



Practical Discipleship

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Global Missions | Advanced Global Educators

Introduction

Welcome:

Self: Brief Bio.

Introduce Title: Practical Discipleship

Opener: TWO BY FOUR

Have eight people line up shoulder to shoulder, alternating male and female, with everyone facing the same direction. The object is to get all the females on one end and all the males on the other. If you prefer, you can use some other identification to distinguish alternate people. If the group is large, have two groups of eight line up and compete for who can solve the problem first.

These are the rules:

First, the goal is to solve the problem in the fewest possible moves, with a maximum of four moves (can be done in two moves). It's probably a good idea not to tell the players the maximum or minimum until they have had some successes in solving the problem.

Second, all moves are made in pairs. A pair is you and anyone standing next to you.

Third, when a pair moves out of the middle of the group, the empty spot they left must be filled by another pair.

Fourth, pairs may not pivot or turn around.

Fifth, there should be no gaps in the solution of the problem.

Learning points: Solutions do not “just happen” or happen randomly. The objective is accomplished through a meaningful, sequential, and intentional process.

Groups and Introductions:

Groups: Count off (or use a creative means) to divide class into smaller groups of 5-8 participants.

Introductions: Have participants tri-fold clean piece of paper to make a name tent. On the front, have participants print their first name in large block letters. On the back, have participants write:

- the name of the most influential “discipler” in their life since their New Birth
- the number of years since their New Birth (Spiritual age).

Have each team select a team leader. Be creative (closest birthday to today's date, eldest spiritually, vote by pointing).

Objectives

Practical Discipleship will enable you to:

- Measure your P³ factor to accomplishing effective discipleship
- Discover the importance of discipleship
- Strengthen your weakest link in accomplishing effective discipleship
- Identify and meet four critical needs of a new convert
- Practice effective discipleship

Agenda

- Introduction/Objectives/Agenda
- Defining Discipleship
- Three steps (P³) to Accomplishing Effective Discipleship
- Four Keys to Producing Disciples
- Close

A Disciple Maker's Assessment

Directions: Read each discipleship characteristic and assess the level of its application in your life using the following scale: **1 = Rarely, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Frequently, 4 = Most Always**

Honesty adds value. Respond according to present practice, not what you desire to be.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I am willing to teach others about Jesus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I understand and accept my gifts and talents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I practice hospitality, befriending and inviting sinners and new convert to my home | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I faithfully model the giving of my time and resources to God's work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. My love for God is manifest through my love for others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I faithfully read and study God's Word | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I am concerned with my physical body, the temple of the Holy Ghost | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. I consistently teach others about Jesus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. I actively use my gifts and talents for God's purpose | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. I faithfully pray for the lost, new converts and fellow saints | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. I am intentional about my discipleship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. I possess inward holiness that evidences itself outwardly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. I control my tongue | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. I faithfully attend the House of God and related church activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. I am sensitive to the needs of others an willing sacrifice to meet them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. I have an accountability/prayer partner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. I am spiritually sensitive and look for opportunities to disciple others in the ways of God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. I am careful about my example and walk with God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. I have a teachable spirit and am ever striving to learn and grow | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. I communicate the gospel and Christian principles with tact and candor | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. I am being discipled | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22. The fruit of the Spirit are evident in my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23. The gifts of the Spirit are operating in my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24. I am passionate about God and His purpose in my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 25. I fervently worship God in spirit and in truth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

TOTAL SCORE: _____

“Disciple” Defined

In your own words, define the term “disciple:”

Define “discipleship:”

The term **disciple** is derived from the New Testament Greek word *“μαθητής”*, coming to English by way of the Latin *discipulus* meaning *“a learner”*.

In Ancient Greek, the verb *manthano* is used to denote the process by which one acquired theoretical knowledge. A disciple was a learner. A man was known as a *mathetes* or disciple when he bound himself to another in order to acquire his practical and theoretical knowledge. The word was sometimes nearly synonymous with the term apprentice. There was never a disciple without a master or teacher. In some Greek circles the teacher was paid by his disciples.

Apart from His sacrificial work on the cross, the most significant thing our Lord did upon the earth was to make disciples. Our Lord had written no books, He had built no organization; there were no physical structures or monuments left to commemorate Him. He had placed the future of His earthly work entirely in the hands of His disciples. Had they failed their task, humanly speaking, the church of Jesus Christ would not exist today.

There was never a disciple without a master or teacher. The “discipler’s” responsibility, then, is to lead/teach others to become intimate with, bound to, and disciples of the Great Master. We must be careful to avoid being a substitution master. Discipleship is not about leading another to focus and depend upon the human discipler, but upon Jesus! Discipleship is the process of making one a *learner of Jesus Christ*. Let us not seek to disciple others, so much as to be disciples ourselves. Let us not seek to become disciples of men but rather followers of God. Thus, as we focus in this lesson on process and practice of discipleship, we must exercise care lest we become obsessed more with the process, the practice, and the prestige of the discipler than we are with our Lord Jesus Christ.

P³ Factor

Discipleship does not just *“happen.”* Discipleship is *intentional*. There are three steps to accomplishing any meaningful objective:

Purpose = *mission, vision, rationale for existence.*

Passion = *motivation energy, zeal.*

Process = systematic approach to fulfilling the purpose.

What happens to purpose without process?

What happens to passion without process?

Cite examples of how God is a God of Process?

**Group/Team Discussion:
(20 MINUTES)**

Group/team leader facilitates the discussion and completion of the three questions. Give teams about 5 minutes. Team Leader prepares for debriefing. Then, YOU debrief the teams, flipcharting their answers.

- *Creation Order* (light preceded plant life. If light had not preceded plant life would have been short-lived. In creation God was process oriented.)
- God is not the *author of confusion* . . . (1 Corinthians 14:33)
(The opposite of confusion is order. God is orderly!)
- *Spiritual Gifts*, “Let all things be done *decently and in order.*” (1 Corinthians 14:40).
(Even spiritual gifts submit to a process.)

(Ask participants to connect the “2x4” openers exercise to discipleship.)

Ask: Which of the three P’s do you think is most commonly the weakest link in a typical church’s discipleship program? Which is the weakest link in your program?

God is concerned with a quality effort.

- Creation: It is *good*.
- Those involved in Spiritual gifts: “. . . seek that ye may *excel* to the edifying of the body of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 14:12)
- Heaven’s commendation: “*Well done* thou good and faithful servant . . .” (Matthew 25:21)

*God is interested in Process!
God is interested in quality!*

Four Keys to Producing Disciples

Introduction

1. New Converts = *Babies*

- Somebody else feeds them.
- Someone else cleans up all their messes.

2. A church must prepare for New Converts as they would prepare a Nursery for new babies.

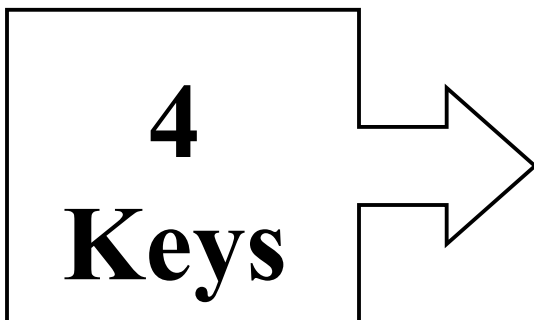
Ask Questions - What are the New converts':

(1) *Needs?*

(2) *Issues?*

(3) *Questions?*

3. A process of systematically discipling new comers must be based on responding to your answer to these three things. Our evaluation determines that new converts needed . . . then we begin responding to “how” will those needs be met?



→ *Guidance at conversion*

→ *New Friendships*

→ *Structured Teaching*

→ *Speedy Involvement*

Read activity instructions: “In the boxes below and then on flipchart paper develop an icon or symbol for each of the ‘four keys to producing disciples.’” Give teams 12-15 minutes. Team leader needs to facilitate the process. Then, give each team 2-3 minutes to present their wall charts, explaining their icons.

4 Keys to Producing Disciples

1. A New Convert needs Guidance

- New converts will often deal with “*buyer’s remorse*.” Satan will make sure of it. Also some new believers have not yet been through a Home Bible Study, or need to know more about baptism or the Holy Ghost.
- New converts should meet with a trained *altar counselor* when they are baptized in Jesus Name or receive the Holy Ghost.
- Altar Counselors do several things:
 - (a) Establish a *connection*. This is not to be a dry “gotta do this” kind of thing. The objective is to have another friendly face at the church.

- (b) Provides the new convert a packet of material. It has the prayer clock, a book “*Daily Things of Christian Living*,” cards with important phone numbers, a CD by the pastor - this is a guide to prayer and Bible study.
- (c) Discusses our discipleship classes and Home Bible Study with the new comer.
- (d) *Telephone Friend* calls the next day. This is an attempt to stop “buyer’s remorse.”
- (e) The next day a *letter* goes out from the pastor. In other settings this may need to be a call or a visit from the pastor.
- (f) Discipleship Team Leader gets feed back . . . and gives this to me.

2. A New Convert Needs Friendship

- Each new member should have a minimum of *seven* new friends in the church within the first *six* months.
- People are not looking for a friendly church, they are looking for a *friend!* As pastors and church leaders we have to teach our people about being friendly.
- Friendships are best created using:
 - (a) *Fellowship Families* . . . get your people involved with children and young people.
 - (b) Quarterly Newcomer’s Socials at the Pastor’s home.
 - (c) *Small groups* . . . folks we have to press our people out of their comfort zones. Ask, “Hey Bro. Bob . . . see that young couple back there - that is John and Mary . . . would you folks mind asking if they’d like to meet you at Dairy Queen.”

3 A New Convert needs Structured teaching

Most of our preaching and teaching is over the New Converts head!

- New converts must be taught at their level. Down scale - 7th grade level.
- Start a new converts, discipleship, or orientation class.
- When does it meet? Where does it meet? Who teaches it?

Three levels of instruction (perhaps more):

1. Take Root - Doctrine and basics like prayer and praise.
 2. Bear Fruit - Christian responsibilities
 3. Fitly Framed - Finding one's place in ministry.
- Consistent expositional teaching on the scripture.
 - Every new convert received 12 letters from me. Each letter is basically a mini-Bible study.

4. A New Convert Needs Involvement

“Every person has a *ministry!*”

- Romans 12:6-8 lists motivational gifts. Every person has gifts that cause them to perceive and act on life as they do!
- Find a way to get people involved as soon as possible. This involvement must:
 1. *Be Meaningful*
 2. *Fit their gifts.*
- Involvement in platform duties or teaching is generally not possible till one completes the discipleship classes. There are other places for the new believer to serve.
- List some involvement ideas:
 - *Hospitality*
 - *Church Cleaning*
 - *Grounds and Maintenance*
 - *Tape Ministry*
 - *Parking Lot Attendant*
 - *Teacher's Aide*
 - *Class Secretary*
 - *Attendance Taker*
 - *Receptionist*

5. Odds and Ends that count in discipleship

- Be consistent . . . whether dealing with one new convert or ten.

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- Love people
- Honor people
- *“Every person is not a person of prominence, however each person is a person of significance.”
- Jack Hayford*
- Welcome new converts - the last Sunday of each month. Repeat your mission statement and key principles at that time.
- Celebrate - have graduations for each class group.
- Be patient - it takes three to five years to develop a new convert. Particularly in the area of giving and our disciplines.
- Understand that every plant does not produce an hundred-fold.
- Church members must realize the mission is discipleship.
- Everything revolves around new believers!

Conclusion

What is the biblical objective of the Church?

List three to five personal “takeaway” points from *Practical Discipleship*.

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