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How the Church can make Disciples...even in a Pandemic

Murray Moerman /Thursday, February 4, 2021



COVID-19 is an opportunity like a freight train in the sense that it so big we may not even see it because we are too close to it. COVID has in many ways weakened the church, forcing us to ask, “since there is so much we **can’t** do during COVID, what is the core we **must** find a way to do?” Initially the scramble was to on-line streaming and pastoral care, both valuable and necessary while finding our bearings in a confusing, divisive environment. Then what?

What do we do when a freight train comes at us? We pivot. **Our mission hasn’t changed but how we make disciples may.** Here’s one way we can do that...

Disciple-Making Groups

Restrictions allow us to gather in very small groups. These groups can meet in three ways: socially distanced, by internet, or as household “bubbles” already doing life together. **These small groups can be trained to function as small churches and can reproduce themselves more easily than large churches.** Heads of households can be trained, as can home group and ministry group leaders.

The training method must be simple and easy to transfer. Disciple-making groups can meet anytime convenient and practical for two or more people.



A Simple & Practical Process

Here's a simple template for how to run a Disciple-Making Group:

1. RECONNECT (Look Back)

- What one thing are you thankful for (or rejoicing in) today?
- What challenge are you experiencing?

2. REVIEW (applies the 2nd time onwards)

- Can someone summarize the story from last time and share how God spoke to us?
- How did it go with your "I will ..." statement from last week?
- Did you share what you learned with someone? How did the person respond?

3. READ (Look up to the Lord)

- Invite someone to read the new scripture passage. Ask someone else to read it in a different translation.

4. RETELL

- Can someone retell the story in their own words?
- Is there anything more to add?

5. RESPOND

- What does this passage tell us about God, or about Jesus?
- What does this passage tell us about people, or about ourselves?
- What is God drawing you to pay attention to? How is God speaking to you? Is there an attitude/behaviour to change? A promise to lay hold of? Something specific He wants you to do?

6. REACT (Look Forward to Fruitfulness)

- How can you put your learning into action? (I suggest using a notebook, take a few moments to write your responses.)
- "I will ..."
- (It may be the Lord is inviting you as a group to respond to a need. If so, write together a "We will..." statement.)

7. REPEAT

- Who could benefit from what the Lord is teaching you?
- How will you share what you learned?

8. PRAY

- Pray for one another



How do Disciple-Making Groups fulfill core functions of the Church?

Notice six core functions of the church that are included in this simple process. We've included which steps of the process relate to each core function:

Pastoral Care:

- Connect & Pray for one another
- RECONNECT & PRAY (Steps 1&8)

Self-Evaluation:

- "Am I applying what the Lord is speaking to me?"
- REVIEW (Step 2)

Bible Engagement:

- The Word of God is central, the Holy Spirit is the teacher as we share what God is drawing our attention to.

- READY (Step 3), RETELL (Step 4) & RESPOND (Step 5)

Growing as a Disciple:

- React to what God is speaking to your heart with the practical application God suggests to you. Write it down and tell others what you've written.
- REACT (Step 6)

Disciple-Making:

- Repeat what the Lord is teaching you to someone in the orbit of your relationships. That person could be a believer, a seeker or someone who hasn't yet identified the questions which lead to eternal life in Christ. Everyone has the potential of taking a baby step or a larger step towards being/becoming a disciple of Christ.
- REPEAT (Step 7)

Prayer:

- Ideally each person prays for at least one other person present. Prayer seeks the Lord for grace in the personal challenge shared by that person and empowerment for "I will" statements and the person we're asking the Lord to enable us to bless.
- PRAY (Step 8)

Whatever May Happen

In time, by God's grace, the Covid-19 freight train will fade to gray. But whatever may happen we can be ready and fully engaged in advancing Jesus' core calling to us all: "Go and make disciples of all peoples ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Questions will arise. Let me know: MurrayMoerman@gmail.com. In the meantime, you can find out more information on this process by visiting [Disciples who Make Disciples](#).