2 Timothy 2:2 Discipleship

The purpose of "2 Timothy 2:2 discipleship" classes is to equip Christians with

- 1) knowledge and skills to apply biblical truth personally
- 2) the experience to train others so they can apply biblical truth to their lives as well

<sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Mat 28:19–20



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#### People need to grow into spiritual maturity. The question is how?

It has become fashionable these days for churches to preach "disciple making." Everyone is for it. Everyone claims it as a priority. The words, however, often exceed the reality.

A tragic personal experience made the need for disciple making a passion with me.

Several of my relatives attend the same church and had been trying for years to get my aunt involved. After much patient influence, she and her husband finally agreed to attend.

Following a couple of visits, the church leaders began sending people to their home each week on evangelistic visits. My aunt and her husband were impressed with people's concern; eventually they made decisions to follow Christ and to become church members.

The tragedy: never again did anyone from the church contact them about spiritual things. As a result, they dropped out within a couple of years because they felt ignored. From their perspective, the church was concerned only with adding two more names to the membership rolls.

Churches cannot assume the job is done once someone makes a "decision" for Christ. We must fully incorporate each individual into the life of the church. And that job never ends.

In fact, author Lyie Schaller goes so far as to say, "It is un-Christian for a congregation to seek new members unless it is also willing and able to accept them into that called-out community."

Most Christians would agree with the need to help people grow into spiritual maturity. The question is how?  $^{1}$ 

by Gary Olsby, minister of Christian education. West Valley Christian Church, Canoga Park, California

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Fresh ideas for discipleship & nurture . 1984 (D. Merrill & M. Shelley, Ed.) (13–14). Carol Stream, IL; Waco, TX: Christianity Today; Word Books.

The **Gray Matrix** addresses the crucial issue of finding the appropriate level of Gospel communication for our audience – wherever they may be. In reality it is no different from finding appropriate things to talk about with our neighbors or those we may meet in the market.

No matter what kind of Christian ministry we are engaged in the **Matrix** provides help in the following ways:

- It helps us understand visually where people are at in their spiritual pilgrimage.
- It reminds us that imparting spiritual <u>knowledge</u> alone is not sufficient. We need to pay attention to building relationships, to feelings, sensitivities and attitudes.
- It helps us better understand the kinds of things we need to be talking about in order to engage their interest and understanding.
- It provides a tool that helps us evaluate the extent to which our own ministries can be effective in communicating the message (whatever that message may be, i.e., acts of kindness, gospel, dealing with sin in a Christian's life, how to be Spirit-filled...).







#### **Spiritual Awareness**

		4 -	Growth in Christ
		3 -	Conceptual & Behavioural Growth
		2 -	Incorporation into Body
		1 -	Post-Decision Evaluation
-2	-1	-1 -	1 2 3 Repentance & Faith in Christ
		-2 -	Personal Problem Recognition
		-3 -	Grasp of Implications of Gospel
		-4 -	Awareness of Basics of Gospel
		-5 -	Initial awareness of Gospel
		-6 -	Awareness of True God
		-7 -	No real awareness
	N	lo Kn	owledge

Closed

-3



## **The Process of Becoming Like Christ**

# "Follow-Up" of a Christian

#### Here's Life Inner City - Bakersfield

**Discipleship Development Dynamics** 

re believe we are in a time of unprecedented growth of the Christian church. We also see one of the greatest weaknesses in the Body of Christ in America today is in the area of "Follow-Up." The "Follow-Up" period is that critical time when the believer bridges new birth in Christ to Christian maturity and further discipleship. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ recorded by the apostle Matthew states: <sup>[2]</sup><sup>8</sup>Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and <u>make disciples</u> of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20 NIV) The Great Commission of Jesus Christ was not to make **decisions**, but to make **disciples**. We all agree that a person must come to the point in his spiritual development when he makes a choice/decision to place his faith in Jesus Christ; that Jesus is God, (John 8:24) and that Jesus died for his sins (1 Corinthians 15:2, 3). This process of becoming a Christian and going on to spiritual maturity can be expressed in four steps:

- 1. Hearing and receiving the truth of the Gospel.
- 2. Belief in Jesus and acceptance of His death for forgiveness of sins.
- 3. Receive **Follow-Up**, the next step from decision to a basic understanding of the change that has taken place.
- 4. On-going **Discipleship** in the faith, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

"Follow-Up" is both rationale (knowledge/truth) and relational (friendships). The Apostle Paul describes his method of bringing people to maturity in this way: *We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but <u>our lives</u> as well, because you had become so dear to us. (1 Thessalonians 2:8 NIV)* 

A good metaphor of "Follow-Up" is newborn care for an infant. The type and intensity of the care given to a newborn is markedly different than the care given to a young child or to an adolescent. If this specialized care is not given the child may well not make it to adulthood. Like the apostle Paul our goal is to present every man and woman complete (mature) in Christ (Colossians 1:28, 29). But without "Follow-Up" the new Christian may not be able to have the foundation from which to build to maturity.

The bible teaches the ultimate goal of evangelism or any Target Area Outreach is **<u>not to make converts</u>**, but <u>**to make disciples**</u>.



"I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that <u>I</u> <u>am</u> [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins." John 8:24 NIV

*W* "By this gospel you are saved... that <u>Christ died for</u> <u>our sins</u> according to the Scriptures". 1 Cor. 15:2, 3 NIV

*We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone <u>perfect</u> in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me*". Colossians 1:28, 29

#### **Dawson Trotman on Follow-Up**

Zealous and yet decidedly practical, Trotman in his generation was the chief proponent and practitioner of disciplemaking follow-up. Here are some of his words on the subject:

For new Christians all the world is new. They have before them a grand new life with all its potentialities for blessing and profit and use. They can either fall into a nominal Christian existence and be of little help—or an actual hindrance—to the cause of Christ, or they can move victoriously into a life of fruitfulness and glory to the Lord."

"The patient, tender care of those able to instruct and equip men and women for the Christian walk—this is the embodiment of what we commonly term follow-up."

"Perhaps yours is a church where a few do the work that many should be doing. But the majority of Christians should have a part, and perhaps would be willing to do so if they but knew what to do and felt qualified to do it. Follow-up is something in which the whole church may participate."

"But are the new Christians to be encouraged to start daily habits of prayer and Bible study merely by being told? No, they must be shown. The person who seeks to do follow-up must be what he is trying to teach, for the learner will follow the example of the teacher sooner than he will his word."

To pastors: "Every member of your congregation who is spiritually healthy should be able to meet his own problems and help care for another . . .. However, every member who is not spiritually strong doubles your responsibility. You must not only care for his own problem, but do the work he would be able to lift from your shoulders were he in good spiritual health. The simple application of follow-up will conserve, perpetuate, and multiply the fruit of your weeks and months of prayer, visitation, and preaching the gospel."

"Imparting truth, along with being a living embodiment of the truth, is the initial step. But once this is done, a constant vigil must be kept to ensure that this truth is carried out in the believer's life. It involves correction and instruction, for not only does the human mind forget, but the human will must be challenged to continue steadfast."

"You are in the greatest business on earth—that of bringing men and women into fellowship with Christ and to the place of greatest usefulness in God's marvelous plan."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Discipleship Journal, Issue 1 (January/February 1981). 1981. NavPress.



			LEVELS O	F MATURITY	
		Ваву	CHILD	Adolescent	ADULT/PARENT
Disciple's	Need	Protection, Love, Basic Knowledge	Consistent, Strong Guidance	Strength, Experience, Responsibility	Leadership Ability, Consistent, Self- Discipline, Spiritually Reproducing
Disc	Motivator	His Spiritual Vacuum	His Discipler	Himself	God and the Ministry
Disciple Maker's	Role	<b>MOTHER</b> to Nourish and Cherish	<b>TEACHER</b> to Equip for Service	<b>COACH</b> to Help Him Develop Strength and Responsibility	<b>PEER</b> to Motivate for the Long Haul

Adapted from **Personal Disciple-Making** by Christopher B. Adsit

<sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17)

#### CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH PERSONAL INVENTORY

 $^{2}$  The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

INTAKES				OUTPUTS		
WORD	PRAYER	FELLOWSHIP		MINISTRY	CHARACTER	FAITH
My mind and attitudes are controlled by Word, i.e., the Word is relevant to every area and event in my life.	I consider prayer essential to God working in and through me and I pray accordingly.	I live an open honest life, blameless in relationships (no bitterness or offenses).	PARENT	I share Christ as a way of life and am involved in building other Christians. I'm gaining a vision for the world.	Serving stage. I give of myself without expecting anything in return.	I'm living a life of rest in God as expressed in Hebrews 4:1-11.
I am developing my own convictions and my own reasons for what I believe.	My prayers center on praising God.	I am closely associated with at least one other person and receive direction for my life.	ADULT	I'm doing some initial follow-up, i.e., helping a Christian to become grounded in his new faith.	Sharing stage. I give of myself to others but expect to get some of my desires met if I abide by the rules.	I trust God's sovereignty in all issues of life.
I meditate on the Word and feed myself from it.	I pray in faith praying specifically and believing God for big things.	I am involved in spiritual activities with other Christians. I'm being helped on a personal level.	DNUOY	I have led one person to Christ and am concerned for his growth.	I surrender on issues as God puts His finger on them (i.e., conviction from Word).	I'm claiming specific promises from the Word.
I have a regular intake of the Word and apply it to my life.	I have a daily prayer time.	I prefer Christians as my primary influence.	CHILD	I'm able to share the Gospel and I am doing it among some friends.	I cleanse my life from "sin" primarily according to the dictates of my Christian culture.	I believe in God's good character and in His power and might.
I read the Word occasionally & have an appreciation for it.	I pray when problems, concerns and worries arise.	I attend church or other Christian gatherings.	)	I can share my testimony.	I live respectably by the world's standard.	I have assurance of salvation.
I have respect for the Bible and for Jesus' words.	I have thanked God for salvation.	I like being around some Christians.	INFANT	I have shared the fact that I had received with at least one other person.	I'm repentant and sorrowful for past sins.	I accept Jesus as my Savior and believe I'm saved.



#### **Discipling FAT People**

#### Chris Adsit, Associate National Director of Discipleship, Military Ministry

In these days of heightened sensitivity, never refer to someone as "fat". The "politically correct" term is "horizontally gifted". But when it comes to deciding who to invest your time in as a disciplemaker, forget protocol and look for FAT people; that is, **\underline{F}** aithful, **\underline{A}** vailable and **\underline{T}** eachable.

Your time is valuable! You have a limited number of hours in a day, and how you invest those hours is crucial. As you ponder who to give your time to, bok for these three qualities:

**Faithful**. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul admonished Timothy, "The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Draw a bead on those who are faithful to God and faithful to the commitments they make. Look for those who are eager to "Come to Me...take My yoke upon you and learn from Me..." (Matt. 11:28, 29).

**Available**. Look for people who will either have or make time to be discipled. As Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." Little can be done with someone who is already working eighteen hours a day and can't even find time for his family or for the Lord. If a person is unwilling or unable to alter his priorities or adjust his schedule to spend time with you, why should you bother?

**Teachable**. Most of us are poverty-stricken when it comes to time. It's a foolish extravagance to squander precious time teaching a person something he will never apply or pass on! It's pearls before swine. As Mark Twain once said, "Never undertake to instruct a pig to sing. You'll only frustrate yourself and annoy the pig."

There are two notable exceptions to the FAT criteria: those you lead to the Lord and those the Lord clearly directs you to disciple despite their gauntness. In the former, it is vital to remember that newborn babies need time to develop the FAT qualities. Your role with them is to be the "mother". A mother will expend great energy to be sure her child is fed - regardless how ugly or irresponsible that child might be. She exhibits unconditional love and acceptance, and her need-meeting is on *their* terms, not hers. Eventually, they need to begin growing FAT, but the good mother will give them some time.

In the second exception, your initial assessment of a person may produce a strong, "Naaaaah." But be sure to consult the Lord. He might see something you don't, something not on the surface but in the heart, and He might overrule you. There are many 'diamonds in the rough" out there that our sovereign Lord knows all about. With a little chipping, splitting and polishing, they could be dazzling. I can think of eleven terrific examples found in the four Gospels. In fact, two of them *wrote* Gospels!

Allow your commitment level to parallel those you minister to. If someone exhibits only a casual interest, don't immediately dive into a consuming one-to-one discipling relationship. Better to involve them in a low-commitment weekly group study first. Gauge their faithfulness to that, and gradually focus in on them as they sharpen their focus on the Lord and demonstrate their spiritual obesity.

Though it may sound harsh, it needs to be said: don't waste your time on the uncommitted. John the Baptist said that Jesus was going to do some winnowing; the wheat He would put in His barn, but the chaff He would burn up (Matt. 2:12). Focus on the wheat. The chaff will do nothing but drain you physically, emotionally and spiritually. There may come a time when you have to confront an un-FAT-fu disciple and say, "Look, make a decision: be wheat or be chaff. Get serious or get out." This measure will either blow some debilitating chaff out of your life, or it will score the hull of that wheat grain just enough to stimulate some germination!

Would God say, "There's more to love with the FAT ones"? Adsit might, but not God! Every child of God is on the receiving end of 100% of God's love; it's not performance-based, and neither should our's be. But when it comes to the strategic decision of who I should invest my time in, I'm keeping my eye peeled for the FATties!

For more information on Disciplemakers International, email us at **disciplemakers@ccci.org**, write us at **Disciplemakers** International, P.O. Box 2212, Eugene, OR 97402-0044, USA, call us locally at (541) 3453458 or toll-free at (866) MAKE-DISCIPLES (866-625-3347), or visit our website at www.disciplemakersinternational.org What factors influence the number (and quality) of disciples with whom we invest who progress to the level of reproducing spiritual – where their disciples are winning people to Christ and their disciples are reproducing as well?





Community Win Build Train send





#### **Action Steps**

On a scale of 1-10 please indicate the level your ministry is actively involved in the following areas.

 Members consistently living out "The Great Commandment"

LOW HIGH 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10

- Members making spiritually reproducing disciples ("The Great Commission")
   Low HIGH
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3. Movement would describe our ministry.
- 4. Do you desire growth in any of these three areas?Yes Do
- 5. Would you like to meet with one of the staff of Cru Inner City?
  Yes No Not Sure

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

(why we do what we do)

Believing that followers of Christ are called to care for the needy...

We envision cities transformed through hope and justice of the gospel.

#### In light of this vision,

a major thrust for Cru Inner City is: To see churches <u>mobilize their people</u> so that every Christian becomes a multiplying follower of Jesus Christ who is engaged in meeting the needs of the poor.

#### **MISSIONS STATEMENT**

(what we do, and how we do it)

We serve and mobilize the Church to live out God's heart for the poor, so all can grow in Christ to build spiritual movements everywhere.







Our Ministries will ultimately be evaluated based upon our lordship of Jesus Christ and how we live out

#### "The Great Commandment"

. . .

<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

(Matt. 22:36-40 NIV)

#### &

#### "The Great Commission"

<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20 NIV)

#### One who loves the Lord and others

#### As a disciple of Jesus Christ matures his love for Christ and others grows!

<sup>18</sup>And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV)

#### As we take on the character of Christ we will...

- Seek the lost
- Love our neighbors as we seek to meet their • felt needs (physical, emotional, social, mental & spiritual)
- Seek justice for those in our society who have ٠ been marginalized

<sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" <sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' <sup>36</sup> "Which of these three do you think was a neigh-

bor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" <sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." Luke 10:29-37 (NIV)

#### One who is making disciples

As a disciple maker of Jesus Christ we will invest in the lives of others so that they will mature and reproduce spiritually!

<sup>2</sup>And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

2 Timothy 2:2 (NIV)

Paul Timothy **Reliable Men** Others

#### As we make disciples we will...

- Invest our lives in reliable men
  - Faithful

0000000000

- **A**vailable
- Teachable •
- Develop the process of...
  - **WIN** winning people to Christ (evangelism)
  - BUILD building Christians in their faith ٠ (follow-up)
  - TRAIN equipping Christians with the ٠ tools to reproduce spiritually
  - SEND Sending Christians out to • WIN-BUILD-TRAIN-SEND
- Nurture and model "The Great Commandment"
- Seek justice for those in our society who have been marginalized

# \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

#### **A** Movement of **Reproducing Disciples**

A Discipleship Movement is a group of believers that are committed to each other, to growing in Christ and to the making of disciples as a lifestyle.

Their purpose is...

- To live out the Great Commandment in their lives and the lives of those whom they disciple.
- To see the Great Commission fulfilled in their own community.

<sup>27</sup> Whatever happens, conduct your-# of Disciples Year selves in a manner worthy of the 2 gospel of Christ. Then, whether I 2 4 8 come and see you or only hear 16 about you in my absence, I will know 32 that you stand firm in one spirit, 64 contending as one man for the faith 128 256 of the gospel 512 Philippians 1:27 (NIV) 10 1.024 2.048 11 For example: Assume in one year 12 4,096 8,192 you were to lead someone to 13 14 16,384 Christ, built him in the faith and 15 32,768 train him how to reproduce. If then 16 65.536 the 2 of you did the same process 17 131,072 18 262.144 the next year, there would be 4 19 524.288 disciples. If the method were to 20 1,048,576 continue for 33 years more than 8 21 2,097,152 billion would have not only heard 22 4,194,304 23 8,388,608 the gospel, but would have been 24 16,777,216 discipled as well. 25 33,554,432 67,108,864 26 No one person can reach 8 billion 134,217,728 28 268,435,456

people in 33 years. This would only be possible if we spiritually reproduce ourselves!



29

536,870,912

1.073,741.824

2,147,483,648

4.294.967.296

8,589,934,592



In "Going Public with the Gospel,<sup>ii</sup>" Mark Anderson Director of YWAM writes that "the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has organized evangelistic campaigns using three phases: **preparation**, **proclamation**, and **preservation**. They estimate that in their campaigns, 45 percent of the efforts are in preparation, 45 percent in preservation, and 10 percent in the event, or the proclamation phase. Mark reflects that "this is similar to a pattern the Lord opened up to me as I studied the ministry of Jesus and the early apostles." As much hard work as we put into our events, we need to realize that much of the work begins after it has ended.

<sup>ii</sup> Allison, Lon and Anderson, Mark. Going Public with the Gospel. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003



Outreach events are like a icebergs. The bulk of the iceberg is not seen (it is below the surface of the water). The bulk of our energies should be in preparation & preservation.





#### **Purpose of Teaching**

To change or affirm one's attitudes and behavior



INNER C

Understanding Culture by Dr. Lloyd E. Kwast

#### **Biblical References to Teaching**

#### Ezra 7:10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup> For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

#### Philippians 4:9 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

#### 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV)

 $^{2}$  and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

#### **Teaching Process**

- 1. <u>Tell</u> them what you want them...
- 2. <u>Show</u> them how to do it...
- 3. <u>Watch</u> them do...
- 4. <u>Praise</u> what they do correctly...
- 5. Correct what they do incorrectly, i.e., make suggestions for improvement  $\odot$ ...
- 6. <u>Repeat</u> until they can implement the new skill consistently at the level needed...

# Overcoming Fear Image: Sear biscomfort DESIRE DISCOMFORT 1. Increase Discomfort DESIRE Image: Discomfort DISCOMFORT 2. Increase Desire Image: Discomfort Image: Discomfort Image: Discomfort 3. Decrease Fear Image: Discomfort Image: Discomfort Image: Discomfort

	<b>Process for Building Multiplying Disciples</b> <sup>1</sup>				
	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	
PRINCIPLE	Win	Build	Train	Send	
METHOD	Present the gospel, evangelism. This can be done: • One-On-One • Small Groups • Large Groups Multiple exposures to the gospel	Follow-up appointments and Christian growth Bible study: new Christians learn assurance of salvation and walking in power of Holy Spirit, how to feed themselves from the bible	Discipleship groups: members learn to witness and ground new believers in their faith	Multiplication groups: members start their own groups	
MATERIALS	Four Spiritual Laws, The Bridge illustration, The Romans Road, "Jesus" video, Good News bracelet, personal salvation testimony	Book of Hope: "Knowing God Personally", New Life in Christ: "Who is Jesus" & "Level 1"	New Life in Christ: • Levels 1 • Levels 2 • Levels 3	Five Steps to Making Disciples Bible Study	
TRAINING LEVEL	Basic training	Intermediate training	Advanced training	Leadership training	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Modified chart from: Bright, B. (1997). *5 steps to making disciples: Leader's guide* (4–5). Orlando, FL: NewLife Publications.

# Personal Action Steps in Developing Win – Build – Train – Send $^2$

Win	The people I have introduced to Christ are: The plans I have for witnessing in the next few weeks are:	"Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God." Dr. Bill Bright
Build	New Christian(s) I am following up are: The materials I will use are:	
Train	New Christians or older Christians I can take with me witnessin New Christians or older Christians who will assist me/observe a	
Send	Released to disciple others (2 Timothy 2:2):	
My Part	I feel God is leading me to participate in a 2 Timothy 2:2 discip	leship ministry.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Modified chart from: Bright, B. (1997). 5 steps to making disciples: Leader's guide (110–111). Orlando, FL: NewLife Publications.

# **NEW LIFE IN CHRIST series**

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Download English or Spanish from: http://hlicbakersfield.org/newlife

#### **Protest against the Rat-race**

Do we really believe that *God* has spoken, that *God*'s words are recorded in Scripture, and that as we read it we may hear *God*'s voice addressing us? Then we shall not grudge the time to listen. Instead, we shall want to register our protest against the rat-race of twentieth-century life and strive to recover the lost art of meditation.

It is not a casual, superficial acquaintance with Scripture that the modern Church needs, but rather to heed our Master's exhortation: "Let these words sink into your ears" (Luke 9:44).

John R. W. Stott (from "The Use of the Bible" in Understanding the Bible, 1972)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Discipleship Journal, Issue 6 (November/December 1981). 1981. NavPress.

#### I. The Desperate Need for Personal Bible Study

- A. Most Christians do not know the Bible because they never study it personally.
- B. Most Christians only know what they have been told by significant others.
- C. Most Christians like it that way because then Christianity can be a ticket to heaven or an insurance policy instead of a daily relationship of obedience and service.

#### II. Why Christians Neglect Personal Bible Study

- A. Frustration
  - 1. They want instantaneous results (modern western consumerism).
  - 2. They do not see it as their responsibility (the unbiblical clergy-laity dichotomy).
  - 3. Our cultural trend toward specialists (ex. medical doctors).
  - 4. The confusion caused by so many conflicting interpretations (denominationalism and post-modernism).
- B. Dogmatism
  - 1. They learn a close-minded attitude toward religious truth. "I think it unwise to dogmatize about the meaning of any Scripture. Where the meaning of Scripture is self-evident, we need not dogmatize; and where it is not self-evident, we should not dogmatize. All that the interpreter of Scripture is called upon to say is: 'This is how I understand it, and these are my reasons for understanding it so.' Indeed, you will commonly find in ordinary life that it is the more doubtful statements that are most dogmatically affirmed." (taken from F. F. Bruce, *Answers to Questions*, p. 76)
  - 2. They are indoctrinated by their denomination.
  - 3. They are overly influenced by their own existential circumstances.
    - a. Personality type
    - b. Personal experience
    - c. Spiritual gift
  - 4. Be careful of:
    - a. If it happened to me, it ought to happen to you.
    - b. If it has not happened to me, it cannot or should not happen to you.
- C. Four Sources of Authority
  - 1. Revelation (inspiration)
  - 2. Reason (illumination)
  - 3. Experience
  - 4. Tradition/culture
  - 5. Authority is the key question!
    - -Revelation vs. human reason (rationalism)
    - -Revelation vs. human experience (existentialism)
    - -Revelation vs. human traditions (denominations)
    - God created us in His image, so our mind and experiences are significant but not ultimate. This is also true of our traditions/culture.
- D. A personal price must be paid to know the Bible for ourselves:
  - 1. Prayer
  - 2. Persistence
  - 3. Training
  - 4. Regular study
  - 5. Personal application<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Utley, R. J. D. (1996). *You Can Understand the Bible!* (7–8). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.



#### **Introduction**

Along with the Four Spiritual Laws booklet, your personal testimony is one form through which the gospel can be communicated.

This section is written to those who have <u>never written</u> their testimony. It is designed to help organize your message into an approximately 3-minute outline that explains how you came to know Christ. Two examples of a short salvation testimony given by the Apostle Paul are found in Acts 22:1-21 and Acts 26: 1-29.

In this session, we want to accomplish the following 3 goals to help us get started:

- 1. Explain the <u>benefits</u> of a well prepared testimony;
- 2. Explain how to <u>write our testimony</u>; and
- 3. Give some <u>helpful suggestions</u> as we write it.

#### **Benefits**

- 1. Because you are telling the story of what happened to you, your personal testimony will have universal appeal. It is always interesting to hear how changes take place in people's lives.
- 2. Since it does not require any written material, it can oftentimes be handy when other forms of the gospel (i.e., Four Spiritual Laws, Bible, etc.) cannot be used.
- 3. Your personal testimony is really your final apologetic. No one can argue with what happened to you.
- 4. Finally, personal testimonies are very versatile. They can be given in written form, oral form, formal settings and informal settings. They also interrelate well with other ministry forms (i.e., gospel presentations, discipleship, etc.).

#### Writing Your Testimony

Any subject matter can be presented more effectively by careful organization. It should be our desire to present Christ in such a clear, attractive manner that those who hear will not only want to know Him, but they will also want to know "<u>how</u>" to know Him. Use the following points as you develop your testimony:

- 1. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write.
- 2. Follow a three-point outline:
  - a. Your life <u>before</u> knowing Christ
  - b. <u>How</u> you came to know Christ (Be specific).
  - c. Your life <u>after</u> you received Christ (Changes He has made, what He means to you now).
- 3. (If you became a Christian as a small child, you may not have a point "a", and will need to emphasize point "c" in your three-point outline.)
- 4. Develop your personal testimony around a theme. (Examples: purpose, self-worth, stability.)
- 5. Write in such a way that others will feel associated with you in past and present experiences. In other words, ask yourself if your audience can relate to your story.
- 6. Don't overdo it, but give enough details to arouse interest.
- 7. Try to include one Scripture verse if it is appropriate.

As you write, try to avoid the following in your testimony, as it may hinder communication:

- 1. The use of Christian jargon. Words such as, "saved", "convicted", "converted," and "born-again" do not communicate clearly to the average non-Christian.
- 2. The use of overly dramatic or phony openings to your testimony. It usually comes across poorly.
- 3. Being too wordy, beating around the bush, or emphasizing how bad you used to be.
- 4. Speaking in glittering generalities. Avoid words like "wonderful" and "glorious", etc.
- 5. Mentioning church denominations especially in a derogatory way.
- 6. Speaking negatively about any other individual or group.
- 7. Giving the impression that the Christian life is a "bed of roses".

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#### **Helpful Suggestions**

Use the following suggestions to help you as you write. These will be of benefit as you develop your rough draft, and as you later edit your final draft.

- 1. Write in such a way that your testimony can be used in groups or with an individual. To do this, you may need several different openings to make it more natural for the setting it is to be given in.
- 2. Have a natural jump-off point in your testimony to go into a gospel presentation.
- 3. Using a three-minute time limit will cause you to be more selective in choosing your content. This will result in an increase in quality.
- 4. Write in a style that reflects your personality a natural talking style.
- 5. Evaluate, edit, and rewrite your rough draft, taking the following into consideration as you look over your testimony:
  - a. Does it allow the listener to follow the thought-flow?
  - b. Have I <u>clearly</u> communicated the following issues?
    - (1) Need for salvation?
    - (2) The sin issue?
    - (3) How I placed my trust in Christ?
- 6. Refer to the sheet titled, "QUESTIONS TO AID IN TESTIMONY PREPARATION" (Next Page). This sheet is designed to add "depth" to a person's testimony by probing for the thoughts, actions and feelings involved in the process of placing trust in Christ. The more vulnerable your story becomes, the more universal appeal it has since most people can identify their needs with yours and are looking for solutions.

#### QUESTIONS TO AID IN TESTIMONY PREPARATION

- I. What was your life like before you trusted Jesus Christ or totally committed your life to Him?
  - A. What were your attitudes, needs, and problems?

B. What did your life revolve around? What was most important to you?

C. How did you look for security, peace of mind, happiness? How did you find your activities unsatisfying?

- II. How did you come to trust Christ? How did you come to give Him complete control of your life?
  - A. When did you first hear the gospel? How? Or, When were you first exposed to dynamic Christianity?

B. What were your initial reactions to Jesus Christ?

#### **DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY**

C. When and why did you begin to feel positive about Christianity?

D. What was the turning point in your attitude?

E. What mental barriers did you experience?

#### III. What happened after you trusted Christ?

A. What changes did you see in your life, actions, attitudes, and problems? (Use specific examples.)

B. How long did it take before you noticed changes?

C. Conclusion: What does Jesus Christ mean to you now?

#### **DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY**

#### PERSONAL SALVATION TESTIMONY EVALUATION

Date

So that we can help our brothers and sisters in Christ be more effective in sharing their testimonies, please evaluate the testimony according to these questions. Please give detail, and offer both positive comments and negative critique. Thanks for your input!

#### Person giving testimony \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did the testimony clearly communicate the gospel? How? Did it use church-lingo? What needs to change?

2. Did it communicate personal life change; what the person was like before and after receiving Christ? How? What needs to change?

3. Did it interest the listener? How? Was there a theme? What needs to change?

4. Was the speaker enthusiastic? How? What needs to change?

5. Did it meet the 3-minute time guideline? If not, was it too long or too short?

#### **Advantages of Asking Questions**

- Good questions make people think. When people think, they learn.
- Questions help you know whether the group is grasping the content. Without feedback you'll never know what your group is learning.
- Questions keep the group interesting.
- Questions cause group members to learn more together than they would have on their own.
- Questions enable the leader to focus and direct the discussion.
- Group interaction helps relationships develop within the group, which in turn helps learning and application.

http://crupressgreen.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Asking\_Good\_Questions.pdf

#### **Ask the Right Questions**

A goal of your small group is that it be discussion oriented. The focus should not be on you as the leader but on the needs of the group. Give the members opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings and provide feedback on what they're learning. A primary way that you can foster a positive environment in a small group is by asking the right types of questions. Here are three types of questions:

1. **Open-Ended**. These are questions that allow group members to share any answer or relevant thoughts on the passage or subject being studied. These types of questions are very valuable for group discussion. Open-ended questions stimulate thought and discussion because there are no right or wrong answers. (*It is helpful to prepare questions in advance and write them down*.)

Examples: "What truths stand out to you in this passage?" "How does it make you feel when you think about what Jesus is saying here?"

2. *Closed*: These are questions that are obvious or imply the answer is expected by the leader.

Questions like this aren't valuable for discussion and can actually stifle group interaction.

Example: "Paul says we are to rejoice in everything doesn't he?"

3. *Limiting:* These are questions that aren't really valuable for open discussion, but they are useful to summarize a point or get back on track.

Examples: "What three motivations does Paul mention in this passage?"

"In Matthew 28, what was the last thing that Jesus said to His disciples?"

#### **Ask Questions that Help You Apply Scripture**

- 1. What personal application or idea has God given you for this study?
- 2. What reasons for praising God does this passage offer?
- 3. What personal need or issue has the Holy Spirit exposed during this study?
- 4. What aspects of this study encourage you most? Why?
- 5. What truth(s) from this lesson can you illustrate from personal experience?
- 6. What part of this study convicts you? Why?
- 7. What "I never thought of that before" insight did you gain? (Aha moments)
- 8. What unresolved questions on this subject still bother you?
- 9. Did any aspect of this lesson bring a role model to mind? Who? Why?

Adaptions made from: http://impactchapter.com/small-groups/8-keys-to-leading-a-successful-small-group

# **Small Group Lesson Template**

#### Determine the learning objectives in response to the following questions:

What do I want them to What do I want them to	o understand and believe o experience?	<b>in response to the foll</b> ? ure your application is aimed at l		ons: Christ.)
	be implicit.)	Ask a question that will cultivate inter- est in your study by raising a problem or issue that your pas- sage addresses. (At this stage, your link to the "fallen condi- tion" your passage addresses may only	to where they live	Launch
<b>Discover the Big Idea:</b> Ask a question to help them catch the main point of the passage.	"What does it say?" (observation questions) "What does it mean?" (interpretation questions) "Why does it matter?" (significance questions)	<ul> <li>Survey the Big Picture: Give them a brief overview of the context they need in order to understand your passage.</li> <li>Explore the passage: Ask exploratory questions to help them discover what God said. You can group your questions following the divisions of your textual outline (e.g., Eph 4:1-6, 7-16). You will use the following types of questions:</li> </ul>	ELEMENTS	Christ.)
Ask a couple questions that point them to Christ. What aspect of God's redemptive work do they need to believe and embrace in order to reflect and enjoy God's glory?	<ul> <li>Ask a couple questions that help them environ what it would look like practically to live out this passage.</li> <li>Ask a couple questions that expose heart-resistance to Christ. Help them see how they experience the "fallen condition" this passage reveals (i.e, some aspect of their brokenness that requires the redemptive work of Christ).</li> </ul>	Remember that your teaching will be most effective when it is aligned with God's redemptive purposes. Through Scripture God intends "to restore aspects of our brokenness to spiritual wholeness" so that we might reflect and enjoy His glory. As fallen creatures living in a fallen world, we are dependent on God's redemptive work not only for our conversion but also for the process of growing to maturity. (Bryan Chapell, Christ-Centered Preaching, 269-70).	ELEMENTS	Apply

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# Suggestions / Hints Facilitating a Group Study

- Methods to get quieter people to share in the study (want input from all):
  - Hand out slips of paper with numbers corresponding to the numbered questions in the Bible study. The person with the number is responsible to read and answer that question. By giving out the numbers at the beginning of the session, each person has time to prepare and collect his thoughts prior to speaking.
  - Toss a ball; whoever has the ball has the floor.
  - Have each person share his answers with his neighbor. The neighbor can then summarize what the person had said.
  - o If you have a large class, you can break into smaller groups of four or five, or by tables...
- When the facilitator is not sure of an answer:
  - Ask others, "Does anyone else want to answer that question?" "What do you all think?"
  - Ask if someone in the group would like to research the answer to the question and be ready to share what he had learned with the group at the next meeting.
  - I will get back to you next week after I do research on the question.
- Regaining control of conversation: When there is a lot of discussion, need to pray for wisdom from Holy Spirit as to whether the discussion...
  - Needs to come to an end: Take control of the discussion by...
    - Asking, "Are we in agreement? Let's move on to the next question."
    - Tying the discussion back to the previous question or to the next question.
    - Stating something like: "This is a great discussion." Ask the group how they are doing: "For the sake of time should we move on to the next question or do we want to continue with the current discussion?"
  - Needs to continue because it is a felt need by many to know more about the topic being discussed.
- Review previous lessons (this will put the current lesson into the broader context)
- At the close of the study, give group something to look forward to in the next meeting (where are we going)

"Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God," (2 Corinthians 3:5, NASB95)

#### • Prepare:

- Pray; be a cleansed vessel; be filled (controlled & empowered) by the Holy Spirit.
- Make people feel welcome.
- Introduce the topic (be creative).
- Look up definitions of words that may be new to the people in your group.
- Write down the questions you plan to use (Launch, Explore, Apply, open ended questions; Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Be creative. Good Illustrations will give visual examples or word pictures. Bring visuals/hands-on objects/internet videos, music (i.e. mustard seed and a photo of a mustard tree).
- Prepare several days in advance (that gives the Holy Spirit opportunity to bring to your mind additional ideas & illustrations that can be used).
- Flow of the class/study: encourage the participants to fill in the blanks on the Bible study handouts. This will help the participants to keep on track/stay focused.
- By being prepared you will know what comes next and can bring a discussion back to the topic.
- Attitude:
  - Cheerful.
  - o Confident.
- Give time for people to look up the verses
  - (say "Amen" when you have the verse).
  - Use Table of Contents in their bible(s).
  - Assign verses to specific people to read during the study.
- Note: the goal of the group is not the discovery of truth, but the <u>personal application of truth</u>.
- End on time.
- Clarity for next meeting; anything they need to know (time, date, what to bring or prepare for...).

Facilitator's Name

	Items to Evaluate	Low				.High	Comments
	Physical Arrangements	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□ 4	□ 5	
	People Felt Welcomed	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	Introduction To Topic	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
Name	Asked Open Ended Questions	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
Evaluator's Name	Sought Input From All	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
Eva	Controlled Conversation	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	End On Time	□1	□ 2	□3	□4	□ 5	
	Clarity For Next Meeting	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	Other	Π1	□ 2	□3	□4	□ 5	
	Other	□1	□ 2	□3	□4	□ 5	

Date

Use back for additional comments if you'd like

Topic

	Facilitator's Name			/ D	/ ate		Торіс
	Items to Evaluate	LowHig				.High	Comments
	Physical Arrangements	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	People Felt Welcomed	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	Introduction To Topic	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□ 4	□ 5	
Name	Asked Open Ended Questions	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
Evaluator's Name	Sought Input From All	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
Eva	Controlled Conversation	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□ 4	□ 5	
	End On Time	□1	□ 2	□3	□4	□ 5	
	Clarity For Next Meeting	Π1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	Other	□1	□ 2	□ 3	□4	□ 5	
	Other	□1	□ 2	□3	□4	□ 5	

Use back for additional comments if you'd like

\_\_\_/ / Date

Person giving his/her salvation testimony

#### Person making an evaluation

So that we can help our brothers and sisters in Christ be more effective in sharing their testimonies, please evaluate the testimony according to these questions. Please give detail, and offer both positive comments and suggestions for growth. Thanks for your input!

1. Did the testimony clearly communicate the gospel? How? Did it use church-lingo? What needs to change?

2. Did it communicate personal life change; what the person was like before and after receiving Christ? How? What needs to change?

3. Did it interest the listener? How? Was there a theme? What needs to change?

4. Was the speaker enthusiastic? How? What needs to change?

5. Did it meet the 3-minute time guideline? If not, was it too long or too short?

## 2 Timothy 2:2 Discipleship Training Class

Weekly Schedule						
Time	Length	Торіс				
7:00 PM	5 min.	Prayer				
7:05 PM	12 min	Review / Highlight / Questions & Answers				
7:17 PM	5 min	3-Minute Testimony				
7:22 PM	8 min	Evaluate / Feedback / Summarize Principles				
7:30 PM	60 min	Facilitate Bible Study Lesson (Who Is Jesus)				
8:30 PM	20 min	Evaluate / Feedback / Summarize Principles				
8:50 PM	10 min	Announcements / Prep for coming week				
9:00 PM		Dismissed				

### Note: student requirements

- Each student will give a 3-minute personal salvation testimony to the class.
- Each student will facilitate one bible study lesson to the class using the "Who Is Jesus?" curriculum.
- Each student will facilitate two bible study lessons outside of the class using the "Who Is Jesus?" curriculum.

Each student will receive a certificate when all assignments are completed.



# Certificate

This certificate is presented to

who has satisfactory completed all the lessons and course requirements

# **2 TIMOTHY 2:2 DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING CLASS**

"and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2, ESV)

Instructors

Date

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## **Digital Bible Study Resources**

Biblia.com	50 translations	http://biblia.com
Mobile App	Reina Valera Revisada (1960)	
	La Biblia de las Américas	
BibldeStudyTools.com	20 translations La Biblia de las Américas (BLA) La Biblia Reina-Valera (RVR) Sagradas Escrituras (1569) (SEV) Commentaries Concordances Dictionaries Encyclopedias	http://www.biblestudytools.com/
	History Lexicons	
BibleGateway.com	Audio Bible translations	http://www.biblegateway.com/
mobile.biblegageway.com	43 English Translations 14 Spanish Translations Commentaries Dictionaries	
Blue Letter Bible	18 English Translations	http://www.blueletterbible.org/
Mobile Apps	30⁺ Commentaries Dictionaries Encyclopedias	
eBible.com Mobile Apps	12 English Versions; Has nice app for smart phones and tablets	http://www.ebible.com/ministry
YouVersion Mobile Apps	Audio bibles 100's of versions and languages	https://www.youversion.com/

# WHY THE MISSIONAL MOVEMENT WILL FAIL – MIKE BREEN



Guest post by Mike Breen

It's time we start being brutally honest about the missional movement that has emerged in the last 10-15 years: Chances are better than not it's going to fail.

That may seem cynical, but I'm being realistic. There is a reason so many movements in the Western church have failed in the past century: They are a car without an engine. A missional church or a missional community or a missional small group is the new car that everyone is talking about right now, but no matter how beautiful or shiny the vehicle, without an engine, it won't go anywhere.

# The Engine of the Church

So what is the engine of the church? Discipleship. I've said it many times: If you make disciples, you will always get the church. But if you try to build the church, you will rarely get disciples.



If you're good at making disciples, you'll get more leaders than you'll know what to do with. If you make disciples like Jesus made them, you'll see people come to faith who didn't know Him. If you disciple people well, you will always get the missional thing.

#### Always.

We took 30 days and examined the Twitter conversations happening. We discovered there are between 100-150 times as many people talking about mission as there are discipleship (to be clear, that's a 100:1). We are a group of people addicted to and obsessed with the work of the Kingdom, with little to no idea how to be with the King.

As Skye Jethani wrote in his Out of Ur post a little while back "Has Mission become an Idol?" :

*"Many church leaders unknowingly replace the transcendent vitality of a life with God for the ego satisfaction they derive from a life for God."* 

Look, I'm not criticizing the people who are passionate about missional – I am one of those people. I was one of the people pioneering Missional Communities in the 1980's and have been doing it ever since. This is my camp, my tribe, my people. But it has to be said: God did not design us to do Kingdom mission outside of the scope of intentional, biblical discipleship and if we don't see that, we're fooling ourselves.

# Mission Is The Umbrella of Discipleship

Mission is under the umbrella of discipleship as it is one of the many things that Jesus taught his disciples to do well. But it wasn't done in a vacuum outside of knowing God and being shaped by that relationship, where a constant refinement of their character was happening alongside of their continued skill development (which included mission).

The truth about discipleship is that it's never hip and it's never in style – it's the call to come and die; a long obedience in the same direction. While the "missional" conversation is imbued with the energy and vitality that comes with kingdom work, it seems to be missing some of the hallmark reality that those of us who have lived it over time have come to expect: Mission is messy. It's humbling. There's often no glory in it. It's for the long haul. And it's completely unsustainable without discipleship. This is the crux of it: **The reason the missional movement may fail is because most people/communities in the Western church are pretty bad at making disciples.** Without a plan for making disciples (and a plan that works), any missional thing you launch will be completely unsustainable.

## Mission Is A War Zone

Think about it this way: Sending people out to do mission is to send them out to a war zone. Discipleship is not only the boot camp to train them for the front lines, but the hospital when they get wounded and the off-duty time they need to rest and recuperate. When we don't disciple people the way Jesus and the New Testament talked about, we are sending them out without armor, weapons or training. This is mass carnage waiting to happen. How can we be surprised that people burn out, quit and never want to return to the missional life (or the church)? How can we not expect people will feel used and abused?

There's a story from World War II where The Red (Russian) Army sent wave after wave of untrained, practically weaponless soldiers into the thick of the German front. They were slaughtered in droves. Why did they do this? Because they knew that eventually the German soldiers would run out of ammunition, creating an opportunity for the Red Army to send in their best soldiers to finish them off. The first wave of untrained soldiers were the best way of exhausting ammunition, leaving their enemy vulnerable.

While this isn't a perfect analogy, I sense this is a bit like the missional movement right now. We are sending bright-eyed civilians into the battle where the fighting is fiercest without the equipping they need, not just to survive, but to fight well and advance the Kingdom of their dad, the King.

# Mission Devoid of Discipleship = Failure

The missional movement will fail because, by-and-large, we are having a discussion about mission devoid of discipleship. Unless we start having more discussion about discipleship and how we make missionaries out of disciples, this movement will stall and fade. Any discussion about mission must begin with discipleship. If your church community is not yet competent at making disciples who can make disciples, please don't send your members out on mission until you have a growing sense of confidence in your ability to train, equip and disciple them. Here are some questions I have leaders I'm working with ask regularly:

Am I a disciple?

Do I know how to disciple people who can then disciple people who then disciple people, etc? (i.e. does my discipleship plan work?)

Does our discipleship plan naturally lead all disciples to become missionaries? (not just the elite, Delta-seal missional ninjas)

There were a few questions that emerged in online conversation because of this article:

1. How am I defining disciple/discipleship?

2. Am I separating mission from discipleship? Aren't they part and parcel the same thing?

3. Why am I making this complicated? Can't we just do what Jesus says and stop talking about this stuff?

4. What should we do about it?

## We've moved the goal posts

Defining a disciple is fairly easy, in my view. The greek word mathetes is the word that scripture uses for "disciple" and it means learner. In other words, disciples are people who LEARN to be like Jesus and learn to do what Jesus could do. One great writer on discipleship put it this way: Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you.

A disciple is someone who, with increased intentionality and passing time, has a life and ministry that looks more and more like the life and ministry of Jesus. They increasingly have his heart and character and are able to do the types of things we see Jesus doing. We don't have to look far in the New Testament to see this happening. Just look at the life of the disciples/ apostles and the communities they led over time, they looked more and more like Jesus!

How did the church go from 120 people in an upper room to more than 50% of the Roman Empire in about 250 years? Simple. They had a way of reproducing the life of Jesus in disciples (in real, flesh-and-blood people) who were able to do the things we read Jesus doing in the Gospels.

Is that still the way we see Christians or have we moved the goal post? I have to wonder if we've changed our criteria to match the kind of fruit our communities are now producing. Many are now fine with Christians who show up to our churches, are generally nice people, do some quiet times, tithe and volunteer. Maybe they even have a little missional bent to them. These are all good things, but I don't think this is the kind of "fruit" Jesus was referring to when he talked about fruitfulness in John 15. **Would those kinds of people change the world like the early church did?** 

#### Probably not.

In truth, I think we are pretty bad at making disciples in the Western church. Why? Because I look at the life of Jesus, the life of the disciples, the life of the early church and what they were able to produce with their fruit – and then I look at ours. When we read scripture and the texture of their lives and ministry, do we think that ours holds up to it? Even if we have a growing church, do the lives of the people we lead look like the lives of people we see in scripture? That's the goal post we should be going after.

I've heard Dallas Willard say that every church should be able to answer two questions: First, what is our plan for making disciples? Second, does our plan work? I believe most communities have a plan for discipleship. I'm not convinced many plans are working the way Jesus is hoping they will – and that's why we're in trouble.

I think the fruit of our lives will reveal the root of our lives. So if we are creating disciples who are far from the people we see in scripture as the rule and not the exception, we must ask ourselves why this is the case and how we can change that reality.

# "I'll have a cheeseburger with no cheese, please."

Undoubtedly, one of the key components to being a disciple is to care deeply about mission. In Christendom, it seemed that people thought of discipleship as only an "inner" reality that sought the transformation of the individual and mission was left on the sideline. As we have come to re-embrace the Missio Dei – the reality that the God of mission sent his Son as the great rescuer and we are to imitate him – I wonder if some within the "missional movement" are far more concerned with being missionaries/reformers than also seeking the transformation and wholeness that Christ is offering them personally.

What concerns me is that we have gone ditch to ditch. The reality is that both things are at work in being a disciple. The reality of living more fully in the Kingdom of God is that we are being back put together through God's grace, conforming more to the image of Jesus, having his heart and mind, and the overflow leads to Kingdom activity. That is why Jesus says, "Apart from me, you can do nothing." **Apart from the active work of Jesus in our life we cannot produce Kingdom fruit.** 

To engage in Kingdom mission without being equally attentive to our own personal transformation (through relationship with the King) is like asking for a cheeseburger with no cheese. It stops being the very thing we're asking for! By the same token, to be a "disciple" while not actively engaging in mission is asking for a cheeseburger with no

burger. Both are necessary. To be a disciple is to be a missionary. Jesus made disciples and he sent them out as missionaries while discipling them.

If we look at it objectively, we see churches with discipling cultures (that focus mainly on the transformation of individual self) and churches with missional cultures (which focus on the transformation of the world/people around us) and we often see tensions between these two camps.

**One has a clue, but no cause. The other has a cause, but no clue.** High mission/low discipleship church cultures have issues with Biblical literacy, theological reflection and deficiencies in character and Creed that, in the end, sabotage the very mission they're about. Critics are rightly concerned that these kinds of churches are a hair's breath away from heresy, with people largely not experiencing the depth and transformation of heart and mind Jesus invites us into.

High discipleship/low mission church cultures have strength in the previous issues, but lack the adventurous spirit/ heart of compassion and Kingdom compulsion that so stirred the Father into action that he sent his only Son to a world he so loved. Their transformation isn't leading to the place God is taking them. Critics are rightly concerned that these kinds of churches will turn into Christian ghettos, creating people who lob "truth bombs" over their high, secure walls, creating an "us vs. them" mentality. In both, something is disastrously off.

As humans, we are creatures of overreaction, choosing polarities rather than living in tension. The truth is, a TRUE discipling culture (as Jesus envisioned it) must have both. It's not either/or, it's both/and. We mustn't choose between depth and breadth, but embrace the tension of having and shaping both in our communities

# Character and Competency

At the end of the day, we can probably boil being a disciple down to two things: Character and Competency. We want the *character* that Jesus has and we want to be able to do the things that Jesus could do (*competency*). Discipleship is learning, over the course of our lives, to become people who have both.

# So how we are forming/discipling the people in our communities? This is only helpful if we're truly honest.

- **Character:** Are their lives characterized by grace? Peace? Love? Transformation? Patience? Humility? A deep relationship with the Father? A love of the scriptures? Can they submit? Do they see the world through the eyes of the Kingdom and not the prevailing culture? (Obviously there's a lot more, but you get the idea.)
- **Competency:** Can they disciple people well who can then disciple others? Can they do mission well? Can they hear the voice of their Father and respond with action, with His authority and power? When they pray, do things happen as they did for Jesus? Can they read

and teach scripture well? (Again, Jesus was able to do many things, this is but a short summary.)

These are Kingdom questions. These are Discipleship questions. Which is why I go back to the point that if you make disciples, you will always get the church, but if you make the church, you won't always get disciples. If the people in your community are discipling people who can answer "yes" to those questions, you're doing what Jesus asked you to do. You've sought first the Kingdom and the rest will be added. Look at it through this matrix:



#### Low Character

Finally, discipleship is about faithfulness and reflection. We need to be faithful and obedient to the things Jesus has asked of us (when it comes to character and competency) and let him control outcomes. At the same time, we need to be reflective about whether we're good at the things Jesus could do. Jesus is calling us to be faithful, but he's also asking us to get better, in "his strength which so powerfully works through us," at the Kingdom things he could do. If we're not good at something, let's just not say, "It's OK, I'm faithful." I'd argue that faithfulness also requires us being honest and reflective about whether we're good at the things Jesus could do, seeking to become better. Faithfulness and reflection. It requires us living in tension. He wants both, and if we embrace both, we take the posture of a learner.

# So what do you think? Am I way off? Am I missing something? Is this a fair assessment?

http://www.vergenetwork.org/2011/09/14/mike-breen-why-the-missional-movement-will-fail/

http://www.vergenetwork.org/2011/09/21/mike-breen-why-the-missional-movement-will-fail-part-2/