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(*free download)

Adsit, Christopher. ***Personal Disciple Making: A Step by Step Guide for Leading a Christian from New Birth to Maturity***. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988. This extremely practical handbook discusses the basics of disciple making and gives tools that may aid a discipler in her work. Adsit looks at the different levels of spiritual maturity: babies, children, adolescents and adults. He then seeks to prescribe which kinds of spiritual food each might need. This book has many charts and outlines that could be taken and used directly in a discipleship relationship. Adsit comes from a Campus Crusade background, and advances the Ten Basic Steps as suitable tools for training.

Arn, Win. ***The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*** (2nd ed.) Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Barna, George. *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2001.

Barna uses his sociological research to demonstrate the relative absence of real disciple making in the evangelical church in America. But the book is not negative as a whole. He goes on to cover several churches where discipleship is faithfully practiced at some level, and makes a strong call to return to the biblical ideals in this area. His definition of discipleship is loose, including things like taking a spiritual growth class or participating in an online Christian chat group as possible models, but he has the right idea.

Briscoe, Stuart. *Discipleship for Ordinary People*. Wheaton, Ill. Harold Shaw Publishers, 1988.

This book is not about disciple making, but teaches how to be a good disciple of Christ. It is a useful coverage of what goes into full commitment to following Christ as his disciple.

Bruce, A. B. *The Training of the Twelve*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971.

This fairly academic coverage of how Jesus taught his disciples is a classic, and the basis for several other more well-known books.

Bly, Stephen A. *Radical Discipleship: Tough Standards for Spiritual Greatness*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1981.

As the title suggests, this book is about living a radical, surrendered life for God. He doesn't really teach about discipling others, although he is very insistent that each Christian find a way to minister to others. This book is very practical and hands-on, unlike most other book on this topic. For instance, Bly has lists to fill out that have people asking, "Who can I minister to?", "When will I do this?", "What is radical fellowship?", etc.

Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1963.

While this book says it's about evangelism, it's really about how Jesus made disciples. Coleman has another book under the title, *The Master Plan of Discipleship*, but we prefer this title for learning about disciple making. This book explores principles essential to effective disciple making in a way found nowhere else. It is a must-read. Using the example of Jesus, Coleman expounds on principles like selection, association, reproduction, delegation, and more.

Comiskey, Joel. *Home Cell Group Explosion: How Your Small Group Can Grow and Multiply*. Houston: Cell Group Resources, 2002.

Comiskey studied the cell-church movement as exemplified by Paul Yonggi Cho's church in Korea. He identified eight other huge cell-churches and did a survey of the cell leaders as a basis for this book. The cell-church model is being adopted by a growing number of large churches in America. The model assumes extremely

rapid growth. Most expect their cell groups to double and multiply in six to 12 months. Leadership development goes forward in each cell, as assistant leaders are trained by existing leaders. The central church leadership typically adds a leadership class of several weeks to a year in length, although with the longer programs, the students are already leading groups during most of the training. We found it hard to reconcile his insistence that good cell leadership training “maintain both the quantitative and qualitative edge. Both are essential,” with his claim that, “Six months usually is sufficient time for you to develop a new leader to shepherd a cell.” (p. 63, 64) Apparently, our people are slower learners, or perhaps more sinful than the people in these groups (seriously). By six months, we just hope our people have stopped taking drugs and fornicating! Asked about this discrepancy, Dr. Comisky told me that cell churches compensate for the lower level of training by increased quality in coaching.

Comiskey, Joel. *Cell Church Solutions: Transforming the Church in North America*. Morneo Valley, CA: CCS Publishing, 2005.

This explanation of cell church theory as it relates to the special conditions in North American culture makes an excellent case for why cell churches will work anywhere. Disciple making plays a key part in multiplying cell groups in this model, and this book includes helpful chapters on making disciples, training, and coaching. Comisky includes numerous examples of churches in America where the cell-based strategy is bearing impressive fruit.

Coppedge, Allan. *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1989.

This simple and straightforward book again does not teach how to disciple other people. Rather it explores what the Bible has to say about being a disciple of Christ and why God wants us to be disciples. Coppedge looks at both the Old Testament and the New, proposing that God has always been interested in having a people who follow him and glorify him.

Eims, Leroy. *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978.

An excellent introduction to the idea of disciple making, this book includes a few study guides in the back that could be used in a cooperative study with disciples. Eims is passionate to persuade people of the value of disciple making. The only unfortunate thing about this book is that it is brief, and only covers the early stages of this lost art.

Forman, Rowland, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Miller. *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy For Developing Leaders In Your Church*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2004.

This group writes from the perspective of the Fellowship Bible Church, founded by Gene Getz. FBC is one of the exceptional equipping churches in America, not only growing to great size using a “mini-church” or house church model, but also

successfully planting dozens of other local churches mostly in Texas, Arkansas, and the Rocky Mountain states. They have founded the Center for Church Based Training which propagates the FBC approach to leadership development. Their excellent training material is interactive and suited for use in small groups and classes. The book has a section on personal mentoring that is brief but good.

Foss, Michael W. *Power Surge: 6 Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

This is not a book about personal disciple making, but about moving churches from a “membership model” to a “discipleship model” of church affiliation. Foss speaks from the perspective of a mainline pastor in a Lutheran church who realized he needed to move his church from a paradigm where the members saw the church as meeting their needs, to one where they saw themselves as disciples there to accomplish the church's mission. He frames this shift as one where the pastor moves from caregiver to leader, and where members shift from being maintained to being mobilized to ministry—in other words, decentralizing ministry in the church. One example involves the women who have taken it upon themselves to organize a church-wide garage sale that raises \$60,000 a year for the poor. His chapter on leadership development advances the idea of a Young Leaders' Forum, where leaders can be trained, mentored, and held accountable. He gives an example of one new leader successfully trained to lead celebration of the sacraments. Although operating from a different perspective than ourselves, Foss' thrust is certainly in the right direction.

Fryling, Alice, ed. *Disciplemakers' Handbook: Helping People Grow in Christ*. Downers Grove Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1989.

Fryling is a staffer for InterVarsity, and speaks from long experience. This book covers the basics of friendship building, modeling, and instruction that go into building up disciples. Her focus is more on grounding believers than on leadership development.

Hanks, Billie Jr. and William A. Shell. *Discipleship: The Best Writings from the Most Experienced Disciple Makers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981.

This anthology of readings includes writings from Robert E. Coleman, Leroy Eims, Walter A. Hendrichsen, Gary Kuhne, and more. These writings are all taken from authors who specialized in writing about disciple making.

Hendrichsen, Walter A. *Disciples are Made, Not Born*. Colorado Springs: Cook Communications, 1974.

This short but comprehensive overview begins with information on being a disciple of Christ personally, and then moves to cover evangelism and follow-up. Hendrichsen discusses the stages of the disciple making process, including selection, imparting basics, and then multiplying. Important themes in this book include developing conviction in others and appreciating the calling of God.

Hendrichsen, Walter A. *How to Disciple Your Children*. Wheaton: Victor Books, a division of SP Publications, Inc., 1981.

Family can be a touchy area, but Hendrichsen approaches hard issues with such grace and humility it becomes easy to take his challenge. This book gives us a category for bringing ministry into our homes. More than that, he suggests beginning our ministries in our homes. This challenges the idea that ministry is done with other people's families, and our time at home is "me time." Although this book puts forth good concepts, it would be nice to have more practical ideas on how to incorporate his ideas.

Hull, Bill. *The Disciple making Pastor*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Co., 1988. Unlike his more general works on disciple making, this title is geared towards leaders. Hull begins by stressing the importance of discipleship, challenging the traditionalist view that the pastor is the only one capable of doing important ministry. Later he focuses on how pastors can coach their people toward a successful multiplication ministry.

Hull, Bill. *Jesus Christ Disciplemaker*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1984, 2004 (20th Anniversary Edition).

This is a fine analysis of Jesus' work in making disciples. Anyone interested in making disciples should read this careful study which is full of insight on how Jesus formed character and understanding in his followers.

Kuhne, Gary W. *The Dynamics of Discipleship Training: Being and Producing Spiritual Leaders*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978.

This book is focused on the importance of self-discipline, and instilling a value for discipline in disciples. Themes include the importance of time management, hard work, and discernment. A very brief study course is included in the back of the book that helps to cover the basics of Christian growth.

Krallmann, Günter. *Mentoring for Mission: A Handbook on Leadership Principles Exemplified by Jesus Christ*, (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2002)

This is a well-researched study of Jesus' method of mentoring. Written by an experienced missionary-practitioner, his insights are deep and highly useful. Although hard to find, this book deserves careful study by serious disciple makers.

Longenecker, Richard. *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996)

This is a scholarly discussion of how the idea of discipleship is used by different authors in the New Testament. It does not explain how to make disciples.

Moore, Waylon B. *Multiplying Disciples: The New Testament Method for Church Growth*. Tampa: Missions Unlimited, 1981.

This book is very motivating, and one of our favorite titles on making disciples. Moore does an excellent job raising tension and demonstrating how essential the disciple making ministry is to the Christian mission. In most of the book, he describes the value of multiplication and the accessibility of this ministry. "Anyone can multiply!" is his battle cry. The remainder of the book speaks to some of the character qualities a disciple maker should possess.

Neighbor, Ralph. *Where Do We Go From Here?* Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1990.

This is not a book on disciple making, but on ecclesiology. Neighbor advances a model for cell churches which he argues is more biblical than today's "program-based churches." He advocates the Yonggi Cho model of cell church, including some associated assumptions with which we do not agree. He implies that church programs are largely unnecessary and often harmful. We think both cells and programs are necessary for a well-rounded church, and both are seen in the New Testament church (e.g. the relief project for Judea mentioned in 2 Cor. 8, 9). We agree, however, that when programs become the center of church strategy, we have moved away from the New Testament pattern. Overall, the book is well worth reading, and paints an appealing picture of a church based more on lay empowerment for ministry than on centralized programs and celebrities. He has short sections on personal discipleship, as each cell leader is responsible for developing an assistant leader, usually within the (in our opinion) unrealistically short period of six months.

Ogden, Greg. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. Downers Grove Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998)

This is Greg Ogden's study guide for use in discipleship triads (see below).

Ogden, Greg. *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

This is an important, high quality, recent work on disciple making from a long-time practitioner who has served as a pastor and seminary teacher. Ogden surveys the low condition of discipleship in the modern church before analyzing Jesus' and Paul's approaches to making disciples. His analysis is rich in principles and useful insights. Then he provides a section on practical strategy for making disciples in the modern church. He correctly stresses the relational dimension of disciple making, and clearly explains why programs cannot deliver the real life transformation needed. Ogden advances a method based on triads, where three meet together. We have also had good results with this approach at times, although we find the one-on-one model has advantages of its own. Ogden makes a good case for the efficacy of three-way discipleship, but his claim that three-way meetings lead to multiplication, while one-on-one meetings don't, contradicts our experience. We have seen large-scale multiplication using both

models. We suspect that discipleship with younger people (students) might benefit from a one-on-one format. Most of the stories he tells are about adults of family age or higher. We also suspect that, although Ogden's increased success in multiplication coincided roughly with his move to three-way discipleship, his success may be partly the result of other factors. Separating individual causes is notoriously difficult when studying ministry.

One major difference between Ogden's approach and our own: his multiplication involves multiplying triads, while ours involves multiplying house churches and cell groups. This partly accounts for why we hold to a higher standard of training and experience before disciples would be considered duplicated. It also results in a somewhat different paradigm in general, where the focus in duplication is on the church more than the individual. This is a complex and subtle difference that should be explored more.

Ogden includes a wonderful section on building slowly and solidly (127,128). But even his patience-oriented approach envisages duplication after less time than we propose. But for existing believers, a year and a half may be sufficient, while new believers with lots of problems (like most of our people) may take a lot longer if we hold out for leadership qualifying character. His section on getting started on page 190 says pastors should begin with those in their churches who are already most mature, while in our church, those people were disciplined long ago.

We feel that Ogden's dread of leader/follower roles in discipleship is somewhat exaggerated (although he allows for directive leadership in coaching and spiritual guide roles). We certainly have biblical examples where the disciple maker takes a leading role, and as mentioned earlier, our experience has not duplicated his failure to see multiplication in leader-follower dyads. We agree that any perception of hierarchy should be minimized.

Petersen, Jim. *Lifestyle Discipleship: The Challenge of Following Jesus in Today's World*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1993.

This is a great book on disciple making from an experienced discipler working within the Navigators' organization. Like most books on disciple making, he focuses mostly on establishing young believers, and teaching them how to walk with God. Only a few pages near the end refer to leadership development. But this is a well worthwhile read that grapples with most of the central issues involved in spiritual growth. His last chapter on time priorities contains helpful points for busy disciple makers.

Rabey, Lois and Steve. *Side by Side: A Handbook*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2000.

This anthology of discipleship resources includes organized readings by many of the great Christian minds of today and yesterday. Many focus more on how to be disciples than on how to make disciples. There are quotes from many authors, including John Stott, Ravi Zacharias, Andrew Murray, Martin Luther, Oswald Chambers, Madeleine L'Engle, and C.S. Lewis.

Robinson, Martin, and Dwight Smith. *Invading Secular Space: Strategies for Tomorrow's Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2003.

Written by two missions and church planning experts, this interesting book is written for mission and church leaders considering how to foster church planting movements like those already flourishing in many parts of the world today. Their last three chapters contain elements needed to empower the laity for ministry and personal discipleship figures prominently. But the book is more a theoretical reflection than a practical study on how to raise up disciples.

Sanders, Oswald J. *Spiritual Discipleship*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1990.

Originally published under the title, *Shoe-Leather Commitment*, this book is an extended description of what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus. It focuses on committing your own life to discipleship rather than on how to make disciples of others. It is good for inspiration, and for getting a vision of committed Christian living.

Schroeder, David E. *Follow Me: Discipleship by the Book*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1992.

A book on being a disciple, not on making disciples.

Stanley, Paul D. and J. Robert Clinton. *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1992.

This classic discussion of mentoring brings the expertise of two important authorities on leadership development to the table. Their discussion tends to widen the field when they consider mentoring to include a variety of different relationships. Essentially, any relationship that involves one person benefiting another could be considered mentoring. They even discuss "occasional mentoring" such as teachers, counselors, and "passive mentoring" such as role models. So mentoring is not exactly a synonym for personal discipleship. In fact, their definitions are so broad they include secular mentors in business or professions. Their coverage of the discipling role again involves mainly grounding believers in their walk, as opposed to leadership development or multiplication. Practical suggestions for how to make personal disciples are limited to two pages.

One of their most important points is that most Christian leaders name more than one person as having key influence in their lives, often in different roles. The discipler, the coach, and the spiritual guide are the three most intentional types of mentors. Readers will notice we have incorporated all these roles into the single notion of disciple making. But we agree that God will often use others to fill in areas where a given disciple maker may need help. We certainly are familiar with many cases where multiple disciple makers have given input to the lives of the same believers. When making disciples in the context of good community we should frequently see others investing meaningfully into the life of any disciple with whom we work. But we continue to believe that someone should ideally take the

lead, or the responsibility to see that any promising and willing young believer received the help he or she needs.

This book ends with a stirring study on finishing well. The authors reveal disturbing findings that most leaders fail to do so.

Watson, David. *Covenant Discipleship: Christian Formation Through Mutual Accountability*, Wipf & Stock Publishers 2002.

According to a reviewer, this is an introduction to the way United Methodists and other “mainline Protestants” have attempted to reclaim the practice of giving and receiving counsel in the context of what is most often called “covenant discipleship groups.” In this book, Watson provides instructions for how to go about creating such a group, explains what is involved with fostering the kind of accountability in which members can “advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort,” and even offers a “Sample Group Meeting” (154-161). Watson and company invoke the Pietist notion of the *ecclesiola in the ecclesia* (“the little church in the big church”) to explain how it is that small groups can seek to have a more enriched life together in the midst of a wider surround of a congregation that is not committed in the same way. Watson & company encourage contemporary Methodists to seek renewal in ways analogous to what the earliest generations of Methodists did.

Wilkins, Michael. *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

This is a fairly academic analysis of discipleship, both from the standpoint of being a disciple of Christ and raising up disciples. Although Wilkins has been a practitioner, he is now a professor. We wish he had more practical teaching in this book.

Wright, N. T. *Following Jesus: Biblical Reflections on Discipleship*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

This book is not on making disciples. His 12 meditations explore what it means to be a true disciple today. We think Wright is soft in some key areas.