

Disciple-Making Group Process

This is a walk-through of the disciple-making process. The goal is to teach people to follow Jesus and to help others follow Jesus.

Start with Prayer

It all starts with prayer. Before Jesus selected his 12 apostles in Luke 6, he prayed all night (Luke 6:12-16). So, before we invite people into a group, we pray God would point us to the right people to invite.

Make Your List

Make a list of names of those you are thinking about inviting and begin praying over the names. Continue to pray over the names until, ideally, you have at least three to four people to invite.

Invite

Jesus invited people to come and follow Him (Matt 4:19, Mark 10:21, John 1:39). We are not asking people to follow us. We are inviting them to follow Jesus and we are just facilitating the processes to get them started (1 Cor 11:1). Ask people if they would be interested in joining.

Your First Meeting

Let them know you have been praying for them about joining the group. This is an important thing to explain because if they grow through this, they may one day start a group using the same process and they, like you, will start in prayer.

Explain the purpose, meeting schedule & covenant

Purpose: The purpose of the group is to teach them to follow Jesus and teach others to follow Jesus. This will be accomplished through time in the Bible, conversation, having fun, eating and praying together. The total time commitment will be 26 weeks.

The meeting schedule:

- Explain the process & covenant (1 week)
- Spiritual autobiographies – each person will tell their story (3-5 weeks)
- Discovery Bible study (DBS) – learn a way to study the Bible (8 weeks)
- Good News Bible Study – learn the good news of Jesus (7 weeks)
- Eat, Serve, Rest/Play – Jesus' rhythms we will incorporate (5 weeks dispersed throughout the schedule)

There is a sample schedule at the end of this document.

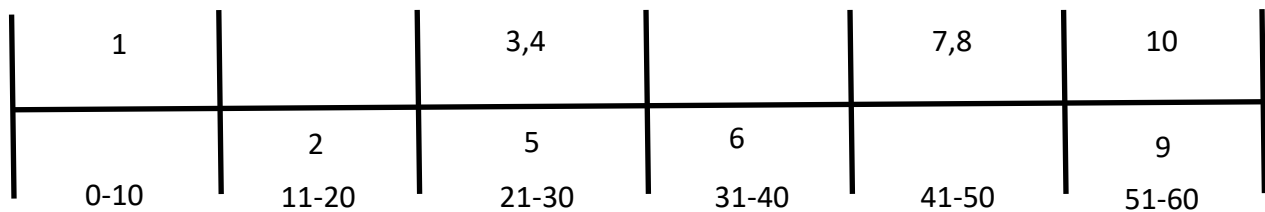
Covenant: The purpose of the covenant is to emphasize the need to participate and attend, to maintain confidentiality, and to consider starting new groups when the process is complete. As the leader of the group you are welcome to edit the covenant to fit your group. ***See the sample covenant at the end of this document.***

Spiritual Autobiographies (Weeks 2-6)

The purpose of the spiritual autobiographies is to get to know each other. Everyone has a story and it helps to be familiar with our own story and to hear others' stories. This will help get you into deeper conversations down the road.

Each of you will take a week to tell your story. The leader goes first (week 2). If there are four people in the group (including the leader), then you will take four weeks to share stories.

Here is one way to keep on track as you are telling your story from Renew.org, "Draw a line on a piece of paper and divide that line into sections, creating one section for each decade of your life. We'll call it your 'lifeline.' It might look like this..."¹



Put a number on the scale to mark a significant event in the decade in which it occurred. This might include: where and when you were born, moves, marriage/divorce, birth of a child, changes in faith/church, death of loved ones, change of career, etc. Place the number above the line if you view the event as a positive event and below the line if you viewed it was a negative event. If you moved when you were 15 and that was a difficult moment in your life, you would put a number under the line in the 11-20 box. This helps each of you stay on track in telling your spiritual autobiography.

Make a list of the events that you can refer to while telling your story. It is helpful to make notes on how you see God's involvement in the events you list. ***We have provided a worksheet below.***

¹ This approach is taken from Bobby Harrington's guide, "Starting a Transparency Group Using the Teachings of Jesus" at www.renew.org

Discovery Bible study (Weeks 7-17)

Once you have completed spiritual autobiographies it is time to allow your group members to discover God through God's Word.

You will want to keep meeting times relatively brief – an hour max. This keeps the group focused and people will find it easier to attend if it is not too long. For a more indepth explanation of DBS, you can download the [guide here](#).

Discovery Bible Study (DBS) is about exactly that – discovery. It involves getting into God's Word to understand it and apply/obey. When we live out the Word, we see the power of God at work in our lives.

DBS Questions

Here are the questions you will work through each week of DBS:

1. What is going well this week?
2. What challenges are you facing this week?
3. What happened with your "I will" statement from last week (will not cover this week 1)
4. Read the scripture, re-read it, have two people tell it in their own words
5. What does this scripture teach us about God?
6. What does this scripture teach us about people, including ourselves?
7. What is one thing you can do this week to live out what you learned from this scripture?
Create an "I will" statement that is not abstract – simple and doable.
8. Who is someone you might share something from this lesson with this week?
9. End in prayer including the blessings and challenges from #1 & #2

We have a recommended scripture list built into the sample schedule below. However, it is important to seek God's guidance about which scriptures to cover. It may be the scriptures below are right for your group or there may be another path of scriptures God is directing for your specific group.

Here are a few guidelines to follow as the DBS facilitator:

- Try to stay only on the passage you are studying without having people cross-reference other scriptures or appeal to sources/authors outside the Bible.
- Try to keep the conversation moving (don't let one person dominate).
- Keep things positive.

Delegation

www.backyardchurch.org

This process is a detailed version of the disciple-making process from www.renew.org

- Part of learning and maturing is your group members being equipped to lead the study with others. In order to help them lead you will begin delegating DBS items to the members of your group under your supervision. As you observe the way they lead, your positive feedback each week will help them grow as leaders.
- You lead the DBS for at least 4 sessions.
- Around the 5th session you will approach the group about delegation
- Delegate the items into groups that make sense: For instance, you can give someone 1-3, another person 4, another person 5 & 6 and another person 7-8, then you pray at the end. You can change this up to fit the number of people in your group.
- The next week continue delegating by switching around who gets which numbers. Do this until each person has done each item.
- Once each person has facilitated each number, they are ready to lead a whole week on their own. Assign each person their own week to run the entire DBS.
- Once they are able to run the entire DBS you are ready to move onto the follow-up study, **The Good News Bible Study**.

Explaining the seven rhythms of Jesus disciple-making²:

There are things Jesus did with his disciples to teach them his way of living. We imitate Jesus' approach in order to be effective disciple-makers. Here are the seven rhythms we see throughout Jesus' ministry³:

1. Fasting and Praying
2. Inviting along
3. Serving
4. Eating
5. Resting/play
6. Learning/study
7. Maturing while multiplying

These seven rhythms are lived out in this disciple-making process. Let's do some review: You started with praying (and fasting if you feel called to). Then you invited people to the group. Now that the group has been meeting you begin incorporating the other rhythms: serving, eating, resting, and learning together. When the group is done, those in the group will have opportunity to multiply out into new groups should they feel called by God to do so.

If possible, find a consistent day during the week to meet for study. Some weeks in lieu of study incorporate one of the other rhythms: rest/play, eating, or serving. As the leader of the group you can schedule in rest/play, serving, and eating as works best for your group. There may be a week no one can make it, turn that into a week of rest.

² The Seven Rhythms are from Jason Dukes' book "Inviting Along".

³ <https://discipleship.org/bobbys-blog/the-7-disciple-making-rhythms-of-jesus/>

Daily Bible Reading

When people are seeking to grow in their faith it is important to be in the Bible more than one day or one scripture a week. We will be reading through the Gospel of Mark and the book of James starting on the first week of DBS. The “Good News Bible Study” will also cover the Gospel of Mark so this will give people some familiarity of Mark when they get to week 18.

Study: The Good News Bible Study (Weeks 18-25)

This is a seven-week study to get people in tune with the basics of the Christian faith. We want people to come to faith in Jesus. In order to do that they need to know who Jesus is, what the kingdom is all about and what makes that good news for their life. [Download the study here.](#)

Wrapping up your group (Week 26)

It is important that groups not only begin well but that they end well. This is time for celebration possibly around a meal. It is important to try to determine if others in the group are ready and able to lead their own group. Encourage them to begin their own prayer process that brings them back to the beginning of this document!

Sample schedule:

- Week 1 – Meet, discuss the plan, sign covenants
- Week 2 – Spiritual autobiography – starts with you
- Week 3 – Spiritual autobiography 2
- Week 4 – Spiritual autobiography 3
- Week 5 - Spiritual autobiography 4
- Week 6 - Spiritual autobiography 5
- Week 7 – DBS 1 (you lead): Priceless Treasure (Matthew 13:44-46)
 - Read Mark 1 this week
- Week 8 – DBS 2 (you lead): Loving God & Neighbor (Luke 10:25-28)
 - Read Mark 2 this week
- Week 9 – Eat/Rest/Serve
 - Read Mark 3 this week
- Week 10 – DBS 3 (you lead): Who Is My Neighbor? (Luke 10:29-37)
 - Read Mark 4 this week
- Week 11 – DBS 4 (you lead): Confirmed With Power (Mark 2:1-12)
 - Read Mark 5 this week
- Week 12 – DBS 5 (delegate): Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing (Matthew 6:25-33)
 - Read Mark 6 this week
- Week 13 – Eat/Rest/Serve
 - Read Mark 7 this week
- Week 14 – DBS 6 (delegate): Showing Mercy & Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35)
 - Read Mark 8 this week
- Week 15 – DBS 7 (delegate): Upside Down Kingdom (Matthew 20:20-28)
 - Read Mark 9 this week
- Week 16 – DBS 8 (delegate): Life In the Kingdom With Others (Colossians 3:1-17)
 - Read Mark 10 this week
- Week 17 – Rest/Eat/Serve
 - Read Mark 11 this week
- Week 18 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 1 – God’s Promises
 - Read Mark 12 this week
- Week 19 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 2 – The Good News of the Kingdom
 - Read Mark 13 this week
- Week 20 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 3 – Jesus Brings Healing and Wholeness
 - Read Mark 14 this week
- Week 21 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 4 – Jesus Forgives Sin
 - Read Mark 15 this week
- Week 22 – Rest/Eat/Serve
 - Read Mark 16 this week
- Week 23 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 5 – Jesus Overcomes Death 1
 - Read James 1 this week
- Week 24 – The Good News Bible Study: Lesson 6 – Jesus Overcomes Death 2

- Read James 2 this week

Week 25 – The Good News Bible: Lesson 7 – Blessing the Nations

- Read James 3 this week

Week 26 – Group wrap up

- Read James 4-5 this week

Group Covenant

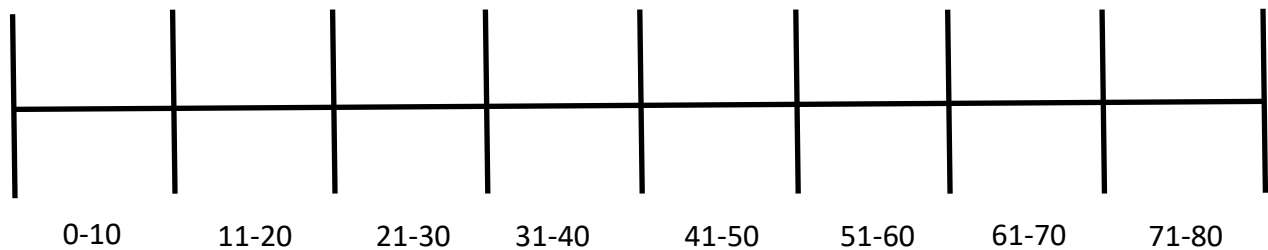
1. I will do my best to participate and attend the group meetings.
2. I agree to keep what is said in the group confidential unless given permission to share with others.
3. I agree to consider starting a disciple-making group once this process is complete if I feel God is calling me to do so.

Signature

Spiritual Autobiography

Put a number on the scale to mark the decade a significant event occurred. This might include: where and when you were born, moves, marriage/divorce, birth of a child, changes in faith/church, death of loved ones, change of career, etc. Place the number above the line if you view the event as a positive event and below the line if it was a negative event. If you moved when you were 15 and that was a difficult moment in your life, you would put a number under the line in the 11-20 box. This helps each of you stay on track in telling your spiritual autobiography.

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Event

God's involvement