

Transforming and Multiplying Disciples Through Micro Groups

The successful disciple-making journey results in disciples who make disciples. But how do you get there? What components make for a successful journey? (1) First is a *relational environment*. Every journey needs a vehicle. Jesus modeled for us relational life investment in a few. The vehicle we will examine is the micro group (3s and 4s) that optimizes the relationship investment in a transparent environment. (2) Second is an *intentional leader*. Every vehicle needs a driver. The driver is the leader of the micro group who gathers the fellow disciples around a mutual covenant and sets the tone of honest, deeply personal engagement with God's word. (3) Third is a *reproducible process*. To arrive at your destination, you need a map or GPS. The GPS is a shared foundational Bible-based curriculum that can be used as a transferable tool to disciple others.

Greg Ogden retired from professional church leadership in 2012 and now lives out his passion of speaking, teaching, and writing about the disciple-making mission of the church. Most recently Greg served as Executive Pastor of Discipleship at Christ Church of Oak Brook, Illinois in the Chicago western suburbs. From 1998-2002, Greg held the position of Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Fuller Theological Seminary and Associate Professor of Lay Equipping and Discipleship. Prior to coming to Fuller, Greg enjoyed 24 years in pastoral ministry. He is the author of six books including *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple* (Intervarsity Press, 2016); *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Intervarsity Press, 2016); *The Essential Commandment: A Guide to Loving God and Others* (InterVarsity Press, 2011); *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ, 3rd Edition* (InterVarsity Press, 2019). Dr. Ogden is a principal partner in a new ministry entitled the Global Discipleship Initiative (GDI). GDI trains, coaches, and inspires pastors and Christian leaders to establish indigenous, multiplying, disciple-making networks, both nationally and internationally. (globaldi.org).

Successful Journey: Disciples who make Disciples

Introduction: The definition of a micro group. We are attempting to answer the question: How do we make disciples? This one proven way.



I. Relational Environment

A. Jesus modeled personal investment as the way to make disciples (Luke 6:12-13) What are the strategic reasons Jesus focused on a few? What was He trying to accomplish?

1. Internalization: the only way for Jesus to pass on His message, manner, and mission was through intimate association.
“This careful, painstaking education of the disciples secured the teacher’s influence on this world should be permanent; that His kingdom should be founded on the rock of deep and indestructible convictions in the minds of a few, not on the shifting sands of *superficial* impressions in the minds of the many.” -- A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*
2. Multiplication: From the beginning Jesus kept in mind that He would be entrusting His mission to His apostles as He returned to His Father.

3. The Power of Personal Invitation into Discipling Relationships: How do we frame the invitation?
4. Transformational Conditions: Key Elements

When we...

- **open our hearts in transparent trust to each other**
 - around the truth of God's word
 - in the spirit of life-change accountability
 - while engaged in our God-designed mission
- ...we are in the *Holy Spirit's hothouse of transformation*

Stages of trust-building:

- Affirmation
- Walking together in difficult times
- Prayerful listening
- Mutual confession

[Discussion: Why is transparent trust a key element in transforming disciples? How would you go about encouraging transparent trust?]

II. Intentional Leader: What roles does a leader place in the health of the group?

- A. Initiates the creation of the group by prayerful discernment.
- B. Makes a personal invitation
- C. Shares with them what is involved (informed decision)
- D. Reviews the Covenant
- E. Asks to prayerfully consider the invitation
- F. Sets the first regular meeting (determines a time to fit everyone's schedule)
- G. Guides the participants through the first few sessions.
- H. Rotates leadership early on.
- I. Models Transparency:
- J. Reinforces the commitment to multiplication throughout

[Discussion: The most important leader in your church is the leader of a micro group. How might you go about reinforcing this reality in your church/ministry? Why is it so difficult do you think to have people initiate disciple-making relationships? How might you address these difficulties?]

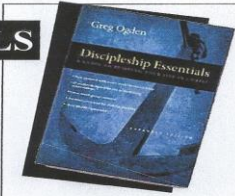
III. Reproducible Process: A Transferable Curriculum.

[Discussion: What are consequences if you don't have a disciple-making curriculum?]

A. If you don't have a curriculum...

B. The Characteristics of a Good Curriculum

1. Transferable Tool
2. Give a Sense of Progress
3. Simple without being simplistic
4. Easy to use repeatable format
5. Highly interactive: egalitarian (every participates equally)
6. Personal (Application oriented)



DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS

- Why was this book written?
- Who is the book meant for?
- What are the key elements in each chapter?
- What are the major themes explored?

PART ONE: GROWING UP IN CHRIST

- 1 Making Disciples
- 2 Being a Disciple
- 3 Quiet Time
- 4 Bible Study
- 5 Prayer
- 6 Worship

PART TWO: UNDERSTANDING THE MESSAGE OF C.

- 7 The Three-Person God
- 8 Made in God's Image
- 9 Sin
- 10 Grace
- 11 Redemption
- 12 Justification
- 13 Adoption

PART THREE: BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

- 14 Filled with the Holy Spirit
- 15 Fruit of the Holy Spirit
- 16 Trust
- 17 Love
- 18 Justice
- 19 Witness

PART FOUR: SERVING CHRIST

- 20 The Church
- 21 Ministry Gifts
- 22 Spiritual Warfare
- 23 Walking in Obedience
- 24 Sharing the Wealth
- 25 Stewardship

FOR REFLECTION

1. Which of these themes seems most important to recover a grip on in our time? What sparks your conviction about this?
2. Which of these themes seems to touch a particular need in your own life right now? Why?
3. Which of these themes do you feel is a particular strength in your own personal discipleship?
4. If you were developing a basic discipleship curriculum, what might be a chapter or two that you would include that doesn't appear treated in *Discipleship Essentials*?

IntersVarsity Press, 2007

Suggested Readings:

Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (InterVarsity Press, 3rd Edition, 2019). This is a curriculum to use in discipleship relationships.

Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (InterVarsity Press, 2nd Edition, 2016).