

Small Group Guide

DISCIPLE-MAKING: SHARE THE WORD

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 27, 2011

Acts

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

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A Core Conviction...

- Every _____ disciple _____ is a disciple-maker.
- The Great Commission is not a _____ call _____ for a few of us, but a _____ command _____ for all of us.
- We are not an audience of _____ spectators _____; we are a fellowship of _____ disciple-makers _____.

“Discipling men and women is the priority around which our lives should be oriented. The Great Commission is not a special calling or a gift of the Spirit; it is a command—and obligation incumbent upon the whole community of faith. There are no exceptions. Bank presidents and automobile mechanics, physicians and schoolteachers, theologians and homemakers—everyone who believes on Christ has a part in His work (John 14:12). The Great Commission is a lifestyle encompassing the total resources of every child of God. Here the ministry of Christ comes alive in the day-by-day activity of discipling. Whether we have a ‘secular’ job or an ecclesiastical position, a Christ-like commitment

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to bring the nations into the eternal Kingdom should be a part of it. If making disciples of all nations is not the heartbeat of our life, something is wrong, either with our understanding of Christ's church or our willingness to walk in His way."

Robert Coleman

Four Components...

- Going: We _____ share _____ the Word.
- Baptizing: We _____ show _____ the Word.
- Teaching: We _____ teach _____ the Word.
- In All Nations: We serve the _____ world _____.

WE SHARE THE WORD.

- We receive the _____ gospel _____ of Christ.
 - The character of _____ God _____.
 - The sinfulness of _____ man _____.
 - The sufficiency of _____ Christ _____.
 - He is the crucified _____ Messiah _____.
 - He is the resurrected _____ Savior _____.
 - He is the reigning _____ Lord _____.
 - The necessity of _____ faith _____.
 - _____ Turn _____ from sin.
 - _____ Trust _____ in Christ.
 - The urgency of _____ eternity _____.
- We possess the _____ Spirit _____ of Christ.
 - Our responsibility in evangelism: We _____ speak _____ with our mouths.
 - God's sovereignty in evangelism: He _____ opens _____ their hearts.
- We reflect the _____ character _____ of Christ.
 - For the sake of _____ ourselves _____.
 - For the sake of _____ others _____.
- We advance the _____ kingdom _____ of Christ.
 - Evangelism is a _____ spiritual _____ ministry...
 - With _____ physical _____ results.
 - As the church _____ moves _____...
 - The gospel _____ multiplies _____.

"The good news of salvation must be heralded to the ends of the earth. Jesus is Lord! He reigns on high and is coming again in majesty and power. Just the thought makes the heart almost miss a beat in wonder! We may not amount to much, but we have a great Savior, and His Kingdom is forever."

Robert Coleman

A Closing Challenge...

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Message Summary

In light of God's Great Commission to us, all followers of Jesus Christ—all disciples—are disciple-makers. We make disciples by going, baptizing, and teaching in all nations. What does that look like? We share the Word, show the Word, teach the Word, and serve the world together. Through our study of the book of Acts, we have seen how the Early Church practiced these four components just as Jesus did.

Sharing the Word begins with receiving and understanding the gospel of Christ. Then the Spirit emboldens us to speak this gospel to others as He opens their hearts. We are to continually reflect the character of Christ in our lives for our own sake and for the sake of others. As others see the gospel at work in our lives, they will be more likely to receive the gospel as we share with them. As we share the Word, the kingdom of God advances.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Read Matthew 4:18–19 and Matthew 28:18–20. Are these statements intended only for a few or for all disciples of Christ? If for all, why do you think disciple-making is often assumed to be somebody else's job or calling?
- Read Acts 4:13; 8:1–4; 11:19–21; and 19:10. Who is God using to advance the church? Only the theologically educated? Only the apostles? Only the elders and deacons? How quickly and how broadly is the gospel spreading? Why?
- Read Acts 5:42 and 20:20. How was the gospel spreading? In our context today, what do you think it would look like for the gospel to spread from house to house?
- Why is it important for the gospel to spread quickly and broadly among all nations? What is at stake?
- To share the gospel, we must receive and understand the gospel. (You might want to have your group begin to memorize the gospel presentation together on our website under the "What We Believe" section) Who does the gospel begin with? Describe the character of God. See Acts 2 and 13 (sermons). What is the nature of man? (Acts 2:23, for example). Who is Christ and what has he done for us? (Acts 2:36; 3:15; 4:12; 10:42; 17:24, for example). What should be our response? (Acts 2:38; 16:31; 20:21, for example).
- What is our responsibility in evangelism? What is the Spirit's role?
- Why is Christ-like character critical to our witness? (Acts 5:1–11, for example). How are spiritual purity, spiritual power, and effective witness interlinked? How does holiness benefit the cause of Christ? (Matthew 5:16, for example). How does immorality blaspheme the name of Christ? How can we flee immorality this week? Who alone can make us holy?
- What happens when we are faithful to share the Word? What are the positive results? Read some examples: Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:1; 6:7; 9:31; 11:24; 14:1; 17:12. Does *Acts* portray less positive reactions to the gospel as well? Did the believers continue sharing the Word regardless of the reaction? How can the stories in *Acts* encourage us?
- Pastor David called us to be a "Christ-speaking people." If we receive and understand the gospel, shouldn't it naturally flow into our conversations? Why doesn't it?
- Do people naturally talk about things they're passionate about? Do grandparents need training or incentives or motivation to speak about their grandchildren? Do people find it easy to talk about their favorite sports teams or their favorite television programs? Why is it easy to talk about these things? What could our hesitancy to share the gospel say about our values or our intimacy with Christ? Ask God for a heart that values what He values.
- Why does disciple-making need to reach beyond just our children and our families? Why does the prospect of eternity make the task of disciple-making urgent? How will billions of lost people respond to

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Christ if they don't hear the gospel? Is God worthy of their worship today? Are you concerned that God is not worshipped among them?

- Who is one person with whom you can pray for an opportunity to share Christ with this week? How can we share Christ at work? At home? At school? At the ball fields? In our neighborhoods? On in the Internet?
- How could your whole group intentionally begin to share the gospel together? How can you share the gospel or play a part in sharing Christ with people in other parts of the world this week, this month, or this year?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus ...

- **Lives and Church:** *This week ask God to give you boldness to share the gospel. Pray that God would provide specific opportunities for you to share the gospel with your neighbors, co-workers, family members and so on.*
- **Local:** *This week we are praying for Brook Hills Men's and Women's Prison Ministry. This ministry takes place in many facilities throughout Alabama. Individuals that are incarcerated often deal with loneliness and hopelessness. However, through this ministry, hope and salvation through Jesus Christ can be brought to those who are in physical and spiritual imprisonment. This hope can bring forgiveness, healing, spiritual freedom, and restoration to those in prison and to their families. We are also praying for Mountain Brook Community Church, Tim Kallam, pastor.*
- **Global:** *We are praying for Josh and Traci Stahley, our church planters to New York City. We are also praying for Brook Hills teams in Australia and the Middle East.*