

Overview of Disciple-Making Movements (DMM)

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This document provides an overview of DMM, and describes its essential and distinctive pieces:

1. the “Person of Peace”
2. the Discovery Bible Study (DBS)
3. the importance of gaining access to communities.

The Ultimate Goal of a DMM

A DMM involves a handful of pieces. Each piece is important and needs to work sequentially with the others. If you aren’t careful, it is easy to care more for individual pieces and lose sight of putting the pieces together to launch a movement. It is important to remember, the goal of a DMM is to see unchurched, dechurched, and unreached groups of people learn to apply the truths of Scripture in their own lives, and become faithful disciples of Jesus. It is also crucial to note that we are not only concerned with disciple-making when we talk about these things but multiplicative (as opposed to linear) movement.

What is a DMM?

A Disciple-Making Movement (DMM) seeks to replicate the disciple-making activities of the early Church as seen in the book of Acts – a powerful movement of the Holy Spirit that involves a rapid and organic multiplication of groups of people who choose to live a life of obedience as a disciple of Jesus Christ that begins within groups and moves outward into groups.

NOTE: The above features of a DMM differentiate it from other strategies for making disciples (e.g. focusing on the individual, emphasizing the acquisition of knowledge, or encouraging participation in an existing local church). A DMM can, however, take different forms and feature distinctive elements. This overview considers one way of doing a DMM.

Although a DMM eventually multiplies at a rapid pace, upwards of hundreds of groups and thousands of people, things tend to start slow and consist of a considerable amount of “unseen” work in the first few years (Research suggests it is often 7 years before movement type growth).

A DMM will typically involve:

- A large amount of consistent, intercessory prayer throughout the city.
- Considerable time spent building relationships in order to discern “people of peace,” which we will define below
- Consistent and specific prayer for these relationships, especially the “people of peace,” and patience to allow God to set the pace for progress and growth
- Identifying the natural oikos / social groups of people that already exist in the city

The importance of recurring prayer attests to the truth that a DMM is a supernatural movement of the Spirit. God is already at work (John 6:44-45). Launching a DMM involves finding out where he is working, and then faithfully, prayerfully, and creatively deciding how to best respond to what he is doing. Therefore, using human effort to manufacture “spiritual” movement in the city should be avoided. **The Discovery Bible Study (explained below) and other similar tools are methods teaching people to obediently rely on the Word and the Spirit. This is where the power for movement is found!**

Those wanting to catalyze a DMM must be ready to wait on God, be able to discern his activity in the city, be willing to follow when he gives direction, be open to the supernatural, and be prepared to respond to spiritual warfare, which is inevitable. Above all of these, the person praying for a DMM must acknowledge that only God can start a movement and there is no silver bullet. These methodologies simply grease the tracks because they are easily replicable, uncluttered by culture, and scalable. They are the sails for a sailboat, but the Holy Spirit is the wind.

Learning to recognize and rely on the Spirit of God will prove critical when looking for a “person of peace” and initiating a Discovery Study (traditionally referred to as Discovery Bible Study, or DBS).

What is a Person of Peace?

In Matthew 10:5-20 and Luke 9:1-6, 10:1-16, Jesus sends the disciples into neighboring towns and instructs them to proclaim repentance and the good news of the Kingdom, cast out demons, heal the sick, and raise the dead. Jesus tells them he is already at work in the towns where he is sending them, and their job is to figure out where he is working. They will know where is working by identifying a “person of peace.”

This is a person who responds to what the disciples are doing in each town they enter. This person welcomes friendship with the disciples, responds positively to the power of the Kingdom demonstrated by the disciples, receives what the disciples have to say about God, and provides for the disciples in a practical way.

Simply stated - **the person of peace is the gateway or access point into a social circle or oikos. They are someone who will be faithful to obey and share what they discover about Jesus. The Bible might refer to them as ‘good soil.’**

However, the passages say some towns will be without people of peace. If no person of peace can be found, Jesus instructs his disciples to wipe the dust off their feet and move to the next town. Look for where God is already at work!

Why is the Person of Peace important?

This can't be underestimated: for a DMM to flourish in a particular community, it must begin through the relationship with a person of peace. The person of peace makes way for a study of the scriptures with an oikos or groups of people who share something in common – “affinity groups.” Examples are families, sports leagues, clubs, art colonies, commuters, etc. The person of peace is more than someone who is open to the gospel, he or she is the gateway through which the good news reaches these groups. Although the person of peace may not lead a Discovery Bible Study (DBS), they play a crucial role in giving shape to the DMM. It may take days, even months to find this person, but this relationship is crucial to eventually launching a DBS.

How do I know someone is a Person of Peace?

David Watson, a pioneer of DMMs who worked with Cityteam International, nicely captures the idea of a person of peace when he says, “The person of peace is the bridge to the people... if you have to convince someone to read the Bible, they aren't a person of peace.”

Characteristics of a Person of Peace
Expresses interest in spiritual topics and activity
Demonstrates hospitality and opens their house
Is sensitive to others' needs and sustains others in some way
Is connected to a community; this person is not a loner
Welcomes spiritual discussions and demonstrations of spiritual power
Is trustworthy
Has identifiable spheres of influence
Has a hunger for moral and spiritual growth
Expresses an eventual interest in Jesus and the Bible
Expresses an eventual willingness to read the Bible

Biblical examples of the person of peace include: the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), Matthew the Tax Collector (Matt 9), Zacchaeus (Luke 19), Cornelius (Acts 10), Lydia (Acts 16), Jason (Acts 17), and Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18).

Gaining Access to Communities through the Person of Peace

The persons of peace provide access to the natural groups of people in the city. Finding a person of peace is normally neither immediate nor easy. It will often require some foundational activities that consist of: prayer throughout the city, spiritual mapping, establishing relationships with people of influence, an eye for identifying established groups of people or social circles, and the ability to recognize where God is working and how to appropriately respond.

If you can find a person of peace without laying this foundation, then focus on cultivating that relationship and move it toward the launch of a DBS. Find a person of peace, establish a firm relationship with this person, and coach this person into learning how to influence her affinity group. At some point, formalize this influence by launching a DBS where everyone in the group learns how to study the Bible, apply the Bible to their own lives, and care for the people around them.

The DBS provides those who don't identify themselves as "Christian" an opportunity to consider life with God and begin practicing a life of discipleship with Jesus long before any confession of belief is made. However, by practicing this kind of life, the hope is to see people eventually proclaim Jesus as Lord and Savior, faithfully follow him in all aspects of life, and spread that good news to others.

What is a DBS?

This type of DMM uses a simple tool called a Discovery Bible Study (DBS) with a person of peace and that person's natural social circle or network. Often the missionary or church planter does not even necessarily attend the DBS, but empowers the Person of Peace or group organizer to do so through coaching.

A DBS is a simple yet effective way for people to explore scripture together, discover its truth, and decide how to appropriately apply these truths in life. Those who participate in a DBS also begin to practice some vital aspects of being a disciple of Jesus. During each meeting, groups have an opportunity to express gratitude, share personal needs, figure out ways to meet needs, and share what they are learning with others outside the group. These practices encourage a lifestyle of worship, ministry, and evangelism. They establish a trajectory of success in what it means to be a disciple and make disciples as a lifestyle long before the Holy Spirit provides supernatural power to do so.

In order to encourage discipleship that is characterized by knowledge and obedience, this way of studying scripture emphasizes practicing truth, and not simply learning truth. Each study begins with a word-for-word reading of scripture, a time of paraphrasing the passage, a discussion based around some established questions, and concludes with group members deciding how to demonstrate what has been learned in a simple, practical, and personally-meaningful way throughout the week.

The structure of a DBS is, however, careful to guard against manufacturing “truth” by always returning the discussion to what the scriptures say. When group members respond to what they read in scripture, the accuracy and truthfulness are always evaluated by going back into the text to review what it says. The words of God are living, breathing, and able to speak into people’s lives and achieve God’s redemptive purposes. This way of studying the scriptures places a premium on the authority of scripture and the role of the Holy Spirit as a teacher for those who study the scriptures, yet who do not yet identify themselves as Christians or followers of Jesus.

This emphasis on the scriptures may trouble people who think of the Bible as a tool used by Christians to argue with those who disagree with them, while reliance on the Holy Spirit as a teacher will likely make others uneasy and apprehensive. In light of these concerns it is good to remember Jesus’ teaching regarding this role of the Spirit in the gospel of John (John 14:25-26), and the guidance Scripture provides for flourishing and living the right kind of life.

This concludes the overview of the essential and distinctive pieces of this type of DMM. The progression of each piece in this movement is as follows:

1. Lay a foundation in order to find a person of peace
2. Find a person of peace and cultivate a strong relationship with this person
3. Launch a DBS in an affinity group through the person of peace

For those who would like to learn more about the Discovery-based Bible Study, the following pages provide specific instructions on how to lead a Discovery-based Bible Study.

Instructions for leading a Discovery Study:

Although a DBS can be tweaked to accommodate needs, the ideal study consists of 5-7 people and only considers 1 passage at a time. It is imperative that the group leader facilitates and does not teach the DBS discussion. The point of the study is for the group to discover for themselves the truth in scripture under the instruction of the Spirit of God. This also goes for certain conventions and practices in the group. Although the facilitator may be used to ending Bible studies in prayer, it is up to the group to decide how to end the time. If the group decides to end each study with prayer, this decision should come from the group’s study of scripture. It is also important the group leader provides enough Bibles or copies of the passage for all group members unless the passage is shared through methods of orality.

By establishing these strict discovery borders up front, the scripture (not a pastor or leader) becomes the content and the Holy Spirit (not a pastor or leader) becomes the expert. We want people to see that the Word and the Spirit ARE the content expert that they need to make disciples. If they obey the Word and the Spirit, they will multiply, and if they teach those whom they disciple to obey Jesus (in accordance w/ Matt 28:16-20), then their disciples will do the same thing.

Another facet of the DBS method is that it is encouraged for the person of peace, and not the religious worker, to facilitate the weekly meeting with his own community. As you will see in the below questions, if the facilitator (your person of peace) meets with you prior to the meeting to go through the passage, he will feel confident as he facilitates the study with his own social network. Remember, when you go through the DBS with him separately, you are still doing the same exact method. *Fight all urges to teach, lecture, bring in other passages of scripture, etc.* You want to create an environment and an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to teach him as he engages with this journey of discovery.

As people express a desire to join an existing group, the group leader will need to discern when it is better to add new members to the existing group or encourage people to begin a new group. Groups should remain small to allow for ample discussion between all group members, but groups also remain small in order to encourage rapid growth and multiplication.

How to facilitate a Discovery Bible Study (DBS)

Each time you meet with your friend, you will walk through the questions listed under *Discovering God Bible Study*. He will do the same thing when he facilitates within his own circle of influence. You should attend that meeting as well, if able, but make sure not to position yourself as the authority. You are a fellow journeyer.

Although you may be tempted to skip parts of each study template, please do not as the questions are strategically chosen to build a foundation of:

- Prayer
- Accountability
- How to read the Bible
- Developing a regular time with God
- Obedience
- Disciple-Making / Evangelism

You may feel inadequate to begin this process, but that is completely normal! Remember, this is a spiritual journey and you have to let God do the work (and believe that he will!).

As you look at the scripture list, you will be tempted to think that nobody would ever commit to this much work. Try to remember that you aren't asking them to commit to everything, just "to the next session." If someone is disinterested or isn't showing any desire to continue, don't force it. If the Spirit of God is drawing them closer, they will want to continue to study.

Also, fight the urge to simplify things by eliminating questions. Establishing these routines and rhythms early in a person's relationship with God is crucial to their long-term development if you want to set them on a trajectory of success, obedience, and multiplication.

What does a typical Discovery Bible Study look like?

Go around the group and have each person answer the questions:

1. Accountability
 - a. Did you follow through with your "I will" statement last week?
 - b. With whom did you share last week's lesson?
 - c. How did you put into practice what you learned from last week's lesson?
2. Prayer (As the group discovers prayer as they read the scriptures, you can begin having them pray for these items together)
 - a. What are you thankful for this week?
 - b. Do you have any problems this week?
 - c. Do you have a need or know anyone with a need that this group can meet?
3. Understanding God's Word
 - a. Read the scripture for today.
 - b. Summarize what happens in the passage.
 - c. Discuss: What does this passage tell us about God?
 - d. Discuss: What does this passage tell us about Mankind?
4. Obedience
 - a. If this passage is from God what will I do?
 - b. ****Encourage people to think in terms of "I will" statements that they can do in the next 24 to 72 hours.****
5. Sharing
 - a. Who will you share this story with this week?

Discovering God

NO	TOPIC	VERSES	TRUTH TO DISCOVER
1	God made creation	Genesis 1:1-25	God exists and created the earth
2	God created man and woman	Genesis 2:4-25	God created man and woman
3	Man and woman ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil	Genesis 3:1-13	Man and woman disobeyed God
4	God's judgments/ curses	Genesis 3:14-24	God judged the man and woman's disobedience

5	God regretted making His creation	Genesis 6:5-7:24	God regretted the man and woman's disobedience; There were consequences for their disobedience
6	God saved Noah and his family	Genesis 8:1-9:17	God destroyed man through the flood and saved only Noah and his family; God promised that he would never again destroy man by a flood
7	God's promises to Abraham	Genesis 12:1-8; 15:1-6; 17:1-7	God promised He would never leave Abraham
8	Abraham was willing to give his child as a sacrifice	Genesis 22:1-19	God tested Abraham
9	God stopped the judgment of His people	Exodus 12:1-28	God showed his desire and power to protect His people
10	God's commandments	Exodus 20:1-21	God gave commandments to His people
11	Sin Offerings	Leviticus 4:1-35	God demanded Sin offerings from his people
12	Good Shepherd	Psalms 23:1-6	God protects His people
13	God's righteous servant	Isaiah 53:1-12	The suffering of God's servant
14	Jesus is born	Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20	Jesus is born according to prophecy
15	Jesus is baptized	Matthew 3:1-12; John 1:29-34	John testifies that Jesus is the Son of God who was promised
16	Jesus is tempted	Matthew 4:1-11	Satan tempts Jesus
17	Jesus and the Woman of Samaria	John 4:1-26, 39-42	Jesus is the promised Messiah
18	Jesus teaches about prayer	Luke 18:9-14; John 16:24	Jesus teaches through the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector
19	Jesus teaches about giving, fasting and prayer	Matthew 6:1-34	Jesus teaches about giving, fasting, and prayer

20	Jesus and the lame boy	Luke 5:17-26	Jesus has power to forgive sins and to heal
21	Jesus calms the storm	Mark 4:35-41	Jesus has power over the wind and the sea
22	Jesus and the demoniac	Mark 5:1-20	Jesus has power over evil spirits
23	Jesus raises a person from the dead	John 11:1-44	Jesus has power over death
24	Jesus talks about his betrayal and his promise to his followers	Matthew 26:17-30	Jesus knows that Judas will betray Him; He makes a promise to His followers
25	Jesus is betrayed and tried	John 18:1-19:16	Jesus is betrayed as He predicted, and stands an unfair trial
26	Jesus is crucified	Luke 23:33-56	Jesus is killed according to prophecy
27	Jesus is resurrected	Luke 24:1-35	Jesus raises from the dead according to prophecy
28	Jesus shows himself to his followers and then ascends to heaven	Luke 24:36-53	Jesus dies and is resurrected to fulfill prophecy and forgive sin
29	Enter into the Kingdom of God	John 3:1-21	If we believe in Jesus Christ we will receive eternal life