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MASTERCLASS

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*TRAINING SESSIONS ROOTED IN THE
TEN AFFIRMATIONS*

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Holistic Disciple Making Masterclass & Certification

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INTRODUCTION SUMMARY:

Why Is Disciple Making Important Today?

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Jim Putman – Relational Discipleship Network
- Drew Hyun – Emotionally Healthy Discipleship
- Randy Pope – Life on Life Missional Discipleship

Why Make Disciples?

So why is disciple making important in today's time and culture? Bobby Harrington and his panel of disciple makers and organizational leaders give answers to this very nuanced question in this introductory Intensive. In their answers, these leaders reveal the many ways they take this question to heart in all that they do for the mission of Christ. The panel discusses deep questions and focused strategies for making effective, dedicated disciples of Christ—disciples who are willing, prepared, and able to go out and make more disciples.

Bobby opens the video with a bit of perspective on disciple making, saying that disciple making *is always* important and *has always been* important. Remember Moses? In Deuteronomy 6, he

told the parents of the Israelites to disciple their children, to take the words of God and imprint them on the tablets of their hearts and to write the words on their doorposts. When Jesus entered the world, he exemplified and taught the very same thing. Jesus chose twelve disciples and invested in them every moment he could. Since then, a whole lot of people have had the privilege of being disciplined in the way of Jesus. And now is *not* the time to give up or lessen our efforts.

Next, Bobby shares a bit of his story and how he was first disciplined by one of his university professors. Because of this experience Bobby came to wholeheartedly believe that disciple making truly changes lives. Bobby became convinced of why disciple making—and talking about disciple making—is so important. Think about it: disciple making is more important today than at any other time in the past two hundred years. We have entered a time in society when people are forsaking truth for the worship of themselves, a time when people no longer believe that God formed this world and takes part in the lives of his children.

For us, disciple making should be about people coming to Jesus and forming their lives around him, and it begins with truly believing in Jesus, in his life and mission, and in the importance of eternity. We want, for ourselves and for others, to come to Jesus for salvation—and from there, we want to form a life around him so that Christ lives visibly in us. To do this we need help.

Seven Motivations for Making Disciples

In this Intensive, Bobby offers and briefly discusses seven motivations in Scripture and in life on why discipling people carries so much significance:

1. *People desperately need it.* What did we need in our life when we were lost and broken, confused and wandering? We needed the same thing that every single person breathing needs. Bobby says that people need somebody to enter their lives and in practical ways show them what it means to trust and follow Jesus. We're in a time when people need us to do for them what Jesus did for his disciples: that we would enter into a relationship with them. Relationship is the core and power behind creating disciples of Christ. We should take note that what Jesus did—in fact, how Jesus lived—was relational, intentional disciple making.
2. *Jesus commanded it.* Bobby goes on to say that even today, we are included in Jesus' Great Commission. We are taught to obey all the commands of Jesus, and one of those commands is that we would go and make more disciples of Christ and that would be fearless and unwavering in our pursuit of loving others like Christ. One of the reasons Bobby gives for why we were commanded to make disciples is this: because it expresses the heart of God.
3. *Jesus modeled it.* One of the things that will happen to us is that when we follow Jesus, we begin to look more and more like Jesus. The heart and root of all that Jesus did was founded on relationships and love. As we live in this world, expressing God's heart looks like inviting others in, walking with them through joys and struggles, and remaining steadfast in our love for them—just like Jesus modeled.
4. *People are radically changed by it.* From bitterness to desperation and from anxiousness to hopelessness, people are changed by Jesus. Bobby shares the words of those whose lives have been radically altered by meeting Jesus and bringing faith into their lives. Through these testimonies, we

can be encouraged that the work we do matters and makes a real difference for people who would otherwise remain as they are—hurting, longing, and hoping for someone to come alongside them and offer that which is truly life.

5. *Eternal destinies depend on it.* Bobby emphasizes this reason as something that doesn't quite get enough recognition or importance. He says that the gospel message is very clear when it says that unless people come to Christ, there is no salvation. Jesus is the only way, the only truth, the only life. For us, the Good News is that God sent Jesus to rescue the people in this world. So always remember that people who make disciples are literally changing the eternal destinies of other people.
6. *Jesus alone is worthy.* God became a human being and came down to us. He showed us the way of love and modeled the way of making disciples. He alone is worthy of glory, praise, and honor. Bobby asks how we could not want everybody to follow him, be changed by him, and join him in his mission. He is simply worthy of having every human being trust and follow him in all of life.
7. *Love compels us to it.* Perhaps the most important reason is this: we adopt the very same love of God when we disciple. Bobby offers the perspective that when we really love people, it compels us to want wonderful things for them. Even further, the single most important reason for why disciple making is so important is because of love: *love of God and love of other people*. Because when we love someone, we want them to become more and more like Jesus, just as God intended for us all.

Experiencing Christ

The panelists Randy Pope, Jim Putman, and Drew Hyun join Bobby to talk even deeper about the reasons for and responsibilities of making disciples. Randy talks further on reason number five, that eternal destinies depend on disciple making. He says that he feels that this reason is something known by all but not something truly embraced by all. Randy then shares a story of when he once asked a group of people to list all the reasons for sharing the gospel of Jesus. Among the group, not one gave the reason of eternal destiny. Randy strongly emphasizes this point: mankind has an eternity and even though people sometimes don't seem to believe or act like people really perish, they do. It should be a matter heavy on our hearts and firmly set in our minds. We have the opportunity and responsibility to share Jesus with others.

Jim jumps in and offers thoughts about the ways in which we reach people, saying that first and foremost people will see something different about us, something unique and attractive about the way that we live and act. Once our own lives have been changed, and we have become changed people, we will be caring, we will have winsomeness, and the way we interact with the people around us makes disciple-making relationships possible, makes way for opening up a door into somebody else's life in a positive and life-changing way.

Jim goes on, saying that a lot of people weren't discipled, they were converted. And because they weren't discipled, they don't know or don't think about people who are lost. Because of this, spiritual brats run around in the name of Jesus and they are not drawing people unto Christ—because they can't; they don't know how to. People who aren't experiencing Christ have no reason or ability for revealing him to the world. And if Chris-

tians aren't experiencing the true difference, the world has no reason to take notice or change their own lives.

The Heart of Disciple Making

Jim talks about how so many pastors have tried, or are trying, to figure out ways to win people to Christianity without bringing the gospel into the picture. And the reason is because the gospel is offensive. Jesus even stated that it was offensive. To say that you can't save yourself—that there is only one way to salvation—is offensive, so people try to be as nice as they possibly can in the name of Jesus, which only leads to a lack of disciple making. This lack of disciple making leaves us with so many relational and experiential downsides. When instead of being caught up in figuring out ways to convince people to come to a church, we could be winning people to a relationship with Jesus. Even still, we have hope. Because the Good News is that Jesus came and offered us himself.

Drew talks a bit about a lot of the metrics and goals that pastors use. He says that these are really only surface level; they don't reach beyond the surface of things into the heart of matters. They don't confront some of the deeper issues in us and in our lives. Drew shares that the common adage in disciple making is this: *if you make disciples you will always get a church. But if you make a church, you won't always get disciples.*

He goes on to say that the gospel causes us to start thinking rightly about what the truth of God is, as well as causes us to begin behaving in ways that can be a bridge to people who think and believe differently than us. Drew urges us to lean into right belief and right behavior—and ask ourselves, *how can we live with an uncommon, sacrificial generosity?*

Motivation and Mindset

Randy jumps back in to say that it used to be that people were motivated already. He thinks that in years past there may have been additions to our motivation, called mindset. He calls us to ask ourselves if we are truly a disciple maker, then states that we can have the mindset all our lives, but if we don't have the right strategy as well, or the right tools, we won't be an effective and relational disciple maker.

The great difference today is that people avoid the tough conversations. People want to help Christians grow but they don't want, or don't know how, to help them be made. A strategy Randy offers: greet people, befriend them, live life with them, invite them into the process.

As the conversation continues, Jim offers some of the experiential wisdom he has gained through his years of disciple making. He says that one of the issues we face is that the enemy has strategies to inoculate people and keep them from being successful and effective. In our society, there is a flood of worldly wisdom, like some sort of antidote to Christian belief. And even though many non-Christians don't have the answers for the questions they have, they can go out and find somebody else's answers—almost everything is discussed on the internet today. And since we have somebody who says one thing and someone else who says another thing, the thought ends up being *well, we can't know, so just forget it*.

Jim goes on saying that ours is not a pre-Christian culture open to Jesus. It is a culture of people who have heard all kind of things and have become resistant to Jesus. He urges us to be praying for a person of peace, who is open to hearing. With this in mind, Jim reminds us that no matter what, people can't really deny how you may be living differently in the world and how you

may hold a different kind of hope and a different kind of love that what the world knows and possesses. People will end up respecting our lives. Keep in mind though that there are good Buddhists and good Muslims who live good lives as well.

Most Christians are so busy with other activities that they don't have time to look around them to see the hurting people and they don't think it's their job. Part of being a disciple is ordering your life to have gaps and opportunities for relationships. To be a Christ follower is to say; *Jesus take priority over everything and through my life. I am going to show how that looks.* Jim ends the thought reminding us to intentionally look for the person who is open to relationship, and he admonishes us to be able to carry on the conversation toward Jesus and his saving grace. Our approach has to be a little different than just wanting to see people be saved.

Missional, Relational Disciple Making

Drew continues the conversation about how we so often measure growth in church circles, saying that too often the metrics of success are driven more by building a crowd and having a healthy budget. Too often, the approach of churches and Christians isn't being shaped by the main thing, which is disciple making. In terms of the right belief, so much of disciple making is putting in the painstaking hours and time and sensitivity. Drew encourages us to redefine what success looks like by asking, *how can we create churches filled with people who are willing to invest in relationships and stick through the difficulties?*

Randy adds one more reason for why disciple making is so important to Bobby's original list of seven, and that is: *Because we need it.* Randy goes on to say that if he doesn't train people to be disciples who can make other disciples, then he effectively

loses them. If disciples don't learn to live missionally, then they don't go out and disciple in the way that they could. Churches are training disciples to train disciples. If those disciples aren't making disciples out of the lost, then we have missed the point. People will not grow personally as God intends. We have to be leaders and models for those we disciple because if we can't model for people how to worship, how to win someone to Christ, then they won't truly get why it's so important. We have the opportunity to equip people with tools to take young believers and help them grow strong in their faith.

Jim adds a point saying that ministry is a very important aspect of missional disciple making. Jesus turned his disciples into servants rather than just people who thought, *What can I get out of this?* We need to understand what a disciple is, understand what love is, understand what ministry is, and learn how to go out and make disciples.

Closing Comments

Bobby asks the panel to emphasize one thing that they think holds a lot of value for disciple makers.

- Drew Hyun – Disciple making is the path to deep transformation. For many of us, we play the game, which is appearing to have a relationship with Jesus, but what does it look like for Jesus to be deeply involved in our lives? What does discipleship look like that goes below the surface?
- Randy Pope – Discipleship is the way to honor Jesus. It brings his kingdom to this earth. It honors him the most when we take the church, his bride, and intend to make her as beautiful as possible.

- Jim Putman – The way to win the world is by the world seeing something different. Disciple making, faith, and a real relationship with Jesus is never going to be beautiful to the world if it's not beautiful to those in the church.

Quick Links

- [Relational Discipleship Network](#)
- [Emotionally Healthy Discipleship](#)
- [Life on Life Missional Discipleship](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Disciple making started with Jesus when he chose the Twelve, investing in them and teaching them to live missionally.
2. *True or false:* The first motivation for making disciples is because *we think* others desperately need it.
3. *True or false:* Good intentions are the core and power behind making disciples.
4. *True or false:* Making disciples expresses the heart of God.
5. *True or false:* When we truly love someone, we let them live however they want, without trying to change them or offend them.
6. *True or false:* Disciple making is best measured by how many people we get to come to church and how much is given to those in need.
7. *True or false:* If you make disciples you will always get a church. But if you make a church, you won't always get disciples.
8. *True or false:* Many Christians weren't discipled, they were converted.
9. *Short answer:* Another motivation for making disciples is *because we need it*. Why do you think that is and how should this reason affect our approach to disciple making?
10. *Short answer:* Why does a lack of disciple making leave us with so many relational and experiential downsides? What are some of the downsides?

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SESSION 1 SUMMARY:

How to Use Scripture in Disciple Making

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- John Plake – American Bible Society
- Brooke Hempell – The Barna Group

The Word of God

The Word of God is central to disciple making. Without it we lose our sense of direction, purpose, and authoritative truth. Martin Luther once said this: “The Bible is alive, it speaks to me, it has feet it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me.” Because we have Scripture, we can move and work purposefully in our mission of making disciples; we can lean on Scripture and use it as a guide in answering the concerns and questions of those we disciple. Scripture is an invaluable gift and tool for disciples, disciple makers, and even those who are seeking God for the first time.

Bobby Harrington introduces this Intensive covering the topic of using Scripture in disciple making. First, Bobby talks a little on the purpose and importance of Scripture in our lives,

then the panelists join him to discuss more about the role of the Bible in disciple making. The panelists also share some interesting information about Bible usage and statistics on how the Bible shapes and affects the individual. Scripture has the power to fuel disciple making; it has the ability to bring people together to learn the truths of God.

It is the Word of God that creates faith in us. It is the Word of God that softens and changes our hearts. Scripture reveals truth: the truth of who God is, of what life is about, and of how we are supposed to live. The Bible inspires belief and shapes our beliefs. We can see this throughout time and even in Scripture. Knowing the power of the Word of God should give us strength and purpose.

Finding Faith

We find faith through the Word, as shown in Romans 10:14–17 which reads: “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? . . . Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.” The results of the Word of God working in our hearts are faith, a relationship with God, and a passion for the things and mission of God.

So in order to be a disciple of Jesus, Bobby states, we are going to be somebody who follows Jesus, is being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus. The Word of God is simply central to being changed by Jesus. The apostle Paul says that Scripture is God-breathed, that it is for teaching and training. “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teach-

ing, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

Bobby emphasizes again that Scripture is how God changes lives and works in us. The Word of God is what transforms us. Most of us realize that God’s Word is important in our lives, but do we really live like it? Do we act and interact with others as if Scripture is life changing? “In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction” (2 Timothy 4:1–2).

The purpose of the Word of God is to help us think rightly so that we might live rightly, like 2 Corinthians 10:5 and Romans 12:2 say: We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Bobby talks about understanding how people get caught up in self-inspired theology and offers this: we should tremble at the Word of God. Francis Chan shares the same thought. We come before the Word of God, and we tremble at the glory and majesty of God. In disciple making, our job is to help people encounter God. We show others how to encounter the way God wants us to think by knowing Scripture. In the same way, it is important that we teach people to examine Scripture for themselves. One of the greatest gifts we can give to people—after the knowledge of Jesus Christ himself—is the knowledge of the complete Word of God.

Disciple making at heart, Bobby shares, is this effective process: the Word of God, with the people of God, in discipling relationships, empowered by the Spirit of God. We believe that Jesus and Scripture are the authoritative, reliable, and the ultimate standard for disciple making and life. We believe that because we believe the Bible was written by disciples, to disciples, and for disciples. We believe in the power of the Bible.

Engaging with the Bible

John Plake shares his reactions to what has been said so far, saying that it's important to think about the impact and role of the Bible in disciple making. He talks about how the transfiguration moment was something that Jesus, the disciple maker, needed to do, for others to see who he was—not because it was something he needed. He needed nothing because he knew who he was. Jesus, in his life and ministry, set about answering questions and showing who he was. That's exactly what we do as disciple makers: we bring seekers to God's Word to find answers to the questions that are burning in their hearts.

Brooke Hempell jumps in and quickly shows some of the trends in how people engage with the Bible. She talks about the importance of having clear steps on how to help people start a journey with the Bible moving forward.

Scripture engagement is more than just pronouncing the Words of the Bible, John shares. He says that it's actually consistent interactions with the Bible that has the power to shape our lives. We need to think about three things when it comes to people engaging with Scripture:

- Frequency. How often are they reading?
- When they read, what is going on inside? Is their heart strangely warmed? Are they beginning to walk with the Lord more closely?
- What kind of permission is being given to the Bible to shape life choices?

Next the panelists talk about the scale of Bible engagement. The levels include: Bible Disengaged, Bible Neutral, Bible Friendly, Bible Engaged, and Bible Centered.

- *Bible Disengaged*: People who are really far from the Bible are. These are people not actively pursuing Scripture in any way. They may hear Scripture at a wedding or something like that, but the truths and power mostly wash over them without affecting anything.
- *Bible Neutral*: People who may be conflicted, troubled, looking for answers to their struggles or questions about life and faith. These are the ones just beginning their journey.
- *Bible Friendly*: People who want to engage more deeply but don't know how to—enter disciple makers.
- *Bible Engaged*: People who are reaching for the Bible often. These people have had a spiritual awakening and have some sort of personal relationship with Christ.
- *Bible Centered*: People who allow the Bible to shape them.

John shares a startling statistic that 35–50 percent of those in churches are Bible Friendly or Bible Neutral.

Brooke talks a little more in depth about those who are Bible Friendly, saying that they have no negative feelings, they believe in it, they just can't connect with Scripture like they want to.

Some sort of barrier is keeping them from making progress. Life on life discipleship is so good for this.

An important thing to note is that being Bible Engaged or Bible Centered is not just determined by sitting down for twenty minutes and moving on. The point is that people are going to Scripture consistently and intently, with different ways of engagement. *Is it our source for purpose, wisdom, and so many other aspects of our lives?*

John talks about something learned through studying the habits of Bible Engaged people: as people read Scripture more frequently, they also read it for a longer duration. Too often, we get hung up on a lot of externals, like making sure we are sitting down and reading at least a couple chapters or reading for a certain amount of time instead of simply sitting down and reading Scripture. Remember that God's Word and God's Spirit are the two ways he connects with us.

Brooke shares further about Bible Friendly people. They are people who:

- Reach for the Bible at a significant life change
- Are interested on their own
- Need and want guidance
- Struggle with language
- Know a Bible person

She says that a component of a good disciple maker is having a close enough relationship to notice when people are reaching for a guide in faith and Scripture. When we are in a close enough relationship, people feel safe to come to us for help or to confide in us their struggles or the things they are going through.

What Is Our Job?

John talks about how the broader culture is moving away from the presence of the Bible. He shares a story of an Uber driver who was searching for a tool to teach and train his children to be good people. John suggested the Bible as teaching tool and the Uber driver said that he hadn't thought of that. John then showed the guy how he could easily use the Bible as a tool in teaching his kids. This story shows us how we can affect someone's life by offering gentle tools and truths to those who are seeking. Brooke talks about how to better guide those who may be seeking. We need to start with questions and concerns of the seeker, then we need to model for them how to find answers. In all this, we need to trust God because it's not on us to complete the job. We start the work. We are a part of the work, but it is God who moves. Be sure to give space for God to move in people's lives.

We tend to think that our job as disciple makers or leaders is to start with the text and make sure everyone understands the text. We need to let the text point disciples to Christ. Let's allow people to interact with Scripture and bring their questions to Scripture just like the disciples brought their questions to Jesus. We can trust God to speak to people through his Word. Rather than just teaching them to consume large quantities of it, let them be impacted by it.

It's been a direction of the church for many years, decades, to focus on a good biblical foundation, and often that looks like education. We just cram knowledge and insight into people's heads, which is fascinating to us. We love it. But we are increasingly seeing that it doesn't necessarily lead to permanent change. The disciples were formed by doing things together and then Jesus shared the knowledge along the way. So we get stuck in thinking that we have to teach people first so that they can become certain

things. Just get in there. Start meeting God. See it take action in their life.

A Few Resources

The panelists share and discuss a few resources which disciple makers and seekers could find helpful:

- [*howto.bible*](#) is a tool for those who may not know exactly where to begin with disciple making.
- [*abs.biblese*](#) is a tool to measure scripture engagement.
- [*thebibleproject.com*](#) is a resource with videos and teachings on the Bible.
- [*lookinside.bible*](#) is a resource for those who have questions or want answers to their questions.

Included in the list is a tool to measure your Scripture engagement, which provides vocabulary for you to talk about the Bible in your life. Another tool is a resource about the many questions people have and ask about the Bible. Another is a resource great for teaching older and younger people. These resources are just a few of the many, many out there to help and encourage both disciple makers and seekers in using Scripture and furthering their relationship with God.

There are a lot of people interested. It's important to engage with them. Try not so much to feed them fish as to teach them how to fish or fish with them. Anything that helps break down barriers is good. Use videos, use any engagement tools you can find to provide clarity in interpretation. Be sure to ask those you disciple what questions they have.

The goal is to first fall in love with the Bible and then begin to understand more of the structure and foundations. John talks about how the process of disciple making is like building a bridge,

from text to context. The disciple maker is the bridge. The bridge is a person. We don't want to be a bridge to nowhere. Sometimes we get so focused on what we want to convey and teach that we lose track of the fact that we've lost people. Be learner-centered. Until we answer the questions that people have about God and Scripture, we won't be able to tell them what God has to say about himself. Bobby jumps in and offers this piece of advice: *Go back to how Jesus made disciples. Have intentional relationships and bring in Scripture.*

Closing Comments

- John Plake – Some people may wonder why all this is so important. He then shares eight ways that Bible engagement shapes people. They become more generous givers, they attend church regularly, they pray more regularly and volunteer more, they tend to attain higher levels of education, they have a sense of divine calling, and they have a commitment to Christ.
- Brooke Hempell – The importance of relationship in engaging in Scripture was discussed. We need to be mindful of that importance. Because a decline has happened and can happen in spiritual health—fatigue is a guarantee—we need to think about creative ways to engage and help people remain in those good habits of studying Scripture.

Quick Links

- [American Bible Society](#)
- [Barna Group](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* We can create faith in God by ourselves.
2. *True or false:* We shouldn't encourage people to interact with Scripture in case they become confused or misunderstand things.
3. *True or false:* Of those in churches, 35–50 percent are Bible Neutral or Bible Engaged.
4. *True or false:* Those who are Bible Neutral are those who don't really care either way about the Bible. They are those who just want to live their lives.
5. *True or false:* The disciples were formed by Jesus sharing knowledge and then showing them what that knowledge looks like in action.
6. *True or false:* Jesus' transfiguration was about showing the disciples who he was.
7. *True or false:* Disciple making at its heart is this: the Word of God, with the people of God, in discipling relationships, empowered by the spirit of God.
8. *True or false:* Scripture is the authoritative, reliable, and the ultimate standard for disciple making and life.
9. *Short answer:* In order to be a disciple of Jesus, what are we going to be and what are we going to do?

10. *Short answer:* What are the truths that Scripture teaches us?

What Difference Does Bible Engagement Make?

8 Characteristics of Bible-Engaged People

Bible engagement transforms people's lives in measurable ways. Through our ongoing research, American Bible Society is learning specific ways people change when they consistently interact with and reflect on Scripture. Our research tools enable us to measure engagement levels and track people's growth. Over the past eight years, we've discovered that Bible-engaged people share these eight characteristics:



They are more generous givers.

Would you believe Bible-Engaged people gave 10 times more to charity last year than Bible-Disengaged people did, on average? The Bible Engaged gave an average of \$1,000 compared to \$100 for Disengaged.



They have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

Bible-Engaged people are 3.5 times more likely than the Bible Disengaged to say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today.



They pray to God more frequently.

Bible-Engaged people are 2.25 times more likely to have prayed to God in the past seven days than the Bible Disengaged.



They have attained higher levels of education.

Christians are sometimes caricatured in popular culture as backward and uneducated, but the data point in another direction. Higher Scripture engagement scores are positively correlated with completing higher levels of education.



They attend church more frequently.

Bible-Engaged people are 2.9 times more likely to have attended a church service in the past month than the Bible-Disengaged.



They are more likely to volunteer.

Whether they volunteer in the community or serve in their church, Bible-Engaged people put their faith into action by serving others, more frequently than unengaged people.



They have a sense of divine calling in their work.

In 2018, American Bible Society joined with the University Spiritual Life Survey to see what impact Bible engagement might have on the next generation. Among other things, we learned that Bible-engaged college students have a sense of divine calling toward a particular kind of work.



They are more likely to forgive others.

Bible-Engaged people are significantly more likely to say they are "able to unconditionally forgive whatever someone else has done to me, regardless of whether they ever ask for forgiveness or not."

BIBLE ENGAGEMENT IS

Consistent interaction with the Bible that **quantifiably shapes people's choices** and **transforms their relationships** with God and with others.

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SESSION 2 SUMMARY:

Learn the Difference Between Disciple Making and Discipleship

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- David Young – Renew.org
- Michelle Eagle – Renew.org
- Steve Gladen – Saddleback Church & The Small Group Network

In our churches, conveying clearly what we believe and what we mean is so important. The unity of our mission is at stake if the definitions we use get watered down. If we aren't always clear about what things mean, about expectations, about our mission, we will have a hard time achieving anything—and more importantly, we will have a hard time making disciples who can go out and make more disciples. Having clear expectations and using the same language is so important because it unifies us and empowers disciple making.

Definitions and Effective Communication

From the pulpit, in elders' meetings, in leadership classes and trainings, all of these situations require clear, purposeful, and consistent language for effective communication. For instance, discipleship and disciple making are often thought to be the same thing yet are different. Take a look at these definitions:

- *Discipleship* – is simply the state of being a disciple. This word (like the word evangelism) is not in the Bible. Unfortunately, in the North American church, discipleship is typically seen as an educational process designed to orient new believers to the biblical and everyday practices of our churches – and so we often prefer disciple making.
- *Disciple* making – is entering into relationships to intentionally help people follow Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus (Matt. 28:18–20).
- *Disciple* – is someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus (Matt. 4:19).

Matthew 4:19 reads “Come, follow me . . . and I will send you out to fish for people.” The *disciple* definition can be broken into three parts corresponding to the head, heart, and hands, like this:

- *Head*: Have you committed your life to Jesus? Have you turned your heart to follow him?
- *Heart*: Does your life look different? Is your heart different?
- *Hands*: Are you making disciples?

Ask yourself if you have a definition for the terms and core values you want to convey. If you don't you won't be able to

convey those things to others. Typically, we fall into an educational model, where people are being taught about Jesus but not about what needs to happen to change people's lives and what needs to be done to become obedient to Jesus and his commands.

These days, people want to come and sit and listen, which works well in an educational model. And while it is great that people should want to come and sit and listen, doing so doesn't necessarily change lives. We need to be able to apply those teachings to our lives in a real way.

Matthew 28:19–20 reads: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” We are given one command: Make disciples. That command includes three participles: Go. Baptize. Teach.

Jesus modeled entering into relationships beautifully. He showed us what it looks like to go, baptize, and teach. And Jesus taught his disciples how to do the very same thing. We have to initiate relationships and seek people out for the purpose of making disciples. We need to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in how to do this. Building relationships isn't easy, we need to be willing and prepared to do the work, as well as willing and prepared to seek spiritual guidance for ourselves along the way.

Relationships

Remember that Jesus wasn't just pushing information and creating artificial growth with his followers. Jesus' disciple making involves repentance and conversion, with a special focus on grace. When we invoke repentance, conversion, and grace in disciple making, lives are sure to be powerfully affected and changed.

Part of being a disciple is understanding our need to be obedient to Jesus' commands, one of which includes making disciples. Our goal, though, isn't just to tell people how they should live or to merely add numbers to the church. Our reason for disciple making is because Jesus commanded us to make disciples. We need to find joy in Jesus' commands and realize that we can give people the tools to be able to deal with the struggles they are facing. In doing so, we need to direct people to Jesus over and over again. Remember: A *disciple maker* is a disciple of Jesus who enters into relationships with people to intentionally help them follow Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus.

Disciple making relationships are not causal relationships. Disciple making culture is not a Sunday school educational model. The relationships and the culture should remain focused on Jesus' way of doing things. Jesus mentored, taught, and invested in his disciples. He sent them out. He knew his mission and goal.

Instead of quick answers, we need to empower our leaders and disciple makers to actually disciple the people that they are in relationship with. We need to lean into their questions and any questions that arise. We need to be ready and willing to invest in people and help bring the kingdom of God to life in them. Keep these definitions in mind:

- *Church* – A spiritual family growing in surrendered obedience to all the teachings of Jesus Christ who gather together regularly under Biblically recognized leadership for the purpose of fulfilling the great commission (making disciples) with a Great Commandment heart (loving God, loving people).
- *A Disciple making culture* – The beliefs, habits, and narrative of a church constantly repeated with congruence and

intentionality, that make it clear to almost everyone, all the time, including newcomers, that disciple making is what everyone does in this church.

- *A Disciple Making Church* – is a church where disciple making is the core DNA and culture of the church, where the average church member makes disciples to the fourth generation and this disciple making activity is regularly produced in significant and diverse streams within the church and these streams multiply consistently into new churches.

The Footsteps of Jesus

People in churches should be expecting to make disciples. The person who has just converted to Christianity isn't exactly ready to make disciples, but they should be in a discipling relationship and they should know that making disciples is an expectation of being in the church. In a disciple making church culture, the average person knows that they are to make disciples. It's nothing too complicated, scary, or difficult. When we set out to make disciples, we are simply following in the footsteps and teachings of Jesus.

Some may ask: *How does disciple making grow bigger than your church?* When a movement where churches are planting churches with the core being disciple making occurs, you know it has grown bigger than one single church.

- *A Disciple Making Movement* – exists when churches plant multiple churches (within a few short years), through gospel activity, that has abundant fruit among the lost, that multiplies these disciples (people growing in obedience to all of Jesus' commands), who in turn replicate themselves in

others, so that we can see at least four generations regularly produced in multiple streams of disciple making activity and these streams multiply consistently into churches.

We have been given a great commission by God. We have also been given everything we need to do it. So let's just do it.

At this point, the panelists join and start by discussing the importance of definitions. Michelle Eagle shares that the biggest problem in disciple making today is lack of clarity about what it is and what it's about. Steve opens by emphasizing that clarity is important, saying that words can be similar but still carry a very different impact. For that reason, words truly do matter and make a difference in carrying out our mission. David Young says that we are so accustomed to the classroom model and teaching a course. But in many places around the world, it is still a more personal model. In these places, you don't teach a course, you teach a person. Think of Aristotle and Plato. Think of Jesus and his disciples. These are personal models of discipling, which is the process of being molded.

Discipleship in Action

When people hear discipleship, they think Bible education. But think about the fact that people don't actually do what they believe as much as they believe what they've been doing. Instead of bringing our own definitions to biblical concepts, we need to let biblical terms tell us how to think. Ask yourself: *How did Jesus make disciples?* The term *discipleship* is not in the Bible. But still we can see discipleship in action when we look at Jesus and at the work the disciples did later after Jesus had left them. When we go to the model of Jesus, education was a part of it but there

was much, much more to making disciples than just imparting knowledge.

Often we correlate discipleship to cognitive behaviors. If you don't take the knowledge being given into the practical application, people will become lost and won't be able to take what is being taught into their own lives. Michelle shares that a lot of people aren't sure about what they need to be doing. Because of this, education is safe. We can get everybody to come and hear, but do we really have to change their lives, or our own? Discipleship in action is more than just education. Discipleship in action means we are making clear what needs to be done. It means lives are being changed from the inside out.

Obedience

In the Great Commission, Jesus told us to make disciples. We don't just teach people Jesus' commandments. We teach them to obey Jesus' commandments. Some of us associate obedience with legalism, so we become afraid of being harsh and judgmental if we teach obedience. We become fearful of teaching obedience thinking that we'll be teaching works-based salvation instead of salvation by faith. Most people have been conditioned to think of obedience as a form of slavery.

Obedience is not a form of bondage but a form of liberation. When we obey Jesus, we discover his blessings. Look at what Jesus teaches us. Think about what he says concerning money, relationships, love. Think about the way those things are really liberation and immense blessings from God.

Steve shares that the educational system is safe because we can go and learn and then just scatter to the wind. It may seem easier to partake in such a system, but in reality it is not, and neither is it more worthwhile to do so.

Life on life has to happen to reach authenticity and safety in relationships. People don't gravitate toward truth that isn't coming from a trusted source. Look at Jesus with the disciples. He built trust with them gradually so that he was able to speak harsh words at times, in order to bring the liberation they needed.

Being Changed by Jesus

Keep in mind that if you don't have definitions that serve as a glue holding things together the group will drift. Our culture wants everything instantly, everything from food to relationships. But the more time we can spend in relationships the better we will be in shaping truth in those we are discipling, and the better off we will be as well. Being a disciple is not just following Jesus, it is being changed by Jesus.

Michelle talks about how it's so important that we be in small group relationships. She says to remember the Holy Spirit. We can easily rush into things and rush into relationships and conversations without seeking and waiting on the Holy Spirit. We can drag people along because we think it's for their growth, but the Holy Spirit could very well lead in a way that would be better for all involved.

Don't drag people along. Rather, allow them to be encouraged in the process. Don't just pull people where you think they should go. Let the Spirit lead. Each person moves along in this process in their own time. The Holy Spirit needs to be the power force behind our disciple making.

Becoming More Like Jesus

It's so important to realize that if you are going to be a disciple you need to be committed to making disciples. Jesus is our goal. Can we really be like Jesus without making disciples the way

Jesus made disciples? No, of course not. Becoming a disciple is a process, and at some point in the process we become more like Jesus. Keep at the forefront of your thinking how important clarity of language is. You can't separate what you say from the stage and what your core is.

Enthusiasm for disciple making will catch on; it will spread. Disciple making is not a separate component and entity within a church. In a disciple making church, disciple making is the culture, core, and mission. What happens when people are given the clarity of language? At that point the culture becomes instinct. In disciple making movements, there is a culture of disciple making where people instinctively make disciples.

The motivation for what we are doing—to be a disciple and make disciples—needs to center around the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. When you love others like yourself and serve one another and love God with everything, things will play out. Ordinary people can be used in extraordinary ways by the power of God's Spirit.

Closing Comments

The panelists close by sharing practical first steps that can be taken to begin making disciples who can make disciples.

- David Young – It really matters that we get the definitions right. We need to focus on the problem before focusing on the solution. We need to make sure the church understands the problem before facing the solution. Give people a chance to discover what you have discovered along your journey of disciple making. Intentional strategy will help cultivate culture. God will start to work miracles and the culture will begin to change.

- Michelle Eagle – Once you have the definitions, take a purposeful look at your ministries. As leaders, we have to look at our ministries through the lens of disciple making. We need to ask ourselves if the ministries we are supporting serve the greater purpose of making disciples of Jesus. While it can be tough to look at the ministries taking place and see a need for pruning, the growth that comes after is worthwhile.
- Steve Gladen – We need to bring back the passion that is going to help people living through struggles. We need to build pathways that will bring practicality into disciple making.

Quick Links

- [Renew.org Network](#)
- [The Small Group Network](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Having clear definitions and expectations unifies and empowers disciple making.
2. *True or false:* *Discipleship* is simply making a disciple.
3. *True or false:* There are three parts given in the one command to “Make disciples.” those three parts are: Go. Baptize. Teach.
4. *True or false:* Using the term “obedience” automatically assumes works-based salvation.
5. *True or false:* Being a disciple is not just following Jesus, it is being changed by Jesus.
6. *True or false:* We can still be like Jesus without making disciples the way Jesus made disciples.
7. *True or false:* In a disciple making church, *disciple making* is the culture, core, and mission.
8. *True or false:* We need to make sure the church understands the solution to a problem before doing anything else.
9. *Short answer:* The definition of a *disciple* involves which three parts? Be sure to explain the three parts.

10. *Short answer:* How did Jesus make disciples? Give any background, explanation, or reasons that you can.

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SESSION 3 SUMMARY:

How to Teach a Discipleship Gospel

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bill Hull – The Bonhoeffer Project
- Dan Leitz – The Bonhoeffer Project
- Cindy Perkins – The Bonhoeffer Project
- Earl McKay – The Bonhoeffer Project

Living Out Jesus' Discipleship Gospel

Following Jesus means living out his discipleship gospel. We are taught and called by Jesus to share and teach and live out the very things he shared, taught, and lived out with his own disciples. We, as Christians and disciples of Christ, should have his calling to make disciples placed on our hearts and reflected in our lives. Every day we should purposefully and mindfully let his mission become our mission as we carry out the calling of discipleship and disciple making.

Christ teaches us all the things we need to know for discipleship. He showed us the way. For us, following him means gaining the skills and strengths for making disciples and faithfully carrying out the discipleship gospel. If we take a close look

at the gospel Jesus taught and shared, it includes discipleship, or disciple making, as a natural, organic part of what it means to be saved. A lot of people haven't been taught this. They don't see or understand it because we, as a church culture, have a tendency to neglect how Jesus lived and forget what his greatest and final commission was: making disciples who will go out and make disciples.

False Gospels Are All Around Us

A gospel that doesn't call for or teach discipleship is a false gospel, or a partial gospel. The gospel that separates conversion from discipleship is a gospel that makes it almost impossible for us to fully live out the Christian life. When we inadvertently fashion a gospel without discipleship as a central part, we make following Christ optional—and we make the gospel about forgiveness of sin and getting into heaven only. In doing this, we neglect our great calling and promise. Because when God saved us, he also called us to discipleship and disciple making.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is said to have written, “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.” Indeed, a Christ-less Christianity doesn't allow for Christ to be living and active and a part of the intricacies of our life. All of those who are called to salvation are also called to discipleship. Discipleship ties us to Jesus and connects us to his life in a powerful way. Our life will truly flourish with Jesus. Our eternal life begins with Jesus. In fact, eternal life begins now as we become sanctified and as we become a new creation. It is our responsibility to live out the calling of discipleship.

A disciple lives their life following and learning to live their life as if Christ was living it. Remember that the gospel you believe in determines the disciples you will make. The gospel is

about loving and caring for others, so if we become too focused on ourselves then we can't get to a place of actually living and being like Christ. It comes down to this: we need to find the discipleship gospel. We need to understand what the discipleship gospel means for us—and what it means for others when we faithfully follow Jesus and carry out his mission.

Consider the Intentionality of the Gospel

The discipleship gospel includes a gospel declaration, a gospel response, and gospel benefits. Gospel declaration means accepting who Jesus is and what he has done. Our gospel response is moving forward in intentionally following Jesus and becoming part of his mission. Part of the gospel benefits is the Good News. The declaration, response, and benefits are what make discipleship a natural part of what it means to be saved. The discipleship gospel is a gospel for others, involving love, devotion, and purpose.

Consider the intentionality of the gospel. Look closely at why you are doing what you're doing. Pay careful attention to what is being produced in your life, in your church, and by those individuals on your leadership team and in your church. The gospel is something very intentional, and it is lived out on a daily basis. Considering those things powerfully helps in living out the gospel because we can get lost in what it is we're trying to create. We can lose our vision and mission by getting lost in selfish ambition or false gospels, so we need to grasp how important it is to share the gospel that is truly biblical.

The gospel is not just a golden ticket that you put into your back pocket, it needs to produce something. Jesus calls for fruit; he calls us to make disciples of Christ that will further carry out his mission. Our response to Jesus' calling and his gospel is so

critical. It's critical for us and for others because it involves a spiritual impact and eternity.

There is a sense that disciple making ought to be more organic, so how can we go about doing that? Part of our focus and efforts should be about getting ahold of a gospel that is clear and simple, one that is precisely what our hearts have been longing for—without the things that so easily distract us and set us heading off in a different direction. Think about the gospel you teach and the gospel that you have always been taught. Do the two differ? There are bound to be nuances in how we think and perceive the gospel as we grow in maturity and wisdom. So when, if ever, has your gospel been challenged? When our gospel is challenged, that is a crucial moment. It is a moment when we have the opportunity not only to seek clarity but to ensure that we are following Jesus' discipleship gospel as clearly and simply as we can.

Maintain a Clear Vision for Disciple Making

Think about the power of having a clear vision for making disciples. How do moments of realization change the way things are done? Do challenges and struggles move and shape how things are carried out? Scripture tells us that we need to examine ourselves on a regular basis. It's not always easy, as Scripture is a mirror and reflection of our souls. Even still, we should reflect on what teaching is supposed to be and what it is designed to do. Teaching and preaching are not just skills to fill up time with talking and feel-good inspiration. We should be seeking teaching and preaching that is also training and a purposeful raising up of disciples and disciple makers. We should want our use of Scripture to be effective and transformative, and we should want to maintain definitions that actually carry a meaningful purpose.

Those definitions serve as a unifying factor in churches and for Christ's disciple makers.

The discipleship process is a transformation of the heart, and that means it's not always easy. In some ways, discipleship is one of the most thorough church subtraction processes we can embark upon—because people aren't always necessarily ready for discipleship and disciple making. Church subtraction can be a hard thing to bear, but keep in mind that disciple making and creating disciple makers has a higher purpose than high church attendance. Take a moment to think about ways for discipleship, where are the roadblocks and what are the difficulties inherent in the process?

One roadblock or difficulty could be that people don't generally like change, especially difficult personal changes. Even though that may be the case, we still need to be faithful to what God has called us to do. Try to pull people along and understand that pushback is a part of the process. Every pastor has to calibrate the rate of speed that they are going to lead their congregation. It something unique for every group of people and every individual.

Carefully Consider What Your Church Values

Leaders need to consider the great question of what their church values. What the church values is fundamentally important. Theological currents through the ages have often caused churches and people to drift unaware. First, you need to know why you are doing all of this: *Why the gospel?* And then you need to move to the what: *What is a disciple?* And then you create a plan. This is a time to investigate, study, and wrestle through what it means

to make disciples in your own context, where you serve, and in the conditions you are currently in.

It's important that the church leadership is behind what you're doing, and it shouldn't be a hard sell because discipleship and disciple making are in the Bible and are fundamental to Jesus' life on earth. Jesus' last words need to be our first mission. The Great Commission is the best sales tool that you have in getting leaders on board.

Keep in mind that a lot of it has to do with how we communicate what we are doing. Everything we do in discipleship is based around that Great Commission, so teach Christ's people to obey Christ's commands. Help people engage in and be obedient to Christ's commandment, but remember that pushback is a common part of that. Don't be discouraged because not everyone is ready at the same time. Not everyone is going to be ready. Some people are raring to go. Some people need ample time to realign their hearts and minds to Christ's hope and calling for their lives. As a spiritual, discipleship revolution begins behind the scenes in your church, you will see people who are doing it and getting the idea. You will see lives begin to be changed, a sort of healthy, holy jealousy. That's good, but that won't be everyone in your church.

Unity of Mission and Sustained Success

Be very mindful that you don't necessarily start pushing people too hard at the beginning. Revolution doesn't usually happen overnight, and that's okay. That's necessary. Taking careful time and paying close attention to the individuals as change gradually occurs ensures clarity of mind, unity of mission, and success that couldn't necessarily be achieved or sustained in any other way.

A discipleship gospel is something that needs to be built into every structure over time. It takes purposeful, intentional actions

and time. Shepherd people through the change carefully and gently, encouraging and admonishing them all the way. Bring them along with you. Don't just throw them off the boat because they're not with you at the moment—and learn not to obsess over those who are not yet all the way on board. Simply let them come with time and careful effort. Work with the willing in the meantime.

Prayer

The panelists are asked to consider and share what part prayer plays in their implementation of discipleship and disciple making.

Prayer needs to be at the forefront. Part of it has to do with your intention, what it is you're trying to do. Be sure you know what you're doing before beginning. Work it out and wrestle with God so that your vision can be clear and aligned with God. Pray through working with those who are not yet willing. God can surely move and work in the lives of others.

One way to get people on board is to give them items to pray over concerning the process. Focus people toward prayer to clear the path forward. Doing this helps people feel like they're a part, like they're included, and also begins transforming them from the inside-out.

The panelists are asked what the length of time to change the culture of a church could be. All churches have different dynamics. One church could be in a five- to seven-year process. Remember that it's not about the speed by which things are being done. It takes a while to build up speed and steam and momentum. Excitement at the beginning often dies. Instead, let an underground movement begin and flourish, like Jesus did with a couple of men and a fishing boat.

Changing church culture is a slow process, and it's certainly a *process*. Work with the process as it comes. For those who lead, there's nothing new under the sun. If you don't know why you are doing what you are doing, it is going to take you longer. Having a vision for what you're doing is so important. You could still be looking at discipleship as a program to implement. True discipleship is holistic. You have to shift your mindset away from discipleship as something simply to help the church "get better" or grow in numbers. Culture is different than a program or philosophy. It involves every aspect of what you're doing and points you to the exact thing you're going to be doing.

The difference between discipleship and evangelism lies in something you *are* versus something that you *do*. A healthy follower of Jesus will take part in evangelism. Remember that the kingdom of God is spiritual in its power. What caused ordinary people to become witnesses of the gospel was the Holy Spirit moving in them. A witness and an evangelist are separate in that a witness tells a story, and in the process talks about the declaration of Christ's coming. Discipleship is more of a state of being. It is learning how to follow Christ and how to live as Christ would live. It includes creating disciples like your own self, individuals who will be willing to go out into the world—telling the story of Jesus—and make disciples who will do the very same.

Closing Comments

To end, the panelists are asked: *How will the discipleship gospel make a better society?*

- Dan Leitz – Discipleship in and of itself when it's founded on Christ, goes out to many generations; it's exponential and revolutionary. It's not just changing one life. It's

changing a life that will be able to change others. It's not just a feel-good thing. It's kingdom-oriented. It is what we preach no matter what is going around us.

- Earl McKay – Being a disciple is loving as Jesus loved and serving as Jesus served. It cannot be anything but revolutionary and life-changing. Loving as Jesus loved, fleshing that out is hard work. Starting from that foundation is transformative. It cannot help but affect our neighbors, our neighborhood, and our community.
- Bill Hull – There are several things that create a society, one being the conscience of a society, another being the family. The family shapes society, and the family is somewhat in crisis right now. The government is another shaper of society. And finally, the church, while undersold in our society, is a powerful shaper of society. The hope for society is that Christ-like individuals will make other Christ-like people and that they will do so exponentially, and eventually such a movement will grow and shape our society. There is always hope that God will be able to restore, to bring renaissance, and to bring renewal to our society.

Quick Links

- [The Bonhoeffer Project](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Christ teaches us most of the things we need to know for discipleship.
2. *True or false:* The gospel that separates conversion from discipleship is a gospel that makes it impossible for us to fully live out the Christian life.
3. *True or false:* The gospel is like a golden ticket that you put into your back pocket.
4. *True or false:* True discipleship is holistic.
5. *True or false:* It's okay to push people really hard. Sometimes that's the only way to get results in a timely manner.
6. *True or false:* The discipleship gospel includes a gospel declaration, a gospel response, and gospel benefits.
7. *True or false:* Discipleship is a natural part of what it means to be saved.
8. *True or false:* Teaching is supposed to be something that inspires, something that keeps people interested in Jesus.
9. *Short answer:* What is discipleship?

10. *Short answer:* What shapes our society? What is the hope for society? Can our hope be lost?

SESSION 4 SUMMARY:

What Compels a Person to Be a Disciple and Make Disciples?

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Greg Ogden – Global Discipleship Initiative
- Joanne Kraft – Discipleship for Women
- Danny Hinton – Downline Ministries

What's So Compelling About Jesus?

To be a disciple means to be a follower of Jesus. So, then we must ask ourselves, *What's so compelling about Jesus that we should follow him?* If we know that we want to truly be disciples of Jesus, following after him in his mission, shaping our lives after the way he lived, and actually doing the things he taught are things we simply have to do—because we want to.

Jesus has a way of bringing about in us both fascination and fear, like a divine paradox. And as much as Jesus affirms us, he disturbs our lives; he assures and complicates our every decision

as we grow more deeply into him and into his likeness. He is the confounding Christ.

Jesus, the Confounding Christ

We can see the human response to Jesus' confounding nature clearly in Luke 5, when Jesus called his first disciples. The story goes like this: The about-to-be-disciples had been fishing all night, with no luck. Jesus was standing near the lake as people crowded closer and closer around him to hear the things he had to say. Jesus noticed some fishermen off to the side washing their nets, bummed and discouraged from their lack of a catch. The next thing we know Jesus continues his preaching from a floating pulpit, and when he finishes, he has the boldness to tell the fishermen to put their boats and nets back into the water—even though they had spent the whole night fishing, without catching even one fish.

And they did. Because something about Jesus, something inside him, drew them in and moved them to listen. Something about Jesus inspired them to act upon his request. Before the fishermen knew it, the nets were so filled with fish that the boat began sinking. It is then that Peter fell to his knees and begged Jesus to leave him, because he knew he'd never be able to leave Jesus. And so Jesus told the fishermen not to be afraid. He told them that from then on they would fish for men—and they left everything and followed Jesus.

Peter, for one, was magnetically drawn to Jesus. It is Peter's experience that a lot of us can relate to. Peter became so overwhelmed by the power of Jesus, the authority in his nature, the wonder of his miracles, that he fell to his knees. Peter knew that Jesus could change his life. Perhaps Peter knew that his life would never be the same. Seeing Jesus, he was reminded of his sinfulness

and made sure to remind Jesus as well. Because Peter didn't want to disappoint Jesus—a man who worked miracles into ordinary events, a God-man who was asking Peter to leave everything, follow him, and fish instead for individuals who would become disciples of the confounding Christ.

Oswald Chambers captures Peter's experience like this:

If we have never had the experience of taking our common religious shoes off of our commonplace religious feet and getting rid of all the undue familiarity with which we approach God, it's questionable whether we have ever stood in his presence, that those who are flippant and familiar have ever been introduced to Jesus Christ.

The disciples left everything to follow Jesus. And for us, to follow Jesus is our greatest adventure. We are being recruited by the Lord of glory to be engaged in an eternal mission, and we have the calling to recruit others to join Jesus and ourselves in that eternal mission. When you follow Jesus, you will have to face your fears. Every step into obedience is to face the fear in yourself.

Disciple Making Is Different

So, *what compels us to follow Jesus?* We are compelled because our life awaits fulfillment in him when we let go, face our fears, and follow him on this eternal enterprise of being his disciples and making disciples. Which brings us to: *What compels us to make disciples?* What we are shown in Scripture about the compelling nature of disciple making is that disciples are made in relationships. Disciples are called by name to come and follow Jesus—and to take part in having a deep and authentic relationship with him. Disciple making needs to follow Jesus' disciple making model. Jesus spent time discerning the people to call

unto himself. In the same way, we can spend time in prayer, seeking out who in our lives God may be calling us to disciple. It is God who works and moves in people, we merely move and work to fulfill his will and mission.

Disciple making is so different than church programs. Jesus is about relationships. Churches are too often about programs, especially in today's society. Programs, while not necessarily bad or destructive, are all about information and the relaying of facts. Facts don't change lives. Jesus changes lives. Relationships involve transformation, and transformation is about intimacy. An intimate and lasting relationship with Jesus is a powerful thing, it's the very thing we are trying to help other individuals find and develop in their own lives.

Programs rely on an expert, while relationships mean sharing in the gospel together. Jesus did not rely on his preaching to make disciples. No educational system would be a success if the teacher merely met with the pupils for one hour per week and had no deeper relationship with them than that. It is the relationship and knowing people more deeply—their hurts, challenges, struggles, and joys—that enables and empowers life-changing disciple making.

Programs are about synchronization. Relationships are about customization and personalization, where individuals go through the journey of faith together, through its challenges and through its struggles. To be compelled to make disciples you need a relational experience of disciple making. You need to have been nurtured in a disciple making context. Secondly, you need to be compelled to make disciples through a replicable experience.

In order to do this, first pray for discernment as you invite others along in disciple making. Share your life with others around the truth of God. Grow towards maturity in Christ—

together. And growing in maturity includes making disciples of others. Soon enough, you will be equipped to go out and live the mission.

How Did We Get Here?

So, there are two holes in our heart: one to know God and the other to respond to God's call. How we will fill those holes is by going. Go. *Go and make disciples.*

It was Jesus himself who made disciples who went out and made disciples. Our aim is to follow the mandate that Jesus so clearly and lovingly gave us. We have to be a disciple before we can make disciples, and the two are intimately connected. One without the other simply doesn't make sense.

The ideal is that everybody who comes to faith in Jesus would be discipled. Ideally, disciple making would happen first primarily in the home. Unfortunately, God's ideal happens less than we'd hope for. Disciple making is often delegated to happening only in churches. In the American church, we are lacking the sort of pastoral leadership needed for people to grow in their faith and disciple others and reproduce that process. *Which leaves us where?* That leaves us in the position that we're in now: people who aren't sure what it means to be a disciple, much less how to go about living a life of making disciples.

Danny Hinton talks about how we see godly, passionate twenty-somethings who are sold out for Christ, and we think, *Wow. I want that. We need more of that in our church.* Yet we still don't take the time to realize that those people are built and developed into that place—they were discipled. A lot of people long to experience the joy of having that kind of leader who is passionate but are unwilling to do the work of getting to that place in their own life.

Joanne Kraft talks about how there is power in the invitation. Church culture can grow from one person inviting another person into their life, sharing their life with that person to develop a spiritual relationship of discipling.

Preach the Discipleship Gospel

Greg talks about the way we have been communicating the gospel. We have not been preaching a discipleship gospel but one that says you can be a Christian and have your sins forgiven and then just go on with your life. We need to make a radical direction change in our life in order to engage in truly receiving the Good News. We have not been preaching a discipleship gospel. But we need to. Remember that the gospel we proclaim is the kind of disciple we will make. We want to make disciples *of Christ*.

Danny reflects on the difference between referring to someone as a Christian or as a disciple. We tend to categorize Christianity as a destination. If we thought of it more as a trajectory, we'd find a call for constant movement and growth—and even more so we would continue the work even after a person comes to Christ. We would pursue them further, encouraging them to in turn pursue Christ and his likeness.

Think about what a disciple is below the surface, it's an *identity* built around becoming something. Now think about what a Christian is beneath the surface; it's a state of being—one that can too easily become stagnant and unchanged, one that can lack others-centeredness and life-changing vitality.

The difference between a disciple and a Christian will come out when a potential disciple is in relationship with you. Anybody who is truly a disciple, will grow to the point where they also make disciples. If we want to become like Jesus, we

have to engage in disciple making. We can see in Scripture that Jesus devoted between 65 and 90 percent of his time to making disciples, not just being a disciple. A disciple is somebody who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus.

Obedience Is God's Love Language

We need to gain a mindset of transformation, one of intentional, conscious change. Invest in others and move toward them. Engage with people and engage in their life. People are going to execute disciple making in a lot of ways, unique to their own diverse gifts and callings, but the paradigm is going to be the same. People will be passionate for Christ and that passion will bleed out into making disciples. Disciple making includes reaching out to people who don't know Jesus and helping those who do know Jesus get to know him better and grow more.

Joanne shares how she sometimes realizes that those who are in the church aren't discipling. And they don't realize it or don't even realize that they should be discipling. Obedience is God's love language. Are we being obedient to his Word? How can we say that we want to trust and follow Jesus but not live out his mission and calling?

Joanne continues by sharing three reasons why people can place living like Jesus and following in his footsteps to the side:

1. *Analysis paralysis*—This happens when people don't think they know enough and become afraid, believing that they don't have what it takes to carry out the hard work of Jesus' calling, but we need to remember that God empower us.
2. *Busyness*—People often say and think they are too busy, but we all have twenty-four hours in the day; so, we need to

consider what is taking up our time and what is manifesting itself as our priority.

3. *Complacency*—We can get distracted or confused thinking that the disciple making life is for other people. If we are going to be obedient and love God well, we have no choice because discipleship is a part of that package.

How do we help churches so that each church has a simple, effective, reproducible model?

The Importance of Culture

Danny discusses how the healthiest models are where churches and ministries have a *culture*. Our churches today are not anti-disciple making, per se. It appears that instead, churches today are most interested in appearing as if they are engaged in the Great Commission while not actually engaging in or fulfilling it. The very structure of the church, knowing people personally makes a big difference in creating a culture of disciple making.

Joanne offers the point that whether you are in ministry or not, you are a part of this, you are part of God's family, and Bobby jumps in, saying that Jesus did not rely on preaching to make disciples. Most churches lack a culture of disciple making due to a lack of intentionality or a misalignment of what Jesus called for and what his church needs. Before we can begin changing our church, we can all start by being a disciple who makes disciples, because unless you have a reproducible, well-communicated model, it cannot and will not shape the culture of the church.

Danny offers up a few thoughts to keep in mind throughout the process of creating culture and implementing a reproducible process, saying that disciple making is something that starts in

the spiritual realm. We get into all the nuts and bolts of it, but it's God who does the work. What must remain at the root and heart of what we're doing—and at the heart of our reproducible model—is loving and beholding Christ. Getting caught up in reproducing a certain book inevitably causes us to lose focus from loving and beholding Christ. We need to have a relationship agreement for disciple making, and a part of that is the plan for reproduction and multiplication.

Closing Comments

The panelists close this discussion by offering a final piece of wisdom and advice.

- Joanne Kraft – Sound doctrine is vital, especially for this age. I just want to encourage those people out there who think it's a one and done discipleship thing, it's not; it's a lifelong culture.
- Danny Hinton – We make disciples and we persevere in making disciples because we love Christ, and for most of us, I would venture to say it's because we have felt it. We've experienced it; it's been tangible. It is challenging but it is the joy of our life. Disciples need to learn it, see it, and then feel it. Once that happens they will be compelled to make disciples for a lifetime.
- Greg Ogden – Vision, intention, and means are necessary for transformation. The vision that we have for Jesus, how compelling is it? The one that we fall in love with is the one who will draw us along. We need to ask ourselves: *What is that vision of Jesus?* You have to have a means and way to stay connected to that vision.

Today, we hope that you will recommit yourselves to being disciples of Jesus and to making disciples with Jesus.

Quick Links

- [Discipleship.org](https://discipleship.org)
- [Global Discipleship Initiative](#)
- [Discipleship for Women](#)
- [Downline Ministries](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* If we know that we want to truly be disciples of Jesus, we just have to follow what we think he wants us to do in our own life.
2. *True or false:* Jesus explained himself before asking his about-to-be disciples anything.
3. *True or false:* Following Jesus truly is our greatest adventure as we engage in an eternal mission.
4. *True or false:* True and deep relationship with people and with God is what empowers disciple making.
5. *True or false:* Disciple making *starts* with setting our hearts and minds toward reproducible action.
6. *True or false:* Most churches have in fact been preaching the discipleship gospel.
7. *True or false:* The healthiest churches and church models place great emphasis on culture.
8. *True or false:* The three reasons we most often place living like Jesus aside are: thinking we aren't good enough, tiredness, being caught up in our own lives.
9. *Short answer:* Explain the difference between programs and relationships.

10. *Short answer:* What position are we in now, as disciple makers, that we have to overcome to fulfill Jesus' mission? And how did we get here?

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SESSION 5 SUMMARY:

How to Make Disciples the Way Jesus Made Disciples

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Jim Putman – Relational Discipleship Network
- Ariyana Rimson – Discipleship.org
- Brandon Guindon – Relational Discipleship Network

Jesus Is Our Model for Life and Ministry

Our goal as a church and as individuals is to be disciples and make disciples who make disciples. Although it has become lost or easily neglected, discipleship as Jesus intended should be the key mission of the church. Jesus said to go and make disciples, not merely make converts after all. So for us, disciple making is both introducing people to Jesus—which is evangelism—and teaching them about Jesus—which is discipleship. And us? We are called *to make disciples*—which includes both.

Jesus didn't mean for us to do it in our own way. He did not hand over the reins and methods to us before his ascension. He

left us with a specific calling and with the methods that he lived out before his ascension. Jesus had something specific in mind for believers: the church. We are to be making disciples together as a church, and we are to do it the way Jesus showed us to do it. Too often we tend to separate the teachings of Jesus from the methods of Jesus, yet we still want the results of Jesus. And that is a mistake and faulty thinking. How could we expect the same results without imitating the same methods?

The church today has worked really hard to innovate rather than imitate. We have aimed at drawing people in through our innovations, but has it really helped us? There are some things we don't need to innovate. Jesus made it quite clear that we are to do what he did with his first disciples. When he said to go and make disciples, embedded in that command were the methods Jesus himself used. Because Jesus is the ideal disciple maker for us to follow and shape our lives after. He, as the Christ, had understanding that we obviously don't have. He knows what will reach people and what won't. He knows people—because he created them.

Jesus Empowered Us to Live Out Our Calling

We can look at how Jesus made disciples easily because we have the story of Jesus in the Gospels. Looking through those stories, we can see Jesus making disciples and we can see his specific methodology. His method is one we are able to follow—and should follow. He empowered us to do so.

Jesus, before he actually chose disciples, shared who he was. When he said to the disciples “Come and follow me,” he was also saying, “I want you to come and be with me.” He called them into relationship. He spent a season of time with them, connect-

ing with them, and helped them to connect with one another. He took them along and helped them understand what discipleship is and what it means. He helped them learn about deeper relationship and about loving God and others. Jesus came to be a model of laying down his life for others—true, eternal love. The world had redefined love to mean something that God didn't intend. And the world continues to try today. But Jesus taught what love looks like in relationship.

We need to have a loving, ministerial heart, a servant's heart—like Jesus. We need to be reconciled to God through Christ and be given the ministry of reconciliation. The reason Jesus did life with the disciples was to let them see this mission lived out and live it themselves, not just let them hear about it and figure things out on their own.

But Jesus wasn't against teaching; he taught often, as we know. Still, he often had to go further in explanation with the disciples so that they would better understand and could then go and teach others better. Discipleship is teaching a truth and helping people understand that truth in practical ways for their own life, so that they can become more and more like Jesus—so that they can go out into the world, not just with a message but as the kind of messenger that makes a difference in the lives of others.

Jesus Is the Message

The kind of messenger that we are makes a difference in the ministry we have and the disciples we make. We can easily distort or confuse the message, and that's why keeping Jesus and his methods at the heart of what we do is so important. Too often we try to fulfill the God-given mission of Jesus without using the methods that Jesus used. This is why it's important to not just

accept the mission that he gave us but embrace the methods of Jesus. Jesus is our example of what a mature believer looks like.

For Jesus, right and wrong are connected with love, and he showed us that through his life. Jesus understood truth and applied it accurately because he was Christ, God's son. Scripture lets us know that Jesus understood and lived out the truth, and it also shows us that Jesus understood discipleship and how to live that out. The discipleship process isn't just a means to an end, for someone to gain knowledge; it is something that builds relationship, community, support, and encouragement so that we are no longer acting alone but acting like Christ and walking in his presence. What it comes down to is that Jesus is the model that we are to emulate: *Jesus is our model for life and ministry.*

Discipleship Demands Us to Follow Christ

We need to return to Scripture and not just look at what it says about who Jesus was or truths about him but also look at the method of Jesus written in there for faithful discipleship and disciple making. There's embedded truth in the Scriptures about how to make disciples.

As disciples and disciple makers, we should seek to emulate Jesus' method and model. We believe that discipleship demands us to follow the resurrected Christ and imitate the priorities and patterns of the incarnate Christ. We want to champion Christ.

Jim Putman talks a bit about the difference between a convert and a disciple. We realize that this distinction is like that of evangelism and discipleship. Jesus is both Messiah and King. He is Savior and Lord. It's his kingdom, so when he said go make disciples, it is for his kingdom and his purposes and plan. We need to obey him.

Brandon Guindon talks about what happens when we look at the life of Christ and follow what Jesus did. We can see a continuous relationship between Jesus and his disciples when we look at his life. Part of our problem is taking bits and pieces of the disciple making mentality and turning them into programs that we do instead of a lifestyle that we live. We talk about bringing back Jesus' message—the gospel—along with his methodology, but he never intended for the two to be broken down and separated. For Jesus, healthy disciple making was simply how he lived; it was his lifestyle. He modeled it for us, and the church in Acts worked to live it out too.

The *Whole Church Should Be Involved in Disciple Making*

Jim offers his thoughts on why the whole church should be involved in making disciples, not just its pastor and leaders. He shares how in the early days of the church, they were first called disciples. The early church was to be filled with disciples. It wasn't until a little bit on that they were first called "Christians," but that term was never intended to replace the meaning behind being a disciple. So some today think that they can be a Christian without being a disciple. And this just isn't the case. We are called to be a Christ-follower and disciple maker in every sphere of our life. We need to ask ourselves what it looks like to think, *Alright, everyone is a disciple. How can I be a spiritual disciple maker who makes disciples wherever I go?*

Brandon offers his thoughts on why the whole church should be involved as well. We are ambassadors. We are given the ministry of reconciliation. Those designations weren't just given to Paul and Peter and the other disciples. Those designations were given to everyone. It is not our job to support the select few. It is our

job to make disciples. We are all called into the mission of Christ together. Following King Jesus is to be our lifestyle. Anything less is a failure to accomplish and be obedient to what Jesus called us to.

The way we make disciples needs to be built around relationships and love. Jim talks about how Jesus embodied relationship in disciple making. When we follow Jesus, it changes our heart. It makes sense that Jesus' method for making disciples involves being in relationship and community. Love is what we do and model everyday wherever we are; it is a lifestyle and a culture. It is in relationship that we learn to be relational and love others.

Consider the Fruits of the Spirit

The fruits of the Spirit are *love*, joy, and peace . . . with who? Patience toward who? Kindness toward who? The fruits of the Spirit are all relational, spiritual fruit. It is love that ties it all together. If we don't have love, we are nothing. We can do great things and know great mysteries without love, because we want to earn our salvation. But God is—and always has been—calling us to love.

The reason why we do what we do is because we are being changed from the inside out. Jesus' method showed his true motivations. His motivation was, and is, and will be *love*. And his method reveals that love so that we can more fully understand the *what* and the *why* as we go through life and loving others.

So how can we get past curriculum and move beyond that into culture? If we are going to use curriculum, people need to be a part of a loving, disciple making culture. Curriculum is not necessarily unimportant, but teaching needs to involve so much more than that.

Strategy and Culture

Brandon talks for a moment about culture, and more specifically culture in the church. He says that the typical first step that church takes is asking what strategy they need. It has to go back to what the leader is living out among the people that leader is leading. Everywhere we go, we have the opportunity to create culture. We need to know if the culture we are creating is reproducible, is it one that fights for relationship, is it one where people love even when it's difficult. Culture is like an umbrella that helps us produce disciple making. Ask yourselves: *Is our culture programmatic? Is it critical? Does our culture look like the culture that Jesus created?*

Think about Jesus' small group of disciples, in another culture Peter and Matthew would not have gotten along well, yet in the culture of love and community Jesus created, they did—because culture beats strategy every time. So challenge yourselves: Are you merely focusing on strategy?

A lot of people think that they aren't qualified or aren't gifted or aren't supposed to create culture and make disciples, so they end up stepping back and waiting for someone else to do those things. They think of spiritual leaders as those who we listen to on Sunday. Yet Jesus chose everyday guys. He didn't turn to the Pharisaical, spiritual leaders of the day.

If we don't lead in such a way that others can follow, you're saying to them that they can't do what you are doing. But if you lead in a way that shows and tells them they can do what you're doing, then they will. The best your people will be if you never invite them into the process is informed spectators. Jesus showed the disciples a model they could actually be a part of—culture.

People Will Know That We Are Disciples by the Way We Live

Ariyana Rimson shares about how Jesus is the model for our life and ministry. One of the things we can keep in mind is that people will know we are disciples by the way we live, not just by what we say. We all need to be on the same page about the fact that Jesus laid down his life for us and that we are called to lay down our lives for others—not because we have to, but because we want to do so for him and for the love of others.

The hope we should have for ourselves is having a heart that aims to do good things, not just say good things. We need to remember that our pastors are not Jesus. *Jesus is Jesus*. We need to pick up our Bibles; we need to read Scripture and learn for ourselves. Take what your pastor is saying and run it by and through God's Word. You need to be accountable for yourself because the Spirit lives inside of you. Jesus gave us the Spirit and his power to make disciples. That power inside of us is the same power that worked in Jesus. We are commanded to make disciples, but our disciple making needs to come out of a deep and abiding love for God.

We are ambassadors for Christ. Jesus is our King. He has all authority in heaven, and he has asked us to do something. He's not all that interested in the way we think disciple making should be done. He died for us and loves us but also gave us a command with very clear instructions. Our vision for the church should be what Jesus told us to do. We should carry his vision with us wherever we go. He has given us his Spirit and the power to go live out his calling and mission. We need to just go do it and stop making excuses.

Closing Comments

- Jim Putman – A lot of times we think of this in terms of your church, but before you ask anybody else to do anything, start with you. As you start to actually make disciples, it changes the way you teach, it changes the way you live, and people can actually see it and model it. As it starts with you, you now have opportunities to start inviting other people in too.
- Brandon Guindon – Jesus is the model in life and discipleship. It has to start with you. I would encourage everybody to have a *come to Jesus* moment. Go look in the mirror. Ask yourself some hard questions, *Does my life reflect Jesus? Is there fruit in my life of making disciples? Can I look around and see that disciples are being made, and those that I'm raising up, are they able to make disciples that can make disciples?* It starts with you.
- Ariyana Rimson – So many times, we hear people ask what God's will for their life is. Well, God wants you to make disciples. That is literally what he wants you to do. Then people think, *There's got to be more than that.* Nope, that's it. That is the biggest impact you can make in your life.

Quick Links

- Discipleship.org
- [Relational Discipleship Network](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Disciple making only requires discipleship.
2. *True or false:* Jesus was against teaching because it doesn't actually create disciples.
3. *True or false:* Part of discipleship is helping people understand truth for their own lives so that they can become more like Jesus.
4. *True or false:* It's not always necessary for the whole church to be involved in the disciple making process.
5. *True or false:* What Jesus showed the disciples was a model for disciple making, and that model represented something that they could be a part of, which is culture.
6. *True or false:* People will know we are disciples primarily by what we say.
7. *True or false:* The fruits of the spirit are relational fruit.
8. *True or false:* Curriculum should be abandoned entirely because it doesn't make disciples the way Jesus intended.
9. *Short answer:* How will people know that we are disciples of Jesus by the way we live?

10. *Short answer:* What sorts of questions can we ask ourselves about our disciple making, in what Brandon Guindon calls "our *Come to Jesus* moment"?

SESSION 6 SUMMARY:

How Love Drives Disciple Making

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Pete Scazzero – Emotionally Healthy Discipleship
- Geri Scazzero – Emotionally Healthy Discipleship

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

The core of everything for us as disciples and Christians is loving union with God, loving union with others, and loving union with ourselves. For us, if love isn't our motivator, our purpose, and our reason for discipling, everything else will have trouble fitting together. The thing about being in loving union with God, especially in leadership, is the danger of leading without Jesus.

Pastors can preach sermons without him, churches can build things without him, and we can plan things without him. We've all been there. But when we do things without him, we can be sure that something crucial will be missing and we are sure to find out that whatever it is we have tried to accomplish without Jesus will not have a lasting effect. This goes with making disci-

ples as well. There will be little fruit and little impact long term when we leave Jesus out of the mix.

Jesus talked about this on the sermon on the mount, about the danger in leadership of losing love, especially loving union with him. The “I never knew you” scene in Matthew helps show us this too. What Jesus is saying there is that they were doing his works without love. This loving union allows Jesus into our hearts and into our life—a surrender, a letting go. It’s a lifestyle of loving union. We live in a love relationship, in oneness with him out of which everything flows. So the question becomes, *How do we slow down to live in this loving union with Jesus?* The key is to anchor ourselves because if we aren’t in loving union with him we’ve lost everything, missed everything.

Loving People in Our Everyday Lives

And the second thing to think about is the question and issue of loving union with other people. How are we to go about that in our everyday lives? Most of us were never disciplined in loving other people. The assumption usually goes, *If you love Jesus it’s all going to work out just fine.* But if you take a look at the teachings of Jesus, he put loving people as a distinctive of the kingdom of God, which was in complete contrast to the religious leaders of his day. It was completely turning away from what they knew and had been doing. He turned things upside down. He made the priority loving people.

Jesus refused to separate loving God and loving people. In his Greatest Command, both loving God and loving people were the answers he gave. We can guess from all this that knowledge won’t save us—even though knowledge is often the thing we pursue most heartily. *Love* is what we’re being called to. Jesus called us to love.

Yet it's not just loving God and loving other people, loving ourselves is also required. Loving ourselves in a healthy way—not a narcissistic way—that is. We give out of who we are, and we cannot give what we don't possess. We can only give what we do possess. For us, who we are is more important than what we do. It's our being that we give to others.

We Are Stewards

It's not selfish to take care of yourself. We are stewards of ourselves and others. The hope is that we will move from shallow to deep transformational discipleship. It begins with you, your team, and your church. This kind of transformation will come out of love—love with Jesus first, and then love for others, and being in a healthy place yourself.

Emotional health and spiritual maturity are inseparable. Most people come into adulthood and still aren't in a place of good emotional health. How do we disciple people in a way that disciples their whole person, that moves into significant, deep discipleship out of which mission flows. American Christianity is content with quite a shallow level of discipleship. We value and treasure information, but information doesn't actually lead to formation inside or deep change.

Holistic Disciple Making Defined

We believe love is the driving motive. The Great Commandment, which is to love God and love people. The Great Commandment precedes the Great Commission to go and make disciples. Loving God and loving people is the passion behind the priority, the motive behind the mission, the heart behind the hands. Love is the signature card of true disciples, and disciple making cannot happen apart from

loving and caring relationships. Larger ministries require more relational disciple makers to keep growing. Disciple making is relational. As ministries grow, more relational disciples are needed. Jesus himself said, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

Pete and Geri’s Story

Geri shares her and Pete’s story of moving to New York City and beginning to minister and plant a church. A lesson Geri gained through the experience was that we can lose ourselves and our souls a bit even while exciting church growth is happening all around you. Although churches may grow rapidly, we can feel inadequate, unable to give, and lose ourselves in the process.

The couple talks about how they lacked a lot of knowledge. In their own lives and marriage, they struggled with what discipleship looks like. The problems weren’t outside of them, in the church, the people, or their kids. All of those things can be big challenges, but ultimately they aren’t the problem. The problems arise inside us. Behavior can flow from unconscious stuff.

The couple shares how they learned to open up about what they were feeling inside and how they began to learn more about the interior world of themselves, their inner heart. They talk about how radical it was to open up as they realized how much they had been missing and lacking and not loving. It was a critical, painful awakening for them. They share how they reflected and contemplated what had happened to cause such a crisis.

A Divided Church

The church is as divided these days as much as the wider culture. And why is that? Pete talks about how we don’t have the maturi-

ty and the depth to have civil, mature discussions with each other and disagree. This is a tragedy for us, the church isn't distinct from the culture. The pressure of the culture is revealing the shallowness of our churches. And this is like a gift from God. He is showing us that getting a group of people together in a room is not enough to create a disciple. Going on a mission trip is not enough to create disciples. Giving money is not enough to make a disciple. Essentially we need to leave the world so that we can serve the world.

Traditionally we would try to measure our maturity with questions like: *Am I confident as God's child? Do I love to worship God? Am I spending time in his Word and in prayer? How am I using my gifts? Am I integrating my faith into the workplace?*

In their ministry, Pete and Geri look beneath the surface with questions like: *Do you know what you are feeling at any given moment? Are you willing to explore unacceptable or unknown parts of yourself, allowing Christ to transform you more fully? Can you share freely about your emotions or your joy or your pain? Can you experience and deal with anger in yourself in a way that leads to growth in others and yourself?*

All of us have been shaped and affected by our past, by how we grew up and who we grew up with. Although we are now in the family of Jesus, we can tend to do life more like the family we came from. The goal is to think more deeply about whether we are letting Jesus transform us from the inside out. These are tools to help people do it. It's a challenging journey and it takes time.

A Definition of Success

Bobby asks the panelists why the church is this way and how was the original church different? Pete shares that there are many, many factors. But part of American and Western culture is bigger,

better, faster. We tend to define success by numbers and growth. How we define success becomes our priority. We begin thinking that everything is good so long as people are coming to church, so long as they are in small groups, so long as worship is dynamic, so long as there is a façade of growth.

That is not disciple making. It does not mean that we are actually making disciples or even that people are being changed. It merely means that we are connecting people and keeping them in community. All of that is well and good.

Doing discipleship that way isn't biblical. John the Baptist's numbers went down, Jeremiah's did, too. *Even Jesus' numbers went down.* It's not biblical to define success by growth and numbers. Pete shares that success is becoming the person God is calling you to become and doing what God has called you to do. We know that success is abiding in Jesus. It's also making disciples. So the question becomes, *am I making time like Jesus did to invest in people, care for them, and love them?*

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

Geri talks about how time and again, people have interpreted "Blessed are the peacemakers" as don't ruffle feathers, don't rock the boat. But sometimes we have to disrupt fake peace in order to gain real, true, lasting peace. Conflict is scary though. We just have to learn how to respect and negotiate our differences. Think about James 1:19 "Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." But what does that really mean? Listening deeply and carefully to another person matters. Listening is synonymous with loving for most people.

This is not just emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a low-level self-awareness, not lasting, deep, transformational change. What we are concerned about is discipleship. Most

people are so not used to digging in, we try to escape the confrontation. We live in a world where what matters is how we appear to others.

The approach we need is to live in the family of Jesus, separate from the world's culture and the world's communities. We need to model and lead through our own brokenness. We have to ask ourselves: are we going to follow Jesus. We need to live out the message we are sharing. We come to Jesus to have our lives changed. For the interior life of people to really change, they need experiential discipleship. We can think we understand things, but it is through living out discipleship that we really learn and better understand.

Discipleship Is Slow

One of the largest problems is that discipleship is slow, and it takes time. A lot of people aren't willing to take the time and invest. Still, we can't give what we don't possess. There is a hunger and a thirst that the disciples had. We're too busy with our own lives too often. But Jesus is our life. We need that awareness. Jesus' way was exponential. It wasn't mass pursuit. It was investing in individuals slowly and intentionally.

It's important to remember that we don't need another program. Don't take this to people before you can live it out yourself. We need a life that flows from Jesus. You do need to get trained. This is not a small group curriculum. This is not a Sunday school class. We need the theology and skills like Jesus: *How do you listen? How do you speak? Do you speak clearly and respectfully, like Jesus?*

Our aim is to form a new culture in our churches, in our families, in our communities, and in our lives. We need maturity, personal maturity that spills out into our workplaces and

families. This is a way of life. It's a culture. It could take seven to ten years to create the culture. It begins with you and in your marriage and then into your leadership team and into the church. This is a leadership paradigm that is not for the faint of heart. We are going after a new culture formed around deeply changed disciples. The Christian life is major transformation after major transformation.

Steps to Take in Pursuing Disciple Making Driven by Love

Geri and Pete share some of the key steps that people can take. Pete says that you want to begin with yourself. Do it for yourself. Start with yourself. Lead with who you are.

Geri shares that if we can even begin to have awareness of our need for growth, that's a great first step. The way we change other people is by changing ourselves. It was who Jesus was that changed other people. It's scary, but what's the alternative? Playing church? If we can begin to gain awareness of where we're at and where we want to go, that's wonderful. What you do is important, but who you are is way more important. The first work we need to do is with ourselves.

Closing Comments

- Pete Scazzero – As a guy who never listened to his spouse for the first seven years of his marriage, if your spouse is trying to say something to you that you don't want to hear, God is probably in there somewhere. Secondly, you are doing one of the most important works on the earth, pastoring and leading churches. Above all else, seek him. Slow down so that you have time to be with him so that

you can be abiding and leading out of a cup that runs over.
If the yoke feels hard and heavy, it's not Jesus.

- Geri Scazzero – If you're married, all the fodder for your transformation is in that relationship. Get on the journey and resource yourself. Get help because change requires help.

Quick Links

- [Emotionallyhealthy.org](https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org)
- [Discipleship.org](https://www.discipleship.org)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* The core of everything for us as disciples and Christians is loving union with God, loving union with others, and loving union with ourselves.
2. *True or false:* There can still be fruit and an impact when we do things without Jesus.
3. *True or false:* Jesus placed loving yourself above everything else.
4. *True or false:* When the yoke we feel is hard, that means the work we are doing must be important so we should keep at it.
5. *True or false:* We need to be careful about taking this concept of Emotionally Healthy Discipleship to our churches or others before we have the ability and skills to live it out ourselves.
6. *True or false:* “Blessed are the peacemakers” means that we need to ensure people won’t get the wrong idea or be turned away by what we say.
7. *True or false:* The church is no longer distinct from the broader culture, for the most part.
8. *True or false:* It’s not true that as long as people are attending church and taking part of small groups that both growth and disciple making are happening.
9. *Short answer:* What does culture reveal about our churches? What does what we’re doing show us about ourselves?

10. *Short answer:* How should we define success?

SESSION 7 SUMMARY:

What Are Disciple Making Metrics?

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Dann Spader – Likejesus.church
- Craig Etheredge – Disciplefirst.com
- Myron Pierce – Myronpierce.com

God Gives the Increase

To open this disciple making intensive, Dann Spader shares a bit about growing up on a farm, how his father worked diligently yet still relied fully on God to bring the rain and the growth and the increase. He offers up this lesson for us: it is God who gives the increase, but our job is to heartily work together with him to produce maximum fruitfulness. And the very same principle goes for disciple making too. We are called to trust God with the increase and in the meantime work diligently doing everything we can to move people toward Christ.

Jesus is a masterful harvester. Both his message and his methods are important for us as Christians and disciple makers. Dann

goes on to explain his four-chair pathway made up of seeker, believer, worker, disciple maker:

- *Seeker*: Jesus challenged us to come and see; refers to the spiritually dead; where no fruit is being produced.
- *Believer*: Jesus then challenged us to follow him; refers to spiritual children; where some fruit is being produced.
- *Worker*: Jesus taught us to reproduce; refers to young believers; where more fruit is being produced.
- *Disciple Maker*: Jesus told us to go and bear fruit; refers to spiritual parents; where much fruit is being produced.

What Is Fruitfulness?

For us, fruitfulness is intimately connected to God's blessing, and we can attain fruitfulness best through multiplication. Dann explains that *fruitfulness* in Scripture can be defined as four things: character, conduct, contribution, and converts. Through those things we can see when we are being fruitful in God's kingdom.

The first challenge Jesus gave was to *come and see*, and the result of his challenge was conversion. Dann encourages us to measure our conversion growth rates—which is not merely the number of new people in attendance but the percentage of people who are newly converted to loving and following Jesus. We can grow a church by getting a better preacher or a new building, but our mission is not growth as much as it is conversion growth: making disciples who can make more disciples. The key question for us is this: *Are we seeing a healthy conversion growth rate?*

The second challenge Jesus gave was to *follow me*, and the result of that challenge is simply serving. New believers need to learn their new identity in Christ. New believers also need

to learn how to live a cleansed life in Christ. As babies grow, they become more others-oriented, and that is how we can see spiritual growth and maturity coming to life in others. We can measure this by asking how many people are engaged in serving others. Serving others is a good sign of growing maturity in new believers. Jesus modeled this others-oriented lifestyle for his new believers and for us. The key question to ask with this is: *What percentage of our people are engaged in serving?*

The third challenge given by Jesus was to *follow me and I will make you fishers of men*. The end product of this challenge is reproduction. This challenge of Jesus reveals the greatest intentionality on his part. Jesus told his disciples that he would teach them to reproduce, and he did just that. The key question for us to ask here is: *Why?*

The ultimate goal of Jesus was not to reach the world as much as it was to make disciples who could reach the world. Jesus' metric was reproduction. He helped his disciples become spiritual parents. As leaders we need to ask critical, clarifying questions: How many people have seen somebody come to Christ as a result of their own engagement and involvement in that individual's life? Are we seeing a growing number of people who are reproducing?

The fourth challenge Jesus gave was at the end of his ministry, *Go and bear fruit*. The result of this is multiplication—disciples making more disciples. What we need to ask here is: *How many people in our ministry have spiritual children and grandchildren? Are we seeing a growing number of those people?*

Evaluating and Measuring Disciple Making Metrics

Historically the church has had its big four metrics: bodies, bucks, baptisms, and buildings. If our mission is disciple making movements, we need to measure according to that instead of anything else. Are we making disciples who can make other disciples? The issue, for us, is not growth but multiplication. *Are our new believers growing into maturity and reproducing new disciples?*

It is God who gives the increase, but our job is to work together with him cultivating, planting, and reaping for maximum effectiveness as we steward what God has given to us. In discipleship.org's free e-book *Disciple Making Metrics*, all of this is explained in more depth. So be sure to check out that resource.

Myron Pierce opens up the conversation by saying that we need to evaluate what we're measuring. Craig Etheredge adds that there will be an evaluation of our ministry when we stand before Christ. Because of that, we should be evaluating now. Dann Spader further adds that this kind of metric—where you measure serving, reproduction, multiplication—is hard work and is often not fun. Because it just so happens that we tend to come back to the question: *Are we really doing what we want to be doing and what God has called us to be doing?*

When we stand before God, the things that will matter most should be our focus in the here and now. Craig shares that there are indeed some challenges with metrics that we have to acknowledge and overcome before successfully measuring anything in our churches. One challenge is the challenge of accountability. People will often pushback with the reason that we can't quantify ministry or that they aren't about to offer up what's going on in their own personal lives. Another challenge is ambiguity, which is: How do we measure love, faith, and grace?

Dann offers that he has definitely experienced pushback and says that we all know it is God who saves somebody and God who gives the increase. We still need to be engaged in the mission though, and we have to open up and let ourselves be used by God to help people come to Christ.

What—Or Who—Are Your Leaders Reflecting?

We have to measure, because that's simply how we can get better. We need to be prepared for pushback because it will surely come. If we're not careful, people will bring to us assumptions of what growth is, and their beliefs could hinder the growth of a disciple making culture in your church. Myron shares that the harder a congregation pushes back tends to be a reflection of leaders who have not yet modeled the lifestyle of what it looks like to make disciples who make disciples. We, as leaders, can challenge people through our actions, and we can work diligently to remedy the false narratives about what it is leaders do and how exactly disciples are made. Disciples are made by everyday disciples. Leaders lead others into leading. We are all under Jesus's calling to disciple making. We are all called to be disciple makers.

If you are just starting out with metrics, you might have to teach on a specific area and then ask questions of your people. It's part of culture to measure metrics and measure against the mission is a way of having and maintaining accountability. We need to look at who is actually reproducing, at where multiplication is happening, and at how often conversion is happening in the church.

If you want to really get into how people are living their life, you can only collect that information through some sort of survey. But be aware of the accuracy of those surveys. People tend

to be super generous with themselves when doing surveys; it's only natural. Even still, it's important to measure and be familiar with where people are at and where your church is at with disciple making. Breaking down what's happening in the church is important for staying true to the mission of Jesus.

Start with Yourself: What Has God Been Doing in Your Life?

We do know through biblical revelation that Paul often told stories. One simple thing we can do is just measure stories. And before you start with your congregation, start with your leadership. Before you even start with your leaders, start with yourself. When you go into meetings with them, just share what God has been doing in your life and how you have been working toward the mission with the individuals who are in your life and ministry.

When you start measuring against your mission, stories will surface. We have the opportunity to gain insight into what is happening in the lives of our leaders and in our church. Look for opportunities to share and create opportunities for others to share as well. We need to look at if we're really making disciples and what making disciples actually looks like for our churches.

It's hard to measure what you have not yet defined. By and large, sometimes we define discipleship by how much we know. But true disciple making is living like Jesus and following his mission. There is a very holistic nature to disciple making that we need to keep in mind. Every part of our life needs to fall under Christ and his mission for us. There's our financial life, our spiritual life, our relational life, our health—all of those things should be influenced and characterized by Christ and his mission.

We need to think carefully about where to start to have every part of our life reflect Jesus. This is key: don't try to create a program around metrics, because if we do that then the essence of what Jesus' mission and our goal as disciples will be lost. We will miss what Jesus was calling us to.

Measure Against the Mission

Bobby offers a few key things we could be measuring. The first is measuring the number of groups a church has, especially as a ratio in relation to the Sunday gathering. Also, how many—what percentage—of people are in disciplining groups? Measure the number of apprentices in your disciplining groups. We have to decide what we will compromise, and we have to decide what we want to do.

The question is raised “How do you differentiate between discipling a not-yet believer and someone who is a believer, and as leaders do we approach them differently?” Craig shares that we can treat non-Christians just as if they're believers, and what that means in the process is that they belong before they believe. There's an attitude conveyed in that process. But at the same time we need to ask ourselves if we have small groups that are designed to help new believers be disciplined by more mature disciples. There are many levels of this, but we always need to come back to measuring against our mission.

Bobby shares a statement that serves as the basis for this intensive and asks for the panelists to respond to it. The statement comes from Discipleship.org's affirmations:

“We believe verifiable fruit is the measure. God's agenda for each of us is that we stay close to him and bear fruit, more fruit, and then ultimately much fruit, showing ourselves

to be his disciples. God transforms our hearts as we were made in him and he leads us into lives of love where we love others. Jesus modeled the focus of love as he came to seek, save, and disciple people. Jesus masterfully showed how love produces disciples. It's a natural process from those who do not know Jesus all the way to those who become mature disciple makers.”

Good and Faithful Servants

Myron shares his reaction first, saying that we tend to compartmentalize everything. We have boxes that we check off, but we need to pause. Go back and look at Jesus and how he made disciples. In doing so, we can gain this sense of the complexity and messiness of life. It's not polished or perfect. We need to get back to how Jesus did it. Over and over again, we need to emphasize that to ourselves, to our leaders, and to our church. What were his goals? What needs to be modeled so that we can measure what God has called us to do? What do we need to do to receive the affirmation, “Well done, good and faithful servant”?

Craig shares that yes, Jesus is our model. When we look at Jesus' life, we can see a broader strategy that falls into intentional stages of moving people from irreligious and far from God to disciple makers that span the world. So when we are building strategy from a church perspective, it's important to identify those stages and then put metrics in place to test if what's being done is working. We need to see if connectivity is happening, if there is a heart of evangelism, if there is depth and training and multiplication happening. All of those things need to be in play, and metrics help us to measure the health of a church and show us how to get better.

Dann talks more about how Jesus was very intentional to get people to reproduce. His mission was to create a movement not just form a church. Jesus took his disciples on seven different trips to teach them and show them and model for them how to reproduce. When we begin seeing the intentionality of Jesus, it should transform our own intentionality and agendas. Jesus knew exactly what he wanted, and he stayed focused on it throughout all the mess and trials that came in his life.

Closing Comments

The panelists share their recommendations for action steps we can take today:

- Craig Etheredge – We are good at doing metrics. In addition to those metrics that we are already looking at, why not look at two or three disciple making metrics and focus on those as well. Sometimes we can think about all the things we want to measure that we become overwhelmed and don't measure much at all. But take one, look at evangelism or look at multiplication, and try to see how to gather and collect the information from your group. Focus on a few of them and you will begin to see things moving forward in your church.
- Myron Pierce – We need to start measuring generations, and in order to do that, we need to start with ourselves. Move towards generational disciple making.
- Dann Spader – No matter if you are a leader or just a follower, evaluate your own life based on those four challenges that Jesus gave. Do some hard assessment of yourself. As you do that, you can begin to move it out to others. Begin with yourself and say, 'Do I need to

realign my own life to the life of Christ?’ Because all fruit ultimately comes out of a reproduction of who we are.

Quick Links

- [Discipleship.org](https://discipleship.org)
- [Likejesus.church](https://likejesus.church)
- [Disciplefirst.com](https://disciplefirst.com)
- [Myronpierce.com](https://myronpierce.com)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* One disciple making principle we can take to heart is this: it is God who gives the increase, but our job is to heartily work together with him to produce maximum fruitfulness.
2. *True or false:* Fruitfulness in Scripture can be defined as four things: character, classes, cooperation, and converts.
3. *True or false:* The four-chair pathway is made up of seeker, believer, worker, and disciple maker.
4. *True or false:* One of the first things we can do is make a program out of metrics so that our church will be sure to get on board and keep up with it.
5. *True or false:* We should emphasize Jesus and his goals above all else.
6. *True or false:* Metrics are like a test to see if what is being done is working.
7. *True or false:* All fruit comes out of the things that we do.
8. *True or false:* Our mission is to create a movement not just a church. Seeing Jesus' intentionality should transform our own intentionality and agendas.
9. *Short answer:* Historically church growth has been measured by what? Instead of that what do we need to measure—if our mission is disciple making movements?

10. *Short answer:* Describe briefly the four challenges that Jesus gave. What sort of questions should each challenge raise for us in our disciple making?

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SESSION 8 SUMMARY:

Experience the Spirit's Power in Disciple Making

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Dave Buehring – Lionshare
- David Ferguson – Great Commandment Network
- Ken Shigematsu – Senior Pastor, Tenth Church

Often, the role of the Holy Spirit is a missing piece in our churches and in our disciple making. We can too easily forget the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit among all the other things we're working on or working toward. But the Holy Spirit helps make us like Jesus. With the Spirit comes a process for transformation. Jesus says, "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The book of Acts exists because of the Holy Spirit coming upon and working through the disciples of Jesus. In Acts we can see the disciples obeying what Jesus told them to do: make disciples.

The disciples' primary mission was not winning converts, not planting churches, and not changing church culture. It was reproducing disciple makers and disciple making communities. When they did that, there were lots of new converts, many new churches, and culture was powerfully affected. Too often our aim is to plant churches and make converts. Jesus never said that was supposed to be our aim. Our aim needs to be making disciples, and the fruit of those efforts is all the rest. We need to return to making disciples. And for us, the role of the Holy Spirit is vital to disciple making.

The Roles of the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit *brings the presence of Jesus in and through our lives.*
- The Holy Spirit *brings the likeness of Jesus in and through our lives.*
- The Holy Spirit *brings the power of Jesus in and through our lives.*

We are carriers of God's presence. He guides us into truth and helps us to remember the truth. He creates in us an attitude like Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the one who does the tweaking in our heart and makes us more like Jesus. He convicts us of sin and unrighteousness. He puts sin to death in our lives. He sanctifies us. The fruit of the Spirit comes from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God does a lot of things. One of the things we need to realize is that God wants to empower us through his Holy Spirit to fulfill his mission, and without his power we cannot live out disciple making. It takes *his* power to bring about change in our lives and in the lives of others. The Spirit helps us through challenges, helps us in our weaknesses, and helps us in prayer. He

gives us the power to overcome sin and to know the will of God. The Holy Spirit plays a significant role in our lives as disciple makers and in pouring out the love of Jesus.

The Process of Transformation

Jesus talks in Matthew 7 about how the one who hears his words and does them, which is practicing obedience, is a wise man building his house on the rock. It's not just our knowledge of the Word. It is the Holy Spirit working and moving in us. *We* are not the transformers. The Holy Spirit is. We need to realize that God is in control.

Think of a small seed. By itself, that seed is tiny, but in the ground it has the potential to reproduce orchards. Within that small seed, within the things God has made, is the power of multiplication and transformation. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to bring about transformation in us. Trust in that. Believe in that. And act according to that trust and belief. Then watch as God works and moves in the lives of his disciples.

Revelation

Think of the word *revelation*. Revelation is different than knowledge. Knowledge is information and awareness. Revelation is when the Holy Spirit pulls back the curtains and we see something spiritually that we have never seen before. Flesh and blood cannot reveal spiritual things to us; we need the Holy Spirit for that. It's not as important that we get all the information. The key is paying attention to what the Holy Spirit is revealing. God's role is revealing and transforming. Our role is obedience. If we obey what God reveals, we will see transformation in our lives. God reveals and then when we obey, transformation comes. The Holy Spirit is our guide, and we are supposed to follow what he is

doing. When we are discipling people, keep in mind the transformation process of the Holy Spirit. Look for what the Spirit could be doing in people and ask what the Spirit is doing in their lives.

Our Statement About the Holy Spirit

“We believe that Holy Spirit power is the means. Disciples cannot be made through fleshly efforts. Jesus, in his humanity, fully acknowledged his dependence on the Spirit. So disciple making is not just a strategy, it is a way of life accomplished through the fruit of the Holy Spirit living through a person’s yielded and holy life. If Jesus depended on the Holy Spirit’s power, how can we do any less? They Holy Spirit will lead us to be obedient people who live holy lives to God’s glory.”

Spiritual Transformation

David talks a little bit about how the Father loves the Son by revealing things and the Son loves the Father by yielding to the Father. He further explains how this concept is missed in today’s society. He shares part of his story of discipleship and faith, saying that knowledge can lead us to arrogance. We need to make sure we don’t separate the truth of Scripture from the One who wrote it and desires to reveal it to us.

Ken jumps in and shares a bit about his journey of spiritual transformation. He talks about when he was a young pastor, he went on a pilgrimage and learned from monks in Ireland. It was that pilgrimage that pushed and fueled him to deepen his own spiritual practices.

Dave then discusses how oftentimes people will use discipleship materials and still wonder why people aren’t being trans-

formed. The thing is, we can easily get stuck in a bible study mentality. While bible studies aren't bad, there is more to our faith than that. We are called to transformation and obedience, and we need to be looking for God's revelation in our hearts and lives.

We are called to be all about obedience-based disciple making. So how can we know the voice of the Spirit? Something we can consider when thinking about this question is to imagine that the Spirit is going to take truths from the Word of God and make them living and active in our lives. David encourages us to take the bible verses hidden in our heads and let the Spirit make them alive in our lives. In our lives, we can be looking for a path that leads us closer to God. We can lean into times when we feel the peace of God enter into our hearts as we are trying to discern the Spirit's leading in our lives.

Bobby talks a little about disciple making movements going on across the world and some of the patterns he has noticed between them. One thing that the people involved and committed to these movements have in common is fasting and prayer.

God Creates and Permeates

There are a lot of practical things involved in disciple making. As disciple makers, we need to help people connect the dots in their lives. When we act we should know that we are being obedient to God. What God initiates, he permeates. What we initiate, we have to sustain. Part of our role as disciple makers is to help people connect things to the Lord. When you hear God and obey, it is life-changing. As we begin to grasp the power of God working in our lives, it is life-changing.

Sometimes we really can get a sense of God in our spirits speaking to us. We can be encouraged by that. So how do we give

space for the Holy Spirit to bring revelation during a bible study? Our discipleship toward bible study is one of reading, discussing, and teaching and then we leave. We need to learn to cultivate the act of asking what spoke to our hearts, where we found conviction, and where affirmation was found. The Lord will show us things, but we have to learn to listen. We have to lean into what he might be saying, into his presence, and into the leadings he presents.

Spirit-Empowered Faith

A video of David Ferguson is shown, in which he talks about disciples making disciples. We need to focus on the importance of the message of the Great Commandment. If we are going to set out to make disciples, where should we start? Our aim is to equip them to love the Lord and others. Our aim is to draw people closer to God. Spirit-empowered faith involves fulfilling the Great Commission through a Great Commandment kind of love.

How can Christ be formed in us? Believing right and behaving right are essential, but they aren't sufficient—they are intended to lead us into a deepened love for the One who inspired the Scriptures. All the Scriptures depend on the principle of loving God and others. A discipleship journey could be characterized by walking in the light. Along the same lines, darkness is always chasing us. All we have to do to be overcome by the darkness is to stop walking. We need to maintain faith and keep walking in the light. When the Holy Spirit leads us into an encounter with Jesus, we walk away changed. That's the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will lead and empower us in our experience of Scripture. God's word is a powerful and meaningful source of life for us. We can live and experience bible verses. We can

embrace truth and faith. That is one thing. But it is quite another thing to live out and practice truth and faith. We are called to embrace *and* live out God's truth in genuine faith. Are we experiencing Scripture? Are we sensing God through his Word?

In Matthew 5:14, Jesus told his disciples that they were the light of the world. Faithful engagement in community and fellowship allows the Spirit to perfect his work in us. Our lives can be testimonies of the love and faithfulness of God. It's one thing to experience worship with God, and it's another thing to live out worship throughout your everyday living.

When it comes to a Spirit-empowered faith, we can know that a Spirit-empowered outcome must be relational. It's not simply rational or behavioral. A Spirit-empowered disciple listens to and hears God. Listening is relational. We cannot do this outside of the Holy Spirit because it cannot be done in the flesh. We are called to love people, and we are also called to live out his mission. We are to be ministers of reconciliation.

Bobby summarizes David's talk like this: if we don't put the Great Commandment at the center of the Great Commission, we will probably get off track. It takes work and intentionality to be filled with the light and love of Jesus.

Let God Speak

So how can we build times of listening into our bible studies or worship services? If we want to hear God speak, then that's what we have to do. To better listen to God, we should want to focus in on and give time to the Word. In doing so, we will give space for God to speak to us and impress things upon us. Listening to the voice of God takes intentional time and practice. We can ask and pray according to God's will. We can ask him to remake us and change us. We can ask to be made gentler, kinder, and more

patient. We can engage more deeply with him. After we have done all that, we can engage in community, praying together and letting the community pray over its individuals.

How can we know we are hearing the voice of God? The panelists discuss how we can figure out if what we think we hear is our own voice or not. To do this, we need to look at what is being sensed. Is it scriptural? Is the Holy Spirit bearing witness—meaning, is there peace, faith, and courage accompanying the impression? Lastly, seek out wise counsel concerning the matter.

Eventually, we will have to step out in faith. And once we realize, afterward, that it was God, go back and consider what was felt spiritually in the moment. Then when the same sense comes about inside again, we can pay close attention. As this is practiced over and over again, we can gain familiarity with the Shepherd's voice. The voice of God is self-authenticating. And keep in mind, we can all get it wrong at times. But that's okay. God calls us simply to listen to him and lean into what he's revealing to us.

Discipling People in Fasting and Prayer

Ken shares about his experience with fasting. One of the gifts of fasting is that we become more attuned to the voice of God. God speaks to us more than we recognize—and fasting allows us to rest. In fasting and praying, our senses become heightened. Build a habit of fasting and prayer. Listen to what promptings and impressions arise in your heart while you are fasting. If you can't hear God, then don't get ahead of yourself thinking that God has told you what to do.

One of the most important decisions that the leadership of a church can make when it comes to disciple making is to engage in the disciplines of fasting in prayer. A devotion to seek God continually is an important thing for us to cling to. We

can respond to God. We can even respond communally. We can receive direction from God through prayer and fasting. We, as individuals and as a community, can be greatly encouraged by it.

Closing Comments

The panelist each give a recommended step for disciple making.

- Ken Shigematsu – Mother Teresa said, ‘It is in the silence of the heart that God speaks.’ So I would recommend one minute of silence a day.
- Dave Buehring – The piece that we’ve discussed about revelation, obedience, transformation is beginning to recognize the difference between information and revelation—and beginning to step out when you sense the Lord is putting something in your heart. Learn to trust. We all make mistakes. Begin to pay attention when God is revealing things to you and step out in faith.
- David Ferguson – Reigniting discipleship does take the discipline of prayer. Redefine what you think your prayer life is. If there is only one person talking, you are not having a conversation. Prayer is not about asking for things. It is listening to and hearing God.

Quick Links

- Discipleship.org
- Lionshare.org
- Greatcommandment.net
- [*Survival Guide for the Soul: How to Flourish Spiritually in a World that Pressures Us to Achieve*](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Revelation and knowledge are basically the same thing.
2. *True or false:* We help God bring about transformation in the lives of others.
3. *True or false:* One of the gifts of fasting is that we become more attuned to the voice of God.
4. *True or false:* We can see in Scripture that the Father and Son reveal and yield to each other.
5. *True or false:* One of the most important decisions that the leadership of a church can make when it comes to disciple making is to engage in the disciplines of fasting in prayer.
6. *True or false:* We can figure out if we're hearing our own voice or the voice of God by asking ourselves, *Is what I'm hearing scriptural?* and by sensing if there is peace, faith, and courage accompanying the impression.
7. *True or false:* Spirit-empowered faith involves fulfilling the Great Commission through a Great Commandment kind of love.
8. *True or false:* So long as God's truth is embraced, we're doing okay. Having faith is enough.
9. *Short answer:* What are the three roles of the Holy Spirit as described in the video?

10. *Short answer:* What are some of the things that Spirit does in us?

SESSION 9 SUMMARY:

How to Make Disciple Making the Core Mission of the Church

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Justin Gravitt – Navigators Church Ministries
- Alex Mata – Navigators Church Ministries
- Steve McCoy – Small Circle

Everyday people are the champions of disciple making. The conversation centers around how to make disciple making the core mission of your local church—not just a program or extracurricular activity. Leadership matters. Strategy matters. Outcome matters. Ask, *How can we make disciple making the very heartbeat of what we do?*

Leadership Matters

As leaders we have more impact on the complexion of the local church than we realize. If leadership is not passionate about disciple making, the church as a whole is far less likely to be committed and passionate about it. Leadership matters because leaders

often shape the definition and idea of success for the church. What is celebrated and what is emphasized within a church is what people will think is most important. If we celebrate life change, relational depth, and disciple making then people will think and believe that those things matter most.

Something that must be fought against is *expert* culture, which is the idea of a chosen few who know more than everybody else and the spotlight remains on them. Creating a movement and culture of disciple making needs to involve everyday people. The power needs to be shared and spread out. We even see examples of this in Scripture, like when Moses was encouraged to spread the work and responsibility out. Another thing to keep in mind is the consumeristic culture that we live in. The appetite of churchgoers often needs readjustment—from receiving and consuming to becoming a part of the culture and community and getting in the game.

Ephesians 4:11–12 tells us that the responsibility of leaders is to equip God’s people for the work of the ministry. If leaders are going to equip the people, then equipment and tools will be needed. There are many different tools to the approach of discipleship. Too often we leave disciple making up to chance, thinking that it will just happen by nature. Our thinking needs to shift, our definition of success needs to shift, and we need to help everyday people get involved in disciple making.

Strategy Matters

People need a clear path to understanding disciple making. One thing we can focus on is deprogramming. Learn to say no. Keep a close look at what your schedule is. If the itinerary, activities, and schedule are too overloaded, then rarely will there be room or time left for disciple making.

Think for a moment about finances. The budget of a church will reflect not only the priorities but also what lies at the core and heart of that church. If a church's resources are being poured out in too many areas, disciple making will likely be lost in the crowd. It will be harder, if not impossible, for disciple making to remain the heart of a church if resources are not being dedicated toward the effort. Without clear focus and support, disciple making will likely struggle and falter within a church.

Disciple making needs to be visible. If people come in and have to guess if there is disciple making going on or not then it's probably not at the heart and core of the church. The disciple making pathway needs to be very, very clear.

Outcomes Matter

When people see tangible evidence of life change and relational depth within people in the church, you won't be able to hold them back. Ask yourself, *Is the approach we are taking to disciple making creating a tangible difference that people notice?* Outcomes matter in the way that a church communicates and celebrates. What a church celebrates will likely be replicated.

We believe that the core mission of the local church is disciple making. We believe the local church is the primary environment for disciple making. The church is for discipleship, and then disciples manifest the kingdom of God to the world. When the church reverses this process and its primary attempts are to get the world into the church instead of the church going out into the world, what happens is chaos. Ministerial work needs to be rewarded based on how many disciple makers are created and the kind of people that are sent out into the world. The church is for others.

The Everyday Person

So the idea of everyday people is really important. So often when we think about church, especially as church leaders, we think big and we think on the macro-level of systems and processes. Justin Gravitt encourages us to think about the everyday person. When we evaluate, we need to think about how the everyday person is being impacted. Disciple making is for the everyday people—those who are in the church or are new to the faith or have been in the faith for decades. Are they to the point or getting to the point of knowing and thinking that they can do it. As a church member, there is a very real struggle to live out our faith in just everyday life.

The question is asked, “Wouldn’t the home be the primary place for disciple making?” The church is a big deal. The church is where families learn to make disciples and how to disciple their kids. The church is where singles are included in disciple making. Disciple making in the local church is a big deal. Steve McCoy shares his observation that the church is a village. Sometimes leaders within the local church often have a powerful and influential voice with kids.

Jesus Is Our Foundation

Jesus is our example for life and ministry. When we look at what Jesus did, we can see the foundation that he laid. He formed the foundation of the church. When Jesus went about making a church, he did it through disciple making and it didn’t stop once the church was planted. In our culture, we have lost that. We seem to think that we can bribe the church with a foundation other than Jesus Christ.

Alex Mata talks about The Great Commission was to *go make disciples*. We can ask ourselves, *In what context do we go and make*

disciples? We want to reach the lost and make disciples, and so the house that God has created for us to equip and build up the saints is the church. Steve jumps in and talks about the Old Testament, where we see God charging his people to multiply. We know that activities in the church don't necessarily result in multiplication. They easily become consumeristic. The very heartbeat of disciple making is being aligned with God, who calls us to be multiplying disciples.

The Call of the Local Church

God made us. God wants a relationship with us. So what does that look like? God sent Jesus to save us so that we would place our faith in Jesus. Once that happens, Jesus is at the center of our lives—not just for salvation but for all of life. God wants everyone to trust and follow Jesus. The entire Bible calls us to trust and follow Jesus. The Bible is a call to be more like Jesus. How are people supposed to act in the local church? We are to love like Jesus. We are called to form our lives around Jesus. What is that exactly? It's disciple making. For pastors, it's a necessity to believe and be convinced that what we do is about helping people be disciples of Jesus and to form their lives around Jesus for salvation and for life.

The panelists talk for a moment about churches and church leaders who think that everything they do is discipleship. While in a general sense, yes, the things we do could fall under the goal and mission of discipleship—but not everything is Jesus-style disciple making, and that matters! For disciple making churches and leaders, if *everything* is discipleship then nothing is. So how can we navigate this common misunderstanding and help people get to a place where the *focus* is Jesus-style disciple making rather than a general sense of purpose.

Justin says that we're not going to have a church with a core mission of disciple making if there is not a pastor whose mission is disciple making. The pastor can't just know about it, he has to do it. He cannot simply talk about it, he needs to demonstrate disciple making. And this is a big challenge because most pastors don't actually have training in order to live this out. Discipleship means many different things to many different people, so we need to make sure that we are clear in our terms, that we are speaking with the same language, and that our church leaders and churchgoers understand the focus and mission of the church—disciple making.

Living Out Disciple Making

Pastors have to figure out what it means to make disciples who can go out and make disciples. It's one thing to learn about disciple making. It's another thing to live it out and encourage others to do the same. We face a lot of challenges in living this out, but it can certainly be done.

Bobby talks for a moment about the kind of mindset that we need to have to carry out disciple making. We need to be biblically convinced that what God wants us to do is raise up disciples of Jesus—not just get people saved. Once we are saved, all the rest of our lives is a call and mission of raising up more disciples. We also need to be convinced that the way Jesus made disciples is the way. His model is the perfect model for us to follow in our disciple making. And we need to be steadfast in living all of this out.

The panelists speak to those whose church leadership isn't yet to a place where they want to begin shifting the culture or isn't fully on board yet. We can't change the whole world, but we can be disciples who make disciples regardless of what our leadership is doing. We want to be intentional in our efforts. And the chal-

lenge for those who are trying to work with someone who is not oriented to disciple making is being able to come alongside without being a threat and to be an asset throughout the process.

Allow leaders to self-assess and to gather and grapple with information. Ask them if there might be a better way? And we want to be sure that we aren't seen as a threat or as someone who is trying to take over everything. We want to come alongside in a way that is considered a blessing. When we come to those who may be overwhelmed or in need of help and show that we have a servant attitude and posture as a disciple of Christ, then people will be more open. The challenge is culture.

Culture is a hard thing to change. When we come in with Jesus-style disciple making, that is a culture change. Part of the challenge is being patient. Making a disciple making culture shift takes some time, and we just need to work together to make it happen.

The reality is that a lot of pastors and churches aren't ready to make the shift. We have developed a church culture in North America that came from the Protestants. Our structure is focused on church gatherings on Sunday. It's all good stuff, but it is insufficient. What we should want is to create a church culture where everyday people can be like Jesus and make disciples. We want ordinary disciples to make disciples. A culture like that is completely different than the culture we are used to.

We Are All Ministers

We are all in ministry. Every one of us needs tools. We need to be trained and able to make disciples. For the ordinary, everyday person, the goal is to invite people into discipling relationships. Steve talks about how essential it is to have a disciple making model. We all agree that we need to be making disciples. But

people get frustrated when we tell them to go out and make disciples but don't give them the tools and training they need to actually do it.

Tools in the hands of someone who knows how to use them is very important. We need to be able to do what we are called to do. Justin shares what he calls a disciple makers loop: Tell them what, tell them why, show them how, get them started, keep them going, help them pass it on. Whatever tool is being used, make sure that the disciple maker knows why they are doing and encourage them to get to work making disciples.

Bobby talks about the model he uses. First, they ask people to follow the rhythms of Jesus. They fast and pray. They make a covenant together and establish boundaries and goals. They meet together for a meal or to serve or to experience the sabbath. There is curriculum that can be used with other people and replicated.

Closing Comments

- Alex Mata – In the words of Jesus, 'go make disciples.' The challenge is not to give up but to persevere. The challenge is not to quit and not to get discouraged. We must band together and know that this is something that the Lord has called us to do.
- Justin Gravitt – Disciple making can become the mission of your church. You can decide that you are going to be key in that happening by choosing to be a disciple making leader in your church and taking advantage of the resources available. We need to become what we hope others will become. We have to demonstrate it.
- Steve McCoy – I've always imagined that when Jesus gave the Great Commission he had a gleam in his eye. My exhortation and challenge to leaders and those who are

watching is don't miss the jazz. When you see ripples of disciples making disciples making disciples it is thrilling. Be excited about it and approach it with a mindset that is positive.

Quick Links

- [Discipleship.org](#)
- [Navigators Church Ministries](#)
- [SmallCircle](#)
- [Navigators Church Ministries](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Leaders shape the definition and understanding of what success looks like for the church.
2. *True or false:* One of the responsibilities of leaders is equipping God's people for ministry, which means that leaders need to provide tools, training, and resources for their people to go out and minister.
3. *True or false:* It's hard to have too many activities happening in the church because as long as discipleship is important to the church then disciple making will naturally happen.
4. *True or false:* If disciple making is not clearly visible, then it's probably not at the heart and core of the church.
5. *True or false:* Getting the world to come to the church and receive Jesus should be our focus.
6. *True or false:* Disciple making is for every single follower of Jesus.
7. *True or false:* Above all else, we are each called to be disciple makers—in whatever place, at whatever time, in every moment.
8. *True or false:* We are called to faith in Jesus, and that's it. That's all we need to worry about.
9. *Short answer:* What can those who have leadership that isn't quite ready to make a disciple making culture shift do to further the work of shifting culture? How should they act toward the leadership?

10. *Short answer:* What is church culture today like (in most churches)? What kind of culture can we be working toward?

SESSION 10 SUMMARY:

How Multiplying Disciple Makers Fuels Movements

This content was written as a summary of the Holistic Disciple Making Intensive webinar featuring:

- Bobby Harrington – Discipleship.org
- Dave Ferguson – Exponential
- Daniel Im – Newchurches.com
- Shodankeh Johnson – New Harvest Ministries

Leaders Need to Be Different

Leaders should think differently. Disciple makers who will be the leaders of a movement need to think differently, and they need to act differently. In our world, it is easy to go with the flow of things and be swept up in the latest trends and happenings. But that's not what Jesus called us to; that is not what being a disciple maker looks like. We are called to be different and to think differently.

Leaders need to have a different focus. We can look to Jesus to see how we should be focused. Jesus showed his focus in everything he did, and he trained up disciples in the same way. He

trained up disciples to focus on the things of God and on making disciples.

Leaders should keep what's important at the heart of their work.

It is important that movement leaders stop thinking about branding so much. What needs to be most important in the minds of the leaders is what the movement is doing and how people are being changed.

Leaders need to be obedient to Christ. We need to be careful that we are obeying Christ. That is what will take the movement forward and give a movement the foundation it needs. We need to be led by the power of the Holy Spirit. Movement leaders know that their power comes from the Holy Spirit. Movement leaders are led by the Holy Spirit.

Leaders need to create a mindset of replication within disciples. If we are raising disciple makers and leaders, it is vital that those disciples, disciple makers, and leaders can replicate. They need a mindset of replication. We need a mindset of replication. Jesus told and taught his disciples to replicate.

Leaders need to keep things simple. Movement leaders keep things simple because they want things to be sustainable. Jesus made things simple. And his simple mission of saving the lost reached the world. We too can keep things simple by simply doing the work of seeking the lost and bringing them closer to Christ.

Leaders need to maintain a culture of accountability. It is very important that a culture of accountability and integrity be created within any movement. Leaders need to have a servant's heart and be true servant leaders. People need to be given the opportunity to practice and the space to fail. All of Jesus' disciples failed when Jesus was arrested, all of them. They all fled. But that didn't

stop Jesus in his mission, and they recovered from their failure and went on to further the mission of Christ.

Leaders need to raise up disciples who are willing to sacrifice. And leaders themselves need to know what it means and show what it looks like to make sacrifices for the mission and purpose of Christ. People need to be willing and open to learn. As we focus on raising up disciple makers, we need to ensure that they have a kingdom mindset. Invest in future leaders. Train them. Disciple them. Raise them up to be leaders like Jesus.

Our Call to Make Disciples

Every leader is encouraged to raise disciple makers who will fuel movements all around the world. That is the calling Jesus gave to his disciples and the calling given to us. We can do it if we align our hearts with Jesus and obey him in all we do.

We believe that equipping disciple making leaders is the linchpin of disciple making movements. All Christians are called to be disciples who grow to help make disciples, using the unique gifts God has given each of us. Leaders are also called to grow a movement of disciple making leaders. How Jesus built a movement differs from how a person makes a disciple. Jesus made disciple making leaders. If we are going to create disciple making movements, it is our conviction that we must train leaders in how Jesus built a movement—discipling leaders who become disciple making leaders who lead others.

We are committed to 2 Timothy 2:2, where Paul casts the vision of discipling four generations, when he told Timothy that “the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” Raising reliable leaders of a movement is harder and takes more time and prayer, but in the end this will bear fruit

that will remain. Practically, this means we must develop a teams of disciple-making leaders who will fan the flames of reproducible disciple making into places where others have not gone before.

Creating a Movement

Daniel talks for a moment about how humbling it is to think about the idea of disciple making. When we go to create a movement or to start something big, it is so easy to immediately begin working on the things we can control, like branding and fundraising. We can get so busy and focused on the things that we can control that we can neglect coming before God and praying. We can too easily forget that the movement maker is Jesus. We plant and water, but God gives the growth. It is merely a role that we play in discipling. We can teach the spiritual practices and model them. Ultimately though, it is God who moves and works and blesses the growth.

So, what would happen if every leader, every disciple, every disciple maker kept their focus not on doing great things for God, but doing things for a great God? What if our prayer changed? If our goals and our prayers shifted to doing things for a great, powerful, and mighty God, then we could just focus on being faithful and acting—instead of being burdened with carrying the weight of doing great and wonderful and inspiring things for God while he stays back out of our way and cheers us on. With that simple change of heart, we could shift our focus and our thinking off ourselves, our goals, our mission to God's kingdom mission.

Dave shares his reflections on how movement leaders think differently. Multiplication thinking is a different way of thinking. There is a humility that comes with it when we realize that we cannot do it on our own. Our job is to work with others and

work with and for God to create movements and make disciples. If we don't have a dream that makes us dependent on God, then we need to get a bigger dream. It is dreams that big that push us to rely on and trust in God. Those big dreams change the way we approach God and the way we think about ourselves. Big dreams help us realize that we can't do anything without God.

The Process of Embracing Disciple Making

Fear is something we all face when beginning the work of something big. God knows that we feel that, and he also knows that we have the capacity to carry out the mission in our lives. In order to receive the growth of God, we have to seek him out. We have to look to him for guidance and leading so that we can then obey.

Jesus was a praying man. All throughout his ministry, Jesus prayed. Prayer was a part of his DNA and his culture. Jesus spent quality time with the Father. We need to pass that same DNA and practice on. The way to reach God is through spending time with him. Everything we do needs to be submitted to God. And prayer is a powerful way to align our heart with God, which is so important for the work of disciple making.

Strategic Thinking

Praying and fasting and relying on God goes along with working hard and strategic leadership. The foundation is prayer and fasting. Strategic thinking is necessary. Strategic thinkers in a disciple making movement think about what and who is lost. When we keep in mind that the world is lost, that individual souls are lost—just as lost as we once were—then our thinking, our strategies, and our mission is sure to be affected. With that in mind, strategic leaders are sure to reach out to a lost, broken, and hurt-

ing world. Once we reach out, we can begin the work of displaying a love like Jesus, in the name of Jesus, for the mission of Jesus.

It is important that leaders think beyond the local church in terms of replication. The driving force for outreach is seeking and saving the lost; it is bringing people to God. When we think about the DNA of disciple making, there is the question of whether we are living like Jesus. Are we patterning our lives and our rhythms after Jesus? Too often we are attracted to leaders or people who we follow more than Jesus himself.

Think about the Israelites in the wilderness. Moses was gone forty days and they had already turned away to an idol. We are prone to wander. Obviously then, we have to look to staying focused on Jesus. It can be that simple. As a follower of Christ, we have access to God. And when we seek him, he will speak through his Word, he will speak to us.

Disciple making movements are not about a lot of training and theology. The focus is on the everyday person and grounding disciples in Scripture. It is about empowering the everyday person. God is always faithful. He has always done his part. What we are in is a divine partnership. We can train leaders by identifying ordinary people to live out the disciple making mission of Jesus. That is exactly what Jesus himself did, and we are to follow in his footsteps and set ourselves up to follow his pattern for disciple making.

If we are going to raise leaders, we need to ask God to help us find those to partner in the work and find the right people for the mission. God will provide. God has always brought forth the right people for the mission. Our job is to help leaders have the kingdom mindset so that they will be able to replicate wherever they go.

It's always about what is being done to raise up leaders. The right leaders will fuel movements. The right leaders will encourage the everyday person. They will empower them and train them up to be a God-fueled, God-centered, reproducing disciple maker. And it is a wonderful thing to witness. It is a joy to see people discovering Christ and jumping on board his mission. We really can reach the world for Christ, one disciple at a time.

When we think of disciple making we can see that it is declining. We can see that people are plateauing in their faith and in their own disciple making. Yes, some people and some places are reproducing disciples. And then some people and places are creating disciples who reproduce disciple makers. That is the kicker. We need to encourage and be encouraged to reproduce disciple makers. That's our calling and our mission.

How Can We Find and Equip Leaders?

Shodankeh speaks for a moment about what it means to be a leader. Jesus taught his disciples. He trained them and raised them up to be leaders. The disciples kept learning, and once they learned they began to obey. A leader must first learn and then obey.

A lot of the time, we can learn but then not follow through with obedience, and this creates a knowledge-based disciple. It is obedience after learning the truth that really matters. A leader is willing to make sacrifices. These are the kinds of things we can look for in potential leaders. We can coach people to this place just like Jesus did, and then we can coach people far beyond this until they are a reproducing disciple maker.

The difficulty for us with simplicity is that we want movements now. We don't really want to wait. But what will create a movement is multiplication and replication happening now so that a movement can then form and be fueled. Our methods

need to be simple, effective, and reproducible so that everybody can do it. Things need to be accessible for ordinary people. Think and communicate that we are disciples and disciple makers. Our identity is that we are disciples of Jesus. We are disciple makers.

Closing Comments

- Daniel Im – Build everything around the Word of God. There are lots of things that can catch our eye but build everything around the Word of God. If you have disciples who are more passionate about a book about discipleship than about the Word of God then you have built the wrong thing.
- Dave Ferguson – Dream big. Find a big dream that you know you can only accomplish if God's in it. Start small. Find one other person that you can pour yourself into.
- Shodankeh Johnson – Make sure it's grounded in prayer. Be led by the Holy Spirit. Allow the Holy Spirit take the lead in everything you do.

Quick Links

- Discipleship.org
- Newchurches.com
- [Exponential](#)

Session Questions

1. *True or false:* Movement leaders know that the Holy Spirit is important, but ultimately it is up to them to get the work done.
2. *True or false:* As we raise up disciples and disciple makers, we need to ensure that they have a mindset of attaining whatever goal that is set before them.
3. *True or false:* If we don't have a dream that makes us dependent on God, then we need to get a bigger dream.
4. *True or false:* So long as a leader gains lots of knowledge then they are sure to be successful.
5. *True or false:* Disciple making movements are about empowering the everyday person.
6. *True or false:* Leaders in local churches need to think beyond the local church when it comes to disciple making.
7. *True or false:* So long as the methods we use get the job done, it doesn't really matter what we do to make more disciples.
8. *True or false:* We should aim to shift our thinking from doing great things for God to doing things for a great God.
9. *Short answer:* At the beginning of the video, Shodankeh Johnson talked about some ways that leaders need to be different. List some of the ways he mentioned.

10. *Short answer:* What piece of advice really stood out to you? Why?