

Maize Plant Discipleship Syllabus

I tell you that unless a grain of wheat that falls to the ground dies, it stays just a grain; but if it dies, it produces a big harvest — Jesus, John 12:24

Jesus refers to his own mission using a simple metaphor of seed entering the ground and dying, in order to produce a large harvest. Grown throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the maize plant provides a similar, highly recognisable metaphor.

Metaphor of the Maize Plant

Good seed sown in good soil, stimulated by sunshine and refreshed by rainfall produces dynamic growth and a good harvest.

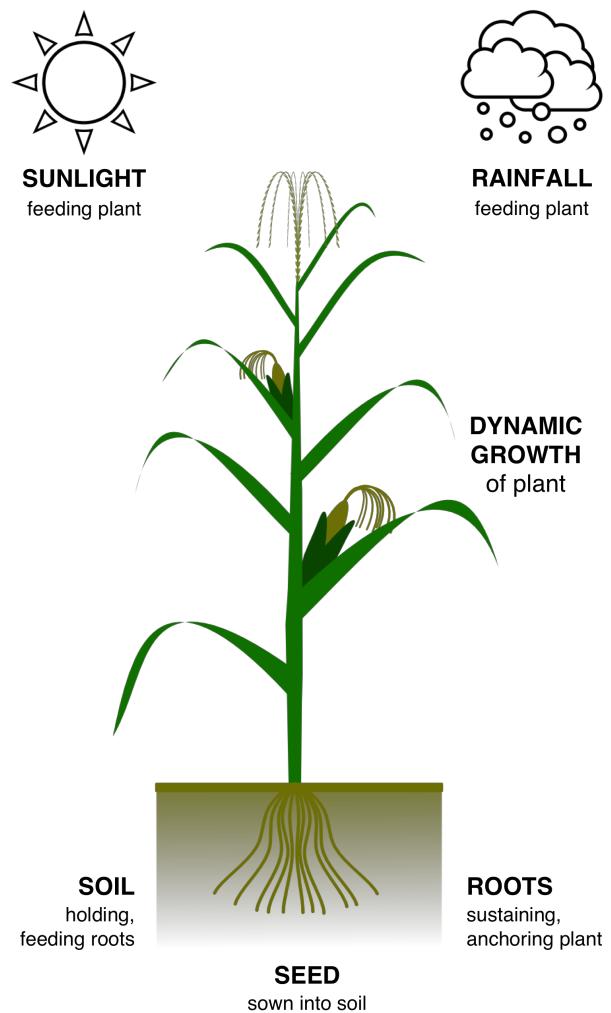
Messianic communities also need to be rooted in good ground that allows us to draw on vital, spiritual *nutrients*, to be stimulated by the revelatory *light* and to be refreshed by the living *water* of the Messiah's Spirit.

This creates the *dynamic growth* of messianic community, anchoring it against the withering winds of false teaching and sustaining it amidst the excessive heat of trials, temptations and vocational responsibility.

The figure opposite portrays these basic components of the maize plant metaphor.

Syllabus Structure

The Syllabus incorporates a Facilitators' Handbook and 16 Handbooks (one per module) structured to symbolically reflect this metaphor and the imagery of maize, in terms of: soil, roots, plant growth, sunlight and rainfall.



- **Soil and Roots (Messianic Foundations)** — which represent the biblical, covenantal community, context and vocation of Israel (Module 1)
- **Maize Plant (Messianic Dynamics of Growth)** — which represents the dynamic spiritual growth and multiplication of messianic community (Modules 2 to 9)
- **Sunlight and Rainfall (Messianic Disciplines of Growth)** — which represent the essential spiritual disciplines that stimulate and sustain the growth of messianic community (Modules 10 to 16).

Soil and Roots (Messianic Foundations)

Module 1. A panoramic overview of scripture, revealing God's unchanging, eternal purpose—the foundation of the entire syllabus.

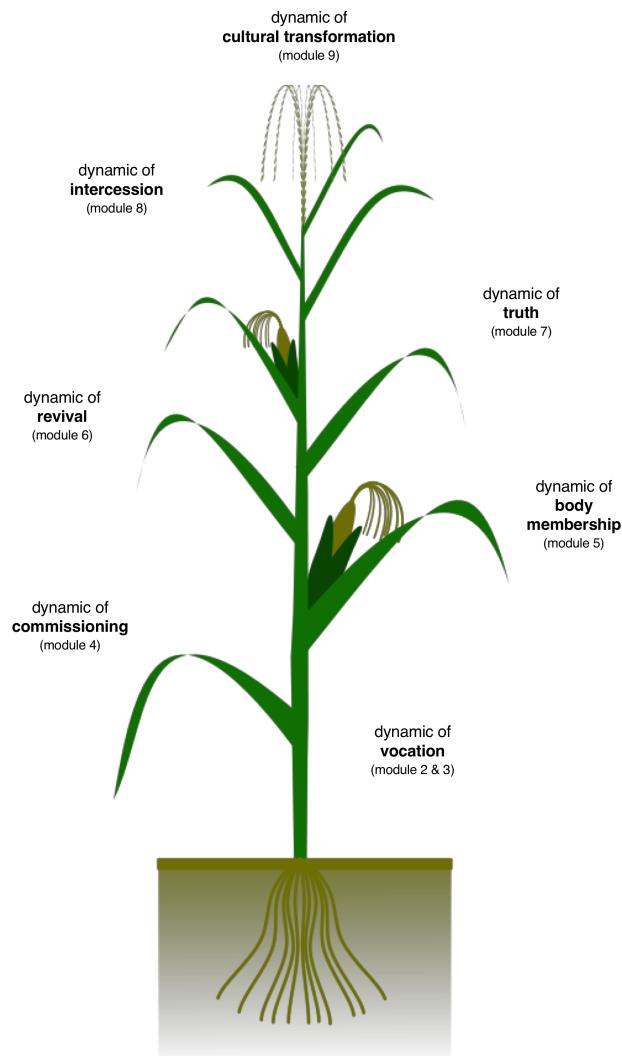
- **God's Eternal Purpose** — the Messiah is the Seed that enters the *soil* of the biblical, covenantal history of the people of Israel, in order to die and ultimately produce a great harvest of people—a messianic covenant community—from amongst the peoples of the earth.



Maize Plant (Messianic Dynamics of Growth)

Modules 2 to 9. The spiritual dynamics that produce the characteristic development, growth, structure and fruit of messianic community.

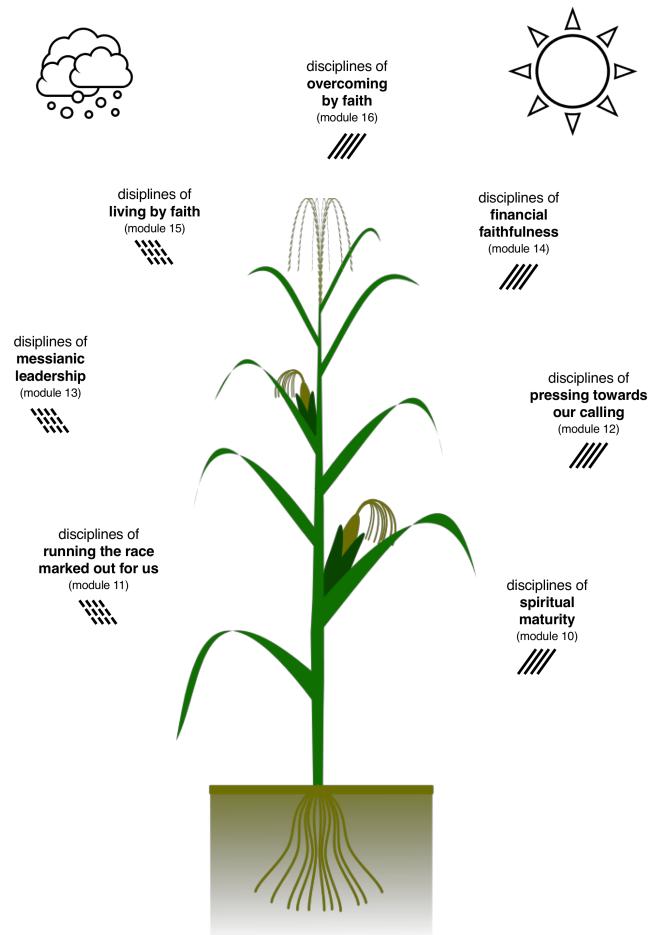
- **Dynamics of vocation: the Gentiles** *the historical development the Messianic Community's vocational mission to bless the nations of the world*
- **Dynamics of vocation: the Jews** *the significant responsibility of the Messianic Community towards the Jewish people.*
- **Dynamics of commissioning** *strategic and structural dynamics of messianic commissioning and community growth.*
- **Dynamics of body membership** *dynamics of membership, commitment and spiritual maturity within the body of the Messiah.*
- **Dynamics of revival** *a cycle of spiritual activities representing the dynamics of revival, leading to a spiritual harvest.*
- **Dynamics of truth** *encountering truth, as we walk in practical, covenantal faithfulness towards God's revelation, wisdom and direction.*
- **Dynamics of intercession** *the priestly vocation of the Messianic Community to be a house of prayer for all nations.*
- **Dynamics of cultural transformation** *the call to work amongst and on behalf of the nations, towards cultural transformations that signal the presence of God's kingdom.*



Sunlight and Rainfall (Messianic Disciplines of Growth)

Modules 10–16. Seven characteristic *disciplines* of messianic community, which open us to receive the revelatory *light* and sustaining *living water* of God's Spirit—without which we become spiritually weak and incapable of producing good fruit.

- **Disciplines of spiritual maturity**
three stages of encounter and growth in spiritual maturity: pastoral-devotional; missional-vocational and apostolic-intercessory.
- **Disciplines of running the race**
motivations, qualities and disciplines for living an enduring life of service: “completing the race marked out for us.”
- **Disciplines of pressing toward our vocation** *identifying and excelling in our personal vocation, through a deepening of our relationship with the Messiah—including a lifestyle of “prayer without ceasing.”*
- **Disciplines of financial faithfulness** *a biblical perspective upon financial faithfulness, wealth and poverty.*
- **Disciplines of messianic leadership** *the qualifications, motivations and characteristics of faithful messianic leadership and a leadership model balancing the needs of tasks, teams and individuals.*
- **Disciplines of living by faith** *seeing with eyes of faith enables us to endure times of testing and purification and embrace challenge as an opportunity to experience God's faithfulness.*
- **Disciplines of overcoming** *Confronting idolatrous, cultural strongholds in the power of the Spirit and discerning strategies that make room for a transformative encounter with God's overcoming power.*



Format

Each MPD module *Handbook* contains four interrelated *Studies*, each of which incorporates:

- Scripture Readings
- Topical Sections and Summary
- Questions for Group Discussion

The format is designed to facilitate reflective group learning—so that Maize Plant Discipleship relies simply upon facilitators willing to co-ordinate study groups and discussions.