRES US FOR THE  
ADVENTURE OF TRANSFORMATION



A NavPress resource published in alliance  
with Tyndale House Publishers



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*Ordinary Discipleship: How God Wires Us for the Adventure of Transformation*

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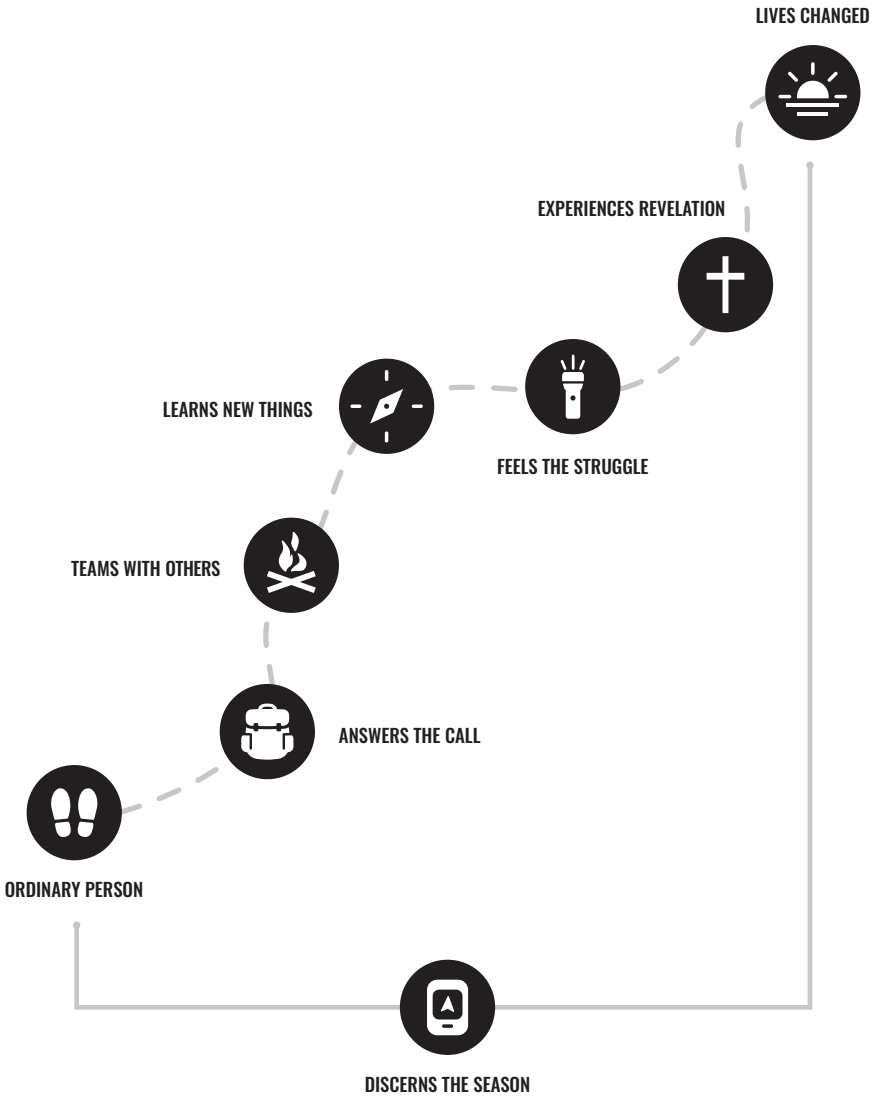
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# Foreword

Why read a book about making disciples? If you're anything like me, you're probably thinking that we've exhausted every formula, strategy, or program available—and to be totally honest, the success rate has been less than impressive. We all know we are supposed to do the last thing Jesus commanded his disciples to do, but most of us dread the whole idea, thinking it is something we are not qualified or gifted enough to do. As a result, we are often filled with shame, guilt, or condemnation because of our perceived inadequacy and sadly end up spending most of our lives as Jesus followers doing lots of secondary things—all the while missing the joy of doing the actual thing we are all called to do. But I truly believe that only our misunderstanding of what it is to make disciples has resulted in our unwillingness or inability to do so.

Jesus said, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you” (Matthew 28:19-20, NLT). With

these words, he invites us into the greatest adventure on this side of eternity. He is not calling us to adopt and implement a behavior-modification program, nor is he calling us to disseminate information to people as if they are computers who need more data for their memory bank. Rather, he invites us to embark on a breathtaking journey, to know him more intimately, and thus to become more like him.

Jesus has not given us a command that he has not equipped and empowered us to fulfill, nor has he asked us to do something that would not be an integral part of the abundant life he came to give us. Disciplemaking is not an obligation, but the greatest privilege of our lives—and it is for everyone, not just the “special ones.” If we understood how vital our own part is in fulfilling the Great Commission, and then did our part, we would actually fulfill the Great Commission. It’s not rocket science. It’s disciplemaking.

It was over dinner that Jessie first shared with me the concepts she has unpacked in *Ordinary Discipleship*. I remember thinking then, *Everyone needs to hear this message*. This is not a how-to manual; it is a guidebook that makes you want to embark on the adventure that is disciplemaking. Jessie not only demystifies the process of making disciples, she offers us a road map—unique for each person—to do the very thing we are called to do.

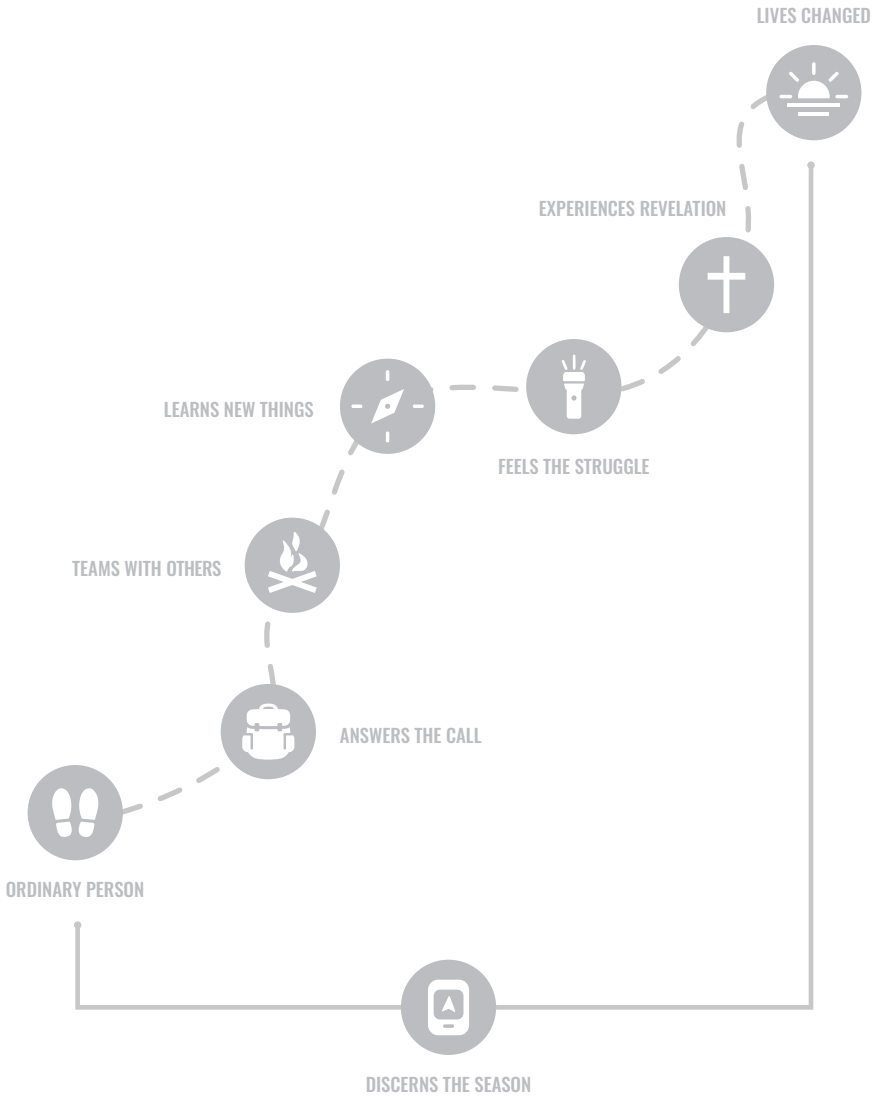
Jessie’s passion and conviction poured out on these pages are contagious. I believe that more is caught than taught in life, and you will catch the heart of disciplemaking in this book. Jessie lives, eats, and breathes this message, and she is the most pragmatic mystic I have ever met. As we journey through this blend of biblical truth, brain science, outdoor

adventures, and the power of story, we are left with an insatiable desire to be, and make, disciples of Jesus.

This is the book on making disciples that I have been waiting for—and I know you have too.

**CHRISTINE CAINE**

*Founder of the A21 Campaign  
and Propel Women*



## EXPERIENCE THE JOURNEY

*Becoming a Hero Maker*

*May the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good  
for doing his will.*

HEBREWS 13:20-21, NIV

DREW ARNOLD WAS THE FIRST PERSON to recognize the call of God on my life. I was going to be a high school science teacher, but the spring after I graduated from college, a phone call from Drew changed all my plans.

Throughout high school and college, I had professionally guided wilderness expeditions for different organizations. One of those was Drew's organization—Solid Rock Outdoor Ministries. SROM was similar to Youth with a Mission, only stateside in the deep trails of Wyoming; instead of going on a mission trip, students learned about God in the wilderness.

Drew asked me if I would work full time for SROM. I prayed about it for one week (which is crazy short for me—I dated my husband for five years), before saying yes to \$350 a month to build this wilderness school for discipling.

Drew had been an amazing rock climber, wilderness mountaineer, and skier, but now he had multiple sclerosis and was confined to a wheelchair. That didn't stop his fervent pursuit of the call of God, though. He had stepped down from his full-time pastoral role to lean into being a mentor and disciplinemaker, choosing to spend his days pouring into me and his son, Andrew, and eventually another leader named Josh as we worked to build SROM.

In this season of leadership, I was out of my league, in over my head, and desperate for Jesus. Knowing how dangerous our work could be, I decided I needed to figure out how to teach something once with a high degree of effectiveness so that someone could remember it with a high degree of accuracy. Lives depended on it. That's when I began studying and reading about how the brain learns and changes.

But what began as a risk-management exercise, I realized, had disciplinemaker implications as well. Many times, I would have only ten minutes to an hour with a student. How could that one conversation be effective enough to possibly change eternity?

I started applying the science of transformation to the art of disciplinemaker. I took everything I'd been learning about the brain and placed it over questions like:

- *How do you have a disciplinemaker conversation?*
- *How do you hear what God is doing?*
- *How do you partner with God so that in five minutes something catalytic can happen and someone's life can change?*

At SROM, we began paying attention to people's transformation stories, discovering we could predict when change was likely to take place and what we were doing to either help or hinder the process. We adjusted our program to best facilitate transformation.

Not everyone changed, but many did. They could choose to be willing participants in the transformation or not.

Fascinated by these revelations, I went on a sabbatical from SROM to obtain my graduate degree in Mind, Brain, and Experiential Education—and what I discovered was the science behind what God had already shown me:

*God hardwired our brains for transformation, which means anyone can help anyone else on the journey to change.*

## **Agents of Transformation**

Everything that has happened in your life—every aha moment, insight, or healed wound—has equipped you for the task of making disciples. You don't need to have lived another life or be a different person. You just need to look at your life through God's eyes. He has equipped you. You are hardwired for transformation, and you are created to be an agent of transformation.

Discipleship, like being a wilderness guide, is about helping people choose to go somewhere they have never gone before or do something they have never done before. *It is about helping someone be brave enough to choose to change.* It is showing them a new way of living in the world and exploring what they have never seen. It is sharing wisdom—not general



wisdom, but the hard-fought wisdom *you* have learned in the life of faith—and teaching skills so they can do it on their own. Both can feel like a blind walk into the unknown, but you'll find that it's the journey, not the destination, that matters most.

In the Bible, the Greek word for disciple is *mathetes*. Literally translated, it means *learner*. But the problem in our Western mindset is that we associate learning with the mind, reason, and information. Take it from the educational neuroscientist, this is a dangerous misunderstanding. Education is important, but it has *limits*—things it can do and things it can't.

True learning is deep and holistic. It affects all parts of us—body, soul, and spirit. We are not transformed by facts and information, but by what we believe in our bones. If our life does not demonstrate it, we have not learned it. So, being a learner in the biblical sense is about apprenticing our lives to Jesus and choosing to live changed by what we learn.

In guiding others, success is not defined by whether we conquer the mountain, but by whether we conquer our inner fears and self-imposed limitations. Discipleship is not simply about whether we make it to heaven when we die, but how our encounter with the risen Jesus changes us today. Jesus transforms our fears into faith and our weaknesses into his strength throughout our lives. This grace is a free gift, not of ourselves (Ephesians 2:8). Through the great love of Jesus, we are changed. We live in relationship with Jesus, remaining attentive to him and obedient to what he asks us to do. Our relationship with Jesus alters our lives. As we follow his guidance, our motives, actions, and behaviors change. The great joy of discipleship is helping others be changed by Jesus too. As we share life together in a messy world, we extend

his example, simply sharing with others how Jesus has transformed our own lives. We help people to walk in love and obedience as Christ transforms them too.

The innate transformation of the journey of faith is why anyone can be a disciplemaker. If you have given your life to Jesus, you have your own journey of transformation to share!

So, now that we've talked a bit about disciples and disciplinakers, let's adopt some better definitions:

- A **disciple** is someone who chooses to be changed by their relationship with Jesus.
- A **disciplemaker** is a disciple who lives changed by Jesus and journeys with others for the intentional Spirit-led purpose of helping them be changed by their relationship with Jesus too.

God loves us exactly where we are. But he also paid an exceedingly high price for us to live in greater freedom and intimacy with him. He is always trying to move us into a greater fullness of life, which is why he has provided guides and companions to help us. Disciplinaking happens when a person partners with God in this process and becomes a voice of love and truth in our lives.

I have been on hundreds of wilderness adventures. Whether we were walking, camping, climbing, or resting, our true selves were being revealed. We were exposed and reshaped by what we faced and by each other. I remember John, a skinny, sassy kid who talked a big game. He thought sarcasm and emotional distance made him a leader. But as we stood on the edge of

the Grand Canyon, all that bluster faded. On our twenty-mile journey down to the river, John learned that he could open up to the community. In serving others, he had the tangible experience of being a leader and a hero. When we returned seven days later, John's parents did not recognize their son.

Often, by the end of a wilderness trip, students were no longer students but overcomers and heroes who had faced their challenges. And I was no longer a guide but a hero maker, someone who had helped others discover who they were and what they could do.

That's what it is to be a disciplemaker. We take a person from where they are to where they have never been. We help guide them from who they are to who God created them to be.

## **The Hero's Journey**

You may know the story. Frodo Baggins, called out of ordinary life in the Shire, is tasked with carrying the Ring of great power to the volcano where it was made. He initially rejects the task, believing he is ill-equipped for such a significant and dangerous undertaking. Only when he realizes that he is the only one with a heart strong enough to resist the evil of the Ring does he agree to take on the assignment. Many others accompany him, including his best friend, Samwise, who never leaves his side. The journey is filled with friends, enemies, mentors, and challenges for Frodo to overcome both physically and in his own heart.

Whether or not we're acquainted with *The Lord of the Rings*, the outline it follows is familiar. We might notice the same pattern with Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars*, or Neo from

*The Matrix*, or countless other characters from our favorite movies and books. It resonates somewhere deep inside us. We identify with the struggle, the fear, the need for friendship, and the need for help. We understand how the desire for the known and the comfortable can battle against the call to the unknown and the turbulent journey ahead.

Real heroes suffer and face danger with courage. They don't start out as heroes; they become heroes. Their journey changes them and takes them to places they would never have chosen to go on their own.

I suspect you've heard this story. You have lived this story. You have read this story in a hundred books and seen it in a hundred movies.

In the 1940s, Joseph Campbell researched the great mythic<sup>1</sup> stories in human history and found a consistent pattern across cultures and civilizations. Despite being separated by continents and thousands of years, each culture's epic story followed the same pattern.

Campbell named this pattern *The Hero's Journey*, and it is taught in story-writing classes all over the world:

- A hero is called out of his or her ordinary world and presented with an insurmountable challenge.
- The hero initially refuses the call, usually due to feelings of inadequacy.
- With the help of a mentor, allies, and friends, the hero embraces the task at hand.

---

<sup>1</sup>To be clear, *mythic* does not necessarily mean “fantasy” or “false.” *Mythic* means “epic.” These stories often communicate the morals and values of the culture.

- Along the way they face considerable opposition and trials.
- Finally, the hero obtains the reward and returns to their ordinary world, transformed by their experience.

Something about the Hero's Journey inspires us, calls to us, and awakens a deep longing inside of us.

Think about your own journey for a moment. Where did a moment of real transformation and change take place in your relationship with Jesus? It likely came at a point of despair or adversity. You probably did not wake up that morning with the thought, *I really want to become a better Christian today*. But life presented you with a circumstance that catapulted you to change.

Sometimes we get to choose our journey and sometimes we don't. In fact, sometimes the journey is forced upon us, like when we find out we have cancer or someone close to us dies, or when our job takes us to a different state and we have to move. We can't always determine the circumstances we find ourselves in.

Our choice then becomes whether we will participate in the transformation. Will we answer the call and say yes to what God is doing?

---

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is a circumstance or opportunity that you said yes to that changed you?

---

I believe God wrote this pattern, this Hero's Journey, on our hearts and on all human hearts, so that we would know what he

wants for us. It helps us recognize the path, even when we don't know the way. But it is more than that. It is also our blueprint, our outline so that we can come alongside someone and help them become a disciple. It is the map for the journey of a disciplemaker.



An *ordinary person* is called out of his or her ordinary world, presented with a seemingly impossible challenge.



Initially, that person refuses the call, usually due to feelings of inadequacy. (Note: For some their journey stops here when they refuse to participate in the transformation.) But eventually they decide there is no other choice; they *answer the call* and say yes to what God is doing.



Next, they *team with others*. Mentors, allies, and friends come alongside them to embrace the task at hand.



Together, they *learn new things* as each person walks their own Hero's Journey.



They *feel the struggle*, which culminates in the biggest trial of all. This part of the journey must be faced alone and often represents the hardest point of someone's transformation.



But finally, in the space of surrender,<sup>2</sup> the ordinary person cries out to God and *experiences revelation* that leaves them changed.

<sup>2</sup>In the words of Isaiah the prophet, "'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty'" (Isaiah 6:5, NIV).



Ultimately, something in the ordinary person's life is redeemed and restored. This is what makes them a hero. As they return to their ordinary world, the ordinary person has become a hero and *lives a changed life*—transformed by their experience.

Once we know what to look for, we see the pattern of the Hero's Journey everywhere in the life of faith.

The Hero's Journey is woven throughout Scripture. This is Abraham's story and Moses' and David's and Ruth's and Mary's. It is Paul's story and Peter's story.

### **Disciplemaker Pro Tip:**

Jesus himself modeled the perfect Hero's Journey. He knows the path and invites us to follow him as our guide. When you get lost, look to him to help find your footing.

We see the Hero's Journey in the Israelites leaving Egypt through the Red Sea, going into the desert, and eventually entering the Promised Land. We see it in their journey into exile. Any time you leave, are recreated, and return, you have completed the Hero's Journey.

This is the journey we all take as disciples. We are all on this map somewhere. And every season of

learning from God follows this pattern, so we experience it over and over. As you look at the map and understand the journey, you will recognize it in your own life and be able to identify where you are as a disciple. Learning to orient yourself on the map won't just help you, it will help everyone who wants to be a disciple or a disciplemaker.

## ***An Ordinary Person Answers the Call***

At the beginning of every story is not a hero, but an ordinary person sitting in the middle of ordinary life. Jesus always starts with regular people. In Luke 5:1-11, we see this stage mirrored in the life of Peter, who was working as a simple fisherman when Jesus showed up on the shore. Suddenly Peter's mundane world was disrupted, awakening something deep inside. But Peter had responsibilities, a family.

Multiple times Jesus gave the invitation to "follow me." There was a rich young man who asked Jesus what he must do to follow him. Jesus said he needed to leave everything (Mark 10:17-27). Jesus told another young man to leave his parents (Luke 9:59-62). Both young men chose to end their journeys with Jesus right here. They chose to remain in life as they knew it.

When everyday life is disrupted, we are faced with a choice and a decision. And almost all of us initially "reject the call." The cost is too great, we have too many responsibilities, we are afraid. Approximately 50 percent of people end their journey right here before it ever begins.<sup>3</sup>

Peter, too, initially rejected the call. He "fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'. . . Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people'" (Luke 5:8, 10, niv). What a crazy invitation! Did Peter even know what it meant? Probably not. And yet we know that although Peter's initial response was no, he eventually answered the call with a yes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: HarperCollins, 1981), 318, Table B.3.

<sup>4</sup> Download a free example of Peter's Hero's Journey at [ordinarydiscipleship.com](http://ordinarydiscipleship.com).



We each have the world we know—the “normal” that we wake up to each day. It is in this very place, the ordinary place, that Jesus calls us to step out and follow him as a disciple. Jesus did not limit his invitation to the religious leaders. He invited fishermen, tax collectors, women, and the marginalized as well. The invitation to follow Jesus is given to the ordinary person who will answer the call with yes.

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### **PERSONAL REFLECTION**

Think about your own call to follow Jesus. What was your “ordinary world”? What was your response? Have you left the safety of your pre-Jesus world to follow him?

---

### ***Teams with Others to Learn New Things***

Once the ordinary person accepts the call, she quickly learns that she is not alone. God always brings others to accompany us on our journey—mentors, guides, allies, and friends. Soon, alongside these companions, the ordinary person learns the skills, tools, or character traits required for the challenges ahead. This knowledge is gained through the day-to-day happenings of life: learning to hear God’s voice, prayer, studying Scripture, and growing in the fruits of the Spirit. For Peter and the other disciples, this happened as they learned from Jesus in community. Jesus also gave his disciples opportunities to practice what they were learning. He sent them out two by two (Mark 6:7-12), and he used life’s opportunities as teachable moments.

Likewise, Jesus uses community to reveal our strengths

and weaknesses. We learn what gifts we have and what we bring to the table to give others. We also discover areas where others are more mature or competent and what we can learn from them. Jesus works with us to develop our character toward increasing Christlikeness and living in the Kingdom of God through community.

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### **PERSONAL REFLECTION**

Think about your Jesus journey. Who has been with you on this? Who has mentored you? Who has been your friend? What impact have they had on you? Would you take a Hero's Journey if you had a band of friends and a mentor to walk with you?

---

### ***Feels the Struggle and Experiences Revelation***

It's the big scene in all our favorite movies; the main character faces the moment where they either fail or transition from ordinary person to hero. For Frodo, that moment was when he chose to relinquish the Ring to the fire of Mordor. The moment usually happens in the middle of significant struggle, as the ordinary person wrestles with who they are supposed to be and what they are supposed to do. Music swells, tensions rise. And then—breakthrough. Out of the fire, a revelation—clarity about who that person is created to be.

Peter experienced the struggle when he denied Christ and the rooster crowed. In denying Jesus, Peter had done what he said he would never do. His sense of self was shaken. His grief was profound. So he returned to being an ordinary fisherman.

Until—revelation. The resurrected Jesus stood before him, holding love, restoration, and breakfast in his hands.

Testing can come in many forms. We may be tempted to compromise our character to take shortcuts in our jobs. Or we might have to surrender our specific vision for how a family event should go so that everyone can work together to build a better plan. The real trial requires us to face our fears, overcome a temptation, or renounce a false belief about God and embrace truth.

Jesus promises us that testing is part of the process of growth. Paul writes that fire exposes the quality of our faith (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). But testing is meant to reveal beauty. As a disciple we follow Jesus into hard places. We follow him into the valley of the shadow of death. And the greatest way we overcome is when we discover joy in the midst of challenge. The trials in our life help refine and purify us, making us stronger, more connected to each other, and more effective for the Kingdom. We sit with our friends as Jesus prepares a table before our enemies, and in those moments we realize how strong we are together. And no matter what we face, Jesus will never leave us, and Holy Spirit<sup>5</sup> will always be there to guide us.

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## PERSONAL REFLECTION

In your Hero's Journey, what is a fear, temptation, or false belief you have overcome? How did that happen? Who was there and helped with that overcoming?

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<sup>5</sup> Have you ever wondered why, when we talk about God and Jesus, we call them by name, as people, but then we talk about the third person of the Trinity like a thing? You'll notice that I talk about Holy Spirit as the third part of the Godhead, without the word "the." I'm not insisting on this for you, but as we talk about Holy Spirit in this book, know that I've left the word out and call Holy Spirit by name. Try it yourself!

### ***Lives Changed by Jesus***

In the final phase, the ordinary person has completed the Hero's Journey and become a hero. The hero reflects upon how she has changed, the relationships she has built, and the revelation she has gained. She often says goodbye to her mentor and allies, returning to the same ordinary world where she started. But the world is different—not because *it* has changed but because *she* has changed.

Most of us would never think of joy, peace, hope, faith, and self-control as our sources of power against worldly tensions, injustice, and division. However, Scripture tells us that is exactly what we are given as tools (2 Corinthians 10:4). These are the prizes God's Word promises we will find on our journey of discipleship. And they are amazing gifts, like a spring of water hidden in the desert, or the ruckus of laughter that rises up around a campfire. These gifts are strong and trustworthy. When we discover and develop the gifts on our journey, we'll find that they are not easily stolen from us. And the deep relationship that we build with God and with our companions is something that will exist for all eternity. This is how we are transformed—and how we transform the world.

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### **PERSONAL REFLECTION**

How were you a different person on the other side of a trial? In your own journey of overcoming, what treasures or prizes have you gained? What truths about God or fruits of the Spirit have been deposited in you as a real, tangible treasure?

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## Your Guidebook

In my decade as a wilderness instructor trainer, I read hundreds of guidebooks—everything from laminated maps on the South American Andes and the Utah desert rivers, to typed Word documents detailing the climbing area of my first ascents. The descriptions in guidebooks can be a little mysterious, and you have to take them with a grain (or handful) of salt. Descriptions of climbs or river rapids, for example, are often puzzling and even poetic: “*Whether you climb the face or the hand crack (at this point), the number of grunts remains fixed.*” You might read the words a few times and wonder, “What does that mean?”

Guidebooks intend to create intrigue because their purpose is only to get you to the river, the rock face, or the base of the mountain. They do not give a step-by-step account of the route. For one, that would ruin the adventure of it. Second, routes change. A river is never the same from one day to the next. Rocks move, glaciers travel, and the environment is evolving and migrating. Giving a step-by-step description of the path would lure the reader into a false sense of confidence, control, and complacency. And in the outdoors, complacency causes death.

Consider this book your guide to disciplinemaking. It won't give you step-by-step instructions, mainly because no two discipleship relationships are the same. Instead, this journey we're going on together is meant to get you to the base of the route. You'll learn foundational principles that help you see the larger picture of relational disciplinemaking so you can

find your way. But that will take us a little time—and a little trust—as we walk the path.

This book is written for you, the disciplemaker, the guide, even if you don't yet see yourself as that. It is meant to help and equip you for that role, though it won't be your only text on the topic. Like all guidebooks, this book is limited by the lens of personal experience. So I have included some actual standard guidebook disclaimers, adapted for context:

- Disciplemaking is a hazardous activity. Proceed at your own risk.
- You are responsible for your own actions.
- A specific person may, in fact, be harder to disciple than this book indicates.
- Do not be lulled into a false sense of security because you have read this book.
- Mileage was measured on my life's odometer. Personal experience of mileage may vary.
- The reader releases the author from liability of any harm that may result from this activity.

Every guide has their first trip. If you have never disciplined anyone, begin to pray for God to prepare your heart (and theirs) for the journey ahead. You are called to make disciples just as you are—with your face, your story, and your gifts. With your strengths, your weaknesses, your revelations, and your misunderstandings, you are called right now to make disciples. I pray that in this book you will find the simple encouragement and practical equipping to convince you of that Kingdom-forming truth.

And if you're feeling daunted by the journey ahead, I want you to consider—what if . . . ?

What if every person who believed in Jesus as Lord embraced the Great Commission to make disciples? What if they saw the people they encountered daily, at work and in their neighborhoods, as potential Jesus followers on a journey? What if they started praying for some of those people regularly and listened to what Holy Spirit was saying about them?

What if every Jesus follower spoke words of hope that refreshed the soul and connected with people at a heart level? What if each Jesus follower intentionally mentored another person in the things of Jesus—sharing their life and wisdom with someone else?

Discipleship would once again be the life-giving, community-impacting, world-changing adventure Jesus always intended it to be.

The explosion of spiritual gurus, self-help communities, and life coaches in contemporary culture shows us that we're hungry to be mentored and poured into. When each one of us embraces our part of the discipling tapestry, we can help meet this need to be shaped by love. Then the world will see a rich, accessible, and wondrous Jesus and the beautiful simplicity of abundant life with God.

## **Discussion Questions**

Before you can guide someone else on their journey, you need to map out your own. Think about a testimony or revelation you had with God and answer the following questions.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> You can download a free template of the Hero's Journey questions at [ordinarydiscipleship.com](http://ordinarydiscipleship.com).

1. (Ordinary Person) Where were you at in life? What was your starting point?
2. (Answers the Call) What did the call God placed on you look like? How did you respond? What did you have to overcome to start your journey?
3. (Teams with Others) Who did God bring to join you on your journey?
4. (Learns New Things) What sort of things did God teach you?
5. (Feels the Struggle) What obstacles or challenges did you have to face?
6. (Experiences Revelation) What truths, insights, and revelations did God give you?
7. (Lives Changed) How are you different because of your journey?



## Inventory

In every chapter, we're going to pause to reflect and capture insights about that stage of the journey. Your inventory will equip you for the steps ahead.

At the beginning of the chapter, we looked at this Scripture passage:

May the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good for doing his will.

HEBREWS 13:20-21, NIV

How does the Scripture sound to you now? What new meaning does it carry for you?

What revelations or insights are you taking away from this chapter? Capture them here:

**Revelation/Insight #1**

**Revelation/Insight #2**