



DISCIPLEMAKING

**MAKING MORE AND BETTER FOLLOWERS
OF CHRIST BY LIVING THE GREAT COMMISSION**



D I M E N S I O N S O F D I S C I P L E S H I P G U I D E

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DISCIPLEMAKING

Disciplemaking is one of eight discipleship guides for the Dimensions of Discipleship series. It doesn't matter which guide you start with—start wherever you'd like and move on to wherever God is leading you next. When we live in the dynamic rhythm and flow of a missional life, we need to take our cues from the Holy Spirit.

These eight guides are organized according to the tree diagram below; examine it to see how all of the pieces fit together. Disciplemaking is the branch of the tree that holds the means for replicating the entire tree—because we are disciples we in turn make more disciples... who then make more disciples, who go on to make more disciples.





Disciplemaking means living in personal obedience to the great commission given by Jesus, which entails making more and better followers of Christ.



“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

What does it mean to make disciples? Where do we begin? How can we best help others follow Jesus? What pieces need to be in place for the disciplemaking process to replicate itself? The following five-part journey covers these five essential expressions of disciplemaking:

- Engaging in spiritual conversations with those who are not yet followers of Jesus
- Explaining the good news and the way of Jesus
- Establishing new believers in a discipleship process
- Connecting people with a faith community
- Helping new followers make more followers

“The greatest act of faith is when a man understands he is not God.”
—Oliver Wendell Homes, Jr.

Meet together in a group of three or four to talk through each of these expressions. Ask each other these questions. Wait for and listen to responses from the heart. Encourage, challenge, and affirm one another. Go at your own pace: you can do one a week or one a month, whatever pace works best for you. Be sure to allow enough time to live into these behaviors.



PART 1: ENGAGING IN SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS WITH THOSE WHO ARE NOT YET FOLLOWERS OF JESUS



KEY QUESTION: WHO ARE YOU ENGAGING IN SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS WITH?

One of the reasons sharing our faith gets a bad rap is that we are all talk and no listening. No matter what the topic of conversation is, no one enjoys engaging in discussion with someone who talks the whole time without asking questions of the other person and listening to their answers. It's just basic manners.

Engaging with others through listening and asking questions-- and having that same attention returned to us—is an integral part of people's spiritual journey. Someone else asking us thought provoking questions and listening to our answers helps us engage with the ideas in a way we never could by receiving a lecture. This is simply a part of how God has wired us to learn.

"Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm."
—Sir Winston Churchill

As we are sent out into the world to make disciples, we need to engage in numerous conversations along the course of a relationship. It's not one high-stakes meeting where we need to make all the points we want to make. It's a series of conversations where we ask questions and really listen to the answers. And in real conversations, we recognize that not everyone always agrees with us. That's natural. We need to respect the differences and not engage in coercion or cut off the relationship because of disagreements. We can share our perspectives, but we need to recognize that not everyone will agree with us. That's okay—God is still at work in ways we don't understand. Our part is simply to remain faithful in continuing to engage in faith conversations marked by respect.



QUESTIONS:

Brainstorm some good, thought-provoking questions that you can ask others when the opportunity arises. Here are a few to get you started:

What were you taught about God growing up?

How have you explained death (of, say, a grandparent) to your children?

What do you find meaningful about your work?

This week read and reflect daily on the scripture below. Open a natural flow of conversational prayer with the Holy Spirit as you meditate on the scriptures, inviting him to reveal himself to you. Then gather with those who journey alongside you and interact over the discipleship questions.



John 4:1-26

Jesus knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John 2 (though Jesus himself didn't baptize them—his disciples did).³ So he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

⁴ He had to go through Samaria on the way. ⁵ Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. ⁷ Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." ⁸ He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.



⁹ The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

¹⁰ Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

¹¹ “But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? ¹² And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”

¹³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

¹⁵ “Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

¹⁶ “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband— ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!”

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet. ²⁰ So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?”

²¹ Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus told her, “I AM the Messiah!”



DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS:

How curious are you about the beliefs of others?

Describe the last time you asked questions about someone's spiritual journey and listened without injecting your own opinion?

What are the challenges of listening?

How have people responded when you have listened?

Where have you sensed the Holy Spirit at work as they've talked?



ACTION STEPS

In light of this, what is God asking you to do?

How will you do this?

When will you do this?

Who will help you?



PART 2: EXPLAINING THE GOOD NEWS AND THE WAY OF JESUS



KEY QUESTION: HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS IN A FEW SIMPLE SENTENCES?

“Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler.”
—Albert Einstein

A very significant part of what Jesus told us to do was to pass the gospel message on to others. That’s discipling at the heart of the great commission. Passing on the gospel to others takes place in two parts: 1) having a clear understanding the basic essentials of what the gospel is, and 2) deciding how best to communicate to others so they too will gain that understanding of the essentials. For example, Jesus used many agrarian and fishing examples, as they reflected the culture of the people he was trying to reach. How might we use modern day examples to explain to others the gospel?

This week read and reflect daily on the scripture below. Open a natural flow of conversational prayer with the Holy Spirit as you meditate on the scriptures, inviting him to reveal himself to you. Then gather with those who journey alongside you and interact over the discipleship questions.

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”
—C.S. Lewis



Psalm 34:8:

Taste and see that the LORD is good.

Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!

Acts 18:24-28:

Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, an eloquent speaker who knew the Scriptures well, had arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria in Egypt.²⁵ He had been taught the way of the Lord, and he taught others about Jesus with an enthusiastic spirit and with accuracy. However, he knew only about John’s baptism.²⁶ When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God even more accurately.

²⁷ Apollos had been thinking about going to Achaia, and the brothers and sisters in Ephesus encouraged him to go. They wrote to the believers in Achaia, asking them to welcome him. When he arrived there, he proved to be of great benefit to those who, by God’s grace, had believed.²⁸ He refuted the Jews with powerful arguments in public debate. Using the Scriptures, he explained to them that Jesus was the Messiah.



Colossians 4: 3-4:

³ Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains. ⁴ Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should.



DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS:

Describe the gospel in under three minutes as you would to someone who doesn't already understand it.

What do you understand to be the basic essentials of the gospel?

Who do you know who needs to consider those essentials?

How can you best invite that person to do so?

How can the decision to follow Jesus be made more plain to people?

Think of someone you are in relationship with. How can you invite them to follow Jesus in a way that will make sense to them?

How will you balance your intellectual understanding of the essentials with experiential understanding?

THINK OF AN IMAGE

Images—or word pictures—are used throughout scripture. A small seed growing into a large tree. An old wineskin breaking when filled with new wine. A vast field of wheat waiting to be harvested. When you consider the story of the gospel from within your own cultural context, what images come to mind? Choose one and write a paragraph about it.



ACTION STEPS

In light of this, what is God asking you to do?

How will you do this?

When will you do this?

Who will help you?



PART 3: ESTABLISHING NEW BELIEVERS IN A DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS



KEY QUESTION: INTO WHAT TYPE OF DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS ARE YOU ESTABLISHING PEOPLE?

There are almost as many ways to disciple people as there are people. Yet if we leave the discipleship process completely wide open, what tends to happen is nothing. A better practice is to establish a default option for discipleship-- a discipleship engine, if you will-- and allow people to make changes and adaptations as needed.

Some of these discipleship methods include Life Transformation Groups (LTGs), T for T, SOAP, coaching relationships, and even these Dimensions of Discipleship Guides you hold in your hands. Anything that provides some basic content and some format for processing that content alongside others can function as a discipleship engine.

The element of learning from one another is a non-negotiable in discipleship. We cannot learn to become more like Jesus and follow him more faithfully in isolation from others. It's simply not how we were designed as humans, and it certainly is not how Jesus established people in a discipleship process. We are all different parts of the same body and we all bring different gifts to the table. Because of this relational dynamic, no one can disciple another person alone. The full Body of Christ is needed. We can learn things from one another that we cannot learn on our own or from just one other person.

“Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.”
—Eleanor Roosevelt

This week read and reflect daily on the scripture below. Open a natural flow of conversational prayer with the Holy Spirit as you meditate on the scriptures, inviting him to reveal himself to you. Then gather with those who journey alongside you and interact over the discipleship questions.



Colossians 3:12-17:

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace.



And always be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

2 Timothy 1:13-14:

Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me—a pattern shaped by the faith and love that you have in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you.

Matthew 11:28-30:

Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”



DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS:

What are the essential hallmarks of a healthy discipleship relationship? List as many as you can think of.

Who are you currently discipling?

How does that relationship incorporate the elements you listed?

Which elements are present and which are missing or incomplete?

At what point will you challenge the person you are discipling to begin discipling someone else?

How will you prepare him or her for that responsibility?



REVIEW YOUR OPTIONS

What discipling engines are you aware of? Review them and decide which would best fit in your context. Then try it out yourself. What works well? What adjustments might need to be made?



ACTION STEPS

In light of this, what is God asking you to do?

How will you do this?

When will you do this?

Who will help you?



PART 4: CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH A FAITH COMMUNITY



KEY QUESTION: HOW CAN YOU CONNECT NEW BELIEVERS WITH A FAITH COMMUNITY?

We need one another. Christianity is not a go-it-alone faith. The way God has set up the church from the beginning is that we are to live out our faith from within a context of community. A new believer must have fellowship of some kind with other believers. That community provides the means of encouragement, challenging, learning, and prayer. Therefore, every time a new believer comes to the faith, they must be connected to the larger body of Christ.

However, there is a dilemma that taking someone out of their natural network of relationships and surrounding them with Christians can block the continuing path of others coming to faith through that network of relationships. So at the same time that you connect new believers with the body, you also need to ensure that they remain connected to their natural network of friends, family, and co-workers.

“Every time there is a new convert, you have discovered an elbow, a kneecap, or a nose. The assumption is that the rest of the body must be nearby and a church will emerge through evangelizing the new convert’s network of relationships. Through any one person, you can find the seeds of a new church.”
—Robert E. Logan, *Be Fruitful and Multiply*



Acts 2:42-47:

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.

⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴ And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. ⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— ⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Acts 16:14-15:

¹⁴ One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying.



¹⁵ She was baptized along with other members of her household, and she asked us to be her guests.

Acts 16:31-34:

³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." ³² And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. ³³ Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. ³⁴ He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.



DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS:

When have you seen a new believer completely submerged into the church? What did that look like? What were the results?

What are the risks of continuing with their existing network of relationships? What are the possible benefits?

How can you take a both-and approach?

What do new believers need from other believers? How can you ensure that is provided?



ACTION STEPS

In light of this, what is God asking you to do?

How will you do this?

When will you do this?

Who will help you?



PART 5: HELPING NEW FOLLOWERS MAKE MORE FOLLOWERS



KEY QUESTION: HOW ARE YOU HELPING NEW FOLLOWERS OF JESUS MAKE MORE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

You could make 100 followers of Jesus, yet if you don't help them go on to make other followers of Jesus the long-term impact will be small. On the contrary, if you made three followers of Jesus and taught them all to make more followers, and they taught those they disciplined to make more disciples, the long-term impact would be significant and far-reaching. Such is the power of multiplication over addition.

The personal impact on ourselves is equally significant. God calls us to pour out what he has poured out on us. Because we have been loved, we love. It's contagious. When God is at work in your life, you naturally have something to share with others. In turn, your sharing with others opens you up wider to the work God is doing within you. If we are in relationship with God, we have a story to tell... and that story was meant to be passed on from person to person to person through the generations.

"But how could you live and have no story to tell?"
—Fyodor Dostoyevsky,
White Nights



Acts 16:4-5:

Then they went from town to town, instructing the believers to follow the decisions made by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in their faith and grew larger every day.

Ephesians 4:11-13:

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

John 4:39-42:

Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!" ⁴⁰ When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, ⁴¹ long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. ⁴² Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not just because of what you told



us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”

Deuteronomy 7:8-9:

Rather, it was simply that the LORD loves you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the LORD rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. 9 Understand, therefore, that the LORD your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands.



DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS:

What spiritual legacy do you hope to leave?

How are you challenging those you are discipling to make more disciples?

How will you ensure that discipling covers multiple generations?

How are you best equipped to not just make but multiply disciples?

What is your vision for future generations of believers?

What blessings can you pray on the next generation of leaders?

“The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians: who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, walk out the door, and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.”

—Brennan Manning

DOLLARS AND CENTS:

Suppose a father offers his two sons the choice of taking either one dollar a week for 52 weeks or one cent the first week and an amount each week for the next 51 one weeks that is double the previous week’s amount. Which one would you choose?

The first choice would just be adding one dollar each week – that’s linear growth. At the end of 52 weeks – he’d have \$52. The second choice is multiplication – that’s exponential growth. If one of the sons chooses this, at the end of the year he will have an unbelievable amount of money. In fact, his allowance in the last week (not the total amount accumulated over 52 weeks) would be \$22,517,998,136,852.48. Initially the multiplication is slow, but don’t let that deceive you. In the long run, addition never keeps pace with multiplication. Multiplication is explosive. (example used courtesy of Dave DeVries).



ACTION STEPS

In light of this, what is God asking you to do?

How will you do this?

When will you do this?

Who will help you?



WHAT'S NEXT?

So you've completed this guide. What now? Is there another dimension of discipleship you need to zoom in on? If so, which one?

Because the *Dimensions of Discipleship* guides aren't meant to be used in any particular order, it's up to you to do some listening to the Holy Spirit. Take a look at the big picture and decide where God is leading you next. With a holistic system, it's always a surprise. No matter which guide you choose next, you're engaged in an ongoing action-reflection process as you continue living incarnationally and missionally.

Maybe what's next isn't another *Dimensions of Discipleship* guide. Here are a few other options:

You can move on to a similar series: *The Journey Together Now* guides. You can find out more about these downloadable guides at www.loganleadership.com.

If you have a friend or mentor you've been going through these guides with—or if you'd like to begin discipling someone, you can start an online coaching relationship at www.mycoachlog.com: a tool to help you stay on track, reflect on what God is doing, and celebrate progress.

You may be ready to engage in a more formal coaching relationship with someone who can challenge you to the next level of missional living and leadership. Check out www.loganleadership.com for information on coaching.

No matter what's next for you, continue to grow in the ways you follow Jesus into your continuing journey of discipleship.