

Disciple-Maker Groups

Matthew 28:18-20: And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

What is the purpose of this ministry?

Disciple-Maker Groups (DMGs) provide a formal structure for relational discipleship (Matthew 28:18-20; John 13:34; Romans 15:14; Galatians 5:13; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; James 5:16).

The example of Jesus teaches us that true discipleship is relational. He spent a considerable amount of time with His disciples. He walked with them, ate with them, prayed with them, and taught them. His way of making disciples shows that it cannot be reduced to a mere program or course. Discipleship involves investing in people, teaching the word of God, living as an example, and equipping people so that they may in turn invest in others.

Many Christians meet with other Christians for accountability, Bible studies, book studies, encouragement, and prayer. These things are good and commendable, and this ministry is *not* a critique of those gatherings. In fact, this ministry includes many of those very things. Nevertheless, this ministry is different in that it is specifically designed to bring about replication. A person may be a part of an accountability group or Bible study for years with no intention of one day leading a group and discipling others. *This ministry is designed to equip disciples to make disciples who make disciples.* It emphasizes replication.

What happens at a DMG meeting?

HERE'S THE NORMAL SCHEDULE FOR A DMG MEETING:

1. Opening Prayer.
2. Teaching from Scripture (30 minutes).

3. Accountability Questions (30 minutes). This is a time to confess sin and rejoice in sanctification. Everyone in the group will answer the following questions:
 - **Q:** How did the disciplines of Bible reading and prayer impact your heart and walk this week? Were you able to do both every day this week?
 - **Q:** Tell us about the opportunities you had this week to share the gospel or your testimony with an unbeliever. What will you do in the near future to continue those gospel conversations or start new ones?
 - **Q:** How did God use you to serve others this week?
 - **Q:** What temptations and sins did you struggle with this week?
 - **Q:** What good things did God do for you this week?
4. Closing Prayers (15 minutes). Everyone in the DMG participates by praying for one another and the things discussed during the meeting.

What kind of commitment is involved in joining a DMG?

Discipleship is an important matter. It includes responsibilities towards God and others. To set the expectations, everyone who joins a DMG must sign the following covenant (which explains the time, relational, and spiritual commitments involved):

DISCIPLE-MAKER GROUP COVENANT

I commit to the following expectations:

- I pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated spiritual transformation.
- I will meet with my Disciple-Maker Group (DMG) for at least 1 hour and 15 minutes every week, for the next year and a half, unless providentially hindered.
- I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis before my DMG meeting in order to contribute to the discussion.
- I will respect the confidentiality of this group. In other words, I will not gossip or talk to others outside this group about the sins, temptations, prayer requests, and other private matters shared by those in this group, unless the elders need to be told as part of the process of church discipline.
- I will be honest and transparent for the edification of others in this group as well as my own spiritual growth, practicing to be a disciple-maker.
- I will pray every week for the other men/women who are on the discipleship journey with me.
- I am entering this group with the goal of starting a new DMG when this one ends and I will pursue that if it is God's will.

How do DMGs equip people to make disciples?

This ministry will prepare you in many ways! You join with the intent of forming a new group in the future, so this sets your heart and mind on learning to do the work of discipleship. You will be taught from the Scriptures about discipleship. You will be developed through the relationships in the DMGs. You will be held accountable to grow in many ways including spiritual disciplines, evangelism, service, and sanctification. Your personal growth will prepare you to invest in others. *And you will gain real life experience discipling others through this group.*

Let's expand upon that last point. Over the course of time, you will be taught how to lead DMG meetings so that you can, Lord willing, use this model to lead others in the future. The leader of the DMG will spend the first three months leading and guiding the meetings, allowing the members of the group to observe and learn. During this time, the leader will teach a lesson on how to lead the group and prepare a Bible lesson. Even if teaching is not your particular gift, you will be shown how to draw out the truths of Scripture and apply them in this setting (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16-17). This lesson will equip you and give you helpful tools and resources!

At three months, everyone in the group will then take turns leading the Bible study and asking the accountability questions. In this way you will get practice at disciple-making, which will, Lord willing, prepare you to lead a DMG in the future.

In order for that to happen though, the leader of your group must recommend you to the elder overseeing DMGs. To that end, your leader will meet with you on occasion to encourage what you are doing well and help you with any areas that need to be strengthened.

If, at the end of this group, you are recommended by your leader and approved by the elder overseeing DMGs, then you can form a new group and make disciples who make disciples.

How do I get involved?

There are two different ways to join a DMG.

1. If someone asks you to join a group he is forming, simply respond to him.
2. If you heard about this ministry some other way and you desire to join a DMG, then speak to the elder overseeing this ministry. Your name will be added to the list. When leaders are looking for help in forming a new group, your name will be given to them and they will reach out to you.