

AUTHENTIC

A full-page background image showing four hikers from behind, standing on a rocky, scree-covered trail. They are looking out over a vast, snow-covered mountain range and a turquoise lake. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The hikers are wearing backpacks and trekking poles. The overall scene is one of a high-altitude wilderness.

**Disciplemaking and Multiplication
For Everyone!**

Leader Guide

NAME

Making Authentic Disciples



A Disciplemaking and Multiplication Leader's Guide For Everyone!



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The Disciplemaking Alliance @2019

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The Premise

One of the most critical needs in the church today is to make authentic disciples who then multiply more disciples. Hundreds of books, seminars and websites are dedicated to discipling, but the majority of believers never begin this great adventure. I've spent over two decades trying to elevate the discussion and vision on this important topic. This guide and website, iMultiply.org, is intended help you begin actually making and multiplying authentic disciples. I give simple, applicable, reproducible instructions that you can use and pass on to those you disciple. Everything you find on the website is free for you to use, edit, personalize and pass on. I'll also refer to many great books and other websites that will strengthen your convictions and will give you all the information you can digest. But I want to keep it so simple that we get going. We don't need to be overly informed. We do need to make disciples!

My goal is to help you understand what we are making and then give you an assortment of tools to do what God wants us to do. I'll provide a simple path for you to take, but I'll also point you to other leaders and the ideas that they are packaging. I want you to decide the best strategies and tools for your situation. One of the keys to reproducible discipling is simplicity. Can what you are teaching and investing in your disciples be easily passed on from generation to generation? Will they get it and use it? If it depends on you and your ability, it will die. That's not a good plan. If it's simple and clear enough that it can easily be reproduced and taught again and again, that sounds like a plan. That's been my goal as I've created this content.

Welcome to Discipling!

I'd like to begin by helping you understand how to use this material. This is the Leader's Guide and then there is a Team Guide. Plan to read and study through both of them. The Leader's Guide gives a deeper understanding of the why's and how's of discipling. It will have more content and

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more resources for you to use. A large portion of the teaching in the Leader's Guide will be summarized and then complemented with questions to ask in the Team Guide. As you master the content of the Leader's Guide, it will prepare you for the early discussions with your team. You will want to be familiar with both guides. The content differs enough that you will want to master them both. The more you understand the principles and concepts that you find in the guides, the more confident you will be as you lead your group.

- **The Leader's Guide will help you recruit and lead a small discipleship group from start to finish. The Team Guide will provide the foundational content and details not included in the Leader's Guide to start your journey together.** It should at the very least take you several months meeting together to go through this basic content that will help you shape the next two years. Don't be in a hurry. The final is based on depth, not speed. For example, it easily takes an hour of discussion to simply talk through "Let's Get Started" in the Team Guide.
- **The first half of the Leader's Guide will establish the foundations of discipling and multiplication.** The last half will help you with the details.
- **We'll talk about Group Discipling.** I'm encouraging most of you to disciple a group of three people and I'll explain why. But I will still show you how to select and recruit either an individual or a group of individuals for discipling in **The Selection Process**- your choice.
- **Let's Make Disciples** will help you understand the detailed process of implementing and leading your group. And **Questions and Answers** will hopefully answer your questions!
- **Then the Leader's Guide will point you toward good content to use to strengthen and build your disciples.** A light version on content will be in the Team Guide so you can talk about your goals with your group. Most of the content options will be on the website.
- **The Team Gathering Planner and the Monthly and Quarterly Reviews** will bring focus to where we are going.
- **And Resources** will give you tools to use along the way. Most resources will be online. But some articles will be in both manuals.
- **These manuals will continue to develop and improve.** We appreciate you providing healthy input and feedback along the way.

Why Make Disciples?

This is truly the starting point. Unless we own the answer to this question, everything stops with the next distraction. Life has way too many alternatives if we aren't thoroughly convinced that we need to make disciples. So let's digest the answer.

Jesus made disciples. He called them disciples and the writers of Scripture called them disciples. Disciples reflect the mind, character and priorities of their master. They accept, live by and help spread those teachings the rest of their lives. Jesus called his disciples into a progressive, relational covenant and walked closely with them for several years. All of them entered into a unique, relational walk that radically changed their lives forever. Jesus knew them by name and interacted with them all intimately. We see but a tiny glimpse of all that happened during those three years.

We have many pictures of preaching to a variety of groups and numbers of people. We even have mass conversions. But we don't see mass discipling. The only examples we see are relational conversations with one, two, three, twelve and many other people listening in. Jesus shared His thoughts, convictions, truths, and His priorities in discussions as he walked with these committed individuals. He practically lived with these men and women. He encouraged them, challenged them and helped them reshape their values and purpose for living.

Disciplemaking Details

Robert Coleman wrote a masterful, classic book called "The Master Plan of Evangelism." He carefully assessed and categorized the actual, deliberate strategy of Jesus as He was building a movement of disciple makers. Buy the book! Here are the eight categories that Coleman observed in Jesus' plan:

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- 1) **Selection** – Recruiting the Right People
- 2) **Association** – Spending Lots of Time Together
- 3) **Consecration** – Calling for Surrender and Obedience
- 4) **Impartation** – Fully Investing Everything for Kingdom Living
- 6) **Delegation** – Building Personal Responsibility in Kingdom Ministry
- 7) **Supervision** – Releasing with Healthy Accountability
- 8) **Reproduction** – Helping Multiplication Begin

Each of these areas of process and resolution are personal and accountable. Can you see the natural progression in His plan? Jesus knew His disciples and walked with all of them through these eight phases. By the time He left them, they were ready to multiply their own movements of disciplemakers.

Let's get to the answer to our question- why make disciples? Jesus recruited and took the time to make authentic, maturing disciples. He walked and worked with them, showing them how to reproduce authentic disciples. He knew He would leave them in charge of His great mission. They had to be mature enough to stand strong on their own. As Jesus prepared to leave, He shared His final challenge: "Go and Make Disciples!" This command, make disciples, was to be passed on to all of His future disciples until His return. "As you are going, baptize them and teach them to obey." The very words He used point to a repeated process of continuous disciplemaking. So that includes all of us today! This is why we make disciples. It is the Plan! It's what He left us to do!

Why Make Disciples?

Our Current Dilemma

Somewhere along the way, someone forgot to tell us that we have to be disciples who make disciples! Can you believe that? Jesus stated this earth-shattering command right as He was leaving, and, at some point, someone forgot to pass it on. Now, many of us are as guilty as that someone. We have the same Bible with the same verses, but many of us haven't known what to do with it. We weren't disciplined and we've barely seen any examples of it in our church experience.

We have lots of answers and excuses. "The world is different today. Our busyness and commitments would never allow us to do what Jesus did. Most people won't slow down enough to be disciplined. We're lucky to have them come to anything with any regularity. Here's our best solution. Disciplemaking is the program of the local church. People are disciplined by our preaching, our teaching, our classes, and our home groups. At our best, we group disciples for effectiveness and efficiency. We put people through disciplemaking courses or help them get into a group that disciplines them. We pour in all the truths about God and how to live a godly life. In this busy and distracting world, we're doing the best we can. There probably is no real way to do anything more today." Is that the truth? Is that what we have to live with?

Here's the problem. We're not making real disciples! We're filling churches with partially committed believers, and many of them never really grow up. They're adult Christians, but many of them are still walking around in diapers. How sad. Now, some people simply grow up and become disciples and disciple makers because they are hungry, determined or disciplined. They run at truth, sit, listen and learn to feed themselves. Thank God for self-starters. Many of our programs are good and are helping people who have some level of discipline and are motivated. We shouldn't stop what we're doing. But most believers don't go beyond Sunday morning attendance. Isn't that true? And many of the rest never really grow up.

It certainly helps to draw people into smaller settings like a class or a small group. People do grow more in those environments. But I've watched the results of decades of small groups and Sunday school classes, and most

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of them are not producing authentic disciples! So many people won't grow up and become fully developed disciples by themselves. God knows that! I don't believe He ever intended for us to limit ourselves to these types of settings. Most of them don't provide the criteria and certainly not the personal coaching that's necessary to help people really become all that they're meant to be. God commanded **us** to make disciples. This was not simply a group statement. It was meant to be taken personally. He commanded Peter, James and everyone else sitting there to each go and make disciples who would then go and make more disciples. We are all commanded to do this main thing, and we are all personally responsible to pass on this life that He has given to us!

Back to the Plan

Disciples are made, one person at a time! It takes the investment of time, commitment, energy and resources. It can be done one-on-one or in small groups. Either way, it shouldn't and can't successfully be done quickly. In fact, it's been proven that we can have great long-term success if we take our time and build healthy, confident disciples who know how to reproduce what they have received. This is how we change the future of the church. And that's how the movement started. That's what Jesus did in the first place. We need to return to our roots and restart something great again!

Let's talk about movements. Movements capture the hearts and minds of followers. They may be program-driven in the beginning, but programs never carry movements. Healthy movements continue long after leaders and programs die. In most churches, leaders move and many programs change or die. That's why discipling shouldn't focus on a person or a program. It needs to have the intentionality of producing independent, multiplying disciples or it too will die. Most churches can't point to a lot of fruit from programmed discipling twenty to thirty years later.

Parents produce movements. Think about that concept. We have children who we help grow up, they get married, and then they repeat the same process. I'm in the middle of five generations of over a hundred relatives building a Kingdom legacy. It's so natural. You can't stop it. What we instill in our children will be passed on for generations. This is one way to make disciples.

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It's part of the plan. Why wouldn't we want to capture the same dynamic in the rest of our lives? Disciple three, help them disciple three, help them disciple three and then help them disciple three! That carefully-focused strategy will produce well over one hundred disciples, ready to keep on investing in others, in just four generations. Now, that sounds exciting. That sounds like a movement. That kind of strategy will change the world. And isn't that what we want? Isn't that what He wants?

The next big question has to be: What in the world are we building? What is an authentic disciple? Two different opinions will produce two completely different products. One person may look very educated, but he or she may not be living anything like how Jesus intended them to live. Another may be passionately running hard at Kingdom living, but he or she doesn't really understand the Word! You can see why it's critical that we take the time to define and understand what an authentic disciple is from God's point of view.



What Is a Disciple?

There are many definitions of a disciple, long and short. Webster dictionary says a disciple is one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another; a convinced adherent of a individual. That's Jesus for all of us. In the world of Biblical truth, many of us have created our own definitions of what a disciple is. Almost all of the versions are Biblical and helpful. They come from different angles. Many of us define what a disciple is, based on our own paradigm and sometimes in reaction to what we see missing in other definitions. Some of us measure all the qualities found throughout Scripture. Others of us summarize those qualities into a precise list. I personally like something that everyone, young and old, can memorize and remember. Then we can unpack that short, concise definition and build on all the details. Here's my definition:

An authentic disciple reflects the mind, character and priorities of Christ.

He or she loves, grows, serves, evangelizes,
makes disciples and multiplies.

He or she loves God intimately, walks in the Truth and
by the Spirit, reflects the overflow of that love to God's
family and the watching world, serves everyone, goes
fishing as a lifestyle and makes multiplying disciples.

A disciple deepens and fully invests in three love
relationships- Loving God, loving the Family of God,
and loving the Lost.

Becoming a disciple is often equated with helping people learn the Word of God and understand the principles of God. We teach and preach and fill minds with all kinds of information. We put people through all kinds of classes and seminars, retreats and home groups. Now, it's so important to learn the Word and its principles. But our churches are filled with people who know everything about Jesus but they don't look anything like Jesus! Paul makes a powerful statement in his letter to the Corinthian church (I Corinthians 13.)

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“If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”

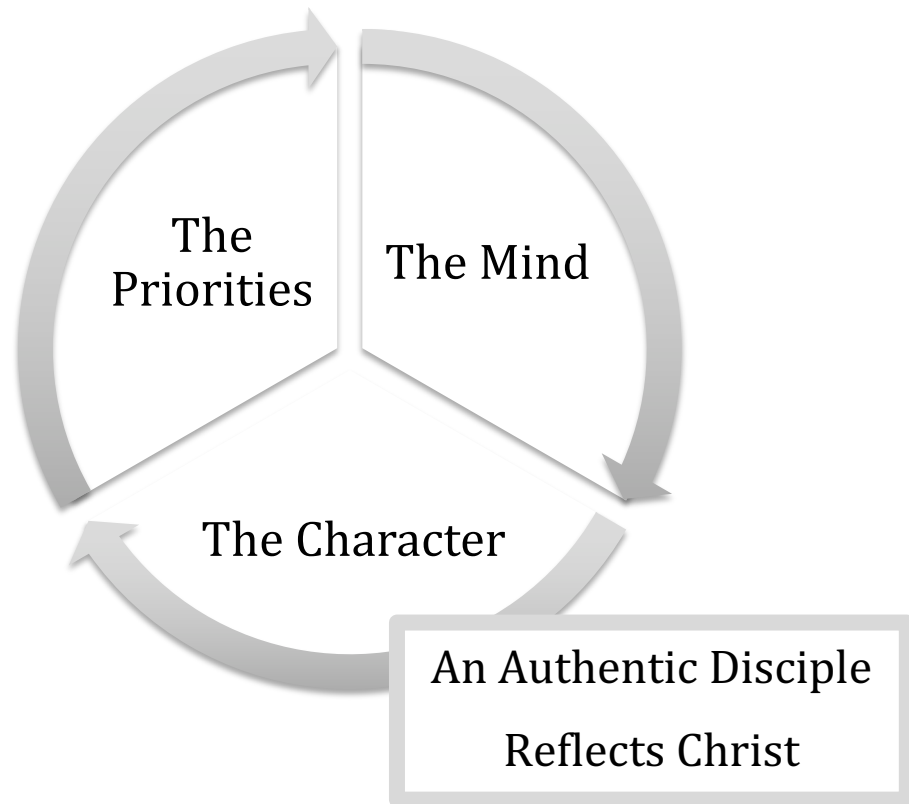
It doesn't matter how much we know and how much we believe. Paul says that if we don't have God's character, we have nothing! We shouldn't minimize the need to study the Word and to know the Truth. But brilliant heretics know the Word and will quote it better than we can. The Pharisees and religious leaders who killed Jesus were students of the Word. And all of the cults use the Word. They just don't know how to interpret it properly. And they're taking people to hell everyday! We can't rest on knowing God's Word as the ultimate goal in making real disciples.

An authentic disciple reflects the mind, character and priorities of Christ. If that's what we're to be and to build, what does it actually mean? All of us are on a journey toward maturity. None of us is without sin. All of us fail more than we'd like to admit. But we can't afford to lower the standard of disciplinemaking to a knowledge-based proposition. So let's look at each of these three components.

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Reflecting the Mind of Christ

Reflecting the mind of Christ is so much more than demonstrating that we know the Bible. It's thinking like Jesus. It's processing like Jesus. It's responding to information and issues and situations the way Jesus would respond. It's having a mind that has been shaped by and saturated with the Word and is now under the guidance and control of the Spirit. We need to know the Word in its fullness. Fellow believers are instructed to help us as we grow in our knowledge of God. That's what church, shepherding, teaching and discipling is all about. But ultimately, the Spirit guides us into all truth. He confirms truth as it's spoken to us or as we read it in a book. And He can guide us away from what authors or even our leaders are saying when they are wrong. The Spirit gives us the wisdom to unpack all of our information and all of our circumstances, both easy and difficult, and to know what to do and say.

The Word and the Spirit also help us to decide what is good and what is evil. Our minds can become very confused without God's help. Thoughts and temptations can come at us and we have no grid to discern what's coming from our own mind, from God or from a demon. So we can assume and presume something that may be false. The Word is truth. It stands as a standard against all lies in our mind or from the enemy. But it's the Spirit who enables us to discern what is truth and what is error. As someone misinterprets the Word, the Spirit gives us the ability to think clearly and to even perhaps present the truth with a spirit of love and gentleness. Knowledge can't stand by itself. Information without transformation brings no solution. We add the Holy Spirit and the Word comes alive!

Reflecting the Character of Christ

God's plan is to build disciples who reflect the full picture of who He is. We clearly need the Word and its Truth, revealed and made alive by the Spirit of God. Then we add godly character to the mix. Look at what Peter said in his second letter (II Peter 1:5-9) about the process of growing up spiritually. :

Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

In other words, it's a package deal! All of these components make a disciple of Jesus. Our knowledge becomes more and more productive and useful as we grow up in all of these other areas as well! By the way, it's wonderful to know that all of this looks just like the fruit of the Spirit.

Look at how similar Paul's list is in his letter to the Galatian church. (Galatians 5:22-23):

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We don't try to produce the fruit. It's too hard. I know. I've tried to do it a lot in my lifetime. And I'm here to declare- it doesn't work! The energy and good intentions will always fade. The mask will slip off, when you're tired, when you're under pressure, when someone's pushing your buttons, when only the ones you love are watching, when you least expect it. Listen- we're not meant to try harder. We're meant to draw closer. "Draw close to Me and I will draw close to you!" (James 4:8) That's what He wants and that's what He promises. It's amazing. We remind ourselves of our absolute inadequacy and our need for His strength each and every day. As we draw closer and closer and become more and more dependent on Him, the character of Christ just happens. Along the way, it's the Spirit's job to point out and convict us of sinful thoughts, attitudes, words and actions. He'll help us learn to surrender more and more of our lives to Him. It's also His role to fill us and grow us in each of these areas.

This is one of the most difficult parts of becoming a mature disciple. It's having a complete mind and character transplant. Most of us have learned to depend on our own strength to do life. In fact, most parenting and schooling is aimed at teaching and fortifying self-sufficiency. Because this is the way we live, it's crept into the church and it's been accepted as the norm for Christian living as well. Here's the tragedy. We can lead home groups, elder, usher, teach classes and preach in our own strength. The more we do it, the easier it is. Entire churches can function using human knowledge, logic, intuition, wisdom and talent. We can even use spiritual gifts with no demonstration of spiritual character. I don't fully understand that one, but I see it all the time. We can use spiritual words and principles, and we can talk about faith and power but not have consistent power for everyday living! That's sounds so scary, but it's true. This has to change if we want to make authentic disciples who will impact the world.

Paul knew how much we would drift and then try to do the Christian

life without the power of the Holy Spirit. That's why He taught over and over again about the critical need to live by the power of the Spirit and not by the flesh. I love this passage in Ephesians 5:15-20:

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. **Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,** speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This passage summarizes an entire lifestyle of living and walking in the Spirit- all day and every day. This isn't talking about Sunday. This is reflecting our life at home, work and wherever we go. This is the life of an authentic disciple. And the centerpiece is the control of the Holy Spirit. Don't be controlled by other things, like alcohol. Don't be controlled by desire, ambition, circumstances or people. And don't be controlled by your own strength and capabilities. Be controlled by the Spirit of God! Some of you reading this right now don't know how to do that. You've never let go of our own control. You've never really surrendered to the full control and Lordship of Jesus. Do it now. Surrender. Pause right now and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with His power and strength. Ask Him to show you what needs to go and what you need to do to bring wonderful, miraculous change in your character, attitudes and actions. Ask Him to heal you of the scars of the past that may be keeping you from being all that you can be in Christ. Let His presence and His character shine!

If we want to become real disciples who bring dynamic change to the next generation of disciples, it starts with us. We have to change the way we live and function, disciplining ourselves day after day. It's equivalent to the discipline of going to a gym or running each day to lose all of those pounds and to get in shape. We have to admit we have a problem, called self-dependence. We can tell our level of self-dependence by how much time we spend with God throughout our day and how much we connect with Him in the functions of our day. Our greatest evidence comes from the inside. Do we see the consistent fruit of the Spirit flowing out of us? Are we over-

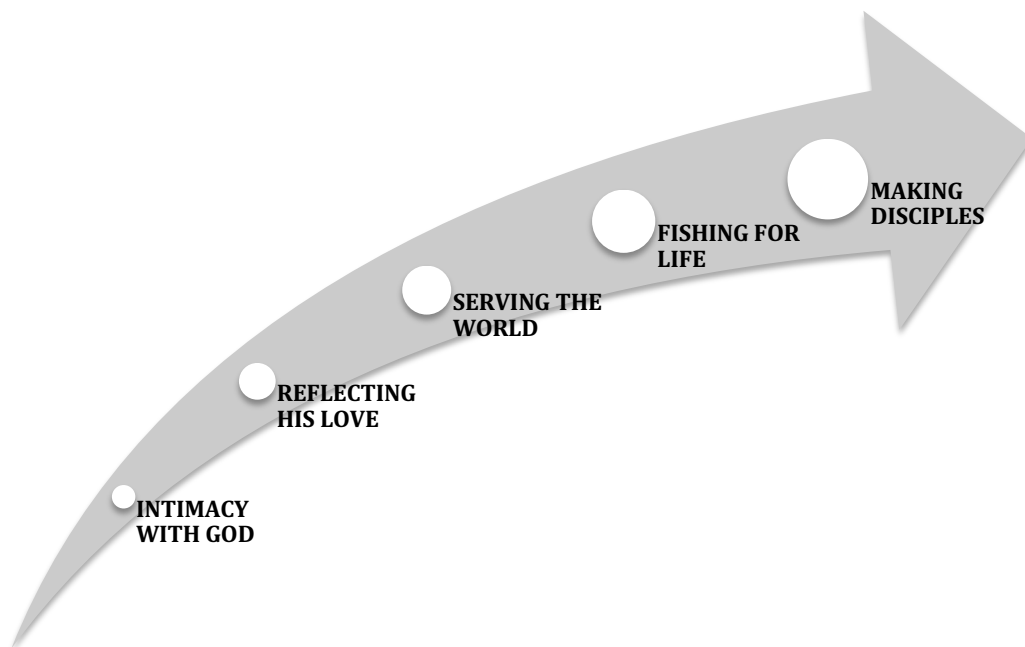
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whelmed as we watch the heart of God welling up in us, making us care and do things that aren't natural to us? All of us should become increasingly aware of where we stumble and fall. We should be continually amazed and grateful when we see ourselves functioning so differently from how we know we function in our own strength. This is all part of the journey of making real disciples. But it has to start with the discipler. We've got to lose that self-dependent spirit ourselves, or that's exactly what we'll pass on to those we disciple. That would be terrible. Don't do it! This is about imitating the character of Christ- it's actually reflecting His character as it shines through us!

The Priorities of Christ



Reflecting the Priorities of Christ

As we draw close to God and He refines and infuses our mind and character with His thoughts and passions, our priorities change. We can't help it! It's the natural product of being filled with the Spirit. We begin to see the world like He sees it. Our hearts break for lost people. We see a sleepy church and we desperately want to wake it up. Our hearts are softened to the injustices that we see around us. Sometimes we don't know what to do with all of the feelings that are unleashed in our hearts. That's where discipleship is so helpful. The Word and the Spirit show us how to live and where to direct our emotion, energy and resources. God has wonderful, unique plans for all of us that vary with our talents, gifts, interests and journeys. We're all shaped differently. And many believers don't really know what to do next. That's where we come in. The disciplemaker has the opportunity to

help guide the conversation within the framework of God's Word and the Holy Spirit's leading.

With so many options, here are some top-of-the-list priorities for every disciple to start with.

1) Intimacy with God

We've affirmed over and over again that our highest purpose in life is to walk closely with our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and His Spirit.

The Westminster Catechism declares that the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Our highest purpose in life is to give pleasure to God, our Father, as we walk with Him through life. But it's impossible for us to please God and give Him pleasure without His power operating in our lives. And we won't gain His power without drawing close to Him. He Is our Source of strength and life. As we draw close to Him, He draws close to us. He is the Vine and we are the branches. That's why this must become our first priority, our highest discipline. Everything begins with our intimacy with God. We can't move forward without it!

Our intimacy with God, our closeness to Him, with growing surrender and dependence, makes us more and more like Him. He actually miraculously transforms us. That process leads us to increasingly reflect the mind, the character and the priorities of Christ. We can't help it. It's amazing! He changes the way we think, look and act. It's not simply growing up over time as we adapt to our faith. Otherwise, we wouldn't drift backwards when we aren't staying close to God. Notice how your bad character qualities come back when you aren't as intimate with Him. Mine do. And notice how your passion for the things of God and His priorities can easily fade. I've seen it happen in many areas of my life. I've seen it in my lack of compassion for people. I've seen it with my hardening heart for evangelism. Then, when I repent and acknowledge my drift, and I draw close again, it all comes back. I love it! I can't control it. All I can do is draw close and respond to the Spirit. Every disciple needs to be brought back here. This is the starting point. Everything in the Christian life flows out of this discipline and walk.

The Holy Spirit has actually been given to us to empower us for daily living. We've already said that many believers suffer for years as they try to do the Christian life in their own strength. Yet the Word points us to a dependent relationship with the Holy Spirit. Although we have all of the Holy

Spirit at salvation, He clearly doesn't have all of us! The Spirit has been given to us for so many reasons. We desperately need His power and strength to demonstrate consistent character. But we also need Him for wisdom, clarity, management, priorities and so much more. As we learn to depend on Him and listen to Him, everything changes. Life becomes richer, healthier, more joyous and so much more fulfilling.

2) Reflecting His Love

As we draw close to God, He draws close to us and fills us with His Spirit and His love. Moses radiated such a brilliant shine when he had spent time with God that he had to cover his face when he went out with the people. God's presence in our lives also shines out for everyone to see. The fruit or evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. People see His love all over us- through our attitudes, our actions, our compassion, our joy in living, and our heart for the things that are on God's heart!

Once again, a disciple thinks, looks and acts like Jesus. This is clearly a process- it doesn't happen over night. We don't just learn how to do this. It's not an act or a company policy. It's the product of our intimacy with God and our dependence on God. It's the product of His presence and transforming power in our lives, as we draw and stay closer to Him. We grow to look more and more like Jesus at home, at work, at the store, in the neighborhood and on vacation. We look like Jesus when no one but Jesus is looking. As we stay close and filled with Him, this is how we look when we're alert or tired, when we're at our best or under pressure. When we aren't looking like Jesus, it's evidence that we, again, have drifted backwards. It's clear that we are more full of our own strength than the strength of the Lord. That's my personal signal to repent once again of self-dependence and to draw close.

Reflecting His love is so essential for every disciple. God's reputation is at stake. We are His very own children, called to shine with His light. We are His very own ambassadors in a watching world. Our actions speak so much louder than our words. If our words don't match our actions, why would anyone listen to our words or believe our dogma? If God's desire is to reach more people all around the world, He truly needs a movement of disciples who think, look and act like Him! The more the people all around us see our authenticity and consistency, the more they will begin to believe that we actually have something to say. If our children, our parents, our fellow work-

ers and our neighbors see the character of Jesus reflected in us, they'll be drawn to Him! And that's His plan. Jesus said to His disciples, "Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

3) Serving Everyone

We have a heart to serve people all around us when we are filled with the love of God. We want to help people- our family and friends, other believers, the people we work with and even strangers that we meet in life. That's what happens when we're filled with His love. We could also call it giving- a growing heart to give to others. Serving is giving of our thoughts, time, energy and resources. As we draw closer to God, we become more and more generous. We make ourselves more available. Our desire to give grows and grows.

We need to remember that serving looks different in each of us. Some of us are servants by nature or by gifting, and we'll be first in line to help with our hands. Some of us serve with our minds or our mouths and give guidance or solutions to help. Others of us love to use our resources to serve wherever it's beneficial. It's important to realize that we won't all respond in the same way to needs that arise around us. Our gifts often lead our thinking in how we respond. It's so easy and, unfortunately, natural to get disappointed when others don't want to serve the way we serve or the way we want them to serve. But God's made us very different so we can accomplish much more in our diversity. Don't force people unto your box!

We need to give each other the freedom to serve in our own way. We also need to make sure that we're not simply justifying our desire **not** to serve. Some of us don't have a heart to serve or to give. We're still very focused on what we want to do with our time and resources. We haven't grown in generosity. That, again, is another evidence that **we** are still more in control of our lives than God's Spirit. We've either reverted or we haven't fully surrendered yet.

Remember, God loves to soften our hearts so we respond to people and needs the same way that He would. It's God's Spirit that awakens our hearts to a need and gives us the desire to help. It's His grand plan and we are simply acting in His power and His will. But we've got to be listening. Again, our hearts soften as we surrender and draw closer and closer to God.

If that's not happening, we have a lot to talk about with the Father.

4) Fishing: for Life

One of our greatest callings is to help people move toward a relationship with Jesus. Remember the story when Jesus invited some fishermen into the journey of becoming disciples with these words: "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." Follow Me and you will be fishing the rest of your life! As His disciples, this **is** who we are. This is one of our major purposes in life. Paul was so moved by the lostness of people and the opportunity to make a difference that he declared that he wanted to save as many as possible. That passion and drive can only flow from the heart of God. He sent His own Son to die for all of us! Certainly He died to save you and me. But now, as His disciples, we are called to tell that amazing truth to people everywhere. As we reflect His love and power, we earn the right to speak. And as opportunities begin to open, the Holy Spirit uses our lives and our words to breath conviction and life into the hearts and minds of those we touch.

The New Testament is filled with passages pointing us to our responsibility to be the ambassadors that He has called us to be. But our relationship to God takes all of this a step further. As we draw close to God, as we are filled with the Spirit, we become overwhelmed with a heart for the lost. God fills us with a portion of His heart. We can't help it. We see everyone through different eyes- our neighbors, our family, the people at work and the people in Walmart. Their need for Jesus grips our hearts. Perhaps we've never felt these feelings before. This is the heart of the disciple. This is the heart of God.

Real disciples listen to the Father and begin to act on these thoughts and feelings. Many of us have walked down this missional road. We've built intentional friendships with the people that come to our minds. Some of us have gone on missional journeys. In fact, some of us have even quit our jobs to give ourselves more fully to His mission, here or somewhere in the world. Now, others of us haven't known what to do with these new feelings of compassion that have filled our hearts. That's where training and discipling is so helpful. Someone who's already traveled the road can help the next pilgrim on his or her journey.

It's also normal to lose this passion for lost people when we lose our closeness to God. It happens all the time. We get filled with God's Spirit and

our hearts are stirred for people all around us. This often happens at salvation. It also happens when we go through a crisis experience and sense a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit's power and passion. Almost invariably, we sense a new heart for lost people. God's doing that in us! That's when we need to act and form new patterns in our lives. And that's when we need to be disciplined and taught how to best build healthy and intentional relationships with our non-believing friends. Unfortunately, for many of us, that didn't happen, and, over time, that initial passion faded away.

Here's one more evidence that we aren't as close to God as we should be. So many of us feel guilty not evangelizing the people in our lives. So we take the classes and work the plan to try to do the right thing. We have the right intentions, but we're missing the key. The classes and training are all good, but they can't produce the right result. Don't try fishing in your own strength! The Holy Spirit is our fishing guide- He leads us to the right people in the right time and shows us what to do and say in the right way. Jesus set the pattern when He addressed His disciples right before He ascended into heaven. Here were some of His last words in Acts 1:8:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Jesus had just told the disciples to wait for the baptism or indwelling of the Holy Spirit. “Don't go until you get His power! But when you get it, you will have the power to be my witnesses all over the world!” What a giant vision! And what a wonderful package deal. “This is what I command you to do and I'm giving you the absolute, supernatural power to do it!”

But here's a scary thought. Imagine doing all of that on your own. How foolish. He's the One who wants to draw people to salvation. He knows what we don't. We set ourselves up for failure. We set up opportunities that may damage people, saying the wrong things in the wrong way or at the wrong time. And we'll soon lose our desire to even share our faith if all we are using is our own strength. All of this clearly reminds us of our desperate need for His power, strength and wisdom as we go through life. As we again draw close to God, He again draws close to us. He fills us with His love and reignites our hearts to reach lost people for Him.

5) Making Disciples

Authentic disciples make more disciples. It's who we are. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus made it so clear in His last words to His disciples:

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This wasn't the Great Suggestion! These were His disciples. They are getting marching orders to pass on from generation to generation. Make disciples and teach every disciple to obey this command and everything else I've commanded you. We're to grow up and then help others to grow up and reproduce as well. This is the job. All of our other commitments and relationships in life have new meaning the moment we surrender our lives to Jesus. His Kingdom takes preeminence. That doesn't mean we suddenly ignore or discount our families, our careers and other responsibilities with our new-found faith. Some cults and extreme church settings demand that type of commitment, and it always ends badly.

Becoming a disciple and disciplemaker doesn't ruin our relationship with people. It strengthens our relationships. We become the amazing person that God intended us to be, and all of our relationships now have much greater value. Everything we do each day has new purpose. We're making disciples. We're investing in every life we touch with heaven in mind. We have a much greater purpose and vision at home with our family. We want all of them to know the Lord and to grow strong in the Lord. In fact, discipling begins in the home! Our impressions, our responses, our words, attitudes and actions are shaping their hunger for spiritual things. We are His reflection. Our neighbors may come to Jesus as they get to know us. The people we work with may have no one else building a bridge for them to journey towards heaven. Our prayers suddenly change and are filled with tears for people everywhere.

God opens our eyes and we see people the way He sees them. As we look at other believers, we see their potential. We see what they could be if they would just grow up. We start finding ways to help them grow. We lead someone to Jesus and now realize that that new believer needs to be invested in. They need to be disciplined! We may meet with that person, meet with

another new believer or we may teach a focused class on growing in the Lord. We may gather a group at our home and talk about how to live out the principles that we find in God's Word.

Does God expect every one of us to make disciples? That's a great question. We're all made so differently. Think of the wide spectrum of people across the planet. We think and talk and act so differently from each other. For example, some of us communicate more easily than others. Some of us talk far less and work far more with our hands or minds. That's the way God made us. So if making a disciple requires good talking or teaching skills, many people wouldn't be able to do it. But it doesn't. We make disciples in different ways. A godly mother and father will pour into their children as they grow up. Every believer should feel the responsibility to help others within their circle of influence to grow in the Lord. We all are, in fact, making disciples, all the time, for better or for worse. We are all influencing others by our words, by our actions, by the decisions we make and by our character. It's happening even though we're unaware of it. Knowing that should motivate us all to make sure we're influencing people toward a Kingdom lifestyle.

God does command every one of His disciples to make more disciples.

But not everyone will disciple in the same structured way that we describe in our books or manuals. It will never happen and shouldn't be expected. What we need to do is provide discipling for everyone. Everyone who is fully disciplined will model the life of Jesus and will pass on the principles to those they touch. They may not all use a book or manual, but their lives and quieter words can be as effective as any book or manual! That's how we work together as a family. Think about spiritual communities, living it out loud, together, committed to model missional living, raising up and passing on the truth to current and future generations. Some of us are better with words and content. Others of us may be better at giving time, care and understanding. But all of us play a vital role in building the body up in love. Together.

That leads us to the purpose of this guidebook and website. Many of us don't know how to build fully developed disciples. And that's because no one has ever done that for us. We don't know how to measure what a real disciple looks like or what he or she does. We may not feel like we are real disciples. Going through this material and applying it with others will change that. It may change everything!

So What is Disciplemaking?

Robby Gallerty wrote a great, practical book called “Growing Up.” He defines discipling as “intentionally equipping believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Christ.” I like that!

Disciplemaking is investing spiritually in individuals so they become fully developed, are living a Spirit-filled life and are in turn investing in others with the same purpose. We will have spontaneous opportunities to help grow other believers, but real discipling is intentional and planned. Disciples don’t just happen. They are developed, over time, with lots of care and effort.

What do we call Disciplemaking in Today’s Culture? It’s Biblical to use the terms disciple, discipler and discipling. But it may not work in your culture. We must never compromise the principles and practice of making authentic disciplers. But we can use all kinds of terms that seem better or more relevant to us or to the people we are working with. The terms that I’m hearing are:

**Discipler, Mentor, Coach, Mentor-Coach,
Trainer, Fathers, Mothers, Group Leader**

**Disciple, Student, Team Member, Apprentice,
Sons, Daughters, Group Attendee**

**Some like to “Team Up” for Discipling. others Group,
Huddle or form a Cohort.**

**Some people feel awkward approaching Peer-to-Peer Discipling,
so they call it “friends getting together”
around discipling principles.**

Call it anything you want- But Just Do IT!

Never lose sight of God's passion for disciplemaking.

I've heard some people react negatively to each of these terms. For example, something in their past experience has made a specific word carry a bad connotation. I've heard a younger generation of leaders crying out for fathers and mothers to disciple them as sons and daughters. Then I've heard others condemning the use of the term "father" in disciplemaking because of the abuse, control and domination of some "fathering" leaders in the past. I've heard of leaders misusing the term "disciple" in the same way. Then there's the battle over what mentor or coach means. Some fight for purist definitions like the goals-only oriented coach and the goal-less listening mentor. By the way, websites are springing up to bridge the language barrier. You can now find a mentor/coach- they've covered all the bases. Come on! Let's stop fighting over words and terms. Pick a term that you like and one that works and use it. Let's get past this and get going.

What are the Essentials for Disciplemaking?

1) In Community

We are all born into a Community, called the Family of God. Over and over again, we are commanded to help each grow up and get strong in the Lord. We certainly need to be committed to help each other, through both spontaneous and intentional encouragement and exhortation. We need to build a culture of love as a community, identifying and caring about those who need to grow up. But most disciplemaking can't happen in mass. Children don't grow up without personal care and instruction. And most people won't grow up without individual care as well. Without intentionally and personalization, formation gaps will and do fill our lives.

Jesus demonstrated a variety of models for making disciples. Besides talking one-on-one, He walked and talked with three, a dozen, seventy and masses of people. He built intimacy, honesty and transparency, complete openness and clarity of thought through endless, healthy discussions. He knew He needed to invest heavily, so He gave all the time necessary to actually produce real, reproducing disciples. If we want authentic, multiplying

disciples, we need to do the same thing, within our own context.

One-on-One – Children need a parent who cares enough to help them grow up and gain independence. Every believer needs a disciplemaker who cares enough to help with that same process of maturing and multiplication. Without personal focus and care, most believers never really grow up.

Three- Jesus seemed to focus on Peter, James and John more than His other disciples. In reality, a small group of three to six people allows for greater and more profitable interaction. Many disciplmaking strategies today focus on groups of this size, knowing that one-on-one interaction will also happen along the way.

Twelve- Jesus picked twelve disciples. He invested heavily in all of them, breaking them into smaller groups and having individual conversations. They practically lived together. Eleven out of the twelve changed the world. And the new twelve and some supporting ladies became the one-twenty, which overflowed into masses of disciples. Jesus investing heavily in the three and then in the twelve is why we are here today!

Numbers- The number of people in a discipling group isn't scientific. It should be a product of personal choice and manageability. Individual time with those we are discipling is critical. But grouping people together also makes sense. We can disciple more people with limited time than if we disciplined everyone individually. Plus the synergy of a group often brings more life and energy to the conversation. Everyone stimulates and adds to the journey. We need to have those one-on-one conversations. But we can probably take it even further when we bring it back to the group. That's what Jesus did, all the time.

Authors and spiritual leaders differ on how many people we should disciple. Some encourage us to disciple one person at a time. Others encourage us to decide: pick two to six people. Here's the question: How many people can you effectively invest in and give good, healthy time to, both as a group and as individuals? With our busy lives, many of us will have time for no more than two or three people. That leads us to the next non-negotiable.

2) In Relationship

Disciplmaking was meant to be done in relationship. A disciple in historic cultures was the student of a teacher or the apprentice of a master. Je-

sus' own example modeled intense interaction. As I said, the disciples practically lived together. A classroom can never match the interaction necessary to build authentic disciples, unless the teacher also spends extensive time with each student. That's the only way to be sure they really understand. This is too important to leave to hope and chance.

Life Together- Making disciples will take a lot of time and effort. The disciples and discipler must grow to know each other well. You are shaping someone's life, for life. And you're doing it for God! Your very words and actions will help build your disciples. People learn far more from what you do than what you say. Howard Hendricks, a great teacher of truth, said that Christianity is more caught than taught. It's true. How you think and why you came to that conclusion is far more important than any direct answer you might give. Remember when your children asked, "Why, Daddy, or Mommy?" People need to know why. So discipling starts by building and deepening a lasting relationship. And that can only happen over time.

Some of us like the idea of moving quickly and efficiently to achieve our goals. So we'd like a quick solution to making disciples. Train them well and then move on to the next disciple. Unfortunately, I've seen what that produces. For most people, training them well takes more time than we might originally expect. And when we move on, we often leave better-educated people with the same character and priorities that they started with. Most of them certainly aren't making more disciples. Jesus, God in the flesh, took several years of continual interaction with His disciples to not only share truth but to wrestle with loads of issues. Maybe He knew something about human nature and how long it takes to change at the core.

Transparent- One of the secrets of growing up is getting transparent with trusted friends. Most of us learn to hide our weaknesses and insecurities, as best we can. We've learned the hard way that there is always someone out there who will hurt us if they know the truth. At least we think there is someone out there. It's happened in the past, so it's likely to happen again. We build levels of protection around ourselves to keep from being hurt.

Here's the problem: we won't get well if we don't deal with our inner issues. We don't see our blind spots because we are blind to them, by definition. It's trusted friends who can best help us deal with our issues so we can become all that God wants us to be. Look at the stories of the disciples. We

learn so much about bad and good character as we see the disciples interacting with each other and with Jesus. The disciples clearly grew to identify their weaknesses and their need for Holy Spirit power as they were just themselves hanging out with Jesus. The same thing will happen as we develop trust and respect for each other in a band of disciples.

Trust grows. It's earned. No one has the right to know your issues until they've proven they can be trusted. Some people prove that they can never be trusted. That's life. As the disciplemaker, you'll have to earn trust just like everyone else. Not everyone can expose everything to a group. Some things should be shared with only a most trusted friend. At the same time, I'm amazed as I continue to hear of incredible healings as groups of men or women get transparent together and find great victory.

Accountable- Accountability goes hand in hand with transparency. Disciples won't grow if they aren't accountable for their words, attitudes and actions. By the way, accountability goes both ways. An unaccountable disciplemaker could end up destroying everything that God is working to achieve. So we call it mutual accountability. We help each other grow up. That level of transparency and accountability has to be talked about from the very beginning. Both are a must. That won't happen overnight, but the group needs to know the foundations that relationships are being built on. Surrendering to become increasingly transparent and accountable to someone or to a group takes time and it varies from person to person. Some people trust almost too quickly. They're going to get hurt in life. That's an issue for a loving disciplemaker to wade into. Others have been injured along the way or they've developed a code of self-protection. They will take much longer to learn to trust. Everyone will need to see the benefits of opening up and being real.

Another key part of accountability and transparency is confidentiality. What happens in a discipling relationship must stay in that relationship. Individuals or groups that open up with each other need to know that what they share with the group will stay within the group. It's so easy to do what we've done before. It's easy to share what Mike said with just one person, for a really good reason. My wife will never tell. The pastor or elder won't tell. But why did you tell? And why wouldn't that elder just tell his wife, who will only tell Sally, who might, by accident, tell Mike's wife. And so it goes. For Christ's sake and all of our sakes, we need to be confidential.

That initial trust will allow everyone to deepen their trust and their willingness to get transparent with more important issues. Real healing and freedom often only comes with trust, transparency and confidentiality. If something that someone shares truly needs to go outside the group, that something needs to be navigated carefully and talked and walked through with that individual and then with the group.

Let's look at one example of a moment that calls for discipling. The group is out eating together. And someone tells an off-color joke. If you let it pass, that action gives permission for more in the future. If it's done in a group setting, the group deserves to see the right response. Pulling the disciple aside doesn't help the group. And if your reprimand isn't delivered in a godly spirit, someone has the responsibility to talk to you as well. This entire story is an example from real life. Thank God that the Holy Spirit's been given to help us navigate circumstances like this in a spirit of love and gentleness. If we're walking in the Spirit, we don't react. We do what we're supposed to do. Everyone learns. Discipleship happens. If we aren't walking in the Spirit and we do it the wrong way, everyone also learns. In this case, we learn that we're all human and disciplinators struggle too. Hopefully there's a next moment with a humble response and another opportunity for everyone to grow. That's the way discipling works.

Coached- Most coaching is intended to bring significant change. Coaches are more focused on helping their clients or players understand the principles than simply providing information. They will work on specific issues to bring about measurable improvement. They set goals and help their players work to achieve those goals.

In the same way, disciplinamaking isn't simply filling a mind with information. It's shaping a life with spiritual formation. We get to be those life coaches helping our disciples actually understand the principles that God has taught us. The Word of God is essential. It lays down the Truth and principles for everything! Then the Holy Spirit guides us and helps us to both interpret the Truth and apply the principles within the context of today's culture. As we draw close to God, He shapes, molds and empowers us to gain the mind, the character and the priorities of Christ.

3) In the Spirit and Word-Based

Our plan to make disciples has to always remain focused on God's

Word and what His Spirit is trying to build in us. We meet with one intention- to grow stronger and more mature as disciples of Christ. We can't become a social club. What a waste of time. And we can't become a philosophy club, the club of the latest opinion or the newest book club. We can read and discuss and thoroughly analyze the best spiritual books out there today. But if they're not founded on and guided by spiritual truth, we're setting ourselves up for trouble. The Word of God brings life to all of our discussions and the Holy Spirit is right there to guide us and to bring understanding and conviction.

We'll find that there are lots of good resources and books to guide us on the road to spiritual maturity. It's wonderful to find the right tool that someone else has labored over to help us with our discipling. That's why I've written this material. But be careful. There's so much content out there that you can easily get sidetracked and you'll lose sight of your purpose. We're trying to build solid, productive disciples who know the Word and understand how to live by its principles. We want to take time, but we don't want to take forever. God wants us to grow up in an appropriate amount of time. Again, every disciple will be different. Your role in their process is so important. Know the Word. Listen to His Spirit. Do what He tells you to do.

4) Transformative

Discipling must be transformative and not simply informative. I've already said that information is part of the package, but it's so not useful and unfruitful if it stands alone. The church is full of venues that provide information for all. And most of the forums are voluntary with no accountability. People can show up or miss church services, classes and home group gatherings. We're happy that many of them at least show up. That's better than the alternative. But making disciples that way is so random, and far too many people simply do not grow up. They only get pieces of the Truth. Their minds are filled with facts and healthy principles that many never do apply, because no one is helping them. Real discipling, on the other hand, must be accountable. And it will have results.

Measurable- Authentic discipling will produce clear and unmistakable changes in a disciple that can be seen as measurable. It's obvious when we grow up from childhood to adulthood. Our bodies and the way we think, look and act change completely. Our transformation spiritually

from childhood to adulthood should be just as obvious. Disciplemaking helps us grow up. The process forces us to deal with the inner and outer issues that need to come into alignment with godly living. As we progress, we see things differently. Our character is measurably different. For example, all of us have character defects. As the Holy Spirit transforms us, we should all be amazed as we watch ourselves changed. If, for example, we're impatient, we see this miraculous refining and redefining of values. We become more and more patient without even trying. We realize the distinct difference is our surrender and dependence on the Holy Spirit. We see other changes- a softer heart, a deeper passion for right and wrong, more commitment for Kingdom service and more love for the Lord, the Family and the Lost. The list goes on and on.

Everyone around us will see the changes that are taking place in our lives. Think about this. Our family watches and knows us the most.

Those at work are probably second. So a more patient Mom or Dad, a more thoughtful Husband or Wife, or an Employer or Employee who has a disappearing anger problem is very noticeable. Sometimes it's not just noticeable- it's remarkable! All of us are messed up. Some of us have become experts at hiding our weaknesses. But most of show our bad stuff, more than we realize. That's why the transformative power of the Holy Spirit is so obvious.

We are no longer the same. If we don't see these changes developing in us,, our process with God isn't working. Something's holding us back. It's so important that we find out why we're not growing up in certain areas of character development. This is not God's plan. This isn't discipleship. Filling our minds without filling our lives leads to a form of religion without power. Paul talked about that. And there's too much of that in the church today. So real disciplemaking has to focus on real life change.

Missional- An authentic disciplemaking process helps believers actually align their lives with God's mission. God saves us to go on mission with Him the rest of our lives. The church is often a bad example of this value. Too many people have been saved and then sit in church on Sunday morning as their primary function as Christians. The Kingdom of God isn't a Country Club experience where we pay dues and feel special. We are called to so much more. Listen to the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:13-16

Make

Making Authentic Disciples

How to Make a Disciple

You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

An authentic disciple increasingly recognizes that he or she is under the Lordship of Jesus, serving everyday at His will. We are no longer our own. We understand that we've been bought with a price. These concepts aren't simply words known to be the truth of God. They have to become the reality of our lives. Our careers, our desires, our family, our dreams, and our assets all come second to serving God with our lives. This sounds terrible if we are choosing to live life our way and are marginalizing God. But, in reality, walking with God and reflecting His mind, character and priorities makes everything else in life so much richer. We don't throw away all the things that we enjoy, just to serve God. God actually transforms those things into the tools we use to touch and change the world. Our family life deepens and is far richer. Our purpose at home and at work becomes clearer. Life takes on a whole new meaning when Jesus and His vision of life becomes our own vision of life. The disciplinemaker has the opportunity to help the disciple see and experience this deeper reality.

As we surrender more and more of our will to the Lordship of Christ, our passion for His mission becomes inescapable. God loves lost people and He wants them found! God places and grows that burden in each of our hearts until we have to do something. Jesus started His movement with an invitation and a plan. He said, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." That's the destiny of every authentic disciple! You and I are surrounded by lost people who desperately need Jesus. We all get to help bring them home! Then we get to help them grow up and bring their family and friends home. That's missional living!

Multiplying- Real disciplinmaking is an investment both in the life of

the disciple as well as future generations that are influenced by that discipling relationship. A father or mother pours into his or her children. They often make a lasting image of themselves that can be seen for generations to come. Parenting goes far beyond raising a child. As the child grows up, gets married and has children and grandchildren, parents continue on the adventure of molding and shaping thinking, character and priorities. But now they are impacting generations! Their influence now includes children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and on and on.

We're talking about intentional legacies that blossom as families put God first and pray for blessing and influence. Real discipling can have the same power and influence. If we disciple for lasting results, we will walk with our disciples as they grow up, as they begin to disciple others and as they help their disciples disciple others. Why wouldn't we want to insure the fruitfulness of our efforts? Paul said this to Timothy in II Timothy 2:2-

You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

Paul is clearly describing a natural process of passing truth on that looks a lot like parenting. Someone taught me what I've taught you. Now pass it on so they too can pass it on. This doesn't sound like a classroom process. Paul took the time to make sure that Timothy really understand and was walking in these truths. He now was fathering him to pass them on to people who would be reliable enough to do the same thing. This Is discipling! It's taking the time to make sure that the people we are investing in get it thoroughly enough to be able to pass the same truth and lifestyle on. One or two generations of a little mistrust can slowly begin to cripple the Church! That's why we're in trouble today. The church suffers from the inconsistency of truth being passed on with clarity and application. And that's also why we need an army of godly, Spirit-filled disciple-multipliers to rise up and bring the transformation that God is waiting for!

5) Fully Invested

Highly Committed- It sounds like real discipling requires that we live life together. We eat, we walk, we talk, we laugh, we cry, we play and we pray together. We hang as families and singles, we go out, we camp out, we barbecue, we evangelize, and we disciple, together. We give ourselves

the time to naturally create profound and undeniable change in those we are walking with.

Now, we also have our jobs, families, home groups and other responsibilities. Most of us can't take off like Jesus did with His guys. That's another reason why it will take time. And it clearly demands a high level of commitment, both from the disciplemaker and those he or she is discipling. Without that, something will die along the way. And it will probably be the goal of making an authentic, reproducing disciple.

The life of a disciplemaker also moves us into new levels of personal responsibility as we look at our own lives. We've already said that our children often take on many of our traits, whether we like it or not. We rub off. That's scary when we're not reflecting the life of Christ. That's why it's critical that we grow up and become as spiritually healthy as possible. Our family's future and character is at stake. But now we're looking at our lives as disciple-multipliers. Paul understood the significance of this role that we are all to assume. He said this in II Corinthians 11:1

And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.

What a powerful and humbling thing to say- "Imitate me!" I think that those words would be hard for most of us to speak. They sound arrogant, and most of us wouldn't want to say it because we see all of our weaknesses. I do. We have to deal with Paul first. He wasn't arrogant. He actually recognized that the only way his disciples could become like Jesus was to watch and learn from him. Paul knew he had weaknesses and issues, just like you and me. He tells us a few of them throughout his letters. He wasn't modeling himself as a perfectionist. He was standing before them as one who had completely surrendered to the process and life of imitating Jesus. "Watch me. Watch how I handle life. Watch how I handle mistakes that I make. Listen to what I've learned and how I've applied it."

That's exactly what God has called all of us to do with our watching world. There's no room for unresolved issues as disciplemakers. We have to fix them or we'll pass them on. Struggling with things like gossip, slander, pride, insecurity, anger, jealousy, judging or addictions like porn or drinking will cripple our ability to help others get free. We'll either dodge the subjects or we'll learn to carefully lie. Something will come through in the way you disciple others. That's what we'll be passing on for generations. It's unac-

ceptable. Do we just not make disciples? No- we get help, we get disciplined by a friend, we get well and now we disciple with our own story of freedom! All of us need to assume the role and say, "Watch me. Imitate me." The world is already watching, so we need to act like we're being watched. And that's especially critical in the role of the discipler.

A Life-time Journey-All of this can be enhanced as we learn to feed ourselves and we grow stronger and stronger in the Lord. But it doesn't start there. Mothers and fathers were meant to help their children grow up and learn to function on their own. That's the same opportunity that we've been given as disciplers. We have the joy and the responsibility to help those under our charge to become fully developed, reproducing disciples of Jesus. What an amazing privilege! It can't be taken lightly. We're making disciples of Jesus, for Jesus. They need to think, look and act like Him. That takes time and ongoing follow-up.

Making disciples should be like having kids and helping them grow up. Think of the level of commitment, the investment and care that a good father or mother provides in the process of walking with their children to adulthood and beyond. In reality, it never stops. We care as they date and marry, we counsel as they make good and bad choices along the way, and we stay actively involved, coaching right through parenting, grand-parenting and beyond. We care! We can't help it. They are Our children!

What if we invested as disciplers with that same heart and passion? I believe everything would change. Instead of going shallow and wide, we'd go deep and worldwide. Imagine pouring into a handful of disciples and helping them repeat that very same process. That would be the beginning of a movement! Multi-level marketing tells you that repeating a process with three clients would produce one hundred and twenty clients in only four generations. That slow, steady, carefully built plan will outnumber most other methods by far! Disciplemaking is passing on the life of Christ from generation to generation.

Disciples are made like a home is built. Blueprints have to be studied and adhered to and the foundations have to be poured. The framework has to be built and finished and then all of the components can be added. And everything gets inspected along the way. Does this match what the architect drew? Is this what the Master had in mind? What does the Word say? That kind of requirement takes our full investment.

The Plan- How Do we Make Disciples?

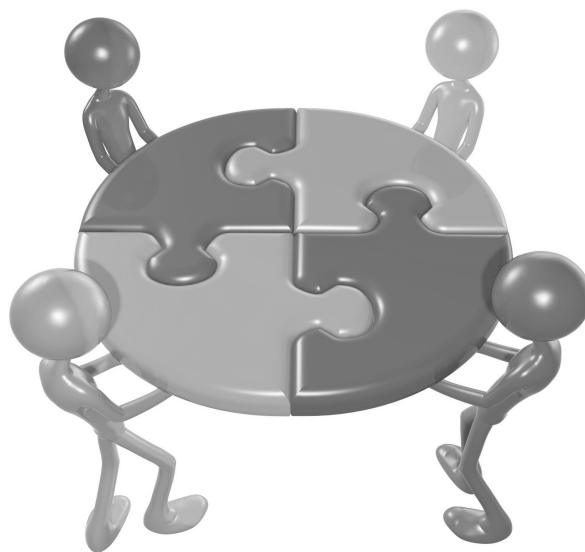
The Value of Group Discipling

Disciplemaking takes time, compassion, patience and energy. Everyone deserves individual time and care in the process of forming, building and releasing disciples. But it doesn't necessarily need to all be done in a one-on-one relationship. Jesus modeled disciplemaking for all of us to see. I'm sure that many of His disciples got one-on-one time with Him. We see glimpses of that. But twelve of the disciples received extensive time and three got even more time with Jesus. There were many women as part of the entourage, and others were joining as the group of followers grew. But Jesus' primary work was with the group of twelve and the three.

Think about the dynamics of Jesus' disciplemaking strategy.

Twelve people had intimate time with him in a group setting. They learned to trust Him and each

other. Their masks fell off as they interacted with each other. All kinds of good and bad things happened because of their interaction and chemistry. Jesus took the time to pull smaller groups aside for special conversations. And He certainly had heart-to-heart talks with individuals, both alone and in front of the group. Think of the times that Jesus would address one, but the whole group was listening. So they learned for each other and from the mistakes made in the group. Everyone learned Kingdom living, and I believe all of this was accelerated because of the group experience.



Most of us could never disciple twelve people at once. Jesus had the ad-

vantage. He gave full time to form those twelve disciples into mature and reproducible disciplemakers, in a very short period of time. Unless you have full time to disciple others who have full time to be disciplined, we have to build a different plan.

I like the concept of discipling three people at the same time. Of course, that could work with two, four or more people. We need to pick a number that's manageable and that allows lots of time for interaction. Too many people will be harder to gather and will take way more time, both in the group and one-on-one. There's a healthy group dynamic with three people being disciplined and interacting with each other in the process. They have to learn trust. They're all pressed to grow up. As they learn to care for each other, they actually help each other grow up in their areas of weakness. Everyone in the group contributes to the journey. And they all see what it will be like when they are leading their own group of four. A number of strategies down through the centuries have used this concept of group discipling.

The second part of discipling is fathering and mothering for long-term multiplication. I'm not sure our goal should be to disciple as many people as possible. We don't need quantity. We need authenticity. It takes time to develop strong, reproducing disciples. Our goal is to disciple people who will disciple people who will disciple people. As our "sons and daughters" disciple their own "sons and daughters" in the Lord, and as they teach them how to pass it on, the multiplying effect will be amazing. Building a movement of discipling produces far more converts and disciples than trying to do it all on our own. Are you ready to lead a movement?

THE SELECTION PROCESS- for TEAMS

BE READY

Don't start too soon and don't wait too long. Make sure you understand what it is to be a fully devoted, developing disciple, and you are living that life for all to see. None of us is perfect. In fact, we all have issues. God will keep working on us until He takes us home. But we want to make sure that we're not missing any of the major pieces that need to be there before we are ready to reproduce ourselves. Think about that. You are reproducing yourself. You can't say: Do what I say, don't do what I do." You can say: "I just blew it and here's what I did about it." We'll show our strengths and weaknesses as we make disciples and we'll have plenty of opportunity to talk about all of it.

You need to be several steps ahead of someone you are discipling. You need to be walking closely with the Lord, growing stronger all the time, demonstrating godly character, and fishing regularly. You need to know the Word and the principles for godly living. But you won't know everything. I don't. Keep learning and don't be afraid to admit that you don't have an answer. Then go find the answer. That's how we grow.

SELECT YOUR PEOPLE

Begin with Prayer- Ask God for wisdom and insight. He knows people inside and out. He knows things we will find out over time. He wants you to succeed, so the Holy Spirit would like to guide you on this great adventure. Let Him! Ask Him to show you the best people to invest in.

Here are the Qualifications- You want to look for people who you believe you can help grow into a maturing, reproducing disciple.

1) They need to connect with you and need to be able to both learn from you and place themselves under your leadership. We don't connect with everyone. That's life. This is important to access right at the beginning. Some people will not follow you and your leadership. It may be something like personality or your age difference or similarity. But it's just not working. All of us will learn the hard way with some people. Don't be surprised when

someone drops out along the way. It happens to all of us. Either they aren't ready for the process or we didn't connect. Timing is sometimes part of it. It's good to stop something that's not working and try it again later on.

It's good to look for things you have in common. Generally, men should disciple men. And women should disciple women. That's usually smart and safe and removes complications. There are always exceptions, like discipling within marriages and families. You can figure that out, with the counsel of others. We could take this "what we have in common" to unnecessary extremes. Quiet people get along with quiet people. Birds of a feather flock together. But couples are often attracted to opposites when they marry. So finding the right people to disciple is far more about whom you connect with and whom God leads you to. Jesus gathered a strange assortment of disciples over eighteen months, including one who betrayed Him. That leads me to the next qualification for discipling.

2) You are also looking for people who fit together. Some of us will disciple one person at a time. That's wonderful. The fit stops with your connection to your disciple. Others of us will disciple in groups of three, four or more of us. I'm focusing in on groups of four, with a discipler and three disciples. I've already said that I believe that the synergy and learning curve can accelerate in a healthy group of believers all working together to grow strong in the Lord. The only complication is that the group needs to get along! They need to fit. That again places the burden on you paying attention both to people and to God.

What people really fit together? For example, should I have older and younger men in the same discipleship group? You figure that out. What is smart? Some people won't open up with certain other people. I've seen younger men intimidated by older men. That may not work. But I've seen some older men intimidated by other older men. I've seen some people stopped because of economic diversity. Fortunately, I've also seen many groups where it makes no difference, at all! Here's the problem- you're not looking for mature people to disciple. You're looking for people who need to be disciplined toward maturity. People arrive with a boatload of issues. Now we've found one more reason to ask God for wisdom as you pray that through and figure it out.

Will these people fit together if I create this discipling team? God only knows and He will guide you if you listen. Sometimes we have to learn

the hard way. That's part of our own growing process. And we shouldn't forget the unique blend of people Jesus, the Son of God, brought together. They were as different as night and day! They clashed and fought and spewed out words and attitudes about life and about each other. We see a fragment of their conversations. And God put them together as His premium, first class plan! These were the ones meant to disrupt and change the world. He saw their incredible potential, and He also sees the potential of the people you are looking at. Wow!

3) You are looking for people who are ready to grow up. You are looking for potential. And you are looking for hunger: people who are AFT'R more. That's Available, Faithful, Teachable and Responsive, an acronym created by Dann Spader of Sonlife Ministries.

Available- A disciple has to be available or he or she won't grow up. Schedules have to change to both be a disciple and to make disciples. If this is a foundational part of the Christian life, then time management is a priority. People have to make the time to be discipled. Some people will immediately be available, either because they have the time or because they have the hunger. Others will have to be discipled into new worlds of discipline. But unless you're convinced that this person needs to be patiently worked with, don't waste your time on someone who isn't ready to be available. There is a right time.

Faithful- A disciple has to be faithful or she or he won't grow up. Didn't I already say that? Faithfulness has to do with commitment. It's being there both physically and mentally. It's having the discipline to show up and the determination to grow up. It's working to move our priorities around so we can be present. It's always being there, unless there's an absolute reason to not be there.

Teachable- A disciple must have a teachable spirit. We all begin with a human deficit. Some of us inherit a submissive spirit and others of us are less fortunate. Part of the discipling process is breaking self-reliance and learning to be teachable, both by the Spirit and by man. Jesus used every disruption as a teachable moment with His disciples. And some of them were slow learners, like some of us are. The people you pick to disciple will have varying levels of teachability. Let the discipling begin. But don't waste too much time on someone who clearly isn't ready to learn. Again, it may be the wrong time or you may be the wrong discipler. On the other hand, God may lead

you to work slowly with a stubborn soul like Jesus did with Peter, because He saw great potential down the road.

Responsive- A disciple needs to have a heart that's responsive to what the Spirit is saying. They need to DO Something! Some people are available, faithful, and teachable. But they just come and sit week after week. They don't actually do anything! It's so sad. There's so much potential, but it's going nowhere. We need people who are inspired by the Truth and then respond to the Need. They hear what you are saying and they respond with a big YES! They hear about fishing and they start fishing. They learn about spiritual warfare and they start fighting. Now, some of these qualities are what we want to strengthen in our disciples as we spend time with them. But we also want to see glimpses of them before we start. Discipling someone who is not responsive will get old fast.

By the way, God sees these qualities. They are not simply a response to a human relationship. God sees our availability, faithfulness, teachability and responsiveness. These are the qualities of spiritual hunger, and they are far more important to God than to us.

4) Hang out with the people you think might be the right ones to disciple. You may already know some of them very well. So spend time with others you are thinking about. Talk with them about life, family, dreams, church or ministry. Meet somewhere like Starbucks or Chili's just to get to know them. Ask friends for insight as you weigh your choices. The right input from the right people can be so helpful. Or not. Some people won't see the potential that you see in someone. Weigh their opinions. Listen very carefully. Sometimes it will save us from wasting valuable time. And other times, we will override their ideas with a strong conviction that God is leading us. Here's the bottom line- don't jump in without lots of prayer. God will help you as you think. Your thoughts and prayers will guide you. Then make the decision and pull the trigger. Pick your people to disciple.

5) Don't make this too hard a process! Give it time and prayer, and then begin. Realize right up front that you will learn as you go. You're beginning a lifetime of discipling. It will get easier. It won't be long before you'll be teaching others how to make disciples. You will learn and they will then learn from your mistakes. Here's another reality check. You'll pick the wrong people. That will happen now and twenty years from now. It happens to all of us. People change or change their minds. Commitment levels change.

Make

Making Authentic Disciples

How to Make a Disciple

We can't anticipate the unknown. So always be positive and start strong. Do your best when obstacles and complexities set in. But don't get defeated and lose heart if someone you're discipling drops out. It will happen. God knows it will happen. Learn everything you can from the situation for the next time. There always will be more people who need to be disciplined than people willing to disciple them. So always be willing, ready, and doing it!

THE SELECTION PROCESS- for INDIVIDUALS

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Let's Make Disciples- The Outline

1) **Prayerfully pick and recruit your team.** Think about the five or six people that could be on your team. **Then bring it down to three.**

2) **Plan to meet together regularly until your team members start their own groups.** That will be 12-24 months from now

3) **Plan to meet one-on-one with members of your team.**

4) **Plan to stay connected to your people- for life.**

5) **Plan for meetings that are long enough to achieve your goals.**

6) **Plan where to meet.** Meet where it's best for everyone.

7) **Plan your agendas and reviews.** Every gathering will be a little different.

The Team Gathering Worksheet targets a two-hour period of time together- an hour to Connect, Check, and Commit, and an hour to Center.

Connect- focuses on reconnecting from your last time.

Check- our five areas of focus- intimacy with God, reflecting His love, serving everyone, fishing for life and making disciples.

Center- brings us to the main thing- our content for our time together.

Commit- for application and prayer. How do we apply it?

8) **Plan your content. Start with what a disciple is, in mind, character and priorities.** Reflect on your group and what they need to grow up and become fruitful multipliers. Don't be distracted by good content and miss your goal.

9) **Have your preview meeting. Invite your group to meet together for the first time.**

10) **Get started. One you have established whom your committed team will be, you're ready to begin.**

11) **Talk about the Goal Line- right from the beginning.**

Let's Make Disciples- The Detail

Disciplemaking isn't a program. This is a way of life. Pastors and programs will change. You may move and join a new church. Learn, adapt and then live this lifestyle as part of the life of Christ. Decide the details of meeting with your disciples before you actually begin. But be flexible. You will need to lead in some of this planning. But you will also need to work around the schedules of those you are discipling. Have a plan that's flexible so you're ready when you meet with your group.

Let's reaffirm the purpose of the group. Disciplemaking is investing spiritually in individuals so they become fully developed, are living a Spirit-filled life and are in turn investing in others with the same purpose. That's becomes the purpose of the group. It's as simple as that. We purpose to help each individual under our care to grow up and then go out and help others grow up. That's disciplemaking, and we're doing it with three people at a time. Let's get started.

1) Prayerfully pick and recruit your team. Think about the five or six people that could be on your team. **Then bring it down to three.** Hungry people are responsive people. Good intentions rarely wake the dead. Unique people who don't easily fit in can hurt your group dynamics. Birds of a feather have fun together and energize each other. Pick people who will respond to you. It's very hard to coach up. You want this to work, so don't try to be experimental. The wrong person will hurt the whole group. It's so important to ask God for His wisdom as you work to recruit your team. Ask and you shall receive.

2) Plan to meet together regularly until your team members start their own groups. That will be 12-24 months from now. Encourage the team to stay together and then multiply together. Everyone commits to consistent attendance or they shouldn't join the team. Some of us will meet weekly, some bi-monthly and others monthly. You want to meet enough that you clearly are bonding together and growth is happening. Consistency is key- meet as often as you need to. You want to build momentum and keep it going. It is hard to build that consistency if you don't meet weekly. Many teams will at least conference call and pray together weekly as a team, especially if they aren't meeting every week.

Everything you do in your time together counts for all eternity. You are not in a race. You're building for the future. You are laying foundations and structures of the heart and mind that need to stand against the winds of time. Take as long as you need- make sure that your disciples are ready to pass it on. You are infusing the life of Jesus in your disciples through your thoughts, your words and actions. They are learning all the time, whether you realize it or not. Your attitudes and moods are training them to respond just like you. So, whether we're in a huddle, at the restaurant or on the golf course, our disciples are subconsciously taking notes. What they see in your leadership, as a disciplemaker, will shape how they lead and how they teach others to lead and to disciple. You can see how big a responsibility it is to shape a life and a movement. If we walk in the Spirit and do our best, we will influence others for generations!

You want to build a culture that's safe and open. That will take time, but you want everyone to learn to trust each other. They need to be able to share the good things as well as the struggles that they are going through. That's so important both for their personal process of growing up and their learning how to help others the rest of their lives. Each of you will bring different cultures, personalities and issues to the table. As the unpacking begins, everyone will learn what it means to be vulnerable and how we respond to each other in a trusting and caring environment. As all of you get honest together, you will help each other transform old habits and issues to new life in Christ. Watching and walking through this process will build the future disciplemakers of the Kingdom. Your experiences together will be as powerful as any of the written lessons you'll work through.

3) Plan to meet one-on-one with members of your team. Most of your time can be spent as a group. But there will clearly be times when you will want to talk privately with one of your team. There's certainly a time for private words of encouragement, exhortation, rebuke or prayer. We find Jesus taking a number of His disciples away from the group for a quiet moment of discussion. Those moments are needed along the way and can be powerful. There will be times when someone in the group will want time alone with you. It is often easier to open up with one person than with a group. God will lead you in knowing what to say and when to say it in your relationships. Be normal. Grow together. But step into moments when conversations need to go further. Sometimes that will be in front of the group. Sometimes that will be on the side.

4) Plan to stay connected to your team- for life. What? Are you kidding? Isn't discipling a twelve to twenty-four month relationship? I believe a lot can be accomplished in a year or two. But end-product discipling brings a set of problems that we all are living with today. We've already said that shorter-term discipling doesn't often build strong, committed disciples who survive the test of time. Many people have gone through a discipleship process that does not show real fruit ten to twenty years later. They aren't strong in the Lord, and they most certainly aren't multiplying other disciples. Shorter-term discipling usually doesn't build the life bond that long-term discipling does because everyone knows it's a limited time together. Disciplemakers, our attitude will be very different if we know we are building a lifetime commitment. You'll want to help your disciple get strong, stay strong, reproduce and continue reproducing more disciples. From the disciple's point of view, you will always be a call, text or email away. Everything about your relationship will change if you decide to invest for life! You may move and many things will change. But your heart and relationship can last a lifetime. It's a choice! It's like investing in sons and daughters.

So here's how it can look. You'll bond in your first year. The team will grow stronger and stronger. Then you'll begin talking about who you each are preparing to disciple. There will come that moment when you know you can't hold them back. It's time! They are ready to fly! Now it's their turn. Your coaching relationship will keep going on as your group prepares to multiply. Everything changes. You will probably move into more of a one-on-one relationship with each of your team members. You'll coach your team members as they pick and recruit their own team.

You'll pray with them and encourage them as they disciple their team. You'll walk with them as they help their team members launch their own teams. That's like having thirty-nine kids, grandkids and great grandkids under your care and charge. You've gone from four of you to forty. What an amazing journey! And this is only the beginning!

You'll still want to meet together as the originating Team, for prayer, encouragement, accountability, and the big picture. Can you see your team meeting monthly or quarterly as they meet weekly with their own disciples? And plan to come together occasionally with multiple groups to demonstrate what God is doing through disciples actually multiplying disciples. Can you picture that? Doesn't that sound exciting? And imagine what that will look like in

five years! Get ready for movement!

5) Plan for meetings that are long enough to achieve your goals. Meeting for several hours at a time would allow you to deepen your trust, open up with each other, and become a bonded group. That won't work for all of you. If you choose to meet more often for shorter periods of time, be sure to use the time wisely. Don't spend your time and then not get to the important things. Learn to pray powerfully with each other. Take the time to open up with each other so you're able to talk through issues that arise. Get to the content. Growth won't happen if you're not including the plan to walk through a set of areas that need to be developed. As I've already said, some of you will meet weekly and others will meet bi-weekly or even monthly. You will have to work harder at bonding if you see each other only once a month

Work to create an environment where you aren't rushed. If someone is always late and someone always has to leave early, you lose and your plan drifts. Have lots of grace, but also use those moments to plan for a better tomorrow. Some of you may find that meeting weekly for a sandwiched hour, perhaps at church or before work, is best for your schedule. You have time available between or before events and you want to use it well. If that works, set your boundaries on time and distractions and perhaps split your agenda between two weeks. Don't sacrifice your closeness, transparency and deepening prayer life together for getting through your content. Don't sacrifice your content for your relational time together. And don't rush through either just to get done. Getting done isn't the goal. Growing healthy Spirit-filled disciples is the goal!

6) Plan where to meet. Meet where it's best for everyone. If you're meeting as a group, it will take more planning around a group schedule. You want to gather in a place where it's quiet and undistracting. That isn't always easy. Don't let distractions destroy everything you are trying to accomplish. Sometimes it's convenient to meet at a place like church. That can work in the right facilities. But make sure you don't lose the very goals you're after by meeting in the wrong place. Be sure to talk about it if it seems like it's not working. Quality time is critical to accomplish your goals. Jesus would consistently work to take his disciples away from the distractions around them so healthy interaction could take place.

You may come up with a normal place to meet each time you gather.

But get creative. Look for ways to get together from time to time where even more dialogue and interaction will happen. Fishing, hunting, hiking, swimming, skiing, doing a road trip, shopping, conferencing, eating, camping, retreating, or doing a night away can accelerate the process significantly. The more time you spend together, the more you will open opportunities to go deeper in conversations. That's what we want. The right conversations will lead to greater spiritual maturity.

7) Plan your agendas. Every gathering will be a little different. You may eat first or just go for it. Realize that something will always try to distract you or keep you from getting to your agenda. Have fun. Relax. But jump in. It may take you a few times to learn how to get started with your group. Don't beat yourself up. But get started. It may be easiest to actually give everyone a schedule so they see the time management goals.

The Team Gathering Worksheet is targeting a two-hour period of time. It is divided into four sections: **Connect, Check, Center** and **Commit**. Read **The Team Gathering Guide- How to Use It** for details, found in the both manuals. Also go to **The Monthly and Quarterly Review and Schedule Example** pages to see how to schedule your gatherings and how to review your progress.

8) Plan your content. Start with what a disciple is, in mind, character and priorities. Show them that they will be multiplying for life. Stretch the group right from the start. They need to know where you are taking them. Use the **Start Here** content to get the conversation going. Do some assessments so the group sees where they are and where they need to go.

Reflect on your group and what they need to grow up and become fruitful multipliers. Every group is different. You may discover what they need by trial and error. They may not be like you. So listen carefully and watch how they respond. Some of us are readers and studiers and others of us respond through talking. Some of us don't have time for homework and others of us will dig in and love it. Some of our groups need to go to the basics and walk through everything- bible history, foundational doctrine, all of the components of godly character development, evangelism and discipling priorities. Others of our groups have had the basics- we simply need to learn to live them! We need a quicker course on growing up, depending on God's strength and living out

God's priorities. Many godly believers just need to be pointed in the right direction. They have everything needed to live out the Christian life. They just need to be motivated and taught how reorganize their lives to fish and to multiply other disciples.

Look through your many options on content. You will find everything from pages to actual books to download. I will take you to studies with videos. I will show you all kinds of free content, but I will also point you to books, studies and conferences that will help you if that is what you need. I will give you several paths to walk along if you want the help, but be free to create your own journey with your disciple or your group.

Here's one critical piece of advice. You can be distracted by good content and miss your goal. Many of these studies will only take you part way towards making an authentic disciple. You will finish a study, a book or a series and be tempted to think you are done. You will need to always step back and ask yourself- have we covered everything we need to release maturing disciples who are ready to reproduce the life of Jesus? When that answer is a yes, let them go! Don't wait too long- they'll never be perfect. Don't be too quick- as I've said, this isn't a race. This is the long haul!

9) Have your preview meeting. Invite your group to meet together for the first time. Some of you will have already recruited your group and this is actually your first meeting. Others of you may do a preview meeting to talk about what a group is and what the commitments are from group members. You may invite four or five people with the plan to have three who will commit. Your risk is that all of them may commit to the discipling process and you will have a larger group. Your only risk with three will take place if you haven't clarified the long-term commitments and someone drops out. You don't want your group to be too small or too large.

10) Get started. One you have established whom your committed team will be, you're ready to begin. Your first several times together will be more about getting to know each other and what you want to accomplish. Meet and get to know each other. Share details about life- family, career, recreation, hobbies, favorite things, dreams and plans. Talk about the group. Share your goals and expectations. Pass out some summary material to help everyone read and understand where you want to take them. Don't rush through your objectives. Understanding what an authentic disciple looks

like is so important from the very beginning. It should take a number of gatherings to establish the reason why you are discipling the group. They need to see what you want to achieve both in their lives and in their multiplication. These are the first steps. Giving the big picture on what a disciple is will lead you into your journey.

11) Talk about the Goal Line- right from the beginning. Everyone needs to know what the objectives are. Make it clear. In order to win, here are the ten things that need to happen.

- a) We'll all grow close and get real with each other.
- b) We'll learn to pray powerfully with each other.
- c) We all grow up and reflect the mind, character and priorities of Jesus.
- d) We will help each other grow out of weaknesses and imbalance.
- e) We'll all learn to fish and will fish- for life!
- f) We'll go on mission together.
- g) We'll get it, live it and know how to multiply it.
- h) We'll all recruit three people to be on our own teams.
- i) We'll all start our own teams in the next 12-24 months.
- j) I will continue to guide you and the four of us will continue to come together indefinitely, on a less regular basis, as the leaders of this movement for encouragement, discussion, strength and prayer.

OUR CONTENT

Our Content is what we study and focus on. We have so many choices on what to study. And we are often drawn to what most excites us in our own personality and ability to learn. Some of us are very studious. We love to dig in to the Word and maybe even the Greek. Some of us like telling and hearing stories, but we don't want to study too deeply. Others of us love a good book that takes us to specific places of spiritual growth. And there are lesson plans for every Book or topic.

The most important part of deciding what content to use in the Disciplemaking process is matching the Content to your people and the End-Goal. You can't simply start by picking your favorite book or Book or study guide. That may not work and it probably won't reach your ultimate goal.

- **Spiritual Growth-** You have to begin by looking at your individual situation to decide what will help them really grow the most in your spiritual journey.
- **Subjects-** Next, you need to assess what subjects you will need to cover over the next 12-24 months to build authentic disciples who truly reflect the mind, character and priorities of Jesus. **This is the End-Goal.** The goal is not simply knowledge. Knowledge in itself never produces life. But the goal can't be about going and doing without knowledge and character building as well.
- **The Mind of Christ-** There are over thirty definable topics about Christian living that the Word brings clarity on throughout the Bible. Then there is the Word, filled with stories, history and His story! Our End-Goal is to help our disciples grow so close and intimate with God that they think and see life through God's eyes. There are many books and studies that will guide you into the Word and point you quickly toward specific topics in your study of God's principles.
- **The Character of Christ-** The Word tells us the character qualities that a Christ-follower exhibits. But defining those characteristics in real life and walking through the thought process of a whole new way of thinking and living takes time and lots of discussion.

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- **The Priorities of Christ-** We have to become doers of the Word and not simply hearers. God has actionable priorities that have to be part of the authentic disciples life. Again, excellent books and studies will point to the verses that demonstrate the lifestyle of serving, fishing and multiplying disciples.
- **Application-** The End-Goal is applying the truths so our disciples actually live the Life. If they aren't changed and reflecting Jesus, we aren't finished yet!

Practical Application

The people we choose to disciple are all unique with a variety of issues and needs. We often see groups forming around our differences. We have discipleship groups for men, women, young people and children. We have groups formed around addictions, disabilities, bereavement, singleness and so much more. And so we have books and studies that focus clearly on those specific uniqueness's. That can be very helpful as we try to empower people to live out an authentic Christian life. But there are two major categories that most people fall into. All of our disciples have the same foundational needs, no matter what unique group they are part of.

New Believers- They need everything, starting with the simple foundational truths of the Bible. Many books and guides are available to walk new believers through to a full understanding of Biblical truth. What books often don't do is walk these new believers through the practical steps of how to actually grow up and become an authentic disciple. People have real life issues that need to be wrestled with all the way to victory and maturity.

Normal Christians- Our churches are filled with people who know a lot of truth but they haven't applied it. They often have intellectual and practical holes in their understanding and lifestyles. They know some truth and some half-truths. Their knowledge is often shallow. They need to be walked through to a deeper understanding of the heart and mind of God. They need to know how to live and how to apply God's truth to their everyday lives. They need to know that character is as or more important than knowledge. And they need to get out of the pew and start doing the Kingdom!

These specific needs will guide you toward the End-Goal in your search for the right Content. It's not that there isn't content. There is too much content. You will have to wade through all of the resources out there until you find what works for you. Once you find the right content, you'll be able to pass it on for life! Our website will guide you to many options. Your church, friends and the Internet will also point you toward great products. Find the right ones and go!

Some of you may find that the best content is more for you as the leader and not for the group. For example, a good book or study can equip you so well that you then can sit with your group and the Word, knowing where to find the right verses to instruct your topic. More is often accomplished with less content and more discussion. The mind awakens as people actually connect with the topic. Many people mentally disappear in a study environment, but no one knows. That's why it's essential that we learn how to engage in our groups in such a way that everyone is mentally present, everyone is processing and experiencing the conviction of the Holy Spirit to grow up and be whole. Discipleship is less about presentation and more about interaction and integration. Our goal is discussing, understanding and applying content so lives are actually changed! We don't need more people filled with kingdom content. We need more kingdom people filled with God!

Some of my Recommendations

There are so many choices for content when we make disciples. You will also discover that we are all so different. Some of us are readers and others of us are not. That simple truth will guide you as you search for the right content.

- 1) **MULTIPLY** by Francis Chan is available for sale or online and downloadable for free. This book provides excellent content from Biblical history and God's plan for His Church to lifestyle development.
- 2) **THE GROWING OUT series** by Carl Simmons is also available online and downloadable. Six books cover all of the foundational values and issues on Christian living, from Growing in Character to Growing in Your Mission. You may also choose to buy these books.
- 3) **The Discipleship Training Manual** from The Bridge of Sacramento is a great downloadable 24 lesson study of God's Word on Christian living.

Thirty-Two Topics and Categories

Here is a list that can help guide you to the essential areas of conversation and study that we need to have. You will find books, booklets and single page studies available on all of these subjects. You will find series of booklets or books that cover most of these topics. Many of them include thoughtful questions to help with your discussions. The Internet is also filled with sites that have downloadable studies on these topics. The next page is a checklist you can use to make sure you are covering every topic. Record the date that you completed the topic and the date that you went back and reviewed it.

Some Key Topics for Spiritual Growth- Basic and Advanced

Who we are in Christ	Financial Stewardship and Giving
Assurance of Salvation	Christian Values
Worship and Dependence	Christian Character
First Steps- Baptism, Church, ...	Spiritual Gifts
The Bible and How to Read It	Spiritual Fruit
The Purpose and Power of Prayer	Spiritual Discernment
Spirit-Filled Living and the Flesh	Discovering the Will of God
Spiritual Disciplines	Spiritual Warfare
Holiness and Purity	Biblical Foundations
A Lifestyle of Evangelism	-Doctrine and History
Dependence on God	-Lifestyle- ex: Compassion-The Least...
The Family-Loving One Another	-Issues- ex: Abortion, Homosexuality...
Obedience and Christian Living	-Relationships- ex: Marriage, Family...
Stewards of our Resources	World Evangelism
Service and Servanthood	Modeling and Leadership
Equipping Others	Coaching Others for Multiplication

CHECKLIST: Key Topics for Spiritual Growth- Basic and Advanced

Topics	Covered - Date	Review - Date
Who we are in Christ		
Assurance of Salvation		
Worship and Dependence		
First Steps- Baptism, Church, ...		
The Bible and How to Read It		
The Purpose and Power of Prayer		
Spirit-Filled Living and the Flesh		
Spiritual Disciplines		
Holiness and Purity		
A Lifestyle of Evangelism		
Dependence on God		
The Family-Loving One Another		
Obedience and Christian Living		
Stewards of our Resources		
Service and Servanthood		
Equipping Others		
Financial Stewardship and Giving		
Christian Values		
Christian Character		
Spiritual Gifts		
Spiritual Fruit		
Spiritual Discernment		
Discovering the Will of God		
Spiritual Warfare		
Biblical Foundations-Doctrine and History		
-Lifestyle- ex: Compassion		
-The Least-Issues- ex: Abortion, Homosexuality...		
-Relationships- ex: Marriage, Family...		
World Evangelism		
Modeling and Leadership		
Coaching Others for Multiplication		

Using the Team Gathering Planner

The Team Gathering Planner is meant to be a sheet to help you stay focused and intentional as a team. It's not meant to be the regular formula that you have to walk through every time you meet. That could easily take many hours and would become boring over time. As the leader, use the Guide as a tool to help you prepare for your meeting. Ask God to give you the thoughts and clarity for your gathering. Where do we need to be stretched? What issues have arisen that we need to address? Use these instructions as a reminder of our key priorities. That can be helpful as you meet one-on-one or as a group. Don't be afraid to bring several copies to the gathering from time to time so that everyone can see what we are trying to accomplish. This is meant to help you think about the four areas that need to be covered. But you may find a better order of interaction at each gathering or as a group. For example, you find that you work better jumping right into Centering on your content and the Connecting and Checking works better later in your time together. Be flexible. This is meant to help you, not restrict you.

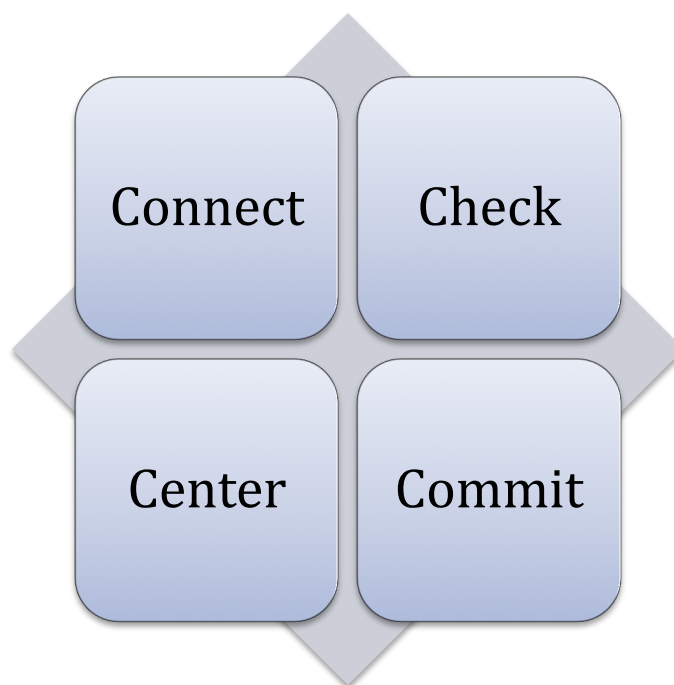
As you look at the four sections of discussion, think about your time management. Some of you have an hour together and others of you are carving out several hours at a time. As you've been meeting together, are you managing to get to each of the areas of need? We need to **Connect**. We need to **Check** on how we are growing in our five areas of spiritual maturity. We need to **Center** on content that will grow us up in our spiritual journey. And we need to **Commit** ourselves to practical application. We may spend more time in one or two areas one week and we need to dive in to the other areas the next time. Are we maintaining a balance in our objectives? Are we spending enough time getting to know each other? Are we learning to trust each other? Are we getting transparent? Are we learning to actually listen to each other and hear what's really being said? Are we spending good time praying together? Are lives changing? Are we developing the mind, character and priorities of Jesus? That's our End-Goal! If our interactions aren't taking us toward that goal, something has to change. Is our content moving around to all the right issues that we are struggling with? Is it building a holistic set of values and priorities in our lives? Are we beginning to see God impacting lives and bringing healthy change?

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Three of these four sections should take an hour, leaving an hour for your content. That will vary from time to time, but the plan establishes the priority for these four areas of interaction. Make sure that you are giving each of these areas the time and priority that they deserve. As we move through these areas, your people will occasionally arrive with situations and stories that could take the group hostage for the entire meeting. That sounds cruel, but there are times when this is not the best use of the group's limited time together. Groups can lose focus and energy when time together turns into a group therapy session. And if that continues, it can shape or kill the future of the group. Often it will better serve the person and the group for you to take additional time talking personally with him or her. Here's the key: Listen to what God is saying in your heart. Should this issue be the centerpiece of today's meeting? If your heart tells you that everything needs to change, then let go of your agenda and let God work through the discussion and prayer. Disciplemaking is more about listening and seizing the moment than getting through a fixed agenda. That's the balancing act we have to walk in. It really requires us to learn to walk with and listen to God. He's the true leader of your group and your agenda. He will give you the wisdom you need to bring balance to your time together.



Team Interaction

CONNECT

Take time every time you meet to reconnect with each other. Connecting isn't just talking. It's listening. It's helping the group listen. It's getting in each other's lives and hearing stories about life. It's sharing the good and the bad. It's becoming transparent with each other. It's becoming so close and committed to each other that you would do anything to help each other out of any problem. Now that takes time. It won't happen overnight. And it won't happen if you don't steer the conversations toward trust, transparency and commitment. You lead. Your openness and care will give permission to the others in your group. This always takes time. Besides the time it takes to cover all of God's content, this is also why authentic discipleship can't happen in a few months.

This will include normal events and stories. But always look for stories that are developing that have spiritual significance. For example, marriage and family relationships are so important. They reveal much about our spiritual condition and how that is impacting others in our lives. So catch up on relational stories on life, and talk about both celebrations and disappointments that have come along. Here's the big question? What is God's trying to say through the circumstances of this past period of time? And how are each of you responding? What are the struggles and the habits that are being battled? What are the actions and changes that are coming? All of this should lead to some time for prayer. Plan for some of the time to be spent in praise and thanksgiving. Form a habit.

CHECK

This section brings us to the time to check up on our five areas of focus- intimacy with God, reflecting His love, serving everyone, fishing for life and making disciples. We want to look back at the application from our last time together. And we also want to always remember our goal- an authentic disciple reflects the mind, character and priorities of Christ. We want to look at how we are doing in each of these areas. From time to time, we will want everyone to take the Spiritual Self-Assessment exam. This section provides a

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How to Make a Disciple

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chance to look at our track record. How are we demonstrating in each of these areas? What does our intimacy with God look like? Is it working? Am I developing the right habits that are building a close walk with God? Am I seeing His character developing and growing stronger in me? Are others seeing His reflection of love pouring out of me? Am I seeing a difference in my life? Is my character changing? Is my desire to serve and to be generous with my time and resources growing? Is my heart for lost people growing stronger? As all of you unpack, end this time with some healthy prayer for each other focusing on what you have talked about. Make some of this time an opportunity for confession before the Lord.

CENTER

This section brings us to our content for our time together. Generally plan to spend an hour on the content. Don't read through it. Wrestle with the issues that you are presenting. Take your group deeper. Use the time for life application. The review of truth without wrestling with how it applies to our lives is a waste of time. The church is filled with people filled with knowledge who don't know how to live! Don't let your discipling further that crisis. We have a chance to dig deep into His truth, the issues that are holding us back and the issues that will set us free. This is the opportunity of a lifetime. Use it powerfully to shape the lives of people who will also shape lives. Make sure that everyone understands the story or doctrine or truth that you are presenting. They need to understand so they can fully apply it and also pass it on. Remember again what Paul says:

You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others. II Timothy 2:2

This thought of passing the truth on with accuracy and reliability is a big deal. Heresies and the misrepresentation of truth happen when people pass on principles that they don't really understand. So, as disciplemakers, we all need to get it, and then we need to be sure that they get it. Plan to revisit truth and application over and over again until everyone really understands and is living it. That's our job. Do it!

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COMMIT

This section of our time together is meant for application. You want to always have an application for the truth that you are processing. Information without formation leads to stagnation. We don't need any more stagnant Christians! What do we do with this content? How do we apply it this week? What are the take-homes from our time together? What do we want to see change, in our attitudes, in our character, in our thinking, in our actions, at home, at work and wherever we are? What do we want to report back on the next time we meet? What are we committing to? Talk about it. Pray about it. Pray for each other. Then go for it! That's it!

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How to Make a Disciple

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Team Gathering Planner

CONNECT (~20)

Catch-Up / Stories / Life / Family / Friends / Work

Celebrations / Disappointments

What is God saying? How are you responding?

What changes are you making? Old Habits / Struggles / Battles New Patterns / Plans

Prayer

CHECK (~20)

Intimacy with God Habits

Reflecting His Love Stories Family

Serving Everyone Stories

Fishing for Life People

Making Disciples Plan

Prayer

**An Authentic
Disciple Reflects the
MIND CHARACTER
and PRIORITIES of
Christ**

CENTER (~60)

The Main Thing

Dialogue

The Lesson

Dialogue

The Focus

Prayer

COMMIT (~20)

The Assignment

Interaction

Prayer

The Monthly and Quarterly Review

A quarterly review is key to achieving your goal of making authentic disciples who then make authentic disciples. We are all prone to drift. When we drift, we don't achieve our goals. In fact, some of them drift right off the page. Making goals and measuring them keeps us on track and accountable. This is part of the discipline that it takes to be a disciple and to make disciples. Some of us love disciplines and accountability. This will be easy for you. Others of us don't like to be put in a box. We flow in life. Some of life needs to flow. Sometimes boxes are artificial and they don't always work well. But without discipline and some measure of what we are achieving and where we are going, we may not get anywhere.

It's invaluable to look at our time together once a month to see if we are doing what we want to do. Taking notes on our progress would be so healthy. And a quarterly review helps us look at the bigger picture. We should do some review by ourselves as the leader. We need to make sure we are on track. But some of our regular review will be beneficial for the team. The team needs to see that we are going somewhere and are working our plan. We need to feel a sense of accomplishment. They also need to see how you are planning and reviewing your plan so they can do the same thing when they start discipling their own team. Everything you do will be duplicated, so it's good for them to learn along the way, just like Jesus' disciples learned along the way. So let's talk about what we should review.

The Monthly Review

Once a month, review the **Team Gathering Planner, Our Disciplemaking Objectives** and **My Journey Map** to see if you are staying on track with your time together and goals. Are you making sure that you are covering all four areas of interaction in your time together? It's not critical to stick to a strict management timeline each week, but it is good to cover all of your areas each month, to stay balanced. **The Disciplemaking Objectives** chart will help you look at specific areas in life that are so important to be growing in. For example, the **Priority of Fishing All the Time** will remind you to keep sharing a progress report on each other's friends and to keep praying for them. Be sure to keep your team prayer list on the table and talked about every week. It will also help the team to review all of these documents periodically so they see the

plan and goals. There are other tools for assessment in the Resource section and on the website that you will want to use periodically. Some of you will find this of value each month. Others of you will want to use it quarterly.

The Quarterly Review

Once a quarter, go deeper! Personally review the articles, **Our Disciplemaking Objectives**, **Team Essentials**, and **What is a Disciple?** This will remind you of your original objectives. It's so easy to forget and get sidetracked. Or we lose sight of essential components like fishing. You will find a variety of spiritual assessment tools to help your team look at their progress and consistency in their spiritual walk. Use these assessments on a regular basis.

It also would be good to go back to Our Content and assess your content. Are you moving toward your objective? Is the content that you are going through matching your original goals? If not, shift! That's the purpose of a review. There are often times when we assess and then keep doing the some things. That's not good when we want to make disciples. Remember, we are committed to walking our disciples through a transformative process that will prepare them to live an authentic Christian lifestyle and multiply that in others. So plan to do a quarterly content assessment, progress assessment, team assessment and goal assessment. A regular review of your goals and how you are doing will help you achieve your objectives.

A Sample of a Discipleship Team Gathering Schedule

You will find a sample on the next page of how to schedule you time over your first four months. This is simply an example. You need to go at the speed of your team. Again, don't rush through critical discussions. Please go beyond the written content so your group is really wrestling with each of the issues that you are challenging them with. This is your opportunity to take them deep into important values that we often struggle with.

The Discipleship Team Gathering Chart

The purpose of the checklist is to help you keep on track with your goals. It's a simple tool to remind you of what you what to review on a regular basis. It so will provide you with a form to take notes and to do some personal assessment on those who you are discipling. Make copies for a notebook and use it to your benefit. The sample will give you an idea of how to us it. Under assessment, ME is you and D1, D2 and D3 are your three team members.

Discipleship Team Gathering Schedule- Example

Week One- Introduce the Group and the Plan- Let's Get started! to Journey Map

Week Two- Objectives, Plan, Team, Commitment and Weekly Plan

Week Three- Team Essential for Disciplemaking

Week Four- In Community, In Relationship

Week Five- **Review**, Transparency

Week Six- Accountability, Confidentiality

Week Seven- Spirit and Word

Week Eight- Transformative, Fully Invested

Week Nine- What is a Disciple?- Reflecting the Mind of Christ

Week Ten- **Review**, Reflecting the Character of Christ One

Week Eleven- Reflecting the Character of Christ Two

Week Twelve- Reflecting the Priorities of Christ- Intimacy with God

Week Thirteen- Reflecting His Love

Week Fourteen- Serving Everyone

Week Fifteen- Fishing for Life

Week Sixteen- Making Disciples

Week Seventeen- **Quarterly Review**

Week Eighteen- The Discipleship Training Manual or Disciple (Francis Chan)

Week Thirty-Two- **Quarterly Review**

Week Thirty-Three- The DT Manual or Growing Out (Carl Simmons) Book 1

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How to Make a Disciple

The Monthly and Quarterly Review Chart (sample)

Month	Date	Planner	Map	Objectives	Essentials	Disciple?	Content	Assessment	Plan
1	3/11/24	x	x						
2	4/13/24	x	x					x	
3	5/12/24	x	x						
Quarter	5/13/24			x	x	x	x	x	x

ME-

Evaluation

D2-

D3-

D1-

4	6/14/24	x	x						
5	7/11/24	x	x					x	
6	8/13/24	x	x						
Quarter	8/15/24			x	x	x	x	x	x

ME-

Evaluation

D2-

D3-

D1-

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How to Make a Disciple

The Monthly and Quarterly Review Chart

Month	Date	Planner	Map	Objectives	Essentials	Disciple?	Content	Assessment	Plan
1									
2									
3									
Quarter									

Evaluation

4									
5									
6									
Quarter									

Evaluation

Questions and Answers

1) What if someone isn't meeting consistently?

The backbone of discipleship is discipline. Many people who need to be disciplined have never faced the giant of personal discipline. They've been made to go to school and they get to work on time to keep the job and to get the paycheck. But the rest of their lives are in varying degrees of disarray. Suddenly they are confronted with their need to grow up spiritually. This may be the first time they've really had to make choices that rival their love of freedom.

They now have a life coach. That's you! Perhaps God has placed you in the life of your friend for this very moment. Who else will help them grow up and get past the lack of discipline in their lives? Who will patiently walk with them? But what about the group's best interest? Here's another question? What about the group's influence? The purpose of group discipling is to allow the synergy of the entire group to help everyone grow up and to learn how to help others grow up the rest of our lives. What a grand opportunity! You'll be working together as a group on all kinds of issues that come up over time. Let consistency and respect be part of that dialogue.

Find the balance of grace and responsibility, on every issue that you deal with. Ultimately, consistency needs to grow, both for the sake of the individual and for the group. If that can't happen, the person should be asked to wait until they are better prepared to commit to a group. That's a hard stand, but it has to happen if nothing changes.

2) What if someone drops out of my group?

Do your best to measure the commitment level of your team members before you begin. We will always be willing to take greater risks with people we especially care about. But we increase the potential of someone dropping out of the group. People, for many reasons, will drop out. We should do all we can to help them make the best decision. Sometimes we discover a bigger issue that needs to be addressed and walked through. That may help them stay in the group. But if they leave, we need to love them and release them to that decision.

3) Should we ever add someone to our group?

The purpose of the group is to grow into multipliers as you do live together. Everything changes as the group bonds together and learns to trust each other. That deepens over time and significantly impacts the speed of maturity in the group. Unless it is early in the life of the group, it really hurts the dynamic to add or subtract anyone. Plus the new person misses what has already been established. If the group has just formed, someone could be added, especially if someone exits the group. One more reminder- there **are** exceptions to good rules. Sometimes we like to make exceptions for all the wrong reasons. Don't do that. But, on occasion, God shows us a better way. We sure better listen to Him. His wisdom beats our rules any day!

4) What if someone is getting difficult?

That's a difficult question. Ha! Jesus had His Judas, so I guess we can't avoid difficult people showing up in our groups either. We need to do our best to avoid it. Do your screening will. Don't add a difficult person, hoping the group will change him or her. That's gambling with the future of your entire group. If God tells you to do it, do it! But you better be sure it's God talking. Here's the bigger problem. Many people aren't difficult until they end up in the group. They hide real well. But the mask drops off in the group. Now it's your problem.

Usually you will need to deal personally with a difficult person. You will probably need to spend more time with him or her to find out what is happening in their life. They may be going through some major things that need more time or even special counseling. Send them to a counselor if that helps. See how the group is impacting the behavior of your disciple and watch for change. Sometimes people are just difficult. They learned it from family or friends and they don't see it. It's who they are. Work to help them with their communication skills. There are so many people who have never been coached. They've just been ignored or avoided. God may have placed this person right in the middle of your life. You may be a major part of their solution. Or maybe not. Some people simply can't be helped. They choose to be disruptive. That will hurt everything you are trying to achieve in your group. If there seems to be no solution to their difficulty, you will need to help them leave the group.

5) We are wasting too much time on content.

That is a normal battle in groups. When we focus too much on content and not enough on application, we do fill our minds with more information. Unfortunately, information without application can feel satisfying, but it doesn't make disciples. So fight it. Control your time. Decrease your intake of content to allow for more conversation. Cut your lesson in half or thirds if you have to. Make the discussion on living out the content the goal of your efforts. It will take you much longer to go through your content, but you want to grow disciples and not students.

6) We are wasting too much time on life.

That is also normal in groups. It's so easy to kick back, spin stories and enjoy each other. That's part of our purpose for coming together. We do want to give time to get honest and open so we can help each other get healthy and strong in the Lord. But this is not therapy. It's not intended to be the place to tell all our latest struggles each time we meet. That wouldn't create disciples- it might create gossips or simply a pity party. Again, control your time. Move through your sections of discussion. Help the group move on to the next discussion or topic. It's not being rude if you plan ahead and learn to lead with kindness and love. It also gets easier to lead after a few fumbles. Always be flexible. Be ready for someone, occasionally, arriving with a center-stage issue that the group will have to address. That's life. Get back on track next time.

7) Something's wrong. No one is opening up.

Some of our personalities are hard to crack open. Some women have been so deeply hurt that their guard is high and trust is low. Many men find it almost impossible to verbalize on how they feel about life and its circumstances. You may be the leader of a group matching one of those descriptions. It probably will simply take time. Trust and openness doesn't come overnight. Listen carefully to what's being said. Don't rush the conversation. Some people need way more time to process their thoughts and answers than others do. If you are on the fast track and some in your group aren't, that could be the problem. Be patient. Sloooooow down. Is there mistrust among your people? Do you believe they trust you? You may need some one-on-one conversations to hear the heart of your group members. It can also be helpful to go to a trusted friend or to a coach for advise on what is happening in your group.

8) We never seem to have enough time.

That can be the way it feels. It's always better to leave a gathering feeling that there's not enough time than feeling there's been too much time. It takes awhile to work to find the right balance. You will have to just keep going, adjusting your scheduling along the way. Work to find that right balance. There may be things that you will have to talk or pray about every other time you meet together. Talk about choices like that as a group. Come up with a plan. Write it down so it is the Plan. Then go for it!

9) I'm having a hard time staying ahead of my group.

That is a problem. It's time to look at your own time management. Your discipling group needs to be a high priority. Sometimes our own journey of discipling others stretches us and forces us to evaluate our other priorities and time issues. When our plate is full, we usually don't want to let go. That's the struggle we all have. But something has to go! Take the time to look at the reasons why you are feeling overloaded. Make some healthy adjustments.

Life does change and it can bring big surprises that disrupt our lives. There are times that we have to put even our highest priorities on hold, for a little while. There are options in the group. You may be meeting too often and need to slow the pace down a bit. You can change it back later. You may have set yourself up at an unrealistic pace in the first place and need to create a new pattern. You can always share the leading of some parts of your group with others who are ready to help you lead. That also creates excellent training for when your disciples go and form their own groups. It's healthy to give more and more of the leadership of the gathering away as the group gets stronger and stronger.

PLAN

Making Authentic Disciples

How to Make a Disciple

Resources

Time- How do we Find It?

We all have limited time and generally fill it up. Most of us don't have extra time. So here's the big question.

How in the world do we find the time to be a disciple?

There- we've asked it! It's the inevitable question on everyone's mind.

We're to reflect the mind, character and priorities of Jesus. We're to spend time drawing close to God. We're to be in a healthy and close community with believers, which usually points to church, ministry and a small group. We're to have a healthy marriage and a close, loving family. We're to work hard and be productive at our career. We are called to fish and to make disciples of others, both intentionally. How in the world is all of that possible? And where in the world do we find the extra time? These are relevant questions that need to be asked.

Let's begin by looking at our excuses. We are all busy. And we often don't have extra time. So we don't have time for fishing or discipling right now. We have our own families to think about and to influence. We're working hard at our careers. We're already busy with our church. We can even get overwhelmed with all the things that we have to do in life. We have almost no time left. And if there is time left, we're tired! When do we get to turn off our brains and just rest? A lot of us struggle to even find quality time with God. How can we find it for new areas of ministry?

So many of us use at least one of these excuses to justify our exemption from fishing or discipling. Here's the problem. We will always find new "legitimate" excuses for every season of our lives. Our circumstances keep changing, but our schedule will stay full. That's why people of every age and circumstance never get around to fishing and making disciples. And that's why you and I will never join this great missional adventure God has called us into to reach and then disciple others until we stop making excuses and obey! That can happen today.

This example represents everything we need to change in order to live out Christ living in us. How do we quit pornography, jealousy, smoking, impatience, over-drinking, pride, gossip, anger or any other sin issue in our lives? We repent, ask God for His power, freedom and discipline, and we then work on our issues until we change. How do we begin tithing or developing a lifestyle of generosity with money and everything else? Many of us as believers have had terrible habits in our track record in areas like giving. For example,

we never feel like we have enough money to give generously to God. And when we get more money, we spend it on our growing needs and desires. God is often ignored and we give a token instead of a tithe or even more! We always justify it in our own minds, until the day we decide to obey. Our circumstances usually haven't changed, but our heart has. Something changes inside us and we begin to get generous. We know it's right! That's when we are suddenly forced to readjust our spending and perhaps even our lifestyles. But we know it's the right thing to do, and God has matured us and changed us in the process. That's exactly the same principle of deciding to obey in our time management when we choose to add fishing and discipling to our lifestyles.

Now, our ability to manage our priorities and time is so important. We will either plan and schedule our life and time or it will just happen. If we're not careful, we'll waste countless hours of our lives away. If we want to exercise, we'd better plan for it or it probably won't happen. Our priorities will decide if it's important and our management will make it happen, or not. So we look at our weekly schedule and decide when to exercise. If there is not time, something has to go. We can't do everything. That's when we rely on our priorities. Is it a priority to exercise a certain amount of time each week? If it is, we adjust around our other plans and make necessary changes.

We usually end up doing what they think is most important. By the way, most of us are doing things that aren't important. And we're out of balance to varying degrees in our life management, see it or not. We may work too much, relax too much, watch or listen or play too much. We may church or family too much. God can help you see how to better balance your life if you ask Him for help. But it will always take effort. It won't just happen. Some things will have to go in order for you to add things that need to stay. It's like eating. If we want to be healthy, we just should not eat some foods. And we need to be careful with other foods. It's a fact of life. To get in shape, we need some discipline and planning. Many of those healthy choices will become second nature to us as time goes by. But we'll always have to remember our priorities.

It's the same with the spiritual disciplines of life. It takes real effort to bring appropriate change to our lives. We are actually changing the way we do life. But once those changes become more and more who we are, they will feel very natural to us. By the way, our Father will give us the desire, wisdom, strength and intentionality to do all of this. This IS His will! But He won't answer this as a prayer to a distant God. Drawing close to Him changes us and empowers us to do His will. As we get close to Him, we become more and more like Him and we naturally change. Here's the bad news. There are no quick fixes. You won't see a lifestyle change or a healthy balance in your time management without His help. And that Spirit-filled life only develops as we spend time and grow closer and closer to God.

The thought of doing all of the things that God calls us to do in the Christian life can look daunting and impossible. Fortunately, God's plan is meant to bring us joy and purpose and not guilt and exhaustion. All of our plans need to be woven into a healthy rhythm. So how do we do that?

We move things around. We start with easy steps. And we don't try to do everything at the same time. We have to eat, so we plan lunches and dinners around our goals. We have to drive, so we use our time more wisely, in thoughtfulness or in conversations or in worship. We decide what we don't need to do or do as much. We do some things every day, some things once a week and some things once a month. We learn to not do less important things, at least not as often. And we learn to say no to things that aren't in our God-inspired priorities. We can't do everything. But we can do everything God want us to do.

Let's look at spiritual fishing. Fishing starts with prayer and that can fit in to the rest of our prayer plan. Taking time with lost people takes intentionality. But it can be scheduled in the normal flow of our lives. We have to eat. Why don't we eat with those neighbors or friends or go do something together? It doesn't have to happen every week. But it does have to be planned. Planning to talk to a neighbor to grow a friendship doesn't take a lot of time. We just have to set it as a priority and then do it!

What about discipleship? It takes time to be discipled and to disciple someone. It too has to be planned. When do we do it? Let's look for those easy answers. Can we eat together? Can we use another meeting and meet at the same time. Are their times when our family members are busy and we can use that moment for discipleship? Can we get up early and meet before the family wakes? Is there a morning or evening or lunch hour when it works best? Here is the fact. Disciplemaking isn't convenient. It takes time to build strong relationships that will end up building authentic disciples. Real discipleship involves people spending lots of time together. It won't always fit in easy corners of our lives. Friends and families hang out, play and pray together. We text and call each other throughout the month. Deep friendships develop. But it doesn't all have to happen all the time. Each of us will develop a unique pattern in our lives that will bless us and will please our Father. That's what we want. He's commanded us to go and make disciples. We want to run hard at all of the components of being an authentic disciple and we want to enjoy it as we go. So we have to plan for change. We have to intelligently reorder our time until we feel like we are finding a healthy rhythm in our lives.

Take some time to look at each of these issues as they apply to your own life. Write down your answers to these important questions on the next two pages. Go back through the article to meditate on God's plan for your life.

PLAN

Making Authentic Disciples

How to Make a Disciple

1) How much time do I need with God and His Word each day in order to draw close and stay to Him? When can I best do that personally?

2) What do I need to do to grow strong and stay strong in the Lord? Is it personal study, classes, church services or a home, fellowship, discipleship or support group? Answer the question and shape your calendar.

3) Am I spending the right amount of time to maintain a healthy, dynamic relationship with my spouse and/or family? Work on God's answer to that question and live out the plan.

How to Make a Disciple

4) How does God want me to best serve Him in my life? This could have daily, weekly, monthly and even annual implications. Again, pray and think about God's plan for your life and your service to Him. Try to distinguish the difference between what you like or want to do and what God actually wants you to do.

5) How often does God want me to be intentionally fishing for lost people? How much time do I personally need to take hanging out with people like that? When will I schedule it into my life?

6) How much time do I give and should I give to discipling others? How many people can and should I disciple? When will I schedule them into my life?

Leadership Disciplemaking Intensive Starting a Disciplemaking Movement

Welcome to this wonderful adventure called Disciplemaking. The concept is old and many have practiced different methods of making disciples. Unfortunately, the evidence proves that most believers and even leaders haven't been disciplined or don't know how to make an authentic disciple. This material is meant to solve that problem. The biggest question that you probably would ask is "How do we begin?"

The simplest way to use this material is to read the Leader's Guide and the Team Guide and then follow the instructions to begin a discipleship team. The plan is to select three people to disciple until they are fully developed and ready to disciple three more people, using everything you have taught them. It generally takes two years to walk your disciples through complete adoption and implementation of the values and lifestyle that we are passing on.

Some of you would like to use this content in a broader setting, mobilizing disciplemaking in your ministry or church. There will be one major issue that many of us discover as we try to implement this strategy. Some of the people we select feel a great sense of inadequacy and lack of experience to simply recruit and begin discipling three individuals. In fact, many would like to work on their own character issues or lifestyle priorities before they start discipling someone else. That's smart. We don't want our people duplicating their own weaknesses in the people they are discipling. We've all seen that movie and it doesn't end well. That brings us to the purpose of the **Intensive**.

By the way, Intensive, by definition, means concentrating on a single subject for a short time; very thorough, vigorous, and in-depth. So here's a formula for an intensive start with disciplemaking in your world. Select a

group or groups of four people to join together as a short-term discipleship core team. All of these individuals need to be ready or almost ready to make disciples. Many of them are leaders in ministry. They will function as a team, learning and owning the principles and goals of discipling. They will practice on each other first, experiencing the dynamic of interacting as a group and bringing their own values and priorities into alignment. There is no better way to get ready to make disciples than to be in an actual discipleship group. No classroom will match this real-life experience. These groups can become a great source of encouragement, prayer and insight long after new groups are formed. It's totally natural to want to periodically continue your interaction with your original team of disciplers. That's why we call it a **Core Team**.

Each group will be different, but most individuals will be ready to start their own groups within six to eight months. Some people will want to get going and start their own discipleship team even sooner. Just make sure that you are not rushing a process in your own life that needs more time to deepen. Other people will want to wait too long. Get going. Step out of the boat and start discipling!

So that's the plan. It's that simple. Start your own Leadership Discipling Intensive. Come together as a team or teams, practice the art of discipling until you get it, and then go do it! Keep meeting periodically as a Core team for healthy support. Let's begin this movement that God has called us to.

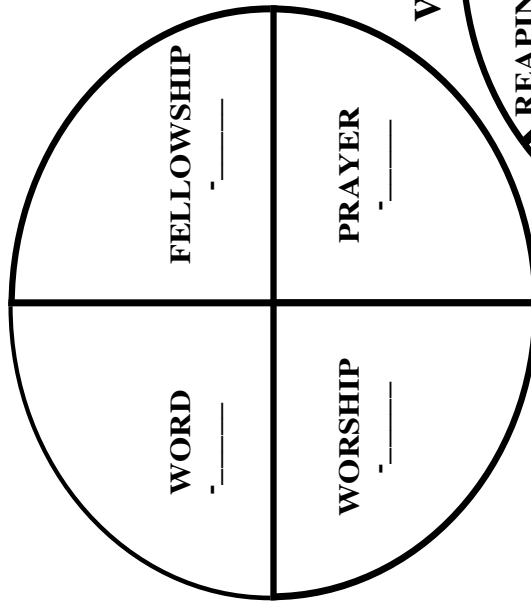
Here's Some Direction

- 1) Prayerfully plan your group of four to begin. Someone volunteer to get it going.**
- 2) Find the best date and location to have your first meeting.**
- 3) Plan your future dates and locations.** Someone leads or you take turns.
- 4) Meet regularly to gain consistency.** Meet long enough to achieve your goals.
- 5) Work through your content.** Begin with the Team Manual. Work on it the same way you will when you have your own team. This practice run is meant to familiarize you with the content and the flow of asking and discussing relevant questions. Have great discussions as leaders. Wrestle with your own issues. Get honest!
- 6) Authentically look at your own lives;** assess your own reflection of the mind, character and priorities of Christ. This is what you're passing on.
- 7) Clearly identify at least three non-believers you are intentionally praying for and in relationship with, modeling this essential priority.** Share your progress with the group on a regular basis.
- 8) Prayerfully begin to identify the three people you would like to approach to disciple when it's time.** Start sharing those names with the group so you are thinking and praying on this together.
- 9) Begin your own group when you are ready.** Again, it should take six to eight months for most of you as leaders to familiarize yourself with the vision, structure, goals and content. Be sure you are balanced in your own life as an example. Make sure you are fishing as a lifestyle. Don't end the intensive group before everyone is ready to go. Part of making disciples is bringing everyone along. That includes leaders in this group.
- 10) Multiply!** Go get your own group! But let your Core Team be that place of prayer, support and encouragement. There will be so many to talk about as disciplemakers. As you step out and begin your group, always keep your eye on the goal- multiplication. When your disciples are ready to begin their own groups, you will be watched God building His movement! That is worth waiting for!

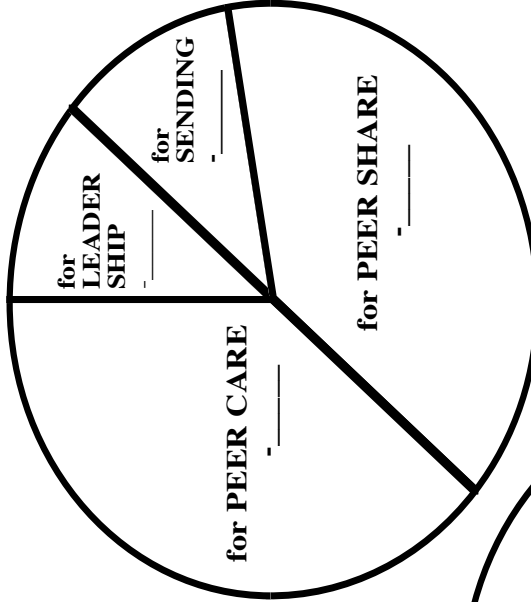
How to Make a Disciple

BALANCING YOUR TIME- MAKING DISCIPLES

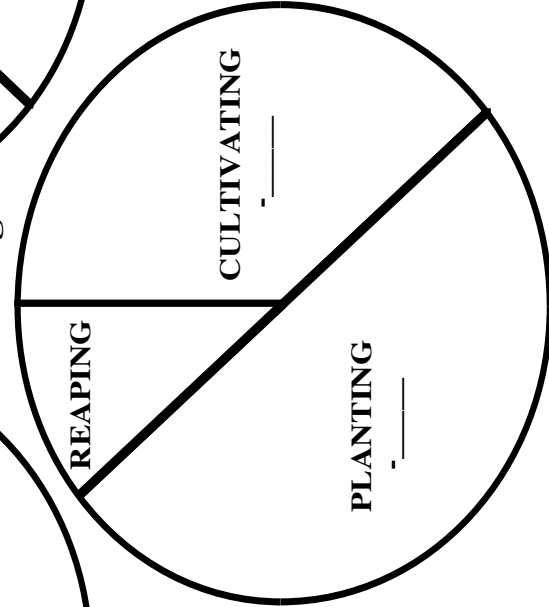
Building



Equipping



Winning



Three Perspectives
 1) Personal Balance
 2) Making Disciples
 3) Ministry Programming

Assessing Balance and Focus

- 1) Amount of Time Spent?
- 2) Passion and Heart?
- 3) Dependent on God?
- 4) Growth and Maturity?
- 5) Fruitfulness?

Measure your weekly or monthly time use.

How to Make a Disciple

iGrow iGo iMultiply Assessment Sheet

Name _____ Date _____

Y/N

___ 1) Am I Growing?

- Love God with All my heart, soul, mind and strength
- Love People everywhere
- Growing in my 7 Priorities-

Word, Worship, Fellowship, Prayer,
Equipping, Winning, Leading Others

___ 2) Am I Going?

- Intentional Relationships with Pre-Christians
- My Three Friends -My Latest CPR Opportunity

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

___ 3) Am I Multiplying?

- Helping Others to Grow and GO!
- My Friends -My Latest Multiplying Moment

_____	_____
_____	_____

PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE HEALTH ASSESSMENT



CONNECT: You were formed for God's family

I am developing authentic community within my church family 1 2 3 4 5
 I am more loving, grace giving and forgiving to others than I was a year ago 1 2 3 4 5
 I am intentionally cultivating my relationships with Christian friends and spiritual mentors 1 2 3 4 5
 I am regularly connecting with my immediate family relationships (parent, siblings, kids and spouse) 1 2 3 4 5
 I am resolving conflict with others in a Biblical manner and supporting the leadership of my church family 1 2 3 4 5

Membership Total _____



GROW: You were created to become like Christ

I have a growing relationship with God through regular quiet time in His Word and prayer 1 2 3 4 5
 I respond to challenges with peace and faith rather than anxiety and fear 1 2 3 4 5
 I avoid using addictive behaviors (food, television, busyness, etc.) to meet my needs 1 2 3 4 5
 I have a relationship with someone that encourages spiritual health & personal growth (spiritual partner) 1 2 3 4 5
 I am honoring God with my finances (budget) and my personal giving to His work (tithing) 1 2 3 4 5

Maturity Total _____



SERVE: You were shaped for serving God

I am expressing my unique God-given design as a way of life (home, work, and community) 1 2 3 4 5
 I am open and praying to be used by God and express my unique S.H.A.P.E. for ministry 1 2 3 4 5
 I am serving in a regular (once a month or better) ministry in the church or community 1 2 3 4 5
 I am sharing group ownership by assuming a small responsibility or facilitating a discussion group 1 2 3 4 5
 I am discovering new ways to cultivate and develop my unique SHAPE for ministry 1 2 3 4 5

Ministry Total _____



SHARE: You were made for a Mission

I am actively praying for and cultivating relationships with un-churched friends and family 1 2 3 4 5
 I am inviting seekers (un-churched people) to church and sharing my spiritual story with them 1 2 3 4 5
 I am seeking to connect unchurched people into our group or in the lives of our group members 1 2 3 4 5
 I am praying and considering where God can use me cross-culturally in the future 1 2 3 4 5
 I am regularly investing in the spiritual life of another person or group (spiritual reproduction) 1 2 3 4 5

Mission Total _____



WORSHIP: You were planned for God's pleasure

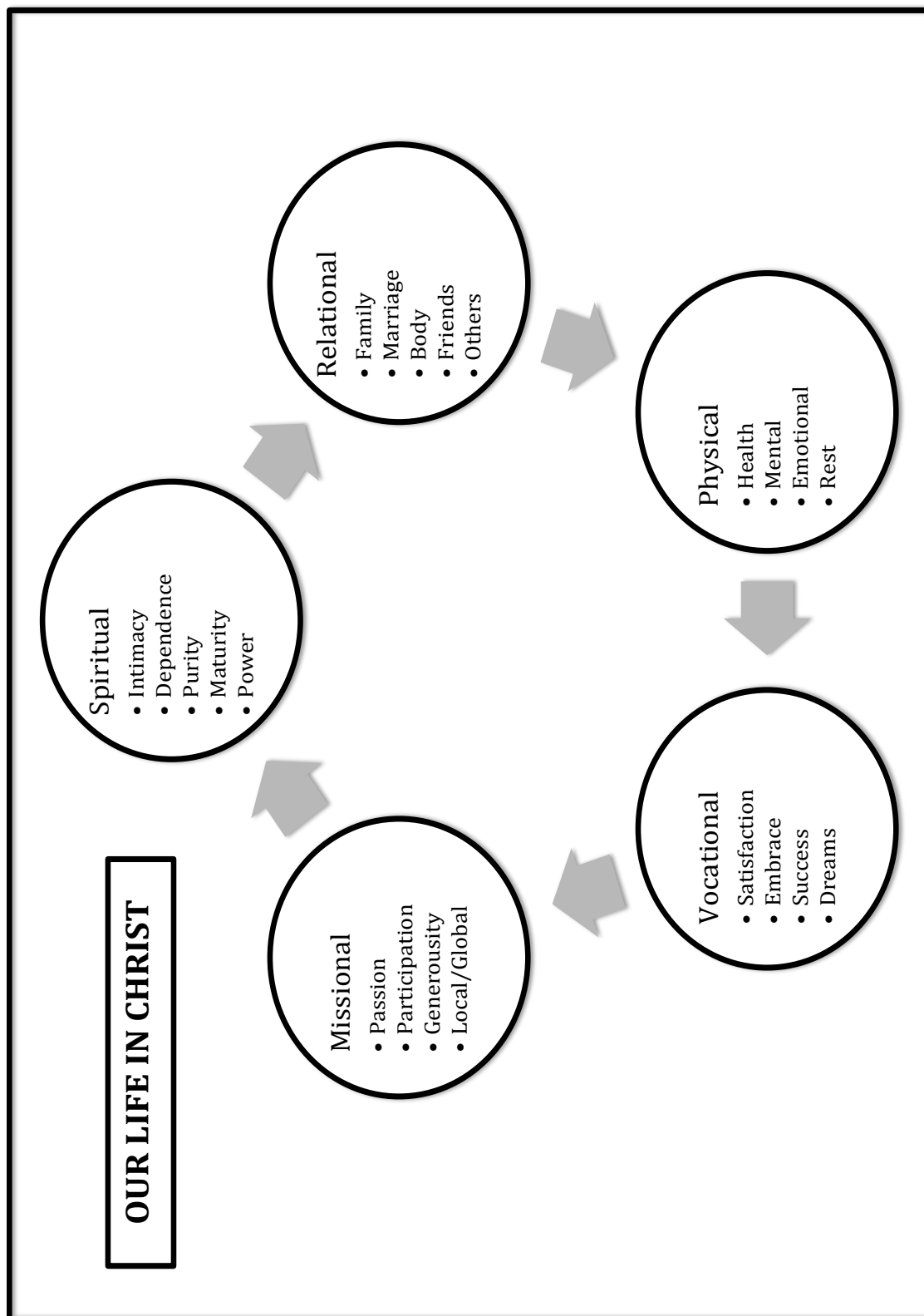
I am faithfully attending church worship services for spiritual renewal and refreshment 1 2 3 4 5
 I have a personal plan and process to help me achieve my goals and dreams (health plan) 1 2 3 4 5
 I have a growing heart for worship to God through music and praise (personal, group & church) 1 2 3 4 5
 I am honoring God with my physical and personal health (exercise & nutrition) 1 2 3 4 5
 I am pleasing God with every dimension of my life by balancing His purposes in my life 1 2 3 4 5

Magnification Total _____

JUST BEGINNING 0-5	FAIR 5-10	GETTING GOING 10-15	VERY GOOD 15-20	WELL DEVELOPED 20-25
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Optional Exercise: Have your parent(s), spouse, group leader and/or one additional Christian friend fill out a copy of this form before you complete the Purpose Driven Life Health Plan.

How to Make a Disciple



PLAN

Making Authentic Disciples

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