

# The Disciple-Making Quick Start Guide

*Almost Everything You Need to Know to Get Started*



*What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2 (CSB)*

- 1. Keep it simple.** It doesn't have to be complicated. You'll never be perfectly ready or have a perfect plan. Study what Jesus did and replicate that, learning as you go.
- 2. Keep it spiritual.** Transformation is a result of the Holy Spirit's work in someone's life. As you lead and as you meet, rely upon the leadership and work of the Holy Spirit.
- 3. Model maturity.** Be a healthy, maturing Christ-follower. That means you are willing to go the distance for Christ—*working* to become a fully-mature believer in every area while *realizing* perfection isn't achieved until heaven. The measure of maturity is obedience, not knowledge. Scripture reminds us of the importance of "teaching them to observe." The greatest lesson is a real-life example of maturity in Christ—you.
- 4. Form a group.** Invite a person of the same gender, or better yet, two or three people, to meet weekly to encourage one another spiritually (Hebrews 10:24-25) by focusing on the Bible, prayer, Scripture memory, and learning from one another. These people can be non-believers, new believers, or just people who need to grow. Let them know early that the expectation is that they would replicate this process.
- 5. Meet weekly** with the group to lead, teach, encourage, and live life with the group until they are ready to disciple someone else. (See meeting outline and spiritual maturity steps on the back.)
- 6. Keep the focus on God's Word.** A top priority is to get the members of the group to abide in God's Word daily. The best way is to select a Bible reading plan that you all read and discuss together. You may also consider a well-rounded resource while also encouraging daily Bible study. You want a reproducible and sustainable process.
- 7. Set some next steps.** Each week individuals share what they are learning from their time in Bible reading and what next steps the Holy Spirit is leading them to take. The steps should be measurable and attainable.
- 8. Accountability.** Everyone in the group will report on their progress toward obedience, focusing on the prior week's challenge and desired next steps. This process should be encouraging and filled with grace, never demeaning.
- 9. Memorize Scripture together.** This is a spiritual discipline that benefits from organization and accountability. Do this early in your meeting together so that it doesn't get neglected. You can either pre-select verses or have them come from the Bible reading plan.
- 10. Pray for one another.** God does the important work, so supporting one another through prayer, both inside and outside of the group, is critical. Model care by following up on prayer requests outside of the group.
- 11. Maintain 360-degree accountability,** meaning the leader is also accountable. It's a great way to model spiritual growth and show the group that discipleship is a lifetime journey.
- 12. Spend time together outside of the weekly meeting.** One way to do this is to find activities you'd be doing anyway and involve others in that. Allow the disciple to see your life and relationships in real settings.
- 13. Be transparent.** People need to see that you, your spiritual walk, and your relationships are not perfect. Your transparency is actually an encouragement to them.
- 14. Share Leadership** – Once you establish a good routine, each member of the group will take turns leading.

15. **Practice sharing spiritual truth.** To get group members accustomed to sharing spiritual truth, ask them to share what they are learning or a Biblical truth with someone outside the group every week.
16. **Challenge them to start spiritual conversations.** Many group members are not already equipped to share the gospel. Teach the group your plan early and often (monthly) until each person can share it. Strongly consider finding ways to participate in evangelism conversations together, so that they learn by observing share your faith.
17. **Passing the torch.** Jesus modeled the discipleship process for us. Here are five steps to follow: a) I do, you watch. b) I do, you help. c) You do, I help. d) You do, I watch, and e) You do, someone new watches--the process cycles.
18. **Celebrate progress.** Find ways to celebrate progress and encourage those taking next steps.
19. **Release new disciple-makers.** When group members are ready to replicate the process, release them to do so.
20. **Remain in contact.** Maintain a relationship of encouragement and accountability with those you've released to disciple others. You may move from meeting weekly to meeting monthly at that time but do stay in relationship and hold each other accountable for faithfulness.
21. **Follow a Meeting Outline** – The “Five Looks” are a helpful way to remember what to do each week.
  - **Look Around** – Fellowship. Just get to know one another. Enjoy and encourage one another.
  - **Look Back** – Scripture Memory & Growth. Practice Scripture memory and review last week's challenge to take next steps.
  - **Look Down** – Learning and growing from the Word. Group members share what they are learning and what God is calling them to do.
  - **Look Ahead** – Challenge. Determine specific and measurable next step goals. You might include challenges in three categories: Personal, Relational, and Missional. These grow out of your personal Bible study and the Marks of Maturity outlined below.
  - **Look Up** – Prayer. Pray in the group if time allows, but at least share prayer requests.
22. **Marks of Maturity** – Keep spiritual markers in mind to measure progress and set next step goals. Because sharing Christ and disciple-making are the most challenging aspects of being a disciple, introduce those early and often in the disciple-making process. Disciples need to be equipped and proficient in all of these: worship, Bible study, prayer, Scripture memory, Biblical community, serving the church, the fruit of the Spirit, local and international missional engagement, evangelism, and disciple-making.
23. **Significant Time** - The number of months you spend with someone is determined by their maturity and can be as little as three months or as long as three years. Don't release too early or too late.
24. **Dealing with a lack of progress or attendance** - Work with the disciple or group to determine hindrances and be patient. Help them plan for success. If growth is still at a standstill, the best use of your time is to find others who are willing. Have a meeting with the person who is struggling. It may be best to release them from any obligation and graciously offer to pick up the discipleship again when he/she is ready and able to invest in the process.
25. **Start Strong** – Consider a Discipleship Covenant in which the group “signs on the dotted line” to indicate their understanding of the expectations. Also be clear from the beginning that the expectations include replicating the process to disciple others.