

DISCIPLE MAKING

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

- Matthew 28:19-20

1. Definition.

- a. Disciple making is:
 - (1) Making fishers of men who make more fishers of men.
 - (a) **Mt 4:19** 19 ...[Jesus] said to [Peter and Andrew], Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.
 - (2) Entrusting the Christian faith to faithful people who will be able to teach others.
 - (a) **2 Ti 2:2** 2 ...What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
- b. Quote.
 - (1) Disciple making is “people intentionally entering into relationships to help others follow Jesus, become more like Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus. Disciple making includes the whole process from conversion through maturation and multiplication, which is making disciples who in turn make other disciples. The definition stresses intentionality, building relationships for the purpose of disciple making, conversion, maturation, and multi-generational multiplication.”¹
 - (2) “Disciple making is hero making.”²
- c. Disciple making differs from discipleship.
 - (1) “[T]raditional discipleship...[is] often thought of as a very personal journey, largely impacting individual Christians who are already converts. Disciple making encompasses far more: building relationships with people in order to make disciples, conversion, traditional discipleship, and multiplication.

2. Mission.

- a. Our mission is to multiply disciple makers of Jesus in Dunedin and beyond.
 - (1) **Mt 28:16-20** 16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
 - (2) “As we stood at the top of Arbel, we could see for miles. To the north was the peak of Mount Herman, the largest mountain in Israel, to the east were the Golan Heights, separating Israel from Jordan, to the south were the fertile farmlands of the Jezreel valley, and to the east were two tall towers of a major electrical plant

¹ Exponential.

² Quote from Ric Sun’s mentor.

next to the ancient city of Caesarea Maritima, where the Apostle Paul set sail for Rome as he carried the gospel to the West. From one panoramic view you can literally see the nations. This was precisely why Jesus chose this place to give his followers what we call today, ‘The Great Commission.’”³

- (3) “...[E]mbedded in this vision statement [Mt 28:18-20] is the purpose of the church—to make disciples. That is, the church exists to make disciples.”⁴
- (4) Disciple making is the normal agenda and priority of every church and every Christian disciple.⁵
- (5) “Jesus’ final words are our first work.”
- b. Our job is to multiply disciples. It’s Jesus’ job to build his church.
 - (1) **Mt 16:18** 18 ...On this rock I [Jesus] will build my church....
 - (2) **Ac 14:21-22** 21 When [Paul and Barnabas] had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
 - (3) “If you make disciples, you always get the Church. But if you make a Church, you rarely get disciples.”⁶

3. Strategy.

- a. Imitate Jesus.
 - (1) We have to go the Gospels to really see the strategy of Jesus. In Jesus we have the perfect Teacher. We don’t want to follow the latest fad. We want to follow the way of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament, particularly the Gospels.
 - (2) “When we are committed to making disciples the way Jesus did, we will never lack his presence, and along with that, his power!”⁷
- b. Be intentional.
 - (1) Intentional, structured disciple making accelerates the multiplication of disciple makers compared to unintentional, unstructured disciple making.
 - (2) “His life was ordered by his objective. Everything he did and said was a part of the whole pattern.”⁸
- c. Be relational.
- d. Keep it simple.
- e. Invest in a few.
 - (1) “[Jesus’] mission was not to reach the world as much as it was to make disciples capable of reaching the world. His laser focus was on

EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP	INTENTIONAL RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP
Requires attention to Scripture	A personal relationship pointed to Jesus
Scripture and Holy Spirit	Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and relationships
Head	Head, heart, and hands
Academic	Teaching / modeling / coaching
Emphasizes factual knowledge	Emphasizes life application
Information	Transformation
Content	Supportive relationship
No breaking of bread Start and stop time / quick	Breaking of bread Meet in homes daily / takes time
Teacher has all the answers	Let’s figure it out together
Large group	Small group
Building / campus	Home
Lesson is the agenda	Doing life together
Setting is formal	Setting is casual

³ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 30.

⁴ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 9.

⁵ C. Marshall and T. Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 13.

⁶ Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture*, quoted in Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 160.

⁷ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 34.

⁸ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 18.

multiplication.”⁹

- (2) “Though [Jesus] did what he could to help the multitudes, he had to devote himself primarily to a few men, rather than the masses, so that the masses could at last be saved. This was the genius of his strategy.”¹⁰
 - (3) “...[O]ther things being equal, the more concentrated the size of the group being taught, the greater the opportunity for effective instruction. Jesus devoted most of his remaining life on earth to these few disciples. He literally staked his whole ministry on them.”¹¹
 - (4) “If the Son of God thought it necessary to focus His life on a small group of men, we are fooling ourselves to think we can mass produce disciples today. God’s design for taking the gospel to the world, is a slow intentional simple process. That involves everyone of His people sacrificing every facet of their lives to multiply the life of Christ in others.”¹²
- f. Live for the next generation.
- (1) “Here is where we must begin just like Jesus. It will be slow, tedious, painful, and probably unnoticed by people at first, but the end result will be glorious, even if we don’t live to see it. Seen this way, though, it becomes a big decision in the ministry. We must decide where we want our ministry to count—in the momentary applause of popular recognition or in the reproduction of our lives in a few chosen people who will carry on our work after we have gone. Really it is a question of which generation we are living for.”¹³

4. Disciple Making in the Local Church.

- a. Simplicity.
 - (1) “...[O]ne of the greatest obstacles to becoming a multiplying church is additional programs.”¹⁴
 - (2) “When every program and process is operating with the purpose of moving people through the pathway, alignment across ministries is natural and effective.”¹⁵
- b. Structure.
 - (1) Illustration: *The Trellis and the Vine*.
- c. Language.
 - (1) Common language and vocabulary around disciple making is imperative!
- d. Four Circles of Ministry.
 - (1) “In the local church, we track the four basic ways Jesus ministered and use those as the foundation for our ministries. We worship together weekly as a

⁹ D. Spader, “Disciple-Making Metrics,” 16.

¹⁰ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 31-32.

¹¹ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 26.

¹² David Platt.

¹³ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 36.

¹⁴ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 113.

¹⁵ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 123.

congregation. Just as Jesus led the 120. We gather in biblical community, just as Jesus gathered with the twelve disciples. We meet in groups of three to five, just as Jesus did with Peter, James, and John for another level of accountability and exponential spiritual growth. And finally, we minister to and reach the crowds through missions and service locally, regionally, and globally just as Jesus ministered to the crowds. To clarify the target of each of these four areas of ministry, we use these terms: Congregation Community Core Crowds.”¹⁶

- (2) “John Wesley combated this disconnect with a threefold strategy for exponential spiritual growth: Societies (50+), Classes (7–12), and Bands (5–7). Attendees of the Society gathering had to present a ticket at the door just to get in. Tickets were given out in classes. Since the class meeting, similar to a small group, was a requirement for all Methodists, one could not enter the Society gathering without regularly attending a weekly class.”¹⁷

e. Congregation.

- (1) **Ac 1:14** 14 All these [apostles] with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. 15 In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said....

f. Community.

- (1) **Mt 26:36–39** 36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, Sit here, while I go over there and pray.
- (2) **Mk 9:30-31** 30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise.
- (3) **Ac 1:12-15** 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James.
- (4) **Ac 6:2-4** 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.
- (5) **Ac 8:1** 1 ...There arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

g. Core. See D Groups below.

- (1) **Mt 26:39** 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed saying, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I desire, but as you desire.

h. Crowds.

¹⁶ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 120.

¹⁷ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 123.

5. Selection.

- a. Criteria. Look for faithful, available, and teachable (FAT) disciples.
 - (1) Faithful: To be faithful is “to be steadfast in affection or allegiance, loyal, firm in adherence to promises or in observance of duty” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).
 - (2) Available: To be available is to be “present or ready for immediate use... qualified or willing to do something or to assume a responsibility” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).
 - (3) Teachable: To be teachable is to be “capable of being taught... apt and willing to learn... favourable to teaching” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).

6. D Group.

- a. “A discipleship group consists of three to five members. The leader of a discipleship group is also a full participant. He or she will be sharing HEAR journals and being accountable just like everyone else in the group. The groups are gender-specific—men meet with men and women meet with women. Discipleship groups meet for twelve to eighteen months for the purpose of multiplication, accountability, and exponential spiritual growth. A group can meet longer, but keep in mind, the goal is replication. Discipleship groups meet for one to one and a half hours weekly. Discipleship groups are not a replacement for Sunday school/small groups.”¹⁸
- b. Daniel’s D-group.
 - (1) **Da 1:5-7** 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. 6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. 7 And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.
- c. Jesus’ D Group.
 - (1) **Mt 17:1-2** 1 ...After six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.
 - (2) **Mt 17:9** 9 ...As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.
 - (3) **Mt 26:37-38** 37 And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch with me.
 - (4) **Mk 5:37** 37 ...[Jesus] allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James.
 - (5) **Mk 13:3-4** 3 ...As [Jesus] sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 4 Tell us, when will these things

¹⁸ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 149.

be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?

- (6) **Jn 18:15-16** 15 Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Because that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in.
 - (7) **Jn 20:2-3** 2 So [Mary] ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple [John], the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him. 3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb.
 - (8) **Ac 3:1** 1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.
- d. Paul's D-group.
- (a) **Ac 13:1-3** 1 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.
 - (b) **Ac 13:13-14** 13 Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, 14 but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.
 - (c) **Ac 15:37-16:3** 37 Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39 And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. 1 Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. 2 He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him....
 - (d) **Ac 20:4-5** 4 Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas....
- (2) Our D-group with Jesus.
- (a) **Mt 18:20** 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.
- e. The optimal size is a group of three (trio), four (quad), or at most five people.¹⁹

¹⁹ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 45.

7. D Group Meetings.

- a. “Eight thousand discipleship groups meet in coffee shops, offices, dormitories, parks, homes, and on the steps outside the church on Sunday mornings and throughout the week.”²⁰
- b. Sample schedule (1-1.5 hours)²¹
 - (1) Prayer | 1–2 mins.
 - (2) Conversation (highs and lows of the week) | 10–15 mins.
 - (3) Scripture Memory | 5 mins.
 - (4) HEAR Journals | 20–30 mins.
 - (5) Accountability Discussion | 5–10 mins.
 - (6) Optional Additional Resources Discussion | 5–10 mins.
 - (7) Prayer | 10 mins.

²⁰ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 109-10.

²¹ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate*, 154.

8. Content.²²

- a. Conviction: knowledge of God and understanding of the Bible (Jn 17:8, 17, 19).
- b. Character: godly character and life that accords with sound doctrine.
- c. Competency: ability to speak God's word to others in various ways.
- d. Connection.

9. Method.

- a. Model.
- b. Assist.
- c. Watch.
- d. Leave.

10. Multiplication.

- a. Key verses.
 - (1) **Mt 13:23** 23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.
 - (2) **Jn 15:8** 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you produce much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.
 - (3) **Ac 6:7** 7 ...The word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.
 - (4) **2 Ti 2:2** 2 ...And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

11. Reward.

- a. "One day, by God's grace, you could see a movement spread from your influence that could literally change the globe and impact the nations in a way that continues until Jesus returns—that can actually happen!"²³
- b. "We must know how a course of action fits into the overall plan God has for our lives if it is to thrill our souls with a sense of destiny. This is true of any particular procedure or technique employed to propagate the gospel. Just as a building is constructed according to the plan for its use, so everything we do must have a purpose. Otherwise our activity can be lost in aimlessness and confusion."²⁴
- c. "When we are committed to making disciples the way Jesus did, we will never lack his presence, and along with that, his power!"²⁵
 - (1) **Mt 28:20** 20 And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
 - (2) **Lk 10:23-24** 23 Then turning to the disciples he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings

²² C. Marshall and T. Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 118-20.

²³ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 8.

²⁴ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 14.

²⁵ C. Etheredge, *Invest in a Few*, 34.

desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

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