3 Minutes - Group Exercise 1: Group Facilitation

• 1 Minute - Select a group facilitator for tonight: the person in your group who graduated from high school closest to today.

• 2 Minutes – Review the roles of group facilitator and group participants:

Role of a group facilitator is to:

- read the group exercise and invite the group to participate in it (refrain from answering first)
- keep the conversation moving around the group
- assure everyone in the group has the opportunity to participate in the conversation
- listen well (not talk more than the group participants)

Role of group participants is to:

- monitor their own talk time
- be fully engaged
  - be attentive to and supportive of participants comments
  - not condemn or judge
- be open to sharing their own thoughts and feelings
- not engage in cross-talk
  - cross talk is:
    - talking when someone else holds the talk time
    - giving attention to a cell phone, other electronic device, purse, etc. instead of the person talking
    - regularly leaving the table

12 Minutes - Group Exercise 2: Questions for Discussion

• What has Jesus been saying to you during this semester of Following Jesus Training? What is He asking you to do or do differently?
• What is Jesus revealing to you about your church? What is He revealing to you about the Greater Lansing community? What difference does He want you and your church to make in the lives of others?

Introduction:

This is our 11th week in this spring semester on our journey together in becoming better followers of Jesus. The goal of disciple-making is to seek out the lost and bring them into a relationship with Jesus through the ongoing process of discipleship. Discipleship
is the training and motivating process in which one bestows one’s experience and expertise to another. The method in which we disciple others is the same method that Jesus selected and developed His disciples – in a closed group. The difference between the open group and the closed group is the level of commitment given by the members. A closed disciple-making group is comprised of a leader and up to 12 people who are committed to make disciples and eventually lead disciple-making groups of their own.

**Key Memory Verse:**

Luke 6:12-13 “...Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them...”

**This Coming Week’s Reading:** John 11-13; Proverbs 15-21

**Objective:**

Participants will learn effective principles that will help in forming a group of up to twelve people and begin the process of discipling a group of people in a closed disciple-making group.

**Key Definitions or Concepts:**

In his book, *The Master’s Plan of Evangelism*, Robert E. Coleman identified 8 principles that one must accomplish in order to begin the process of making disciples. By understanding and participating in these principles, you will be effective in making disciples who make disciples. Tonight we want to study the first 4 principles Dr. Coleman identifies from the ministry of Jesus.

**Principle 1: Selection (Luke 6:12-16)**

A. Before we can begin to disciple people we have to decide who we are going to call. The truth is, no one can disciple everyone. It is important to realize off the bat that the process of discipleship begins with selecting people whom you believe are ready to answer the call to be and to make disciples.

B. Jesus went to a quiet place and prayed before choosing His disciples. In the same way our disciples are chosen with the same devotion to prayer and fasting that Jesus had. Jesus did not disciple the first 12 guys who walked up to Him, nor did He have a raffle. His selection was important because He knew the ministries that these men would be responsible for.

C. When selecting your 12, understand that this process will take time. Do not rush the decision. Look for people who are committed to the vision as well as those who are willing to learn under your care. Jesus had thousands of people following Him, but He only discipled 12. We do not neglect other people; we simply focus on a few in order to better serve the multitudes of our city.

D. Remember, the multitudes will follow if there are leaders to lead them. Discipleship is focusing on developing leadership and not focused on winning the masses. If you develop 12 disciple makers who each make 12 disciples, you would be
responsible for reaching 156 people for the Lord! The multitudes always come from discipleship.

Principle 2: Association (Matthew 28:19-20)

A. It is one thing to call people into your 12; however, it is another thing to actually spend time with them. Parenthood is not defined by the number of children you have, but by the number of hours you spend nurturing your children to become healthy adults. The same is true in discipleship. We must nurture and spend time with our 12 in order that they may grow.

B. Making disciples is a commitment from you just as much as it is a commitment from your 12. Jesus called 12 men to follow and then proceeded to devote His life to training them by example. We make disciples when we open our lives and live as examples.

C. If you cannot stand being around a person, then they should not be in your 12. A closed discipleship group should be a place of unity and strength and not division. The main concept is trust. Your disciples will trust your leadership if you allow them to see your leadership in action.

D. Discipleship is a process that is better taught through experience rather than dictation. Jesus reminded His disciples that He will always be there for us when we need Him and to not be discouraged or frightened. Because they walked with Him, they were willing to walk out on their own because they realized that they were never alone. Phillip told His brother Nathanael to come and see Jesus because he knew that if Nathanael saw Jesus then he would believe.

Principle 3: Consecration (Matthew 11:27-30)

A. One cannot disciple anyone if there is no one willing to follow. Remember that in order to lead a group you must be willing to submit to the authority of another. Every disciple maker is discipled by someone else. Every pastor should be discipled by another and be under authority. Therefore your 12 must be willing to trust and follow you.

B. Consecration is another way of saying devotion. It is important to understand that devotion is a two way street. You must devote yourself to God, to your discipleship leader, as well as to your 12. In return, your 12 will devote themselves to God, to you and eventually to their 12.

C. It is easy to devote ourselves to the people or things that we love. When we truly love our 12, we will find time to help them when they are in need. As our 12 begin to love us, they will understand how to submit to our authority and will begin to trust and obey.

D. Disciple making takes work. A slacker will never be able to devote themselves to the task. At the same time a disciple maker must be devoted to the Vision and Mission of Christ. Remember that Christ loved His disciples so much that He died for them, even the one who betrayed Him.

Principle 4: Impartation (John 20:21-23)
A. Jesus came to give Himself away. Jesus was set apart for the benefit of His followers who would carry out the task that He devoted His life to teach them. In the same way we must impart our knowledge and our love of Jesus’ Vision to those who follow us.

B. Jesus promised His disciples that He would always be there for them. As a result of this promise, He gave to them His Holy Spirit who would purify them and prepare them for service in His name. When we devote our lives to making disciples, our goal is to share with others the same Spirit that dwells inside of us. It is the same Spirit that dwelled inside of Peter, John and the others disciples of Jesus.

C. In order to have an effective ministry of making disciples, we must be willing to pour out our lives into the lives of others. Essentially we are giving away our passions, feelings and thoughts in order that others might use them to continue the harvest. Jesus gave us His source of authority, power and life in order that we might give it to others.

D. There are no short cuts to discipleship. How long will it take to bestow upon others the experiences you have had in life? The reality of discipleship is that it takes a lifetime to share a lifetime. You are here because someone is willing to invest their life and energy into your journey. Soon it will be your time to devote your life into others.

Conclusion: When we refer to people in the disciple-making process, we must always be reminded that while Jesus uses us, He is the ultimate disciple, not us. We are to point people to be discipled by Him. As we develop these principles into our lives, no one will doubt that the people we are investing our lives in...are followers, not just of us but primarily of Jesus.

Pray: Pray for God to help you in selecting and building your group of 12.

15 Minutes – Group Exercise 3: Questions for Discussion

• 3 Minutes. Describe Jesus’ process of selecting His disciples.

• 5 Minutes. Describe the next 3 steps in the development of His disciples. Where do you see this process at work in the world around you? Where do you not see it?

• 7 Minutes. If God helped Jesus select and develop His disciples, will God help you? What are the consequences for a person/church/community who follow Jesus to select and develop disciples? What are the consequences for a person/church/community who do not select and develop disciples?

15 Minutes – Prayer Around Tables

Pray for each other, your family, your church, and your community to Follow Jesus in every way. . .

Closing and Prayer