



The Practical Steps to Disciple-Making

When I equip people to disciple, I like to ask, “Can you read?” Making disciples is that simple. Often church stuff gets way too complicated. But God has an amazing knack for putting the cookies on the lower shelf for people like me.

To get started follow these clear-cut, practical steps.

1. **Pray.** This step serves as a reminder that without God’s presence and power we don’t accomplish anything of eternal value. Invite the presence and power of God into everything you do. (See the first section of *Parent Fuel*, Chapter 10 for practical applications.)
2. **Select.** Ask the Lord, “Who do You want in this group—who is open and hungry to know You?” Once I have some direction on this, I meet with each person individually. In that meeting I give them a strong challenge.
3. **Challenge.** Some people fear inviting others to join them in the disciple-making adventure. That’s understandable, but that kind of fear doesn’t come from God. You may think of many reasons why someone would not want to do this. Resist those thoughts.

With my Bible open to Matthew 4:19, I like to look the other person in the eyes and say, “I see God’s potential in you. He has such a great purpose for your life. I want to help you discover how to follow Jesus and to fish for men. That’s why I want to start this group.” You can use the same verse and the same words.

4. **Commit.** Once I challenge each person individually, we meet as a group. In a relaxed atmosphere I discuss the following issues:
 - *The cost:* “We will meet one hour every _____ at _____. I am asking you to pay a price, so to speak, to join this group. I don’t anticipate too many conflicts. If you commit, you will need to attend every week and go to sleep a little earlier on _____ nights.”
 - *The benefit:* “This group will help you become a man of God. You will move toward maturity in Christ and will become a leader who helps others know Christ.”
 - *The commitment:* “Take this book. It will guide us each week. As part of the commitment, you must come prepared. Turn to page 11 in *Following Jesus* so we can understand clearly our commitments to each other.” I ask different ones to read each point. I repeat this two more times, so they got the seriousness of their commitment. Then I have all of us sign each other’s book on page 11 as a pledge of our commitment to the group and to each other.
 - *The price:* I also charge them for the book. This helps them realize that becoming part of the group will cost them something.
5. **Prepare.** Prior to the first group meeting several actions need to occur for you and your group to come prepared.
 - View the group as a long-term process—you will disciple these people the rest of your life! Hopefully you will work with this particular group over the next few years.
 - Use the materials with the long-term process in view. In the “Moving Toward Maturity” series five books of ten weeks each will take you on a stair-step course of maturing your group in Christ. Each book builds on the previous one.

Following Jesus builds a solid foundation for a life-changing relationship with Christ and for becoming a disciple of Christ.



Spending Time Alone with God deepens each person's relationship with Jesus by teaching how to spend time with Him.

Making Jesus Lord challenges each person to obey Jesus and to give Him control in day-to-day issues.

Giving Away Your Faith guides each person into the wild adventure of overcoming his or her fears and taking the risk to boldly communicate Christ.

Influencing Your World shows the group members that they can become influential leaders through serving the needs of the people around them.

Three additional books will supplement the discipling process. The *Moving Toward Maturity Leader's Guide* is particularly vital for you as the group leader. That guide gives you everything you need to lead a lively and life-changing discipleship group. The book contains the leader's material for the five books in the series.

Time Alone with God Notebook gives each person the practical tools for guiding him or her in a daily adventure with God.

Getting Started helps new believers successfully begin their walk with Christ.

Going through these books will take two-plus years. If your group is teenagers and you begin while your kids attend middle school and they finish in two years, they can begin to disciple a younger group of kids—multiplying disciple-makers.

- Order *Following Jesus* and the *Moving Toward Maturity Leader's Guide* online at www.reach-out.org. You will want to get your own copy of *Following Jesus*. Go through it just like the kids go through their books.
 - Decide with the group the time, place, length of meeting, and size of the group. Ideal is from four to eight people. Each book takes at least ten weeks to complete.
6. *Lead*. The success of the group depends not so much on the curriculum but on the way you lead. Build the relationships. Keep them focused. Follow these guidelines to structure the group.
- Focus. Begin each meeting reminding them of the purpose of the group. Memorize Matthew 4:19, and say it to each other weekly.
 - Review. For the first two weeks, go over the commitments on page 11 of *Following Jesus*. Remind them to come prepared. Each week ask them to review one specific insight that God taught them the previous week and one way they applied that insight.
 - Pray. After reminding them of their purpose, divide them into prayer triplets. Keep them in the same groups for several weeks, then switch. If the group doesn't divide exactly in threes, pray in twos.
 - Discuss. Spend at least thirty to forty minutes going through the material related to the book. When they raise topics outside the discussion, engage them, but do not get derailed. Discuss those topics later. At the same time encourage them to talk. Resist the temptation to lecture or do all the talking.
 - Share. Save time each week to talk about the personal issues and questions they raise. At first the conversation will be surface, but as the group grows closer they will openly discuss their issues. If time becomes a problem, invite them to meet outside the group to continue.
 - Involve. Early in the group involve them in doing some ministry outside the group—meeting a need, going to the inner city, doing a local missions project, or taking a mission trip overseas.

As you follow these steps, the Lord will use you with your group and those they influence in ways you cannot even imagine now!