

DISCIPLE

MAKING

# **LIBERTY STUDENTS**

Disciple Making Strategy



# WHY MAKE DISCIPLES?

## **Jesus Commanded Us to Make Disciples.**

Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.”

## **The Church in America is Disappearing.**

Only 7-9% of Americans claim to believe the Gospel (Jesus is the God-man, Jesus died for our sin, Jesus bodily rose from the dead, Jesus is returning again, we must repent of sin and make Him the Lord of our life, etc.).

Only 22 million of 316 million Americans believe the Gospel. You could fit every Gospel-believing American into the state of New York and leave the rest of the country for non-believers.

Americans are getting expelled, fired, and arrested for their faith in the Gospel and the Word of God.

## **Student Ministry in America is Dying.**

Statistics tell us that 70% of teenagers who grow up attending church will leave the faith and never return to church faithfully again after their high school graduation.

What Student Ministry has been doing has not been working. If we keep doing what we've been doing, we'll keep getting what we've been getting.

## **Ministries vs. Movements.**

God meant the church of Jesus to be a movement, but the church has become a ministry only.

Ministries come, sit, sing, listen, learn, and leave.

Movements also go and make a difference by making disciples and living on mission with the Gospel.

The church has never been so good at building huge buildings, services, and conferences, but we've never seen weaker Christians.

Why is the last thing Jesus told us to do the last thing we ever do?

\*All statistics above taken from “The Great Evangelical Crisis” by John S. Dickerson.

## **WHY MAKE DISCIPLES IN STUDENT MINISTRY?**

### **Jesus’ Disciples were Probably Teenagers.**

Jesus may very well have been a Student Pastor.

Jesus may have chosen teenagers to be His disciples because He wanted to start a movement and not just have a ministry.

### **7 Reasons why Jesus’ Disciples were Probably Teenagers.**

1. Title: Jesus called them “Little Ones” and “Little Children.”
2. Training: It was cultural for a Rabbi to pick disciples at age 15.
3. Travel: Disciples would begin traveling with the Rabbi at age 15.
4. Marriage: Jewish men were normally married at 18. They were not.
5. Temple Tax: Paid at age 18, but only Jesus and Peter paid it.
6. Longevity: The disciple’s ministries lasted decades after Jesus.
7. Immaturity: The disciple’s exemplified behavior like younger men.

\* This section taken from Robby Gallaty’s “Rediscovering Discipleship”

Student Ministry is the perfect time to make disciples of the younger generation before they are sent off to college, into the military, and traveling all over the world for their careers with the Gospel!

# WHAT IS DISCIPLE MAKING?

## **What is a Disciple?**

A disciple is one who follows Jesus and brings others with them.

## **Disciple Making is Simple, Memorable, and Reproducible.**

Simple: Disciple Making is so simple even a Christian can do it. Disciple Making was never meant for just pastors, professors, or professionals, but it was meant to be the ministry of every Christian.

Memorable: Disciple Making itself is the training tool for every Christian who has been discipled to continue making disciples.

Reproducible: Disciple Making should be done in such a way that those who are getting discipled are able to make more disciples throughout the rest of their life.

## **Disciple Making is a Group of 3.**

Throughout the ministry of Jesus, we see Him several times doing personal training with His 3: Peter, James, and John.

## **Disciple Making is Both Daily and Weekly.**

Disciple Making groups do life together daily through group texting (more on that below).

Disciple Making groups meet together weekly.

## **Disciple Making is Missional Living.**

Disciple Making groups are best done in public places (coffee shop, restaurant, etc) for people to see others studying the Scriptures and praying together.

## **Disciple Making will Make More Disciples.**

What is Disciple Making? Disciple Making is the movement that Jesus started to reproduce and spread disciples throughout the world. True disciple making groups will make disciples who are able to start their own groups and reproduce disciple making disciples.

# WHAT IS THE PATHWAY OF DISCIPLE MAKING?

## **1. Worship Services.**

We believe that every disciple of Jesus should be in a weekly worship service with their church.

## **2. Connect Groups.**

We believe that every disciple of Jesus should be in a weekly connect group with other believers.

## **3. Disciple Making Groups.**

We believe that disciples who are worshipping with the church and meeting in connect groups are ready for disciple making groups.

## **4. Missional Living.**

We believe that disciples who are weekly in worship, connect groups, and discipleship groups will naturally live their life on mission more.

Discipleship is the missing leg on the kitchen table. Why isn't the church standing strong today? Why does the church seem to be disappearing and student ministry seem to be dying? If you take off one of the legs from your kitchen table, it will not stand strong. We believe disciple making is the missing leg that churches haven't been attaching. When the church returns to what Jesus commanded, we will fulfill His mission by making disciples.

# WHY HASN'T THE CHURCH BEEN MAKING DISCIPLES?

## **The 2 Big Reasons Why We Don't Make Disciples.**

1. "I've never been discipled."
2. "I don't know how to disciple anyone."

If we're being honest with ourselves, I think a close third today would be "Disciple making is inconvenient."

We need to kick-start a disciple making culture in student ministry today so that our students "have been disciplined", "know how to make disciples", and see the excitement of obeying Jesus in disciple making.

## HOW DO WE MAKE DISCIPLES?

Disciple Making is best done by Jesus' strategy in Luke 24: Bible, Gospel, Personal.

### **Bible.**

Jesus made it clear that we begin with the Bible when making disciples.

"Then He said to them, 'These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets must be fulfilled.'" (Luke 24:44)

Making Disciples always starts with God's Word. It is His Word that disciplines our lives to be like Jesus (Luke 17:17, Romans 12:2, Romans 8:29).

In a one-hour disciple making session, the first 15 minutes may be used to catch up, talk about life, and just enjoy general conversation.

The second 15 minutes should be used studying God's Word. This is more of a discussion about how God speaks to each person through that week's passage than one of the group members teaching a lesson.

It is very important to keep the disciple making group discussion-oriented so that every member is being disciplined to make more disciples.

### **Gospel.**

The best way to make disciples is by a Gospel-centered understanding of the Bible.

“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.’” (Luke 24:45-46)

In verse 45, Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. A true understanding of Scripture is not by Systematic Theology, the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, a trip to the Middle East, etc.

Jesus clearly said that a mind opened to understand the Bible is one that sees the suffering death of Jesus and His resurrection. This is a Gospel-centered understanding of every book, chapter, story, character, law, event, etc.

The third 15 minutes of every disciple making session should be spent in a discussion to understand the passage read in a Gospel-centered way about the person of Jesus, His life, His death, and His resurrection. How does that passage point you to the person and work of Jesus?

### **Personal.**

A must in disciple making is getting personal by applying the passage to each disciples life of failures and faith, struggles and strengths.

“And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:46)

When a disciple’s mind has been opened to a Gospel-centered understanding of the Bible, they can’t help but live their live on mission by proclaiming repentance, forgiveness, and witness.

Before disciples can proclaim those three, they must first experience them personally.

The personal portion of the disciple making session should be centered around areas of needed repentance, forgiveness, and witnessing.

Disciple making is the best place to confess these areas because of the intimacy and trust these groups grow over the weeks.

When disciples experience the joy of repentance and forgiveness, they will naturally witness these things to the lost!

The fourth 15 minutes of every disciple making session should be spent confessing these areas, praying for each other, and encouraging each other to live lives of repentance, forgiveness, and witness from the Gospel.

(It is important to engender trust among all members of the Discipleship Group. Sometimes members may share their need for repentance and forgiveness in areas that must remain confidential within the Discipleship Group, and must feel confident enough to do so.)

**Jesus' model for making disciples is Bible, Gospel, Personal. Luke 24 is the expansion of the Great Commission where Jesus expressed His disciple making strategy.**

## HOW DO WE CHOOSE DISCIPLES?

If we don't choose anyone, then no one will be disciplined.

### **Choose your 3.**

Jesus not only had a congregation of hundreds of followers, but He also had a connect group of 12 apostles. Jesus also seemed to pour His life into His 3 chosen disciples: Peter, James, and John.

### **How do you know which 3 to choose?**

Pray about the 3 that God would have you to disciple. Let Jesus lead you to who He would have you disciple.

### **What if it comes across that I'm playing favorites?**

While this may be true in someone's situation, it should not be a stopper. Picking disciples is not showing favorites. The disciples you pick may not

be the most outspoken or quiet, most spiritual or least, most popular or the lonely. The 3 you pick should simply be the ones God directs you to disciple.

### **Why just 3?**

We have seen that one on one discipling is more for mentoring, and its not quickly reproducible. While one on one is always necessary, it should not be the only disciple making we do.

On the other hand, discipling a group of 12 is very difficult as well because it would take hours for everyone to have a voice and a part in the session.

We suggest that a group closest to 3 will encourage needed intimacy, a sense of community, and a rapid reproducibility to make more disciples.

### **What if I can't decide?**

If you can't decide on which 3 to choose and God doesn't seem to be making it clear, then continue to pray.

If you've prayed but yet you struggle with indecisiveness, then we suggest to always go after the FAT kids: Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

You can't disciple teens who aren't faithful to Christ and the church. (This does not mean we're going after the "perfect" students, but those who are faithfully attending and who will faithfully attend your group.

You can't disciple teens who aren't available. You obviously want to go after the students who are available to meet weekly, those who want to.

You can't disciple teens who aren't teachable. Students show lack of teachability by dominating the conversation, being distracted, or by not living out what they're learning from the group.

If this is your first disciple making group, we highly suggest you go after the faithful, available, and teachable.

# WHEN SHOULD WE MAKE DISCIPLES?

Disciple making isn't a certain time, but its all the time.

## **Daily Disciple Making.**

We've seen the best results with daily disciple making by Group Texting. Group Texting allows the whole disciple making group to be a part of the conversation daily.

Every Disciple Making group should group text each other daily about what they read in their devotions and how God spoke to them. This could be as simple as a Scripture reference and a short sentence or as much as screenshots, pictures, and paragraphs.

## **Weekly Disciple Making.**

We suggest every Disciple Making group to get together once a week for their Bible, Gospel, Personal discussion.

## **Doing Life Together.**

Disciple Making groups should not only text or meet weekly, but they should also find other opportunities to do life together in the normal rhythms of their natural lives.

## **Disciple Making Groups should last for around 12 Months.**

We've found that Disciple Making groups who last for less than 12 months do not make disciples who are able to make more disciples immediately.

We've also found that Disciple Making groups who won't multiply into more Disciple Making groups find it very hard to multiply later on. Their identity became each other rather than the movement of making disciples that Jesus called them to.

Disciple Making Groups that group text daily, meet weekly, and do life together seem to last naturally for 12 months before multiplying in order to make more disciples.

# WHERE SHOULD WE MAKE DISCIPLES?

## **Public Places.**

It seems best to meet in public places to make disciples for the purpose of public Scripture reading, prayer, and discussions. This could happen at a coffee shop, restaurant, etc.

## **Homes.**

Disciple Making groups can also meet in homes. This gives the group enough privacy to discuss very personal things. Homes also offer less distractions. Homes can be very comfortable and involves each other in their personal lives.

## **School Campuses.**

Some Disciple Making groups may want to meet at their school campus as their way of being a witness to their student body. This may bring up questions from other students as an opportunity for conversations about the Gospel.

## **Accountability.**

Wherever your Disciple Making group decides to meet, we highly suggest that an adult leader always has at least 2 teens with them at all times. Make sure to always get parents' permission to be in homes. Parents should always be informed of the whereabouts of every disciple making session.

# THE WIN IN DISCIPLE MAKING!

When do we know that our Disciple Making groups are working?

## **When Disciples are Making More Disciples.**

The goal of every Disciple Making group is to make disciples who multiply out after about 12 months to pick their very own 3 and make more disciples!

### **When the Movement Continues.**

The goal of every Disciple Making group is to join the movement that Jesus started with His own disciples. We want to see our disciples go, make more disciples, live on mission, and continue the movement.

### **When there is Multiplication.**

We have not made disciples until our disciples are making disciples. Our goal is a not a great Disciple Making session, but instead for our 2nd and 3rd generation of Disciple Making groups to have great sessions. Disciple Making is far-sighted, not short-sighted.

### **Why We Track Disciple Making Groups.**

We track all of our Disciple Making groups by spreadsheet in order to see who are in disciple making groups, who is leading these groups, how many are in groups, and how are groups are doing at multiplying after meeting together for a year.

## **WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP IN DISCIPLE MAKING?**

- 1. We encourage you to pray now about who to join with you in a Disciple Making group.**
- 2. Follow Jesus' command to make disciples and join His movement by getting involved.**
- 3. Let's strengthen the church and student ministries by making His command essential to the rest of our lives.**
- 4. Disciple making is so simple even a Christian can do it. In fact, every Christian should do it!**