

Small Group Guide OF ALL NATIONS

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt, Jonathan Bean, and J.D. Payne

January 27, 2013

Acts 8:1-4

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

Message Outline

How Do We Make Disciples Of All Nations?

- We have a peoples-focused goal.
 - What did Jesus say?
 - The Great Commission is not a general command to make as many disciples as possible.
 - The Great Commission is a specific command to make disciples among every group of people on the planet.
 - How have we responded?
 - Over 11,000 people groups in the world.
 - Over 6,000 people groups still unreached with the gospel.
- We take a multi-faceted approach.
 - Multiple contexts
 - Reached: Serving the church.
 - Unreached: Establishing the church.
 - Multiple needs
 - Spiritual
 - Physical

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- Multiple avenues
 - Praying
 - Giving
 - Going
 - Short-term
 - Mid-term
 - Long-term
 - Individuals in teams
 - Traditional missionaries and vocational missionaries
- We need a death-defying commitment.
 - We go wisely.
 - We go willingly.

How Do We Multiply Churches In All Nations?

- We multiply leaders...
 - Disciples who make disciples
 - Pastors and missionaries
- Whom we send out into Birmingham, North America, and the nations...
- To multiply churches in simple and reproducible ways.
 - The commission of our Lord requires it.
 - The example of the church demonstrates it.
 - The reality of the world demands it.

What Does This Mean For Us? What Does This Mean For Me?

- We covenant together to glorify God by making disciples of all nations.
 - Worship gatherings that glorify God.
 - Small groups that are making disciples.
 - Global missions that impacts the nations.
- I commit my life to glorify God by making disciples of all nations.
 - Surrender: A blank check with each of our lives
 - Abide: A personal disciple-making plan in each of our lives

Message Summary

Today's message continues the exploration of what it means to glorify God by making disciples of all nations. The message gives biblical examples and practical implications for what it looks like to fulfill the Great Commission among. The gospel advancing to every people group on the planet is the goal of the Great Commission. At Brook Hills, global missions serves the church where it exists and establishes the church where it does not. Seeking to make disciples and to meet urgent spiritual and physical needs, we pray for the nations, give sacrificially, and spend our lives going to the nations short-term, mid-term, and long-term. As the church, we seek to multiply leaders and churches that will spread the gospel across our city, our country, and the world. We abide in Christ and offer God everything we have to advance the gospel to every people group in the world.

Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- Read Matthew 28:18-20. What does it mean to make disciples of all nations? How does the worship of God fuel our passion for disciple-making and for global missions?

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- Read Acts 1:8. What is the role of the Holy Spirit as we seek to reach the nations? Why is it crucial to rely on Him and His power?
- How is the church multiplied in the book of Acts? Consult Acts 6:7; 8:1-4; 9:31; 11:19-21; 12:24; and 28:30-31. What common elements do you notice in these passages? What events and practices in the lives of the believers lead to the spread of the gospel? In what ways are these actions and attitudes evident in your own life?
- The New Testament shows ordinary Christians doing the work of the Great Commission (see Acts 4:13). Do you view disciple making as the task of ordinary believers or of trained, specialized leaders? Does this give you confidence as you seek to make the gospel known? What do you need in order to make disciples of those whom God has placed in your life?
- What steps can you take this week to share the gospel with those whom you encounter?
- God sees people groups, not primarily as nations but as groups of people organized by common language and culture. Pastor J.D. noted that many of these people groups live in this country and are not yet reached with the gospel. How can your small group intentionally seek to share the gospel and show the love of Christ to unreached people groups both abroad and in the U.S.? As a small group, list various people groups and pray specifically for the gospel to spread and for believers to minister to these people groups.
- When serving in global missions, how do we work differently in reached contexts versus unreached contexts? What are differences between serving the church (reached) and establishing the church (unreached)?
- There are multiple ways to contribute to work among the nations today. How can you engage with missions over the next year? How will you pray? Go? Give? Seek God over the next week to see where He might be leading you in these areas.
- If you or anyone in your small group have served in another context, briefly share with the group how God used that mission trip in your life and in the lives of others. Pray for God to continue to work in the hearts of the people encountered on that short-term trip, for the work being done in that context, and for the partners who labor in that context.
- When sending people out to do global missions, why is it important that we do so in community?
- How could you possibly use the vocational gifts and training God has blessed you with to reach the nations? How might God be calling you to use the skills you have to serve in another context? How can you help the next generation identify talents and abilities they may have to be used for the sake of the Kingdom?
- What is the relationship between worship and missions? How does the desire to see God known and worshiped among all peoples fuel our commitment to global missions?
- Why is it important to not only multiply disciples but to also multiply churches? What does it mean to multiply churches? Why is it important that our methods in church multiplication be simple and reproducible?
- As we commit ourselves to the goal of making disciples of all nations, why is it important that we abide in Christ? How can you use a personal disciple making plan to help you with this? How can your small group help? Pray that you would be willing and open to serve God in foreign missions. Ask for Him to make it clear how you can best make disciples of all nations.
- Encourage everyone in the small group to complete a personal disciple-making plan, and incorporate into small group over the next week or couple of weeks time where members can share their plans with each other.

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?

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- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)

- *Church:* Spend some time this week adoring God for who He is. Praise Him for His holy character and His mighty acts. Thank Him for His blessings in your life. Search your heart for areas where you are not submitting to Him, confess your rebellion, and accept the forgiveness that He offers. Ask the Spirit to guide you how to best be involved in making Him known among all peoples. Finally, pray that God would give you individually and us as a church, a steadfast, unwavering commitment to seek His glory by making disciples of all nations.
- *Local:* This week we are praying for a new outreach initiative in Gate City beginning in February on Sunday afternoons at 5:00pm. This outreach will be particularly focuses toward children living in Marks Village public housing community where over 80% of the children are fatherless. We are also praying for Ambassadors For Christ Church and Rich Thomas, Pastor.
- *Global:* This week we are praying for Brook Hills Long-Term missionary, Jessica T. who is serving in North Africa. Jessica was commissioned out last year from our faith family to join the North Africa Church Planting team. Her role is to serve and support the team as a nurse in the medical clinics they use to engage an unreached people group. Join us this week as we pray for Jessica. We are also praying for our Short-Term team serving in Cuba this week.