

D GROUP: A commitment to Discipleship

LESSON ON DISCIPLESHIP for first session

The great commission has one main GOAL, since it has one main verb - Matthew 28:19 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. "*

The one goal of the great commission is to MAKE DISCIPLES by [3 participles] going, baptizing and teaching them to obey all I have commanded you. At FBC we believe discipleship is a matter of obedience and not an option!

In contrast to modern methods and the teaching of certain groups, true discipleship is not a one on one process. It is actually the assignment of the local church. The word disciple is mainly in the plural [meaning a group process] and the word disciple does not occur in the epistles, because it is Christ through the church body [the focus of the epistles] that make disciples. Therefore, the great commission can only be fulfilled in the local church and discipleship is not merely a one on one process, even one on many, but the entire church working together toward the goal of each member and all of us together becoming more like Christ.

It is crucial to keep this in mind when beginning a discipleship process – the goal is not friendship, nor bible teaching or theological discussion. Friendships can result from discipleship but they are not the goal. Bible teaching and theology are essential but they are not the goal. The target is to become like Christ, GO – become a fisher of men, BAPTIZE – to be baptized, identify with Christ and His church and to function in union with other believers and TEACHING to obey ALL that Christ has commanded in His Word, seeing every area of our lives come under the authority of the Word of God. Discipleship is not merely learning, but living. It is a leader and fellow disciples, a large assembly of men or women and an entire church body passionately pursuing a life that is more like Christ in every way. Do NOT lose sight of the target.

NEGATIVELY: At FBC, we are happy to minister to others from other churches during the summer, but as we enter the fall and spring, we focus our discipleship efforts biblically, so that it is the way Christ designed; each member and an entire church family pursuing to grow to be more like Christ together. Therefore in the fall and spring, we do not open the discipleship process to anyone from another church.

POSITIVELY: At FBC, we call every participant in D group to function as a healthy member of our church family. Again, the discipleship process doesn't just occur at our D group gatherings but through-out the week, in prayer, in our personal study of the Word, in discussion with our spouse and children, in ministry where we serve, as we gather for worship, as we give, as we respond to the Word as it is proclaimed, as we pursue the one another's of true fellowship, as we share the gospel with the lost, as we show acts of compassion to the needy, as we call each other and hold each other accountable to live like Christ and so much more...

In the NT, the discipleship process was primarily man to men and woman to women. And it is essential that this process of becoming more like Christ, be accompanied by a NORMAL commitment to our local Church. Therefore in D group, we are asking every participant to agree to a normal biblical commitment to FBC as their local church. What does that include?

#1 I will be committed to faithfully and regularly attending the Sunday Worship services of FBC. Apart from emergencies or away vacation, I am going to demonstrate a heart's desire to gather with God's people to worship our Lord together as a local body every week

Hebrews 10:24-25 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

#2 I will be committed to serving at FBC in some regular and faithful ministry, seeking to express my spiritual giftedness for the glory of God as a servant of Christ – I will seek to be a MEMBER of FBC!

1 Peter 4:10-11 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

#3 I will be committed to showing and sharing the gospel as a representative of Christ and of FBC to the glory of God

Colossians 4:5-6 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

#4 I will be committed to sacrificial giving to FBC, knowing exactly what percentage I give out of what God provides me, and giving it with joy to the work of Christ through this local body for His Glory

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

#5 I will be committed to caring for the downtrodden, representing the heart of Christ and as a witness to the world

Matthew 25:35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' 40 'And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

#6 I will seek to follow the example of my leaders by His Spirit in this discipleship with all my heart for Christ's Glory

Hebrews 13:7 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. 17 Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

#7 I will daily pursue praying for my spouse and children, for our church and its leaders and my D group members AND I will seek to contact or be contacted by each member of my d group for the purpose of Christ like growth

1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing; Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

D GROUP: Beginning the Process

Agenda for the first D group evening...Name tags/refreshments for everyone/room set up

#1 Welcome – Introduce yourselves to individuals you don't know – then Teacher introduce himself

#2 Where is DISCIPLESHIP headed this fall and winter/Spring?

FOR THE WOMEN

The goal this year is to FINALLY work through the qualities of Titus 2:4-5 for women. Then, in the Spring, to work through the great commandment. Regardless of your circumstances; single, married, unequally yoked, the goal is to become like Christ by developing the qualities of a godly woman.

Each week [sometimes for more than one week] a quality will be discussed at length, questions will open the session, a lesson will be taught, then the gathering will break into in small D-groups for discussion and prayer. Each D-group will work through the closing questions, having EACH INDIVIDUAL make specific commitments on what to dependently apply that particular week. Transparency and genuineness are crucial. Dominating a group for any reason, in any manner hurts the purpose of true discipleship. Individuals looking for friends, long term counseling, fellowship or to feel good should not pursue D group – [though some of those things may happen] the sole purpose of D group is to grow to be more like Christ – period.

FOR THE MEN

The men will be working through the book of Ecclesiastes. A man's man book about life on this planet and the follow of pursuing anything that does not have fearing God and keeping His commandments as central. Topics will include time, money, business, growing old, work, labor, eating, drinking, being merry and so much more.

Again, our goal will be to grow to be more like Christ in every way.

Because this is our first seasonal session, we will infest this week into a focus on discipleship and only introduce our topics for next time.

#3 LARGE GROUP OPENING QUESTIONS [break up into random groups]

- 1-What do **Matthew 18:19-20, Luke 6:46, Ephesians 4:16, 2 Timothy 2:2, Titus 2:4-5, and 1 Peter 5:1-5** teach us about discipleship?
- 2-Why do so very few solid churches passionate pursue the process of discipleship?
- 3-What are the difficulties of discipleship? What are the blessings or benefits of discipleship?
- 4-What will it take for each person here to be committed to the process of discipleship in the months to come?

#4 LARGE GATHERING DISCUSSION [lead by the teacher over the questions above]

#5 TEACH THE LESSON on the back of this sheet on Discipleship

#6 BREAK UP INTO D GROUPS and answer the questions below, the first three are for all groups men and women, then the second set are just for men or just for women

FOR ALL D GROUPS, Men and Women: D group QUESTIONS

- #1 How can we keep our group on focused on the purpose of D group, which is to become like Christ?
- #2 What kind of things will cause our group to get side tracked off of our primary purpose?
- #3 What 3 main areas does each person in the group feel they have to grow in this year? Write them down.

If you have time, begin discussing Titus 2 for women and Ecclesiastes for men with the questions below
Men's groups – take the worksheet home and fill it out and bring it back for next week

FOR MEN ONLY –Along with filling out the worksheet at home in advance of next week, if you have time, discuss these additional questions on Ecclesiastes from the worksheet

- 4-Reflect for a moment on the popular music, movies or television programs in today's media. Can you think of examples of the attitudes of meaninglessness and frustration with the pointlessness of life – list out some examples and explain each one.
- 5-How has the goal of climbing the ladder of success made people miserable or failed to deliver the happiness they expected? Have you or others you know ever experienced this? Explain
- 6-Do you invest all of your time, talents and treasure in an uncertain future when you believe you'll finally reap the rewards, or do you treat each day as a unique gift to be enjoyed and used for God's glory? Defend or explain your answer with specific examples.

FOR WOMEN ONLY –Along with discussing discipleship, if you have time, discuss these questions on Titus 2:4-5?

- 4-Which of the qualities listed in these verses is the strongest of the seven, and which one is the weakest?
- 5-Why do you think the LOVE Paul calls wives to show their husbands is LIKE Phileo and not sacrificial LOVE Agape?
- 6-Do not talk about your husband in a negative manner at all [doing so does not honor Christ], but talk about where you need to grow in your love for your husband?