

Small Group Guide BY MAKING DISCIPLES

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt, John Butterfield, Keith Stanley

January 20, 2013

Matthew 28:16-20

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

BY MAKING DISCIPLES

Matthew 28:16-20

Making Disciples of Christ...

- We glorify God as we become like Christ.
- We glorify God as others become like Christ.
- This is what being a disciple of Jesus and making disciples of Jesus is all about.
 - As we receive the Word, we share the Word.
 - As we follow the Word, we show the Word.
 - As we learn the Word, we teach the Word.
 - As we see the world, we serve the world.
- The question we are constantly asking as a church:
 - How can we most effectively make disciples of all nations?
- The primary avenue for making disciples in our faith family is small groups.
 - Experiencing biblical community as we show the Word and teach the Word to each other.
 - Accomplishing biblical mission as we share the Word and serve the world together.

Making Disciples in the Church...

- We are motivated by love. (Mt. 22:37)

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- Love for God.
- Love for each other. (Jn. 13:35)
- Love for those not yet in the kingdom.
- In each of our lives, we take initiative. (Lk. 10:37)
 - To grow as disciples of Jesus and to give our lives to making disciples of Jesus.
- In all our faith family, we need integration.
 - Preschool, Children, Students, Singles, Couples, Parents, Grandparents

Making Disciples in the City... (Zech. 7:8-10)

- We are ministers of mercy.
 - The fatherless
 - The widow
 - The poor
 - The sojourner
- The gospel is designed to travel through people, not projects.
- The gospel is declared with a heart of humility, not a sense of superiority.

Making Disciples as a Christian...

- From the beginning...
 - Every follower of Jesus is a fisher of men.
- To the end...
 - Every disciple of Jesus makes disciples of Jesus.
- Christ compels us not to come, be baptized, and sit in one location, but to go, baptize, and make disciples of all nations.

Message Summary

Today's message continues to focus on the mission of glorifying God by making disciples of all nations, specifically in regard to discipleship. It follows last week's sermon, which expounded upon a believer's pursuit to glorify God through worshipping Him. Naturally, worship of God leads to witness for God. Witnessing is a response to God's glory but also a response to His command to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. Being obedient to God's command to be His witnesses means that His people will make disciples wherever they go. Believers glorify Christ when they become more like Him and when they help others grow in Christ-likeness. As followers of Christ, we make disciples by sharing, showing, and teaching the Word to others and by serving the world. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be a disciple-maker. His model and commands leave no room for spectator Christians.

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?).

- What is the relationship between worship of God and witness for God? How is our witness for God a demonstration of our belief in the worthiness of God to be worshipped by all peoples?
- Describe the way that Jesus made disciples or modeled disciple-making for His followers? How did He share, show, and teach the Word while serving the world?
- What are some excuses that we make for not making disciples? What do these excuses reveal about us? What do they reveal about our view of discipleship?
- What are some legitimate hindrances to our task of making disciples? What are some practical ways that we can overcome these? How can we help each other overcome these obstacles?

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- Jesus maintained a very close group of disciples with whom he devoted much of His public ministry. How does this type of discipleship often differ from our experiences with discipleship?
- What does Jesus' model of intense and deep disciple-making require from us? Why is it difficult? Why is it effective?
- How was Jesus intentional about beginning disciple-making relationships with His disciples? What are some practical steps that we can take to begin the process of seeking out someone to disciple and someone to disciple us?
- In what ways do you need to be intentional in your own spiritual growth?
- What are the implications of Jesus' commission to His disciples in Mt. 28:18-20--sending His disciples to make other disciples? How should that inform our understanding of "going" make disciples?
- Jesus states in Matthew 22:37 that the greatest commandments are to love God and to love people. What happens to our efforts at disciple-making when they are not motivated by love?
- How can your small group intentionally integrate with other life-stages and intergenerational opportunities within the church for ministry? How does this type of disciple-making strengthen families and build up the whole body of Christ?
- Throughout Scripture, God directs His people to show mercy to those who are most vulnerable, namely the fatherless, widow, poor, and foreigners. What does this reveal about God's character and His heart and desire for His people? Pray for God to give His people – including you – His heart for the poor, the fatherless, the widows, and the foreigners. Praise Him for His loving care for all people.
- How is God moving in our hearts to give us a burden for a particular ministry? How can we intentionally get involved in making disciples in our city? What are some next steps you can take to serve others in this city?
- With what attitudes must we approach disciple-making in other contexts, particularly in contexts concerning ministries of mercy?
- How can we use service-type projects to help us engage with others who need to experience the gospel and to seek out those we can disciple?
- How can we use our time as a small group to better equip one another to make disciples?

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?
- 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)

- *For Our Lives: We are reminded this week of the commissioning Jesus gave His disciples, including us today. Pray our response will be to fall at the feet of Jesus and worship Him and join Him in His work of making disciples. Pray we will daily live as humble, loyal subjects to our sovereign King who has been given all authority. Pray we will embrace the task of making disciples of all nations as the primary focus of our lives. Ask for God's guidance in where we each should be going as individuals to*

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proclaim the gospel. Ask God to lead us all to a small group of people to disciple as well as those who will disciple us. Pray for all of us to live with a sense of urgency in regards to fulfilling the Great Commission.

- *For Our City: This week we are praying for racial reconciliation and unity in the Body of Christ in Birmingham for the sake of the advancement of the gospel. We are also praying for New Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church and Thomas Beavers, Pastor.*
- *For Our World: This week we are praying for Brook Hills Long-Term missionaries Martin and Rose Ebel. The Ebels serve in Woorabinda, Australia where they are focused on ministering to and engaging Aboriginal peoples with the gospel. To find out more information on the Ebel family and ways to pray, visit www.skippi.org.*