

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE:

1: The Call to Discipleship

It's good to welcome you to this introductory session to the CROWN rhythm of life.

If I can introduce myself, I'm David, vicar at St Michael's Budbrooke a church on the edge of Warwick and CROWN is very much the fruit of a journey we have been on together.

A bit about me - I became a Christian when I was 19, so that'd be about ten years ago? *OK, maybe fifteen...*

But as I look over the course of my Christian life so far I notice a number of things.

There have been some great seasons of growth - but that growth hasn't always been maintained... *At other times when I've really pushed into one aspect of the Christian life I have forgotten or neglected other elements...*

I can also think of times when I've heard God speak, or been inspired by a talk, a seminar, a conference - something someone shares, but I've never quite got round to living things out as a result.

Don't get me wrong, it's not for the lack of desire, I don't plan to do nothing - I just didn't plan to do something either. Not planning somehow means life takes over, distractions and busyness kick in - time passes and that moment is lost.

These intentions just weren't intentional enough! Worse still you could say that my growth in knowledge of God's will and purposes didn't lead to faith, it just increased my disobedience.

Perhaps you can relate to all of this?

Of course, it's not unusual to lose our early fervour as new Christians in Revelation 2 we read the church in Ephesus had *lost their first love for Jesus* -

Now, It can be easy to stagnate and level out - but that's not a place to get comfortable. Jesus calls this church back to their former passion, with a warning if they don't respond. He also gives them advice *to do the things they did at first. (Revelation 2:1-7)*

Now, this church had amazing patterns of teaching and mission, worship and repentance, you can read about it in Acts 19, but by the time of this prophecy even whilst they were 'doing the stuff', Jesus notes their hard work and perseverance, they'd lost their way.

Is that true for some of us?

We're often been too busy 'doing church', keeping services and ministries going to step back and ask the big question. Are we pursuing our first love and his agenda. Are we fulfilling his call and commission to us? Are we growing as and making disciples of him?

We might talk a good game, but observation is we often mistake discipleship for "knowledge", or we assume if people attend this group, or take this course, or complete that programme and hear the Sunday sermons they'll just grow.

Well, my question is, if that is the case - why is the church struggling in our day? Rick Warren puts it like this, *'Churches are filled with people who have attended services for all of their lives but are still babies in the faith' Mature discipleship is nothing to do with how old you are or how long you have sat in the pews or been involved in church activities. 'Millions of Christians have grown older without ever growing up.'*

There must be a better way! Mike Breen brings real clarity to this in terms of how we focus, he says, *if you build the church you might make disciples, but if you make disciples you will always build the church.*

As a vicar - I'm passionate about evangelism, but I've had to get to grips with the fact there's not much use catching fish if your nets have got holes in and they don't hold.

As a new Christian there were people in my life who were influential but I was rather left to get on with it in many ways.

So as I've pondered this - thinking there must be a better way - and I know I'm not alone in this - I've asked myself questions like:
How can I consistently grow in faith? How can I put patterns in place that can survive a storm? How can I keep doing the things that will bear fruit without wearing myself and everyone else out?

And this idea of a rhythm of life is my best answer, CROWN has been forming over many years, a work in me of the Holy Spirit and I hope you find something in it that helps you here too.

And all of this is something of a surprise... I have to say, *I'm about the least structured person there is - I'll go with the flow.... but the flow isn't always in God's direction - and I've come to realise that I need intention, and structure to grow and keep growing.*

Along the way I've done all the right things, not necessarily in the right order, and not with sufficient consistency to sustain them, but a personal rule has helped me build patterns to live the life Jesus wants me to.

So let me ask you a question.

How are you intentional about growing as a disciple?

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE

2: What is a Rule of Life?

So, you might ask, what is a rule of life? The root meaning for rule, comes from the Greek word for trellis, the wooden frame that was used to train vines to enable them to grow healthily and be most fruitful.

And that's a helpful image - a rule itself isn't the growth and shouldn't be mistaken for the growth - it is simply a framework that helps growth. The growth itself is organic - it's the vine, and in the Christian life we look for the organic growth led and formed by the work of the Holy Spirit, all the trellis does is provide the pattern for more fruit!

So do you or your churches have good frameworks in place to enable growth?

Now we'll come to image of the vine and Jesus' teaching on that in a moment, but it may help to ponder some definitions and examples:

First to make a distinction, a 'rhythm of life' is an individual or group outworking in practice of a set of principles found within a 'Rule of Life.'

The Monastic Mumblings blog puts it well:

The point of a Rule of Life, for communities or individuals, is that life should be lived in balance, with God as the focal point. A Rule of Life can provide us with the information and guidelines we need to get on the path of intentional practice of our Faith, and the loving accountability we need to keep us there....

The CS Lewis institute notes that the purpose of a rule is to help us to shed the "old self" and allow our "new self" in Christ to be formed.

The original growth of Christianity in our nation was achieved by the work of minsters and monasteries – resourcing centres of spirituality and mission not unlike the model of the Ephesian church we read of in Acts 19. Despite their caricature of being insular communities that hid away and pray, the monasteries and minsters were instrumental in effective mission and the evangelization of our nation.

Each community had their 'rule', a set of practices that helped them express their walk with Jesus. A rule might be defined as a guideline, a covenant, to hold each other accountable to discipleship and to serving each other and our surrounding community.

The Jesuit movement, formed by St Ignatius was profoundly missionary but rooted in a deep contemplative spirituality. *Ignatian spirituality is best described as one 'ordered toward both personal spiritual growth and energetic apostolic endeavour.'* (George E Ganns 1991) The Ignatian pattern of Spiritual exercises brings people repeatedly back to a rich vision of a loving God who seeks intimacy and partnership.

The second practice, the Prayer of Examen, invites participants to review the day, drawing attention to experiences of God's perceived presence or absence. This attention to God's presence is potent for developing missional acuity—the ability to notice God's missionary activity in everyday circumstances.

We had a road trip in California in 2013 - Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, where do these names from? The missionaries - In Santa Barbara - we visited the Franciscan mission, we have a couple of second order Franciscans here at Budbrooke, and guess what, they have a rule of life too.

The Wesleyan revival was powered by the class meetings - with a clear focus on life change and accountability. In recent times, new monastic movements have begun to emerge. Of course, they don't need retreat accommodation or infrastructure to function, they are often based in networks.

So various revival movements in Church History have used rules, rhythms and covenants as patterns through which the Holy Spirit has worked powerfully, creating a culture which sees generations of disciples grow and make other disciples, who make other disciples.

This creation of culture, rather than building up the church, seems to be something the LORD is stirring afresh in our day...

So let me ask you a question.

What patterns have most helped you grow as a disciple?

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE

3: Why have a Rule of Life?

So, why have a rule of life? For some of you an alarm bell might be ringing... Rules, that sounds like the pharisees - they had rules, lots of them. Jesus clashed with them... isn't this bad?

It may help to clarify a few things. In some ways the word rule wouldn't pass trade description! We are not creating fixed instructions, rather patterns and principles that enable us to form our own disciplines to ensure our journey with Jesus is balanced and fruitful.

This brings intentionality to our walk with Jesus. It is an expression of a commitment and desire to grow and offers us a practical framework to do that in which we can share with others.

Far from being restricting, it is liberating. It is flexible enough to be interpreted uniquely for each individual or group. But it is consistent enough to be something that brings unity, a common language for discipleship we can all share. As an acronym it keeps things simple, memorable, and can be translated to any context in the church...

So while two people may follow the same rule of life, their personal rhythm of life will likely look very different depending on their life, gifting and context.

Put another way, with the creative leading of the Holy Spirit, you make your own rules!

At the same time, doing this in community means we can encourage, support, make allowances for and be accountable to each other to as live this lifestyle together day by day. Some groups in the church may even want to make more specific applications of these principles together. We can urge each other on to great things

This freedom to craft a rhythm of life according to your unique circumstances whilst knowing others are doing it too from the same foundation, is a great example of how unity in diversity can be embedded within Christian community.

More than that, rhythm of life gives us something to aim for – and to make ourselves accountable to.

Research show that growth as disciples does not seem to happen automatically. How's this for a stat - 90% of our growth comes when someone challenges us. When were you last challenged?

In 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2 St Paul writes, One final word, friends. We ask you —urge is more like it—that you keep on doing what we told you to do to please God, not in a dogged religious plod, but in a living, spirited dance. You know the guidelines we laid out for you from the Master Jesus.

Paul recognises what they are doing but then he then urges them for more, to go further / go deeper. It is a case of bringing intentionality to what we are already doing.

CROWN is the framework, the trellis, to train this growth and to produce the fruit Jesus looks for, and gives God glory.

It help move us from Bible knowledge to Bible Living...

At St Michaels' if our vision for mission and discipleship is to be fulfilled then it is a pattern we can all share, with spirituality and mission at our heart, an expression of unity across a diverse mix of ministries and Missional Communities. It also becomes a framework through which the church can organise training / equipping and mentoring.

From our history it takes the threads of things over the years we have learnt from, seen God use, have pursued in bursts, and it begins to join together of all these dots, pull together these strands, so we see the picture that God has been forming amongst us.

It also protects us from striving. The very image reminds us that we are the branches and he is the vine, CROWN simply positions us to let God tend the growth.

We don't make CROWN compulsory, we recognise and respect that some may have existing patterns that serve them well in helping them grow in their faith and we want to bless that. However, it is also a fair question to ask of someone, if their patterns (or lack) are not yielding obvious growth in their faith – isn't it time to engage with something that might?

As a church we want as many to access this as possible, supporting a variety of patterns (Of which this community mission school is an accelerated part.) Everyone can be supported in adopting and then living their own rules in group, triplet and 1:1 settings.

So, if you haven't got it already CROWN isn't religious "to do" list. It is a clear but flexible means for the Holy Spirit to create a discipleship and missionary culture.

The principles should last a lifetime and if you keep pursuing them, and keep accountable to someone you will continue to grow and flourish - and - this is our longing, reach your full potential in Christ Jesus.

So let me ask you a question.

Do you have consistent challenge and encouragement in your discipleship journey?

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE 4: Why have a Rule of Life?

So what is the heart of all of this? Turn with me, if you will, to John 15: *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

We've already heard that the word rule is rooted in the image of the trellis - the wooden frame that was used to train vines to enable them to grow healthily and be most fruitful. And that's a helpful image - and one which places us in the midst of this illustration the Jesus gives.

In these verses we find some crucial principles for forming a rule of life and these are at the heart of CROWN.

First of all though, what stands out is an immediate health warning - in verse 5 Jesus reminds us - *Apart from me, you can do nothing*. Yet sometimes you'd often think the opposite is true - we can do the stuff and go through the day with little reference to him at all.

But there are some more hidden treasures here too,

In verse 2 we read in the NIV translation - *He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit*

I always found that quite harsh. Given Jesus later notes that branches that don't remain in him are like those that wither and are thrown into the fire - it seemed to me there were several negative images here.

Now, what's the matter with that you might think? Jesus is warning us.

Cutting off seems a logical gardening image... And when it comes to gardening I'm a bit of a hacker - so I get that... One time I was helping my Father in Law cut his precious hedges, his pride and joy - he said, *don't worry Dave, you can't cut them too close...* That was not true. It did grow back eventually.

So I get it chopping, hacking it all makes sense, you can see why the translators went for that. BUT this word for 'cuts off' can also be translated "lifts up" and if you were a vine dresser that would make perfect sense to you.

Vine dressers would take the branches trailing along the ground - the growth that was wayward, and thread it onto the trellis to raise it into the light, so that it wouldn't go mouldy - but become fruitful.

Doesn't that reflect the Father heart of God? His goodness and tenderness? He lifts up and positions the branches in Jesus that aren't fruitful to be fruitful. CROWN helps God position us for fruitfulness.

But the vine is also trimmed back - *every branch that does bear fruit he prunes [we read] so that it will be even more fruitful..*

Now notice this: it's growth - shoots / leaves are cut back. Now, any gardeners here, why do we prune?

So that the energies of the plant can go into bearing fruit. Sometimes we can be so busy and active with good things, we never bear fruit because there is just too much stuff going on.

Will you let God prune and cut back what might feel good, but will release the best?

Again CROWN helps with this, it is a framework in which we allow the LORD to tend and prune us -

It's a trellis that grows us in Community sharing fellowship, prayer and worship together, in which sustained by Re-Creation as God renews us, by which we Offer ourselves to serve his greater plan for the world, drawing strength from his living WORD as we become good news within our networks.

This is a framework to display his life to the Father's glory that we might bear much fruit - fruit that will last.

CROWN, then is a trellis, an intentional framework around which God does his work of positioning us for fruit. And when God is doing his work, by his Spirit, rather than us just trying harder, amazing things happen.

Verse 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. WOW!

These patterns create culture which see generations of disciples grow, making other disciples, who make other disciples.

CROWN isn't so much an invitation isn't to form a rule - but to create a culture

To position each one of us, and us together as a church in a way that God can do his work of pruning, lifting us up - so that fruit grows and great glory comes to Jesus.

Think about it a church forming effective rhythms in each of these rhythms will be be unstoppable - and God will be glorified.

So let me ask you a couple of questions.

- 1. What in your discipleship is good, but not God? Where might I need to prune?**
- 2. Where might I need God's kindness to "lift me up"?**

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE:

5: Where Do I Start?

Align yourself with God's purpose.

So you might ask, where do I start when it comes to forming a rule of life.

I say to you, you already have. If you are a follower of Jesus there will already be things in your life to build upon - what it's time to do now is to take hold of these with renewed faith...

Mary Lodge, Associate Minister here - wrote this as a bottom line for discipleship, *Growing daily in our faith and maturing as disciples is the will of God for every believer.*

Do you believe this?

It is God's will for you to grow daily in your faith.

If you can take hold of this, then you'll realise this isn't a slog of trying harder but a partnership and adventure with the LORD as he changes us from glory to glory. *He's in it.*

The Scripture is clear about this:

See Ephesians 4:12 .. God gives the ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher to the church, why? *To equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, [what's maturity?] attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

St Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13: 9 Our greatest wish and prayer is that you will become mature Christians

C. S. Lewis expresses this as becoming 'little Christs' – *Out of ourselves into Christ we must go. His will is to become ours and we are to think his thoughts too, to 'have the mind of Christ.'* (Mere Christianity, 1952 pp 184 and 185)

Becoming a mature disciple is for EVERYONE not just a super spiritual elite. As soon as you acknowledge who Jesus is, accept him as Lord of your life and make that commitment to follow him, you become his disciple – it is a nonsense to call him LORD, and yet not be growing.

This isn't just the calling of the keen, it's the pattern for his whole church. So, the first step is to acknowledge by faith that his call for you is maturity.

The question is do you really believe this? Why not say to each other - *It is God's will for me to grow daily in my faith.*

Now, I have a simple understanding of these things. If God's will is for us to grow, do you think that is a process he is going to help or hinder? (It's not a trick question). He's going to help - how does he do that?

Jesus spoke of the farmer who was active in sowing the seed, but could only marvel at God's provision of the growth. (Mark 4). Paul says something similar when he declares - *But God provides the growth.*

This brings us back to the trellis of John 15 and having a framework, the conditions around which God does his work. He lifts us up and positions us, he prunes and tends us.

Now this all sounds wonderful - but what might it mean in practice?

In simple terms I say this - allow God to shape your rhythms. There is so much in Scripture we can imitate and build into our lives.

Make sure your routines constantly bring you back to him - *one of my daily prayer patterns is to ask, What do you want me to do today?*

Let his power fill you and build you up. Don't go at this by trying harder, rather lean harder on him and draw on his strength. When did you last ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

And this God focus will protect us too:

Having a rhythm of life is NOT about measuring ourselves against each other in terms of our apparent maturity. *My rule's bigger than yours.*

NOT about encouraging any sense of self-righteousness or spiritual hierarchy.

NOT about fostering a false sense of guilt or success. *I nailed my rhythm this week. I've failed, I only had a prayer time six days this last week - woe is me!*

It is ALL ABOUT being obedient to God's commands and purposes for us and helping each other in love, to grow in our faith – the more mature we grow the more united we become as the body of Christ.

There is blessing in obedience - his purpose for you is maturity - so place yourself in the path of his promises.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Pursuing God in this way will bring reward.

Faith is at the heart of CROWN, and his CROWN is the reward of faith.

So let me ask you a question.

1. Do you believe it is God's purpose for you to become mature, attaining to the full measure of the likeness of Christ?

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE

6: Intentionality & Accountability

So, God's purpose is for us to grow to maturity. But does our purpose reflect that? Without intentionality, a rule of life just becomes another cool acrostic or alliteration - but is essentially dead or meaningless.

'Growing as disciples requires commitment and effort to grow. A person must want to grow, decide to grow and make an effort to grow' We can not just sit back and hope that the Holy Spirit will do all the work for us! He needs our obedient cooperation!

So, we need to ask ourselves: Are we spectators or disciples?

Tom Wright in his book *Lent with Matthew*, 2011 p7 puts the challenge like this : 'It's very easy for people to imagine that they can be 'religious – they say their prayers, they can go to church, they can read their bible – but basically they are looking on, spectating, while God does whatever God is going to do. And of course there's the sense in which that's true. God is not weak, helplessly waiting for humans to get their act together before he can do anything. But in another sense, part of the point is that God always wanted humans to be part of the action, not just spectators. God made us to reflect his image – his presence, his love and his plans.' - to be actively engaged with his transforming work both within us and in the world.

When we want something - we shape our lives to get it. Remember saving for something - or training for something?

In Mark 4 Jesus follows the parable of the sower, or soils, or fields in which he's spoke of the kingdom seed - with this - Consider carefully what you hear,"... "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you - and even more. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

In essence - when you have revelation from God - put your all into responding... Don't hold back - and God won't hold back either.

His will is for you to grow - as you pursue that - he'll measure back to you... What measure are you using?

Growth in faith needs to be that kind of priority! It will also be challenging. Whoever says they have the Christian life sorted is a liar, a disciple is a

learner... Always a learner... But have you heard the proverb, you can't teach an old dog new tricks? Sometimes we get set in our ways. A commitment to grow is a commitment to be teachable.

Wherever we are on our journey whatever our age or experience – whether we made our commitment many years ago or last week we need to be continually open to all God wants to show us of himself and his purposes. There should never be a point where we feel that we know all there is to know about Jesus and being his disciple.

God is infinite – there is always more to find out about him and his purposes for our lives. By committing to following Christ we are saying that we are no longer conforming to the patterns of the world but are continually being transformed (into little Christ's) by the renewing of our minds (and hearts) Romans 12:2

Being teachable also means being willing to learn and change. It might mean responding to challenge and correction with maturity, rather than being defensive. as we've heard, research shows that 90% of our growth comes when we are challenged as Christians - but it won't if we put the barriers up and won't listen.

Teachability is affirmed through the Scriptures as a Godly characteristic - and remains one of the key biblical criteria for leadership - approach CROWN with a willingness to be formed.

Becoming a mature disciple means daily putting into practice what we believe – learning to grow as a disciples becomes our whole lifestyle. Changing our old habits and practising new ones so that they become part of who we are.

Maturity is demonstrated more by behaviour than by beliefs. It is not about how much knowledge we gain but how we put our faith into practice. 'If your faith hasn't changed your lifestyle your faith isn't worth much.' (Warren p337)

One of the most powerful yet bittersweet quotes for me is in Peter Scazzero's book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality. He records that Jay one of his church members described it best like this: "I was a Christian for 22 years. But instead of being a twenty-two-year-old Christian, I was a one-year-old Christian twenty two times! I just kept doing the same things over and over again."

We need to be intentional, and teachable, but finally, there is another element we so often miss. We need to be accountable. We cannot grow on our own. Rick Warren notes, 'Christians need relationships to grow. We don't grow in isolation; we develop in the context of fellowship' as the early Christians did. (Warren p339)

If you develop a rule of life but there is no pattern of accountability then you are essentially engaging in an academic exercise.

Alternatively, if you fill life with activity but don't know why you are doing it you risk being ritualistic - repetitive action with little or no meaning.

Sharing the journey with others keeps us on track.

Accountability can be a scary word - at its worst we picture cults or controlling environments. Our approach is different.

CROWN enables someone to discern a pattern for Christian living specific to them and worked out before God. We then have patterns in which they become accountable to their own plan!

Low control, high accountability. A culture in which God can do his work in each one of us.

So let me ask you a couple of questions?

- 1. Are you resistant to change, or open to be taught?**
- 2. Is there anyone in your life who has permission to both encourage and challenge you?**

Think about that, talk to those around you, or leave you comments below... and we'll continue in a moment.

CROWN FOUNDATIONS PART ONE

7: Summing Up

There is that wonderful piece of dialogue in Alice in Wonderland where she reaches a fork in the road... She asks the Cheshire Cat -

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat.

'I don't much care where -' said Alice.

'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the Cat.

But it does matter which way we go. We do know where we want to get to - God does have a direction planned - and it is maturity in Christ.

A rule of life is a framework or a tool that can lead us there. It's an intentional structure towards fruitfulness enabling God to do his work positioning and pruning us - for fruit, fruit that will last.

It's no quick fix, in fact it will expose our hidden compromises and mistaken priorities - this will demand a response.

The Order of Mission, a modern day movement, sum up discipleship as this: *Listening to what God is saying, and then Putting that into Practice.*

Repent [thinking God's way] and believe [acting in faith].

We will find there are things that we need to repent of, and opportunities we need to seize with faith - this is not easy stuff. Simple, yet hard, but it will lead us into abundant and joyful life.

Are you going to position yourself for growth?

You see the invitation is to more than forming a rule - it is to create a culture of discipleship. A culture that can reproduce as disciples make disciples who make disciples.

Think about it - If we each are growing in **Community** - in belonging to and worshiping with the church family. In taking regular life-giving rest. as God **Re-Create's** us, so we don't burn out.

In offering and using our gifts as we join God's plan to renew all creation, bringing glimpses of heaven to earth wherever we are.

If we're pursuing a living relationship with Jesus and his word and sharing life and faith with those outside the church if we're doing that consistently and sustainably - God will be glorified and it will be unstoppable.

But Jesus reminds us - Apart from him, we can do nothing,

So this isn't a moment for wahey, here we go.... It's a moment to count the cost, are we really going to surrender and let go of what we'll find in God's way.

Will we let him tend our brokenness as he seeks to lift us up and position us, will we allow him to do his work of pruning...

CROWN will ask all these questions of you.

But if we are, if we do let him - we will be fruitful - and he will be glorified.

So let me ask you a question? Do you have a better plan?

Why not start the journey, surely adventure and possibility awaits at every turn.

Shall we pray?

Lord Jesus, you are the true vine, we are the branches. Teach us the rhythms that help us abide in you... Father, position and prune us for fruitfulness, that you are glorified and we are shown to be Jesus' disciples. Increase our faith and love that we become like him, bearing fruit that lasts. In Christ's wonderful name, Amen.

Next time, we'll look a bit more deeply at why CROWN is more than a convenient and memorable choice of letters.

So do talk to those around you, leave you comments below... and we'll be back next time.

THIS IS DISCIPLESHIP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rk8ERxqCZqQ>

Material for this leaflet was drawn from:

Chapter 18 Developing Mature Members of Rick Warren's book The Purpose Driven Church, Zondervan, 1995

and Chapter 4 Making Disciples of David Watson's Book, Discipleship, Hodder and Stoughton 1981

Chapter 11 in Book 4 of Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis, 1952, Harper Collins Publishing

Tom Wright, 2011, Lent for Everyone – Mayhew, SPCK, London.

Peter and Geri Scazzero, 2006 Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Thomas

Nelson, Nashville Tennessee. Also the accompanying workbook published in 2008