



GROW SERIES
A DISCIPLE-MAKING TOOL

INVEST

IN A FEW



A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MAKING DISCIPLES

LEADERSHIP NOTES

INVEST IN A FEW

LEADERSHIP NOTES

Every time you gather with your group, you want to divide your time into three sections: looking back, looking together, and looking forward. Your group time together should last between 60 and 90 minutes each. Plan to balance your time between these three sections and don't spend all of your time on just teaching content, so leave plenty of time for all three areas.

LOOKING BACK

The goal of this section is to provide pastoral care and accountability

- Ask questions about the past week such as: "How did this week go?" "What stressed you?" "What went well?" "What's heavy on your heart?" "Where did you struggle the most?" (Pray for each other as you begin your meeting time.)
- Review last week's "I Will" statement. How are you putting into practice what you are learning? What problems did you have? What successes did you have?
- Review the memory verse of the week. "What did God show you through this verse?"
- Ask them to share from their prayer journals how God has spoken to them this week.

LOOKING TOGETHER

The goal of this section is to review the new teaching and practice what you have learned.

We want each person to grow in competence and confidence as they put God's Word to practice.

- Spend time reviewing the key questions from each day and discussing answers.
- Half of the time should be spent on teaching and half of the time on practicing what you have learned together as a group.

LOOKING FORWARD

The goal of this section is to plan how they will practice what they have learned during the week and then commission them to do it.

- Have each person craft an **“I Will”** statement, setting a goal of how each person will put into practice what he or she has learned this next week.
- Commissioning: Pray for the group as they go out to do what they have learned in the power of the Holy Spirit.

INITIAL GROUP MEETING

- **Looking Back:** Spend your time catching up with each other. Have everyone briefly share what has been going on in life since the last meeting. You, as the leader, should start off first.
- **Looking Together:** Hand out the books to everyone. Have someone read out loud the section *“How to use this Book”*. Explain that there is a daily reading for them to do along with a Scripture memorization each week. Take a moment to look over the verses you will be memorizing during this study. You may want to refer your group to the page entitled *“Memorizing Scripture”* in the appendix in the back of the book. Answer any questions they may have regarding Scripture memory. At this time, remind everyone to use and bring their Verse Packs from *“Walk With God”*. Explain that they will be reading through the book of Acts together during the first part of the study. There is an overview of the book of Acts provided in the appendix. Remind them how to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** to God and how to **p.r.a.y.** Refer to the appendices in the back for help. Make sure everyone in your group has a Bible and explain that journal pages are provided each week in the study to record their Bible reading notes. Also read through the **“I Will”** commitment page and ask them to make a commitment to the group by checking the appropriate boxes and sign their name at the bottom of that page. Help your group select prayer partners from within the group and encourage them to exchange contact information. In addition, using the table of contents, briefly give them an overview of what you will be studying over the next seven weeks. Explain that the group will be taking *“fishing trips”* together during this study. So it would be wise to prepare in advance a schedule of those trips so everyone can synchronize their schedules.
- **Looking Forward:** Clearly set your expectations for the group and confirm the details of when and where you will meet. If a member must miss for any reason, they will need to contact both you and their prayer partner. Ask if there are any questions. Close out in prayer together, commissioning them as they head into this first week. I love asking the group to get on their knees for prayer, if possible, as I pray over them. Encourage them by telling them how you will be praying for them every day and how excited you are to see what God will teach them during your time together.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK ONE: WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

- **Looking Back:** As you gather together begin by reviewing the week. Ask questions like “How did it go this week?” “What problems are you facing?” “Did you run into problems with your daily reading?” After everyone has shared, review the memory verse for the week. Remind the group that they should be trying to say the verse word for word as it appears in the Bible, not just as a paraphrase. Ask about how their reading has been in the book of Acts this week. What did God say to them personally? How is their journaling going?
- **Looking Together:** Week One is all about defining a disciple. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. On Day One, remind them that Jesus gave us a clear command to make disciples. On Day Two, ask how their definition of a disciple has changed as a result of this study. On Day Four, discuss the difference between character and competencies. On Day Five, discuss why more believers are not engaged in the work of Jesus to make disciples. On Day Six, discuss what it means to follow Jesus today. What choices will they have to make to follow Him fully?
- **Looking Forward:** Encourage the group to make an “**I Will**” statement that commits to being a fully mature, 3D disciple of Jesus Christ. Also remind them to read their Bible every day and to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God as they read. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one group member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK TWO: MAKING DISCIPLES JUST LIKE JESUS

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the “*highs and lows*” of the week. Review the “**I Will**” statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Review the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** Week Two is all about the process Jesus used to make disciples. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Day One is a brief overview of the process Jesus used Day two, remind the group that making disciples is a work of the Spirit. We are partnering with the Spirit to mature believers into fully formed, reproducing disciple-makers for Jesus. On Day Three, discuss how Jesus engaged explorers. On Day Six, reinforce how Jesus cast a vision of personal multiplication to His disciples.

- **Looking Forward:** Encourage the group to make an **“I Will”** statement that commits to walk as Jesus walked and to make disciples the way Jesus made disciples. Remind them to keep up their daily reading as they **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK THREE: THE CALL TO FOLLOW

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the *“highs and lows”* of the week. Review the **“I Will”** statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Review all the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** : Week Three is about the beginning steps to investing in people. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Day One lays out the steps you should take to determine who you should disciple. Review these steps together. On Day Two, brainstorm together about how you can cast a compelling vision of being a disciple to someone who needs investment. On Day Three, underscore the value of discipling in groups. Day Four gives a step-by-step plan for the first time you meet with a *“would be”* disciple. Take time to discuss this and role play what that conversation might sound like. Day Five is about making time to make disciples. Discuss how each member of your group will have to carve out time to invest in others.
- **Looking Forward:** Create an **“I Will”** statement that commits to recruit someone to disciple. Remind them to keep up their daily reading as they **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK FOUR: BUILDING CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the *“highs and lows”* of the week. Review the **“I Will”** statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Review all the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** Week Four is about how to build the basic competencies of walking with God into another person. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Day One, stress that spiritual growth requires training that which results in spiritual maturity. Day Two, ask the group, *“What do you think are the core competencies a believer should master in order to walk with God and make disciples?”* Engage the group in a discussion about why gathering as a group, personal commitment, godly examples and prayer are important to discipling others.
- **Looking Forward:** Create an **“I Will”** statement that commits to meet with their first Grow Group. Again, this can be a friend or a family member. This is for the purpose of practicing and getting comfortable with the diagram. Remind them to keep up their daily reading as they **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK FIVE: BUILDING CHRIST LIKE CHARACTER

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the *“highs and lows”* of the week. Review the **“I Will”** statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Review all the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** Week Five is about how to build the basic Christ like character in others. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Look at Day One and discuss why crisis and community help shape our character. Point out the accountability questions Wesley used in his small groups. What stands out about those questions? Day Three reveals the importance of a safe environment where people can be genuine and authentic. Why is that difficult to find in our culture today? Day Six deals with how to resolve conflict within your discipleship group. Ask them, *“What stands out to you most about the importance of resolving conflict?”*

- **Looking Forward:** Help your group craft an “I Will” statement that commits to cultivating a healthy environment that shapes godly character in the groups they are leading. Remind them to read their Bible every day and to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God as they read. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK SIX: THE COST OF MAKING DISCIPLES

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the “*highs and lows*” of the week. Review the “I Will” statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Review all the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** Week Six is about the cost of making disciples. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Look at Day One and discuss the “*paradigm shift*” which is required for them to invest in others. On Day Three, drive home the point that investing in others can be inconvenient at times. Day Five deals with disappointment in ministry. Share with the group a time when you felt disappointed in ministry and how you handled that situation. On Day Six, they read “*The Fellowship of the Unashamed*”. Have the group read that passage with each person reading one sentence aloud. This is a powerful picture of a disciple-maker who has counted the cost.
- **Looking Forward:** Encourage the group to make an “I Will” statement that commits to counting the cost of making disciples for the long haul. Remind them to read their Bible every day and to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** and **p.r.a.y.** to God as they read. In this way, we walk with God, moving what we learn from our heads to our hearts. Contact each group member this week. Pray over them that God will give them a desire to make disciples who will make disciples for a lifetime. Try to make a point to meet personally with one member each week for prayer and encouragement.

GROUP LEADER SUGGESTIONS FOR WEEK SEVEN: MAKING DISCIPLES FOR A LIFETIME

- **Looking Back:** Take time to review the week and discover the “*highs and lows*” of the week. Review the “**I Will**” statement they made and ask them how it went this week. What challenges did they face? Ask how their discipleship groups are going. Review all the memory verses assigned and journal entries from the past week.
- **Looking Together:** Week Seven is about making disciples for a lifetime. Review the questions at the end of each day’s reading. Look at Day One and discuss someone you know who has made disciples for a lifetime. How has their example impacted your life? Day Three talks about group multiplication. Discuss how you want each one of those in your group to multiply and start new groups. Day Five is about “*doing the work*” of ministry, which is the work of making disciples. Engage your group in discussing why this is Jesus’ top priority. The final day talks about how you will spend your life – as an investor or as a consumer. Challenge the group to invest their lives for the sake of the Gospel and make disciples who will make disciples!
- **Looking Forward:** : This is the last session of your group. It is very important that you take time to review what has meant the most to group. Have they learned how to invest in others in a deeper way? If so, how? It is also important to remind them that this is not the last step, but the beginning of a lifetime of making disciples! Encourage every group member to start a *Grow Group* and begin investing their lives. Make yourself available to help them get started and assure them you are there to encourage them along the way. Also, challenge them to continue to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** to God and **p.r.a.y.** daily for the rest of their life lives! Commission them before you leave to make disciples and produce disciple makers until Jesus comes back!

FAQ FOR LEADERS

Q: How should I use the “*Leader’s Guide*”?

A: I think it is best to read through the “*Leader’s Guide*” before you meet with your group. Any thoughts or ideas you glean should be written down in your “*Walk with God*” book. That way, you are not referring to the “*Leader’s Guide*”; you will be just looking at your own book. The “*Leader’s Guide*” contains only general suggestions about how to lead your group, and does not contain any additional content to be shared in your group.

Q: How long should each group time last?

A: The length of the group time will often be determined by how many are in your group and how engaged your members are in the discussions. Generally, a group time should last from 60 to 90 minutes. I suggest you don’t let it go too much longer than that. Have a clear start and end time in mind. As you approach the end time, bring the group to a close and then make yourself available for discussion for those who want to stay. This way, you honor everyone’s time but allow additional discussion for those who might need it.

Q: What if someone misses a group session? What should I do?

A: It is common that someone will miss a session. If you postpone a meeting because one or two have to miss, then the rest of the group will be held back. The book is designed to be completed in seven consecutive weeks. If you skip weeks, then the group will be confused as to what week they are studying and will get out of the habit of being in God’s Word every day. My suggestion is to continue to meet as a group for the full seven consecutive weeks. If a member misses, ask them to continue to do their study every day and attend the next group session. You might offer to meet with them individually to discuss the week they missed. Also, you can see if they would be able to join the group via Skype, Facetime or some other conference call technology.

Q: What if you are starting a group but know that your group will end up meeting through the holidays when most members will have to miss?

A: My suggestion is to look at the calendar before you begin a group and plan accordingly. If your group is going to roll through the holidays, make a plan on the front end to meet during that time or just wait to launch your group until after the holidays have passed.

Q: What if I have a group member who is disruptive or strongly disagrees with the material presented?

A: It would be prudent to personally meet with that member and try to resolve the situation. Let them know that they are loved and wanted in the group. However, they must not be disruptive. If they can't make the group time positive for everyone involved, they may need to step out and try it with another group at a later time.

Q: What if I have a group member who comes to the group unprepared on a regular basis?

A: Everyone is busy, and you need to show a healthy dose of grace for anyone who is trying to learn to walk with God in a Grow Group. That being said, if they are not doing the basics to learn how to walk with God laid out in this study, then the group will certainly not benefit them. It would be like joining a gym but never working out. You've got the membership, but you won't see the results. I suggest you meet with them privately and encourage them to come prepared. You may have to make accommodations for them such as decreasing the amount of Bible reading to just a few times a week or allow them to use their cards when memorizing scriptures. You want them to be successful and if they are willing to try, you should do all you can to help them. However, if they can't do what's expected of the group, then you might suggest that they step out of the group until they have the time to really put their best effort forward.

Q: What if there are several weeks between Book One: "Walk with God" and Book Two: "Reach your World". What should I do during that time gap?

A: I realize that there may be time gaps between books. What you do during that time really depends on you and your group. You might suggest that the group members read through a book of the Bible during that gap time while continuing to **l.i.s.t.e.n.** to God and **p.r.a.y.** You might suggest that the group meet once during the time gap to stay connected and pray for one another. You might also suggest that the group stay connected through a group text or social media, and you might provide Scriptures to memorize together. Ultimately, you are the best judge of your group members. Any way you can keep them in God's Word and praying for one another will keep the continuity of the group going.