Disciplemaking University

Greg Ogden

Discipleship Essentials
A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ

- Now updated with a new study on stewardship
- 25 studies designed for use in mentoring relationships
- Great small group material
- An innovative tool for making disciples
- Over 100,000 copies sold

Expanded Edition

Greg Ogden
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I. Greg’s “duh” moment

II. The Biblical mandate

A. The Church’s mission statement (Matthew 28:18-20)

“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.

“The Son of God became a man to enable men and women to become the children of God.” - C. S. Lewis

B. Paul’s restatement of Jesus’ mission (Colossians 1:28-29)

“We proclaim Him [Jesus], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.”

1. Paul’s passion

2. Paul’s goal

III. Our reality check: How are we doing at making disciples?

A. “The crisis at the heart of the church today is a crisis of product.”
   – Bill Hull, Disciple Making Pastor

B. “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.” – Max DuPree

C. Doing an honest assessment of our effectiveness in making disciples:

1. “Fact are your friends.” – Bill Hybels

2. Do we really want to know if we are growing disciples?
D. Evaluating our effectiveness:

1. The American scene:
   
a. The *Reveal* study: Christ Church of Oak Brook
   
b. Examination of evangelical Christians in the US
      - High divorce rate
      - Significant racism
      - Poor giving patterns

2. Looking at your own ministry context (first small group discussion):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion: In your small groups, talk with each other about the following questions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a disciple of Jesus? A disciple of Jesus is...</td>
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<tr>
<td>How are you making disciples? What have you tried to deepen people’s understand of what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Christ? What means have you used (preaching, teaching, one-on-one discipling, worship, evangelism, etc.?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What has worked?</td>
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<td>What hasn’t worked?</td>
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<td>What frustrations do you have with making disciples?</td>
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<td>What makes it difficult?</td>
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</table>
IV. Are we making Christians or disciples?

A. Is discipleship optional?

1. Michael Wilkins asks two questions:

   “How many of you can say, in the humble confidence of your heart, that you are convinced you are a true disciple of Jesus Christ? Please raise your hand.”

   “How many of you can say, in the humble confidence of your heart, that you are convinced that you are a true Christian? Please raise your hand.”

2. Can you be a Christian without being a disciple?

   A woman says to her pastor, “I just want to be a Christian. I don’t want to be a disciple. I like my life the way it is. I believe that Jesus died for my sins, and I will be with him when I die. Why do I have to be a disciple?”

   How would you respond to her?

B. The Gospel we have been proclaiming

   1. God loves you.

   2. You messed up.

   3. Jesus died for you.

   4. Accept Jesus into your heart.

   **Decision Question:** “Will you receive Jesus Christ right now and trust him alone for forgiveness of sins and eternal life?”

   **Challenge:**
   Where is discipleship in the Decision Question?

   What are people being asked to be or do?
C. The Gospel Jesus’ proclaimed (Mark 1:14-15)

1. The time has come.
2. The Kingdom of God is near.
3. Repent.
4. Believe the good news.

**Discussion:** What is the gospel that leads to discipleship?
“Jesus’ Definition of a Disciple”

I. Overview of Matthew 28:18-20

Make disciples by…

• Going
• Baptizing
• Teaching
• Reproducing

II. “As you are going, make disciples of all nations….” (Matthew 28:19)

A. World Christians

B. A missionary God: The geographic center of Christianity continues to shift.

C. Be a relational link to the Gospel:
   A. Be an attractive follower of Christ.
   B. Tell your story of Jesus has done for you.
   C. The gospel is so fantastic it must be true.
   D. Grow a love for the perishing.

D. Live out acts of compassion and justice.

III. Baptizing into the name of the Triune God: immersing them into the life of the original eternal community who coexists as the “Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

A. “Let us make mankind in our image, after our likeness….” (Genesis 1:26-27)
   Why did God create in the first place? We were made to be included into the life of the Trinitarian God.

B. Windows into Jesus’ relationship with the Father
1. Words from the Father at Jesus’ baptism by John

   “You are my son, chosen and marked by my love, the delight of my life.”
   (Mark 1:11)

   “This is my son, chosen and marked by my love, the pride of my life.”
   (Matthew 3:17)

2. Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane

   “Abba, Father, remove this cup from me, yet not what I want, but what you want.”
   (Mark 14:36)

3. Jesus’ final prayer for his disciples

   “And now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”
   (John 17:5)

   Invitation: Come join the dance of God.

IV. Teaching to obey all that Jesus commanded

   A. “Teaching them…”
   B. “To obey…all I have commanded you.”
   C. “Everything…all whatsoever….”

D. John Ortberg’s video

   • Public Conviction: What I want you to think I believe.
   • Private Convictions: What I think I believe.
   • Core Convictions: What I actually believe by what I do.
“How Did Jesus Make Disciples?”

The Paradigm Shift Question: How can we grow self-initiating, reproducing disciples of Christ in our ministries? Follow the Biblical pattern.

I. A personal journey:
   A. Negative Example:
   B. Positive Example:

II. Why did Jesus focus on a few? (Luke 6:12-13)
   A. Internalization: It was the only way to transfer his message and mission.

   “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

   1. Reasons for Superficiality
      a. Diverted our leaders from equipping (Ephesian 4:11-12)
      b. Reduced disciple-making to a program
      c. Failed to call people to discipleship
      d. Have not intentionally discipled people

   2. “Disciples cannot be massed produced. We cannot drop people into a program and see disciples emerge at the end of a production line. It takes time to make disciples. It takes individual personal attention.”
      - Leroy Eims, The Lost Art of Disciplemaking

   B. Multiplication: Jesus had enough vision to think small.

   “Jesus, it must be remembered, restricted 9/10 of His ministry to 12 Jews because it was the only way to reach all Americans.” - Eugene Peterson
"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

What difference would this make?

III. What was Jesus approach?

A. The “with me” principle

B. How Jesus’ approach differed from the rabbis of his day

C. Jesus’ stages of development: Situational Leadership

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE-DISCIPLE</th>
<th>STAGE 1</th>
<th>STAGE 2</th>
<th>STAGE 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jesus’ role</td>
<td>The inviter</td>
<td>The living example</td>
<td>The provocative</td>
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<td>The disciples’</td>
<td>Seekers</td>
<td>Observers and</td>
<td>Students and</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
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<td>questioners</td>
<td>missionaries</td>
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<td>Readiness level</td>
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<td>Ready to observe</td>
<td>Ready to interact</td>
<td>Ready to test the</td>
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<td>Who is Jesus, and</td>
<td>What is the cost</td>
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Pre-Disciple (Inquiry) Stage

• Come and see. (John 1)
• Disciples of John the Baptist
• What are you looking for? (John 1:38)
• Well-ripened
• What it is that you say about me?
• From “come and see” to “come and follow me.”

What line must be crossed in order for the inquirer to move on to the stage of developing disciple?

Stage 1: Observe/Imitate

• What role do the disciples have early in Jesus public ministry? (Mark 1-5)
• Establishes his authority
• Displays his heart for people
• Opposes the establishment

Key Question: Who is Jesus and what is his mission?

Stage 2: Interact/Assist (Mark 10:17-31)

• What does Jesus’ interaction with the “rich young ruler” model for the disciples?

Key Question: What is the cost of following Jesus?

Stage 3: Delegate/Support (Matt.10:1-15)

• What are the qualities of good delegation?
  ➢ Clear Instructions
  ➢ Focus: Lost Sheep of Israel.
  ➢ Mission: Preach the kingdom.
  ➢ Power: Heal, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.
  ➢ Means: Take nothing.
  ➢ Response: Move on.

Key Question: Is Jesus enough?

Stage 4: Send/Reproduce (John 17)

• Jesus returns to the Father.
• Jesus prays for the disciples.
• Reproduce. (John 15:8)
Key Question: Will the disciples give themselves to the mission of reproducing disciples?

Application: What lessons can we learn from Jesus’ model for how we make disciples?
“Paul’s Parental Model of Disciplemaking?”

I. Spiritual parenting is Paul’s dominant image.

A. He speaks of his charges as **infants and children**,
B. Refers to Timothy as his **son**, beloved son.
C. Refers to himself as a **nursing mother or mother** going through labor pains.
D. His stated goal is that people grow up, become **adult or mature** in the faith.

> “The Christian life is described in various New Testament passages as growth from spiritual infancy to maturity. The new believer starts as an infant and eventually grows up in Christ. One moves from the state of dependency, in which others model, teach and disciple, to a mature walk with God. As this growth occurs, the believer also begins to assume discipling responsibility for others. While it is true that the believer is always dependent on God and the Holy Spirit in that growth process, there is a natural progression in maturity which leads the believer to be used by God to serve and minister to others.”

(Jack and Judy Balswick, The Family)

II. Paul’s parental images

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIFE STAGE</th>
<th>LIFE STAGE NEED</th>
<th>DISCIPLE’S ROLE</th>
<th>PAUL’S ROLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infancy</td>
<td>Modeling and direction</td>
<td>Imitation</td>
<td>Model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>Unconditional love and protection</td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Hero</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>Increased freedom and identity formation</td>
<td>Exhortation</td>
<td>Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adulthood</td>
<td>Mutuality and reciprocity</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Peer</td>
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</table>
**Developmental Stage 1: Infancy (Imitation)**
- Life Stage: Infancy
- Life Stage Need: Modeling and direction
- Disciple’s Role: Imitation
- Paul’s Role: Model

Paul speaks to the Corinthians as infants.

“Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.”

“I appeal to you, be imitators of me; [literally, mimic] Imitate me as I imitate Christ.”

(I Cor. 4:15, 11:1)


“Join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us.”

(Phil. 3:17)

What was it that Paul expected these churches would imitate?

Paul declares what it is that he wants them to imitate: His passion for Christ; his tears for the saints, his efforts of going house to house, and his death to self so that Christ could come alive in him.

(Acts 20:17-38)

**Developmental Stage Two: Identification (Childhood)**
- Life Stage: Childhood
- Life Stage Need: Unconditional love and protection
- Disciple’s Role: Identification
- Paul’s Role: Hero

Good parents tie their welfare to the welfare and happiness of their children. This next stage of growth happens through identification, when our parents become our heroes.

“My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...” What picture do you get here?
- **Motherly image**

  “Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children...”
  (I Thessalonians 2:7)

  “We were never patronizing, never condescending, but we cared for you the way a mother cares for her children. We loved you dearly. Not just content to pass on the Message, we wanted to give you our hearts. And we did.”
  (I Thes. 2:7-8, The Message)

- **Fatherly image**

  (I Thes. 2:11, 12)

  A good father knows that he can’t motivate his children with the same approach.

  1. *parakaleo*, “come alongside to help, counselor, advocate, helper, encourager.”
     Some need more tender attention.
  2. *paramytheomai*, “encouraged to continue on with the course they are on.” Others need to be encouraged to stay the course.

**Development Stage Three: Exhortation (Adolescence)**

- **Life Stage:** Adolescence
- **Life Stage Need:** Increased freedom and identity formation
- **Disciple’s Role:** Being coached
- **Paul’s Role:** Coach

At the adolescent stage, the parent is loosening the reins, as the kids must differentiate. There is the sense that the child must learn from the consequence of their own actions, while the parent offers support and consolation.

An athletic coach is a good image for this stage. A coach’s job is “making men do what they don’t want, so that they can become what they want to be.” - Tom Landry:

Paul’s relationship with Timothy: “my beloved child, my loyal child, my beloved and faithful child.” If Paul had had a son, he would have wanted it to be Timothy. Yet, Paul had to continuously exhort Timothy to step up to his call.

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. to do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.”
  (II Timothy 1:7-8)

Paul exhorts Timothy to carry on. Paul pulls out all the stops in this motivational letter.

“Carry out your ministry fully.”
  (II Tim. 4:5)
We need **purifiers** in our life. It is too easy to turn down the temperature to lukewarm.

> “One good rebuke is worth a 100 affirmations”. - Gordon McDonald

**Developmental Stage Four: Participation (Adulthood)**

- **Life Stage:** Adulthood
- **Life Stage Need:** Mutuality and Reproduction
- **Disciple’s Role:** Participation
- **Paul’s Role:** Peer

> “God’s ideal is that children mature to the point where they and their parents empower each other.”

**Mutuality marks the stage of maturity.**

**Mutuality and partnership mark the adult stage of Paul’s ministry.**

Titus “my partner and co-worker in your service.”

The root word in partner is *koinonia*, “what we share in together.”

Epaphroditus: my brother and co-worker and fellow soldier. (Phil. 2:25:)

Euodia and Syntyche: “struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers.” (Phil. 4:2,3:)

Paul is concerned that people become all that they were meant to be.

C. S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* asks: “If Christ is to take over our lives so that we are conformed to His image, then won’t we all become simply cookie cutters of each other.”

He says, “No, exactly the opposite.” He reaches for analogy to help us understand, using the image of salt.

> “The more we get what we now call ‘ourselves’ out of the way and let Him [Christ] take us over, the more truly ourselves we become. There is so much of Him that millions and millions of ‘little Christs,’ all different, will still be too few to express Him fully. He made them all. He invented—as an author invents characters in a novel—all the different people that you and I were intended to be. In that sense our real selves are all waiting for us in Him...It is when I turn to Christ, when I give myself up to His Personality, that I first begin to have a real personality of my own.” - C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
“A Vision for Equipping Ministry”

**Thesis:** In order for the priesthood of all believers to become a reality, we need to shift from a dependency model to an equipping model of ministry.

Moses, A Case Study: A needed change in leadership style (Exodus 18:13-23)
What was Moses' role?

I. The Dependency Model of Ministry (the problem defined)

A. Definition—The pastors do the ministry to or for God's people while the people are the grateful (or not so grateful) recipients of their professional care. [“Moses, why do you sit alone?”]

1. Caretaker—

2. Medical model—

3. An unhealthy family system—

B. The “Codependency Conspiracy” [What expectations did Moses have of himself in this role?]

1. The Pastor's part in the conspiracy
   a. Omni-competence (can do it all)

   b. Distrust the laity

   c. Priestly aura (a god figure)

   d. Unhealthy need to be needed (want to be liked by everyone)
Case Study: Pastoral Expectations

The following is a note I received after a visit to the hospital of a 75 year old man after surgery. With tears Al spoke deeply of the emotional and spiritual encounter with the Lord in preparation for his surgery and the peace he had received.

Dear Greg,

Busy as you were, you came to visit Al. We consider this a great blessing. Yes, many saints visited too but still your visit meant the most!

Prayer were answered through the nurses, doctors, and you. Al is doing well.

Enjoy your well-earned vacation.

With our love,

Anna and Al

Discussion Questions:

1. What view of pastor is embedded in this note?

2. What message might I be inclined to take from this message?

3. What unhealthy attitudes might be reinforced in these few words?

4. How do we help people have expectations that ministry received from fellow gifted members is equal to ministry received from their pastor?
2. The people's expectations of a pastor [What was Moses' justification for playing this role--Exodus 18:15, 16?]

a. Only the pastor can deliver real ministry

b. Closer to God than the rest

c. A multi-talented pastor

3. The people's part in the conspiracy [What role did the people play?]

a. Critics/Spectators--

b. Passively resistant

c. Simply assisting the pastor because he has too much to do--
Case Study: How Spiritual Kinship Looks

Rev. Dale Galloway, founding Pastor of New Hope Community Church, Portland, OR, was at home when he received a telephone call summoning him to a home in his community. A grisly and bizarre murder had take place in a distant state, and the detained suspect was the alienated foster child of one of the families in his church. The child has been troubled for some time, and even as the rest of the family had come to Christ, the youth had left home and move to that particular state.

“These people are going to need some moral support,” Pastor Galloway told his wife as he put on his jacket. “I’d better get over there and see what I can do.”

When he arrived, he feared he was too late. Local new teams were already filming the house from the street, and a crowd of reporters clustered around the front door.

As he rushed up the driveway, he saw one of the members of the family’s Bible study, called Tender Loving Care (TLC) group, standing on the porch, guarding the door and detaining the journalists. The group parted to let the pastor through.

Inside, Pastor Galloway noticed another TLC group member talking on the kitchen telephone, lining up meals for the family and screening incoming calls. He continued to the living room, where he found a third TLC group caregiver comforting the family. Pastor Galloway gave the grieving family a hug, led in a prayer, and asked what else he could do. “Nothing, Pastor,” they said. “Everything is under control. It was awfully nice of you to come by.”

He stayed an hour at most and then left, praising God for the handful of men and women in the TLC group, who had learned of their friend’s distress, come to the house, and begun providing meaningful ministry! Even if Pastor Galloway had been away or unable to visit, the family wouldn’t have been neglected; they were being well-cared for by the lay ministers who were “supposed” to look out for their Pastor's needs—their TLC group.

(from Prepare Your Church for the Future, by Carl George.)

Exercise: As a church leader in what ways do you inhibit the empowering of God's people to their ministry? What do you think the people you serve want from you or want you to do? What elements of the Dependency Model do you see in the personality of the people you serve?
II. The Equipping or Interdependency Model of Ministry (the solution proposed)

A. Moses, change your role—Teacher and Trainer of Leaders

1. The Equipping Model defined

"The ministry is for all who are called to share in Christ's life, the pastorate is for those who possess the peculiar gift of being able to help other men and women to practice any ministry to which they are called."

- Elton Trueblood, *The Incendiary Fellowship,*

   a. Is equipping a specialty for some pastors?

   b. What is a measurement of success in ministry?

2. The dimensions of the Equipping Model of Ministry

   a. Mend/Restore

   b. Establish/Lay foundations

      1) Jesus Christ, the True Foundation (Heb. 13:21; I Peter 5:10)

      "Their [pastors] major function is not to make people dependent upon the leaders but dependent upon the Head. This is the highest possible calling. It requires the strongest possible leadership in the church to lead people in such a way that they do not become dependent upon the human leaders. Equipping, directing people to find their life and future in Christ Himself, makes the highest claim on leadership." (Liberating the Laity, J. Paul Stevens)

      2) The Word of God, inherent power (II Tim. 3:16, 17)

      3) Modeling, the incarnational way (Luke 6:40)

   c. Prepare/Train

3. The Pastor's fundamental call
a. Player-coach

"The glory of the coach is that of being the discover, the developer, and the trainer of the powers of others."
- The Incendiary Fellowship, Elton Trueblood

b. The glory of the pastorate: When should you be most fulfilled?

B. Moses, share and develop leadership

1. Manner
   a. Transparency
   b. Needs attraction
   c. Share the spotlight

2. Styles that encourage ministry partnership and release people in ministry
   a. First among equals
   b. Mutual vision
   c. Democratic

C. Moses, decentralize your structure

3. Multiplying Disciples: Make disciple who make disciples

"The New Testament concept of the pastor is not of a person who jealously guards all ministry in his own hands, and success-fully squashes all lay initiatives, but of one who helps and encourages all of God's people to discover, develop and exercise their gifts. His teaching and training are directed to this end, to enable the people of God to be a servant people, ministering actively but humbly according to their gifts in a world of alienation and pain. Thus, instead of monopolizing all ministry himself, he actually multiplies ministries." - John R. W. Stott, The Message of Ephesians
“Key Elements for Reproducing-Making Disciples”

Thesis: Core Elements Necessary for a Disciplemaking Ministry:

- Relationship-based
- Multiplication strategy
- Transformative environment

Ministry-Based Strategy of Disciplemaking

The Program Approach

Committee → Program → Disciples

The Relational Approach

Covenantal Relationships → Time/Holy Spirit → Disciples

I. The primacy of a relational context for making disciples

A. Program vs. relational approach

1. Discipling relationships are marked by intimacy, whereas programs tend to be focused on information.

2. Discipling relationships involve full, mutual responsibility of the participants, whereas programs have one or a few who do on behalf of the many.

3. Discipling relationships are customized to the unique growth process of the individuals, whereas programs emphasize synchronization and regimentation.
4. Discipling relationships focus accountability around life-change, where as programs focus accountability around content.

B. A working definition of discipling: Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciple to teach others as well.

C. Jane’s letter says it all

Dear Greg,

My name is (Jane Smith, not real name). I was just starting to get involved in the church fellowship when you were called to California. I was so impressed with the few times I heard you teach, but more than anything else I was drawn into the love that the fellowship had for you and each other. To an outsider at the time, like myself, one saw such a deep love that I know was prayerfully developed. The term ‘discipleship’ was living.

Long after you left, your leadership materials were being used—I was trained by...who were a part of the ‘inner circle’ that I admired and the Lord used in my life.

After graduating from the University of Pittsburgh with degrees in Child Development/Child Care, my husband and I were led to start a Christian Center (in Pennsylvania). The Lord has done miracles step after step in this ministry and we’re so excited about it! We started with a pre-school program and now have started a Christian school, adding a grade each year.

We feel that by applying Biblical principles and models that we can minister to families in the area. In any case, because of the model I experienced at Pitt, the Center is focusing on small, quality, long-term relationships with families.

Now, the reason I’m writing—I realize now the commitment you had at Pitt and how much time and effort you so selflessly poured into those guys. I appreciate you and your gifts because I feel like I am the fruit of your fruit! And praise the Lord more fruit is being produced! I appreciate your model (Christ’s model) because of our ministry, and how easy it is to give yourself out and spread too thin and not accomplish much.

If you ever question the Lord about your work at Pitt—please think of me and know how much the Lord used you there. So...I just wanted to say thanks!

P.S. I guess you will understand this letter—I just pray that someday someone will write to me expressing their faith in our Lord, and that perhaps my obedience was somehow related to their growth.
II. Multiplication: Empowering disciples to disciple others

A. Frustration over multiplication: I was stuck.

B. The characteristics of one-on-one method of 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 single model approach.

5. Finally, the one-on-one model does not generally reproduce.

C. The characteristics of triads/quads

1. There is a shift from unnatural pressure to the natural participation of the discipler.

2. There is a shift from hierarchy to peer relationship.

3. There is a shift from dialogue to dynamic interchange.

4. There is shift from limited input to wisdom in numbers.

5. There is a shift from addition to multiplication.

**Discipleship Plan Discussion:**

1. What is the difference between a relational vs. program approach? Why is this difference important?

2. Based upon what you have learned so far, what would you say is missing in your approach to making disciples? What is it that you now would want to include?

3. Can you see the value in the micro group approach to making disciples? Yes or No. Why or Why not? What might be your hesitancy?
“The Environment for Transformation:
Creating the Hothouse Effect”

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.

I. Climatic Condition #1—transparent trust

A. 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.

B. Increasing deepening levels of relationship:

1. Level 1: Cliché conversation: chit-chat about the weather, and how about them Cowboys.

2. Level 2: Sharing information and facts: Events, ideas, and fact, but not personal. Did you know that Mt. Everest is over 29,000?

3. Level 3: Sharing ideas and opinions. Getting riskier: It is our ideas and opinions to which people could object, except birds of a feather tend to flock together: Those godless Democrats; those judgmental Republicans.

4. Level 4: Sharing of feelings: positive or negative; joy or depression. We are getting under the skin, below the surface.

5. Level 5: Peak communication: Openness, transparency, self-disclosure. When we are known for who we are rather than an image we would like to project and are accepted anyway.
C. Stages of trust-building:

1. Affirmation

2. Walking together in difficult times

3. Prayerful listening

4. 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

II. Climatic Condition #2—applied truth in community

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

II Timothy 3:16-17

A. The need for Truth

1. We have lost the memory of Christianity.

2. We need systematic instruction.

B. Mosaic image

III. Climatic Condition #3—life change accountability

A. Covenantal Accountability

“A covenant is written, mutual agreement between 2 or more parties that clearly states the expectations and commitments in the relationship.”

B. The challenge of radical individualism: Disciples are under authority

IV. Climatic Condition #4—Missional Outreach

A. Be a relational link to the Gospel. (Acts 1:8)

B. Adopt an unreached people group. (Make disciples of all ethne).
C. Find your particular heart call and serve God within His design (1 Corinthians 12)

D. Live out a heart of compassion and justice for the broken of this world. (Luke 4:18-19)

**Discussion:**

1. Agree/Disagree: These are vitals ingredients for creating a transformative environment. What additional thoughts do you have about them?

2. In your ministry situation, which of these would be the most difficult to achieve? Why? Or where might you find the most resistance regarding these elements?

V. Necessary elements for making reproducing disciples

A. A commitment to a biblical vision of multiplication: Do the Lord’s Work in the Lord’s Way.

B. A clear covenant of disciplemaking: Set expectations.


D. A transferable tool such as *Discipleship Essentials*.

E. A means to keep the vision alive through generational reproduction.
“The Importance of Good Curriculum: Overview Of Discipleship Essentials”

I. What happens if you don’t have a curriculum?
   A. Without a curriculum you don’t have a plan.
   B. Without a curriculum you will not be intentional.
   C. Without a curriculum you do not have a transferable tool that empowers future disciplers to disciple others.
   D. Without a curriculum you don’t have a sense of progression or progress.
   E. Without a curriculum you will not have a structure to define your time together.

II. Characteristics of this discipleship curriculum
   A. Transferable tool
   B. Progression: create a sense of movement
   C. Simple without being simplistic
   D. Easy to use format
   E. Highly interactive: egalitarian (everyone participates equally)
   F. Personal (application)

III. Transferable Tool
   A. In order to disciple others you need content that can be used, reused and implemented.
   B. The tool gives confidence to those who are discipling others that they have content and a structure which they can use over and over again.

      Note to Pastors: Master a tool and use it over and over again.

IV. You need progression: Discipleship Essentials was developed because I wanted a sense that we were covering the “essentials.”
A. One topic builds upon another so there is a **logical sequence to the content**.

B. **Mosaic:** One person said her experience was like filling in the tiles of an **incomplete mosaic**.

Let’s see if we first catch the larger structure and flow of the curriculum.
V. Format is in **4 parts or sections** with two lessons as intro.

A. **Introduction**: (Lessons 1 and 2) *What is discipling and who is a disciple?*

1. What is discipling? *Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciple to teach others as well.*

2. Who is a disciple? *A disciple is one who responds in faith and obedience to the gracious call to follow Jesus Christ. Being a disciple is a lifelong process of dying to self while allowing Jesus Christ to come alive in us.*

3. Sets the agenda upfront

B. **Growing Up in Christ** (Lessons 3-6): *How do we stay connected to Christ?* Establishing some core disciplines that you can practice throughout the time.

C. **Understanding the Message of Christ** (7-13): *What has Christ done for us?*

   • Establishes our identity in Christ through the core doctrine of the faith.

D. **Becoming Like Christ** (14-19): *What does Christ want to do in us?*

E. **Serving Christ** (20-25): What does Christ want to do **through** us?

VI. **Simple** without being simplistic

   **The format is repeatable and consistent.** It starts with the 1) core truth; to 2) memory verse(s); to 3) inductive bible study; to 4) a contemporary reading of the issues involved.

VII. **Easy-to-use** format

   **The format must be easy to use in discussion.** The questions are laid out and you can simply progress through the content as is.

VIII. **Highly interactive: egalitarian** (everyone participates equally)

   Everyone buys in so that you are sharing your insights, applying content to yourself. There is no teacher. The curriculum is the teaching framework.

IX. **Personal (application)**

   It must get to the point of being **personal**. Knowledge without application is just more information, but does not lead to transformation.
X. **Cautions about curriculum**

A. Curriculum does not make disciples. Curriculum is a tool. It is too easy in our day to think that if you follow the plan then disciples are made.

B. God through his Holy Spirit creates a relational environment in which disciples are made. The transformative context and relationship are vital.

C. You need to keep a 50/50 or even 60/40 balance between content and personal sharing.

D. This is not a program it is a relationship. It is not 25 lessons in 25 sessions. You go only at a pace that people can absorb the content.

E. Always keep in the forefront you are to wear two hats:

1. You are going to maturity in Christ.

2. A sign of that maturity is your willingness to adopt a lifestyle of disciplemaking. This is not a program to complete, but a lifestyle to be adopted.
“A Step-by-Step Approach to Beginning and Sustaining a Disciplemaking Network”

I. Start

Step 1: Pray.

- Ask the Lord to place on your heart hungry people to whom he is drawing you. Take your time. Let the conviction settle in. Only then go to the next step.

- What are you looking for? You are trying to sense a teachable spirit and as Paul says,

  “Entrust to faithful or reliable ones who can teach others also.” (II Tim. 2:2)

- Qualities you are looking for:

  1. **Loyalty**: At least a willingness to consider the implications of what it means to attach ourselves to Jesus as the one who is supreme in our life.

  2. **Teachability**: Jesus did not look for those who would by the world’s standards commanded respect or influence. We should resist the temptation to do so as well.

Step 2: Make a personal invitation.

Approach a person in the following way: “The Lord has been placing you on my heart, and I sense that I am to ask you if you would be willing to join me and one or two others on a weekly journey together toward becoming better disciples of Jesus?”

Don’t set yourself up as the discipler who is the model of what a disciple is supposed to be. Your role is to facilitate an environment that has the following characteristics:

- **Relationship Transparency**: Get to the points of sharing the deep things in our life.

- **Truth in Community**: Apply the truth of God’s word to all aspects of our life in a relational environment.

- **Life-Change Accountability**: Help each other to identify those places that need to be brought into conformity to God’s will.
**Step 3: Tell them what is involved.**

If you are using a curriculum such as *Discipleship Essentials*, give them an overview of the content and how you will cover it.

1. Review the overall Table of Contents to get a feel for the overall content and flow.
2. Review the format of a lesson.
3. Tell them it will take approximately 1-2 hours/week to complete the lessons depending on how rapidly you are covering the content.

**Step 4: Review the Covenant (p. 14, *Discipleship Essentials*).**

Disciples need to have a very clear sense of what is expected of them. Walk through the covenant line by line and have them restate the expectations in their own words. Mention that you will be meeting weekly for approximately a year.

As you read each line you could ask them to repeat what they think they are committing themselves to.

- What do you think you are being asked to do?
- Could you put that in your own words?
- What expectations does this create for you?

As you conclude the review of the covenant, you might ask: how much time do you sense that this would take for you to be involved? Is this possible? Would you need to rearrange your schedule in any way to make this group a priority?

**Step 5: Ask the disciple to prayerfully consider the invitation.**

Specifically, ask them not to give you an answer on the spot, but to examine whether they have the time and the heart for what lies ahead. Ask them to pray about this over the next week, count the cost, and then give you an answer that has been prayerfully discerned.
Step 6: Inform them that there will be at least one other person joining you.

If this is your first invitation, this person may even have a suggestion as to who might be the third or fourth person.

Step 7: Set the first regular meeting and get started.

Find quiet space where you will be able to grow into intimate transparency. At the first session ask each person to share their process of making a commitment to the group.

Locations for meetings:
- Private home
- A quiet nook in a restaurant
- Private office

Avoid spaces that are too public:
- Coffee house
- Restaurant which is too noisy, etc.

Step 8: Guide the participants through the sessions.

Go only at a pace that is comfortable. Encourage questions. Address personal matters. The curriculum is only a tool, not something to which to be enslaved. The curriculum is laid out so that you can just progress through it at a pace that is workable.

Step 9: Model transparency:

The group will go as deep as the willingness of the convener to be vulnerable.

II. First few meetings of your group

A. At your first meeting **review the covenant together**. Read through it line by line; ask if there are any questions, and ask each person to say what they think they are committing themselves to. Again, ask them to put into their own words what they think the covenant is asking of them. Then sign the covenant in each other’s presence and date it. Remind them that there will be an opportunity to review and renew the covenant after lessons 8 [p. 80] and 16 [p.146]. This is a time of self-evaluation and course correction.

B. **Get to know each other** as you are jumping into the curriculum. If you are relative strangers to each other, here are some fun things to share together for an initial introduction. Create some fun ice-breaker questions:
1. Where were you born and where did you grow up?
2. Tell us some things about your family of origin:
   a. Siblings: where are you in the birth order?
   b. What was one of your favorite family activities?
3. How did you choose your profession or school (if you are a student)?
4. If married, how did you meet your spouse and share some things about how the relationship developed? Is there any funny story connected to this?
5. What is an interest or hobby that you like to pursue in your spare time?
6. Why are you interested in a group like this now?

C. **Share your faith journey** to give background to where you are at the moment in relationship to Jesus Christ.
   1. As the facilitator, take the lead here.
   2. What are some elements to include in the faith story?
      a. What brought you to faith in Christ?
      b. What have been some of the ups and downs of your faith journey? When have you felt closest to God and when have you felt furthest away?
      c. Who has been particularly influential in shaping your faith?
      d. What are some of your deepest desires now in relationship to Christ?
      e. What would you like Jesus to do for you?
   3. Don’t try to hear all of the stories of the faith journey all in one session. Perhaps a couple at a time can do so, and then you can mix in the faith journey stories while getting going on the lesson material.

D. As the facilitator, **lead the first 4-6 lessons**, while letting the group members know that you will be rotating facilitation so that they can practice and get the feel for how to guide people through the discoveries. It is important to create this expectation from the beginning and then to shift the responsibility. There is nothing like doing something like this to give people confidence that they can lead their own group.

E. Keep reminding people that they are there for **two purposes**:
   1. Their own growth as a disciple.
   2. Growing in the ability to disciple others. You will need to keep reinforcing that there will come a time soon when they will be in the “lead” position.

III. **Growing a disciplemaking network**

   A. Establish a **small oversight group** who can keep track of who are in the discipleship groups and where they are in the progress. Start to create a visual image of the growing network.

   B. You could **create your own newsletter** that you put out approximately quarterly that has articles on discipleship, short testimonies from those who are benefitting from the relationship (transformation that has taken place), or from those who are leading their first group. Keep a list of those participating in the growing network.
C. Hold semi-annual gatherings of all the people who have or are going through the discipleship process. Invite Pastor Ogden (or someone like him) in as a guest speaker to continue to inspire the people involved and to keep the vision of reproduction alive.

D. Make sure your small oversight group is available for problem-solving or helping to find answer to some of the difficult questions that arise.

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**Continuing to Develop Your Disciplemaking Plan:**

**Step 1:** Start your own discipleship experience: Who are the 2 or 3 other people the Lord may be bringing to mind who could be invited into this experience?

**Step 2:** What curriculum will you use?

1. Selected portions of Scripture?
2. A written curriculum such as Discipleship Essentials?
3. What kind of content do you think people can handle?
4. What criteria should you use to determine your curriculum?

**Step 3:** Consider who else in your ministry can begin to lead these types of small, reproducible groups. Your very first group should be made up of potential leaders.

**Step 4:** How can this careful approach to growing disciples be the foundation of your leadership development plan. As a leader your key role is to grow disciples who can themselves become leaders. How does this approach assist that goal?
DAY 5

“A Workable Plan”