GLOBAL DISCIPLESHIP INITIATIVE
globaldi.org

TURNING YOUR CHURCH INTO A DISCIPLE MAKING MISSION
Disciple-Making Intensive

The Vision, Mission and Values of GDI

Our vision: “Compelled by Jesus’ Great Commission, Global Discipleship Initiative (GDI) envisions a worldwide explosion of indigenous, multiplying, disciple-making movements in every country by the year 2026.”

Our Mission: GDI trains, coaches, and inspires pastors and Christian leaders to establish indigenous, multiplying, disciple-making movements, both nationally and internationally.

GDI Core Values:

A. Disciple-making is the church’s mission, not just one bullet point of the many things a church does.

B. Micro Groups: Disciples grow best and are empowered to disciple others in gender-specific triads (3) or quads (4).

C. Multiplying: Disciples are made to reproduce.

D. Transparent Relationships: God’s Word shapes our hearts is an honest, open, and mutually accountable environment.

E. Intentional: Discipleship requires purposeful, covenantal, relational investment.

F. Biblically-Based Curriculum: Discipleship Essentials covers the foundations for a life in Christ and is the empowerment tool we use to disciple others.


Learning Objectives:

1. Capture a vision of what a disciple-making church looks like.

2. Using simple pictorial images, understand the core elements that produce a disciple-making church.

Thesis: Let’s start with the end in mind, painting the picture of a successful journey (model church) and then work backwards to see how we get there.
Successful Journey: Destination

I. One Church’s Successful Journey

A. Make an unwavering commitment to do all that it takes to become a disciple-making church.

B. The Camarillo Community Church Successful Journey

1. The Value of Going Slow

2. Serendipities: Anticipated and Unanticipated Benefits of Becoming a Disciple-Making Church

As you listen to the Camarillo story, what are the key features that moved the church from an attraction model to a disciple-making church?

GDI Value 1: Disciple-making is the church’s mission, not just one bullet point of the many things a church does. Discuss the key points that you think this value statement is making.
II. Starts with an unwavering commitment to make Jesus’ mission the mission of your church.

A. Greg’s “Duh” Moment

B. Keep laser-focused on making reproducing disciples.

1. "The church exists for no other purpose but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose."
   - C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 163, 169, 170

2. Paul’s Mission Statement (Colossians 1:28-29)

III. Taking Stock: Assessing where you are on the continuum to become a disciple-making congregation.

**The Problem:** By almost any measure we can conceive, we have a low state of discipleship in our church today. But we need only one measurement to confirm the trouble we are in.

**Case Study #1:** What percentage of people do you think would have a clue of what to do, if it was said to them, “I want you introduce you to Joe. He is a new convert and has just come to know Christ. I want you to walk alongside him, stay with him, help him to become a mature follower of Christ. And by the way, your job is not done until Joe has assumed responsibility and been equipped to do the same for others?”

What would be the average believer’s response to such a challenge? How might you respond to that challenge?

**Case Study #2:** A pastor of your church is approached by a newcomer to the congregation. “I want to become a well-grounded follower of Christ, and I also want to help others learn to be followers of Jesus as well. Can you tell me how you do that in this church?”

What might the typical response of a pastor if approached with that question besides being bowled over by the passion behind it?
Why Churches Change

Truth about change within organizations: Organizations (churches) change when one of these two things are true: (1) You are compelled by God-inspired vision of what the Lord wants you to become; (2) There is a deeply felt need deficit of disciple making you are compelled to address.

Evaluate your setting:

☐ We have a compelling vision.
☐ We have a felt need deficit.
☐ We have both.

Explain:

Long Version: Use the diagnostic elements from Chapters 1 and 2 from *Transforming Discipleship*.


A. Our Current Non-Disciple-Making Gospel

1. God loves you.
2. You messed up.
3. Jesus died and rose for you and paid your sin debt.
4. Trust Jesus to forgive yours and receive the gift of eternal life.

B. Jesus’ Gospel of Discipleship (Mark 1:14-15)

5. The time has come.
6. The Kingdom of God is at hand.
7. Repent.
8. Believe the good news.

Transition: If we can stipulate that the mission of the church is to make disciples who make disciples, then we might say that the next logical question to ask is…

HOW?
Overview: There are three necessary elements that work together to create a culture of disciple making:

1. **Relational Environment:** The micro group is the container for the core environmental conditions that make for transformation and multiplication of disciple-makers.
2. **Intentional Leader:** The most important role in the church is the leader of a micro group who nurtures the relational environment.
3. **Reproducible Process:** The map/GPS that guides you to your destination is a foundational disciple-making curriculum.

**RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

*Basic Disciple Making Unit: The Micro Group*

**GDI Value 2: MICRO GROUPS: Disciples grow best and are empowered to disciple others in a gender-specific micro group (3s and 4s).**

I. The Key Components of a Micro Group (see Appendix 1)

II. Why the Micro Group is an ideal environment to transform and multiply reproducing disciples. It embodies the three key components that should define a disciple-making ministry.

A. **Relational:**

1. Jesus modeled personal investment as the way to make disciples (Luke 6:12-13) What are the strategic reasons Jesus focused on a few? What was He trying to accomplish?

   a. Internalization: the only way for Jesus to pass on His message, manner and mission was through intimate association.

   “This careful, painstaking education of the disciples secured the teacher’s influence on this world should be permanent; that His kingdom should be founded on the rock of deep and indestructible convictions in the minds of
a few, not on the shifting sands of *superficial* impressions in the minds of the many.”

- A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*

b. Multiplication: From the beginning Jesus kept in mind that He would be entrusting His mission to His apostles as He returned to His Father.

*Jesus had enough vision to think small.*

“Perhaps today’s pastor should imagine that they are going to have three more years in their parish as pastor--and that there will be no replacement for them when they leave. If they acted as if this were going to happen, they would then put the highest priority on selecting, motivating, and training lay leaders that could carry on the mission. The results of three sustained years of such an approach would be quite significant. Even revolutionary.”

- George Martin

**Exercise:** Pastor(s) has (have) only 3 years left with no one to replace them, what should be done to get ready for their departure?

- Pastor’s response (how would this change your priorities):
- Lay persons’ advice to their pastor(s):
- Lay persons’ assumption of responsibilities:

2. The Power of Personal Invitation to Discipling Relationship: How do we frame the invitation?

3. The church’s challenge: Shift from programs to relationships

   a. Discipling relationships are marked by intimacy, whereas programs tend to be focused on information.
   b. Discipling relationships involve full, mutual responsibility of the participants, whereas programs have one or a few who do on behalf of the many.
   c. Discipling relationships are customized to the unique growth challenges of the individuals, whereas programs emphasize synchronization and regimentation.
   d. Discipling relationships focus accountability around life change, whereas programs focus accountability around content.

**GDI Value 3: Disciples are made to reproduce**
B. **Multiplication:** The goal is to empower God’s people to become disciples who make disciples.

1. Change the model of disciple making from…

   a. The effect of one-on-one discipling…

      1) In the one-on-one the discipler carries the full weight of responsibility for the spiritual welfare of another.
      2) The one-on-one relationship sets up a hierarchy that tends to result in dependency.
      3) The one-on-one limits the interchange or dialogue.
      4) The one-on-one also creates a singular model approach.
      5) Finally, the one-on-one model does not generally reproduce.

   b. The empowerment of the micro group (3s and 4s)

      1) From unnatural pressure to the natural participation of the discipler.
      2) From hierarchy to peer relationship.
      3) From dialogue to dynamic interchange.
      4) From limited input to wisdom in numbers.
      5) From addition to multiplication.

The Reproduction Riddle

C. **Transformative Environment**

When we…

- open our hearts in transparent trust to each other
- around the truth of God’s word
- in the spirit of life-change accountability
- while engaged in our God-designed mission

…we are in the *Holy Spirit’s hothouse of transformation.*

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<tr>
<th>GDI Value 4: God’s Word shape our hearts in an honest, open and mutually accountable environment.</th>
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The micro group maximizes 4 key elements that create the “hothouse” effect.

1. Relational transparency

   Key Principle: The extent to which we are willing to reveal to others those areas of our life that need God’s transforming touch is the extent to which we are inviting the Holy Spirit to make us new.
Stages of trust-building:

- Affirmation
- Walking together in difficult times
- Prayerful listening
- Mutual confession

“In confession the break-through to community takes place. Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation . . . In confession the light of the Gospel breaks into the darkness and seclusion of the heart...Since the confession of sin is made in the presence of a Christian brother, the last stronghold of self-justification is abandoned.

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

2. Truth in the Context of Real Community

GDI Value 5: Intentional: Discipleship requires purposeful, covenantal, relational investment.

3. Life-Change accountability

A Disciple’s Covenant

In order to grow toward maturity in Christ and complete Discipleship Essentials, I commit myself to the following standards:

1. Complete all assignments on a weekly basis prior to my discipleship appointment in order to contribute fully (see “Suggested Study Format”).

2. Meet weekly with my discipleship partners for approximately one and one-half hours to dialogue over the content of the assignments.

3. Offer myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated transformation during this discipleship period.

4. Contribute to a climate of honesty, trust and personal vulnerability in a spirit of mutual upbuilding.

5. Give serious consideration to continuing the discipling chain by committing myself to invest in at least two other people for the year following the initial completion of Discipleship Essentials.

4. Being sent on our God-given mission

D. Cultural Defining Elements: GRITS

1. Generational
2. Relational
3. Intentional
4. Transformational
5. Spirit-Driven

**INTENTIONAL LEADER¹**

Every micro group begins with a point person who takes the initiative to start a group. The most important persons in your church are the leaders who starts a group and helps that group catch a practice and vision of multiplication.

1. Prays for the Holy Spirit’s Discernment. (Who they should invite?)
3. Share with them what is involved (informed decision).
4. Review the Covenant.
5. Ask to prayerfully consider the invitation.
6. Set the first regular meeting (determines a time to fit everyone’s schedule)
7. Guide the participants through the first few sessions.
8. Rotates leadership early on. (Everyone leads with the intent they will have their own group.)
9. Models Transparency: Begin with some good sharing experiences to get to know each other.
10. Keeps restating the intent that they are being discipled so that they can lead their own group and so forth. [Pass the baton: Show pictures of baton pass ceremony.]

¹ See the *Leader’ Guide* by Greg Ogden for a more complete description of the role of leader and detailed guidance for how to carry out the leader’s role.
THE MAP/GPS: A TRANSFERABLE CURRICULUM

GDI Value 6: Biblically Based Curriculum: *Discipleship Essentials* covers the foundation for a life in Christ and is the empowerment tool we use to disciple others.

A. The Value and Importance of Curriculum…best answered negatively

**Discussion: If you don’t have a curriculum, what will be the consequences?**

If you don’t have a curriculum…

1. You don’t have a plan.
2. You won’t be intentional.
3. You don’t have a transferable tool.
4. You won’t have a sense of progression.
5. You won’t have a structure to define your time.

B. The Characteristics of a Good Curriculum

1. Transferable Tool
2. Give a Sense of Progress
3. Simple without being simplistic
4. Easy to use repeatable format
5. Highly interactive: egalitarian (every participates equally)
6. Personal (Application oriented)
DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS

- Why was this book written?
- Who is the book meant for?
- What are the key elements in each chapter?
- What are the major themes explored?

PART ONE: GROWING UP IN CHRIST
1. Making Disciples
2. Being a Disciple
3. Quiet Time
4. Bible Study
5. Prayer
6. Worship

PART TWO: UNDERSTANDING THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST
7. The Three-Person God
8. Made in God’s Image
9. Sin
10. Grace
11. Redemption
12. Justification
13. Adoption

PART THREE: BECOMING LIKE CHRIST
14. Filled with the Holy Spirit
15. Fruit of the Holy Spirit
16. Trust
17. Love
18. Justice
19. Witness

PART FOUR: SERVING CHRIST
20. The Church
21. Ministry Gifts
22. Spiritual Warfare
23. Walking in Obedience
24. Sharing the Wealth
25. Stewardship

FOR REFLECTION
1. Which of these themes seems most important to recover a grip on in our time? What sparks your conviction about this?

2. Which of these themes seems to touch a particular need in your own life right now? Why?

3. Which of these themes do you feel is a particular strength in your own personal discipleship?

4. If you were developing a basic discipleship curriculum, what might be a chapter or two that you would include that doesn’t appear treated in Discipleship Essentials?

Intervarsity Press, 2007

Discussion:

1. What are your observations about what you see in the overview?

2. What might be missing from your perspective?
OTHER PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I. Sinkholes: Dangers that can sink your ministry

II. Potholes: Anticipated bumps in the road and how to address them.

ULTIMATE GOAL


Though this value was written primarily for churches and movements that we are coaching outside the United States, the principles still hold true.

I. Self-governing: The leadership of the local church or movement has fully embraced and come to embody the previous six values.

II. Self-supporting (financing): The disciple-making ministry is able to financially support its own disciple-making efforts and is not reliant upon outside support.

III. Self-propagating: The disciple making ministry reproduces itself.

CREATING A CULTURE OF DISCIPLE MAKING

(See Appendix 2 Transforming Discipleship)

I. The Senior Pastor must be the chief champion and practitioner of disciple-making.

II. Disciple-making must be a shared value and practice of all core leaders (staff and lay).

III. Disciple-Making is a prerequisite for key leadership roles.

IV. Emphasize repeatedly the value of reproduction.

V. Pray regularly for your next group members.

VI. Celebrate in public worship at regular intervals the leaders who are starting their own groups.

VII. Share testimonies in public worship.

VIII. Create the sense an individual micro group is part of a larger movement.

IX. Have a long-term vision.