

LEADER TRAINING

2018

I. What is Biblical discipling? Why do it?

Robby Gallaty says being a Christian and making disciples are inseparable. And we are all familiar with Jesus's final command in Matthew 28:19-20:

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
And behold I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

We sometimes feel that only pastors, or those who are extremely knowledgeable about the Bible are sufficient to be disciplers. We think that we must first become those things, then we are able to disciple others. However, the more sustainable (and biblical) model for disciple-making is *ministry as the pathway to maturity* (*Growing Up*, 29) rather than maturity as the pathway to ministry. Look at what Paul writes in Ephesians 4:11-13:

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

We're here to encourage you today that as a believer you have the capabilities to disciple others.

Other references on Discipleship:

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:1

[A]nd what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2

So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

II. Why do Discipleship Groups Fail?

1. Lack of prayer
2. Lack of commitment and/or preparation
 - a. No clear leader for the group.
 - b. Family, work and overall responsibilities “squeeze out” group time.
 - c. No direction for the meetings, unprepared leader and/or group members.
 - d. Leader not shepherding to ensure groups continue.
3. Lack of understanding
 - a. The definition of discipleship is unclear.
 - b. No accountability.
4. Lack of vision
 - a. No clear path to multiplication.
 - i. No mentoring of next group leader.
 - ii. Curriculum and/or group meeting format is not easily duplicable.

III. How do Discipleship Groups Succeed?

OR Essential Marks of a Discipleship Group

1. Pray, pray, pray! Prayer is an important aspect of a discipleship group. The more we pray the more our hearts are aligned with God’s heart and the more we will value the things God values.
2. Clear group leader.
 - a. Leader is responsible for facilitating discussion, especially in the beginning when group members may not all know each other well.
 - b. Leader is responsible for dealing with issues that disrupt the group. The biblical model is leader meets with person individually first to find out “what’s up”; if “unrepentant” the leader asks them to leave. (See Matthew 18 and *Growing Up*, 185-186 for more.)
3. 3-5 people (of the same gender) in the group.
 - a. Groups are closed by default. It’s up to the group to let new people in (must be unanimous vote among current members) — visitors don’t just “drop in” to check it out. Discipleship groups differ from Sunday School in this way.
4. Meeting once per week for 12-18 months.
 - a. Focused on 4 elements (*Growing Up*, 184)
 - i. studying the Word together,
 - ii. scripture memory,
 - iii. accountability questions,

- iv. praying together.
 - b. Preferred to have the meeting place outside of brick-and-mortar church.
 - i. A disciple follows the Lord continually; disciples need to model following the Lord outside of the church building. (However, the importance of church membership and regular, community worship should not be diminished.)
5. Praying regularly
 - a. Leader prays for the group continually throughout the week.
 - b. Group members pray for each other regularly.
 - c. Praying intentionally throughout the week, not just at group.
 - d. Group members pray for future disciples.
 6. Studying the Bible
 - a. The Bible is the primary source of study; books are supplementary.
 - b. Learning how to read and study the Bible
 - c. Building a regular rhythm and habit of personal Bible study rather than “cramming for a test” mentality the night before discipleship group.
 7. Accountability and trust between group members.
 - a. What’s in the group stays in the group, NO gossip.
 - b. The leader is not perfect.
 - c. Accountability questions. See *Appendix A* for a list of example accountability questions.
 8. Cultivating spiritual disciplines — training yourself for godliness (1 Tim. 4:7-8)
 - a. Members are preparing to lead others in the future.
 9. Clear vision setting in the beginning.
 - a. No assumptions on what people know and think about discipleship groups.
 - b. Make requirements for the group clear in the very beginning.
(*Growing Up*, 161, see *Appendix B* for an example list of requirements)
 10. Clear path to multiplication.
 - a. Make sure everyone understands this is the goal and purpose from the beginning.
The gospel came to you because it was heading to someone else. (*Growing Up*, xix)
 - b. Leader has or is identifying and is training next leader.
 11. Fellowship outside of normal group time.

IV. How to choose people for a group

There are a few parameters to consider when choosing people for a group:

1. Pray that God would guide you as you think about who to ask; and also pray that God would begin working on the hearts of those whom you plan to ask.
2. Must be a believer. Discipleship groups are a place for those who follow Christ to grow and mature in their faith. It's not a good setup for evangelism.
3. They should be faithful, available and teachable (see *Growing Up*, 182 for more).
4. Look for people in our church first.
5. Groups must be of the same gender.

V. How to multiply a group

There are no hard and set rules for *the* way to multiply a group. But there are a few guidelines to ensure better success.

1. Pray, pray pray! Multiplying isn't always easy, make sure the entire group is in prayer about it as the time to multiply draws nearer.
2. Be intentional — have a plan for multiplying, pray about it and discuss it in the group.
3. Multiply in pairs. If you have a group of four people, don't multiply into four different groups, there's a better chance of group continuation if you have less spots to fill and the multiplying partner holds you accountable to following through.
4. Train the next leaders. Allow them to "practice" with the current group.
5. Try to get together with past group members occasionally to catch up and provide another layer of accountability.

CURRICULUM

VI. What a typical Discipleship group meeting will look like

SUMMARY

Open with prayer

Scripture Memory

Discussion

Bible Study

Prayer requests

Close in prayer

Time limit: 1-2 hour depending on group

DETAILS

Open with prayer

Submitting yourself to God, setting the tone, asking for wisdom and discernment.

Scripture Memory

Each person recites the week's verse for the group.

Occasionally recommended to have review sessions where you go over past memory verses.

See *Appendix C* for a list of potential scripture memory verses.

Discussion

Each person answers a set of predetermined questions.

Example questions:

#1 — *What is God doing in your life right now?*

#2 — *Did you share the gospel with anyone?*

#3 — *Is there anything you're struggling with?*

See *Appendix A* for a list of other potential questions.

Bible Study

Leader sets the standard for preparation and depth of study.

Leader should be ready to facilitate discussion if it doesn't occur naturally, but ultimately the leader of the group is a co-learner and facilitator. This isn't a classroom setting where one person does all of the teaching. See *Appendix D* for a list of recommended books of the Bible to study.

Prayer Requests

Take prayer requests from group members and encourage members to pray for the requests throughout the week. Encourage each member to keep a prayer log or prayer journal so they can look back on the prayer requests that have been answered.

Close in Prayer.

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Mix it up — do a book occasionally, dinner one night, etc. Variety is the spice of life!

Appendix E has a list of recommended books to study in addition to the Bible, as well as other resources for the group leader.

VII. Church-wide Implementation Goals

1. Leadership classes (like this one) offered 2-3 times per year.
 2. Clear path for church members to get involved with Discipleship Groups. We want to have a person who can serve as the “point person” for when people want to know about how they can be involved in a discipleship group.
 3. Continual “resourcing” of leaders.
 - a. On-going and deeper training for existing discipleship group leaders. E.g. How to study the Bible, How to pray, How to share your faith, What the church believes, Christian Doctrine.
 - b. Develop material for leaders to give to people in their groups.
 4. Move to uniformity with what groups are doing as a whole.
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APPENDIX A

Potential Accountability Questions

Note: *When a group is first starting, group leaders should use discretion as to how comfortable new members are with the accountability questions if group members do not know each other very well yet.*

Have you spent time in the Word and in prayer this week?

Have you shared the gospel or your testimony with an unbeliever this week?

Have you spent quality time with your family this week?

Have you had any lustful thoughts or tempting attitudes this week?

Have you told any lies or half-truths to put yourself in a positive light before others?

Have you participated in anything unethical this week?

Have you lied about any of your answers today?

APPENDIX B

Requirements for Group

Make requirements for the group clear in the very beginning. (Below is from *Growing Up*, p. 161)

- i. I pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated spiritual transformation.
- ii. I will meet with my D-Group for approximately one and one-half hours every week, unless providentially hindered.
- iii. I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis before my D-Group meeting, in order to contribute to the discussion.
- iv. I will contribute to an atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency for the edification of others in the group as well as my own spiritual growth.
- v. I will pray every week for the other men/women who are on the discipleship journey with me.
- vi. I will begin praying about replicating the discipleship process upon completion of this group.

APPENDIX C

Scripture Memory Verses

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|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Genesis 1:1 | 13. 2 Timothy 3:16 | 25. Galatians 2:20 |
| 2. Matthew 28:19-20 | 14. John 3:16 | 26. Romans 5:1 |
| 3. James 5:16 | 15. Psalm 19:14 | 27. Ephesians 2:8-9 |
| 4. Romans 3:23 | 16. Micah 6:8 | 28. Psalm 27:1 |
| 5. Romans 6:23 | 17. Galatians 5:22-23 | 29. 2 Peter 3:9 |
| 6. Romans 10:9 | 18. James 1:22 | 30. Luke 16:13 |
| 7. 1 John 1:9 | 19. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 | 31. Psalm 139:14 |
| 8. 1 Corinthians 10:13 | 20. Romans 1:20 | 32. Romans 5:9 |
| 9. Proverbs 16:32 | 21. Romans 1:16 | 33. Matthew 5:16 |
| 10. Hebrews 4:12 | 22. Colossians 3:23 | 34. Luke 19:10 |
| 11. Psalm 119:11 | 23. Psalm 127:1 | 35. Acts 1:8 |
| 12. Psalm 119:105 | 24. Isaiah 9:6 | 36. Acts 4:12 |

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| 37. 1 Corinthians 1:18 | 42. James 2:10 | 47. Revelation 21:5-6 |
| 38. 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 | 43. 1 Peter 2:1-2 | 48. Galatians 3:28 |
| 39. Hebrews 3:12-13 | 44. 1 Peter 3:18 | 49. Galatians 6:1-2 |
| 40. Hebrews 10:23-25 | 45. 1 John 4:10-11 | 50. Ephesians 4:1-3 |
| 41. Hebrews 12:1-2 | 46. Revelation 21:3-4 | 51. Ephesians 4:22-24 |
| | | 52. Ephesians 6:10-11 |

APPENDIX D

Potential Books of the Bible to Study

The gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*)

Pauline epistles (*e.g. Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy*)

Other epistles (*e.g. James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John*)

Romans

Acts

Psalms

Proverbs

APPENDIX E

Recommended Reading & Resource List

For Leaders

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman

Growing Up by Robby Gallaty

Marc of a Disciple by Robby Gallaty

What Is the Gospel? by Greg Gilbert

Radical by David Platt

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney

Web resource: replicate.org

For Groups

ON BIBLE STUDY

Women of the Word by Jen Wilken

ON PRAYER

A Praying Life by Paul E. Miller

ON EVANGELISM

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman

ON CHRISTIAN LIVING

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney

OTHER

Foundations: A 260 Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Believers by Robby Gallaty

Christ-Centered Exposition Commentaries (for help studying books of the Bible)