

SUGGESTIONS IN DISCIPLE MAKING

Definition: disciple--- a world visionary, world impacting, radically committed learner/follower of Christ, who will then reproduce that in others.

While the Bible commands us all to make disciples, we do not have a “cookie cutter” approach given in Scripture on how to do that. We do see modeled by Jesus, Paul, Moses and others some great general principles on Transferring truth (God’s Word) and doing life together. Most of us will have a bent toward either transferring truth or “life on life”, but intentional discipleship that is Biblical and reproducible will have both-----the giving of truth and “life on life.” (See 2 Timothy 2:2 and Mark 3:14)

Why is reproducible so important? It is the plan of Jesus to reach the world---not relying on mass crusades or bigger church services, but intentionally making disciples.

****Example ---** If one person great at sharing their faith sees 1 person per day get saved every year for 32 years --- 11,680 are saved after 32 years. If we properly disciple someone to reproduce/multiply what has been done to them, then at the rate of **1 per year** - at the end of year one there are 2, then both lead someone to the Lord the next year and properly disciple them, at the end of year two there are 4, year three there are 8, year four there are 16 etc....at the end of the same 32 years - if all reach and properly disciple **1 per year**, the total is over 4 billion. Not only is intentional, reproducible discipleship Biblical---- the math works much better for the Kingdom!!

*****(Let it be noted here that God has already given many of you your first discipleship group----your family. Men should be discipling**

their wives and children, and ladies should be intentionally discipling their children.)

As you start this process, picture the end result – what do you, or better yet what does the Bible, say that the disciple should look like. Hopefully a passionate, Biblically literate Christ-follower, who has the characteristics of the definition given above. (It will be hard to get the person you are discipling to the right spot if you are not radically sold out for Jesus yourself – **totally surrendered**.) Luke 14:33, “In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”

Some have said discipleship is letting the Jesus that fills you rub off on those around you

Some Steps in Disciple Making

1.) Pray God will give you the correct people to disciple.

Selection is critical! People hungry for God will go deeper and stick to the program. Jesus spent more quality time with Peter, James and John than even the other disciples, because I’m sure He saw their hunger and potential to have a world-changing Kingdom impact. With every new person that you disciple, listen to their testimony – don’t assume they are saved. (As God picks the ones to invest your time in, pray to have Kingdom eyes to see the potential of Peter instead of the clay feet of Simon.) Kingdom impact may not be the rich, great communicator the world says can have a huge Kingdom impact. It may be the fisherman or tax collector. The person you are going to disciple should be:

Faithful

Available

Teachable

2.) Get your group in God's Word!

One of the basics of growing to be a "Christ-follower" who can multiply is to be in God's Word daily. A sample plan is included. It can vary depending on the entry level of the person being disciplined. Reading through the New Testament in a year is a good beginning point, and only takes 3 minutes a day. Adding a portion of Psalms and Proverbs to the plan adds 3 more minutes a day. If reading through the entire Bible in a year is the goal, it can be done in about 15 minutes a day. Depending on your group, they may want to do the Chronological Bible and see the redemptive plan of salvation from Genesis to Revelation. Knowing your group dynamic is critical here, but do get them in The Word. Challenge your group! Raise the Bar. In all of these, model the behavior to give them a way to begin this discipline. (www.examen.me is a one of the great computer tools to read the Word and journal as you read)

3.) Hide God's Word in your heart.

The discipline of memorizing scripture is a valuable tool for groups to use. A plan is enclosed that will add a verse a week to our storehouse of biblical knowledge. This plan will also aid the group by equipping them to share their faith. Challenge! Model this! Make it fun with review games – example, references in the hat for past

weeks – pull one out, etc. The topical memory system is another way that is already out there. I do recommend the strategy of reciting the verse reference, then the verse, then the reference again. Also, having a method to periodically review what you have already learned is needed. (Some recite verses many times a day for that week's verse, then that verse gets reviewed once a week for 4 straight weeks, and then once a month for life)

4.) Share your faith

Part of a disciple taking part in the multiplication process is being able to lead someone to the Lord. After week 6 in the listed memorization plan, a person should feel better about leading this discussion. This needs to happen after the group leader has modeled this in real situations.

A great way for this to happen is for the group to go on visits together that are already in place – weekly church visitation, special event visitation blitzes, ministry center witnessing, soup kitchen, etc. Your group should also see you share as God gives the opportunity in restaurants, stores, hospitals etc. – “as you go.” Mission trips are also a great way for this to happen together. Challenge your group! One valuable way to model this early on is to “role play” with each other.

** If the group does not plan on breaking up and intentionally discipling others, it is a Bible study instead of a discipleship group. Jesus disciplined His guys not just for them to soak it in, but for them to be used to **go** reach the world.

The “as you go” type of discipleship should also be applied to your group seeing you **minister** in all types of settings, not just sharing your faith. Let them see you minister to a person in a Sunday School class, hospitals, nursing homes, Walmart – “as you go.” There are plenty of ministry opportunities in this fallen world---broken relationships, financial trouble, bad news from the doctor, loss of a loved one etc..... Challenge your group! Having the group over to your home can be valuable tool as they see how you love and serve your spouse and children.

5.) Go to www.operationworld.org and click on “Pray” – then read about and pray for that country every day. This will get the group’s focus outside of themselves and the local church. Looking at “The Voice of the Martyrs” website will also be helpful with changing the focus to others.

6.) Teach your people to pray. As they hear you pray, they will learn, and there is great material out there on prayer. They also should just pray. Dive in the water and get started. Included in your material is a prayer guide with 12 categories to help keep a prayer time focused, but the bottom line is to pray! Keeping a journal of answered prayers and how God spoke to you can be helpful. (Praying Scripture is also a valuable tool.)

Other supplementary things can be done to help disciple someone to grow into a reproducing, multiplying disciple. One is to read beneficial Christian books. A list of where to start is provided at the end.

Attending Christian conferences, seminars, revivals, etc. together can also be beneficial. Another suggestion I just had given to me recently

was for each group member to pick out a sermon for the group to download and listen to; rotating and doing one per week for the group. Possible preachers include: Steve Gaines, Johnny Hunt, David Platt, Francis Chan, Chuck Swindoll, Paul Washer, John Piper, James Merritt and David Jeremiah. While I do not agree with every theological position a couple of these men take (example--- Calvinism etc...), their sermons have challenged and stretched me over the years, and should be good discussion starters. Using your church pastor's sermon notes from that week's sermon would also be very beneficial. (Going through a dvd series like "The Truth Project" by Focus on the Family is also good for shaping the group's worldview.) Donna Gaines Chronological Bible Discipleship is also a good dvd series to help gain a large view of the Redemptive Plan of God from Genesis to Revelation----check www.bellevue.org for this resource.

Traditional studies like Beth Moore studies and "Experiencing God" do not have to be avoided, but it should be noted discipleship is much more than a Bible study group. Biblical Discipleship is intentionally making reproducing disciples, so any study should just be a tool in the tool belt for God to make the type of disciple we defined earlier.

Get in their life. Discuss how life situations are handled, etc.

(Disagreements at home, work, etc.) Help whoever you disciple see life's ups and downs through the eyes of Christ and His glory. Keep them focused on having Kingdom eyes to reach the world for the glory of Christ.

Jesus preached to the masses (church), he taught His disciples (Sunday School), and he took the apostles (especially Peter, James and John) to an even deeper level (discipleship). Jesus intentionally poured His life

into these discipleship guys and the Holy Spirit used them to change the world. He recognized a world-changing Kingdom potential in them. Most churches spend all their time and resources with church and Sunday School and we leave out the mandate to disciple. Church services and Sunday School can be part of the process, but not at the expense of the deeper life on life discipleship mentioned with Jesus pouring in to Peter James and John.

If God uses us to teach other Christians to be true disciples----- to multiply, the world can be reached - one multiplying Christ-follower at a time

Remember our first example - one person a year disciplined correctly to reproduce - the Kingdom result is over 4 billion in 32 years.

Pour your life into people - disciple!!!

RESOURCES:

** Books for the group to consider reading (Bible is THE textbook)

“Master Plan of Evangelism” by Robert Coleman

“Radical” by David Platt

“Crazy Love” by Francis Chan

“Tally-Ho the Fox” by Herb Hodges

“The Lost Art of Disciple-Making” by Leroy Eims

“Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life” by Donald Whitney

***Fill in the blank books

“Beginning Steps---A Growth Guide for New Believers” (www.namb.net) (2-3 wks)

“Growing in Christ” (13 weeks) www.navpress.com

“Growing Strong in God’s Family” www.navpress.com (10 sessions)

- “Deepening Your Roots in God’s Family” www.navpress.com (11 sessions)
- “Bearing Fruit in God’s Family” www.navpress.com (11 sessions)
- “The Call to Follow Christ” by Claude King www.lifeway.com (7 weeks)
- “Biblical Discipleship” by Bob Warren www.lifeonthehill.org (19 weeks)
- ”A Call to Joy” by Billie Hanks Jr. www.ieaom.org

** The resources mentioned in the previous pages ***Bible reading plans (under discipleship) and prayer guide (under sermon resources)*** can be found at www.colonialheights.org

Please realize the goal in discipleship goes much further than behavior modification. The goal is a transformed life that looks like our Lord Jesus, which will then make the disciple a **world visionary, world impacting, radically committed learner/follower of Jesus who will then reproduce that in others.**

While I am only at the INFANCY stages of learning about making disciples, God’s Word makes it clear that is to be our business----all for His glory and honor. I hope these tips from a novice will be of some benefit to you as you get started, and certainly our teacher, the Holy Spirit, will guide you every step of the way as you stay dependant on Him.

Jimmy Meek