



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

DISCIPLE MAKING FOR MULTIPLICATION AND MAXIMUM IMPACT

EQUIP26, MAY 16, 2025

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DISCIPLE MAKING THROUGH INFLUENCE

Seminar Purpose

This seminar explores how churches can move from primarily attractional and program-driven ministry toward intentional disciple-making that creates multiplication and long-term spiritual impact.

The central conviction of this seminar is simple:

Transformation happens through relationships, not merely information.

Jesus did not primarily build a movement through large events, impressive systems, or entertainment. He built His movement by intentionally investing in a small group of disciples who would eventually multiply disciple-makers throughout the world.

Key Questions

- * How do people actually change?
- * Why are many churches losing influence in society?
- * Why does attendance not always produce transformation?
- * What model did Jesus use to shape people?
- * How can ordinary believers become disciple-makers?

The Crisis of Influence

Several trends discussed in the presentation point to the need for a discipleship shift:

Cultural Shifts

- * Church membership in America has significantly declined.
- * Many churches remain active but are not producing multiplying disciples.
- * Programs often become ends in themselves.
- * People may attend worship services without ever entering intentional discipleship.

Ministry Challenge

A quote referenced in the presentation states:

“A study found that out of 22 million churchgoing evangelicals, only 7 percent had taken any evangelistic training, and only 2 percent had introduced another person to Jesus Christ.”
– The Disciple-Making Pastor

This raises a serious question: Are we producing church attenders or disciple-makers?

Lower Room vs. Upper Room Ministry

The seminar contrasts two ministry approaches:

Lower Room Ministry

Churches often become centered around:

1. Place
2. Personality
3. Programs
4. People

These are not bad things, but they are unstable foundations for lasting transformation.

Upper Room Ministry

Jesus-centered disciple-making becomes the organizing purpose of the church.

Discipleship moves from being:

- * an optional ministry
 - * a department
 - * a class
 - * a program
- ...and becomes:

The organizing mission of the church.

Discussion Reflection

1. What most influenced your spiritual growth?
2. Who intentionally invested in your life?
3. Did transformation happen mostly through information or relationships?
4. In what ways can churches unintentionally become program-centered?

Key Takeaways

- * Attendance alone does not equal discipleship.
- * Programs cannot replace spiritual formation.
- * Healthy churches intentionally shape people.
- * Discipleship must move from addition to multiplication.
- * Churches regain influence when members become disciple-makers.

THE MECHANISM OF TRANSFORMATION

How People Actually Learn and Change

The seminar draws heavily from experiential learning theory, particularly the work of David Kolb.

Kolb argues:

“Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.”

Transformation occurs through:

1. Experience
2. Reflection
3. Teaching
4. Practice

Why Information Alone Is Not Enough

Many churches are excellent at transferring information.

But transformation usually requires:

- * relationships
- * modeling
- * shared experiences
- * practice
- * accountability
- * spiritual habits
- * repeated exposure over time

People rarely change simply because they hear a sermon. People change when truth becomes embodied in relationships and lived experience.

The Example of Jesus

A major emphasis of the seminar is that Jesus focused deeply on a few.

Jesus and the Twelve

Jesus ministered to crowds, but He intentionally concentrated on forming disciples.

Referenced quote:

“Jesus spoke to the crowds, but the engine of his ministry was his purposeful gathering and shaping of the Twelve.”

– The Church as Movement

Why Small Relational Environments Matter

Transformation happens best in small, relational, high-commitment environments.

This reflects the ministry strategy of Jesus.

Why Jesus Focused on the Few

Jesus understood:

- * depth produces multiplication
- * relationships shape identity
- * spiritual formation requires proximity
- * discipleship is caught as much as taught

Important principles from the seminar:

“Jesus focused on the few.”

“Nobody can train everybody.”

“God is a master craftsman, not a mass producer.”

Mechanism of Transformation

The seminar defines the mechanism of transformation as:

Intentional, relational, life-on-life mentoring in small groups, rooted in shared spiritual practices, centered on Jesus’ model, and aimed at multiplying disciple-makers.

This means disciple-making is:

- * intentional
- * relational
- * reproducible
- * spiritual
- * mission-oriented
- * multiplication focused

Practical Implications

Healthy disciple-making environments include:

Shared Practices

- * prayer
- * Scripture reflection
- * accountability
- * serving together
- * hospitality
- * Sabbath rhythms
- * mission engagement

Shared Experiences

- * meals
- * conversations
- * ministry together
- * spiritual conversations
- * serving others together
- * engaging nonbelievers together

Shared Vision

- * becoming like Jesus
- * participating in God’s mission
- * multiplying disciples

Reflection Questions

1. Where have you experienced the most transformation in your life?
2. Why are relationships so powerful in shaping identity?
3. What would happen if churches prioritized disciple-making environments as much as worship gatherings?
4. What obstacles prevent relational discipleship in modern churches?

THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP

The seminar organizes discipleship around three major goals:

1. ABIDE

Communion Before Commission

Before Jesus sends disciples into mission, He calls them into communion with Him. Discipleship begins with being with Jesus.

Key Spiritual Practices

Prayer

- * conversation with God
- * dependence
- * listening
- * intercession

Sabbath

- * rest
- * delight
- * worship
- * resistance against hurry and performance

Meditation on Scripture

- * slowing down
- * reflection
- * hearing God's voice
- * internalizing truth

Fasting

- * dependence on God
- * surrender
- * spiritual hunger

2. BECOME

Imitating Jesus

Discipleship is not merely learning information about Jesus. Discipleship is: becoming like Jesus. The seminar emphasizes relational imitation and shared life.

Key Practices of Becoming

- * Do Life Together
- * Discipleship requires proximity.
- * Practice Humility and Forgiveness
- * Transformation happens in community.
- * Engage With Nonbelievers
- * Mission is not outsourced to church events.
- * Serve Others Together
- * People are formed through mission.
- * Empathy Through Proximity
- * Compassion grows when people move toward others.

3. COMMISSION

Compassion Before Conversion

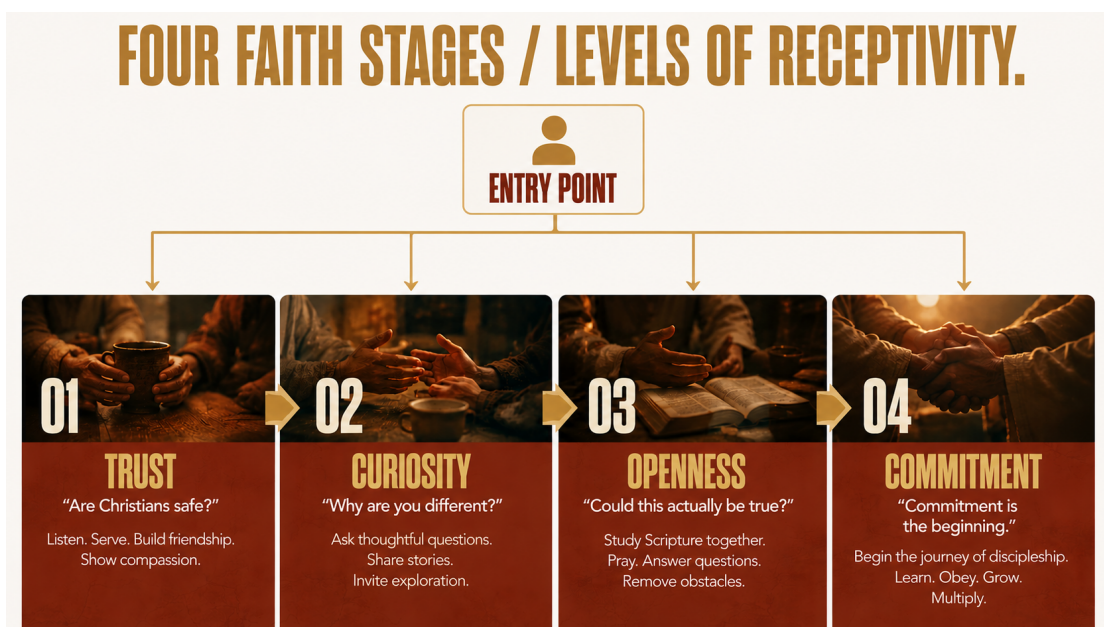
The seminar strongly emphasizes that mission begins with compassion. People are often receptive to truth after trust has been built.

Mission includes:

- * listening
- * serving
- * friendship
- * presence
- * compassion
- * spiritual conversations
- * invitation

Faith Happens in Stages

The presentation outlines four faith stages or levels of receptivity. The task of a believer is to identify the faith stage of nonbelievers to identify the entry point base on relational mentoring.



Stage 1 – TRUST

Nonbeliever's relational exposure to believers is often minimal. They are asking themselves, "Are Christians safe?"

In order to help them cross the threshold of "Trust" several practices break down barriers:

- * listen to understand before convincing
- * serve
- * build friendship
- * show compassion

Stage 2 – CURIOSITY

Question: "Why are you different?"

Practices:

- * ask thoughtful questions
- * share stories
- * invite exploration

Stage 3 – OPENNESS

Question: "Could this actually be true/beneficial?"

Practices:

- * study Scripture together
- * pray together
- * answer questions
- * remove obstacles

Stage 4 – COMMITMENT

Key idea: "Commitment is the beginning."

Practices:

- * begin discipleship journey
- * learn
- * obey
- * grow
- * multiply

Reflection Questions

1. Which stage best describes most people in your network?
2. How can churches become safer places for spiritual exploration?
3. What spiritual practices help you abide in Christ?
4. What habits help people become more like Jesus?

PAGE 4 – MULTIPLICATION & NEXT STEPS

Multiplication vs. Addition

One of the strongest themes of the seminar is the difference between:

Addition Thinking
versus
Multiplication Thinking

Addition asks:

- * How many people attended?
- * How many programs succeeded?
- * How many events were hosted?

Multiplication asks:

- * Who is being discipled?
- * Who is becoming a disciple-maker?
- * Who is mentoring others?
- * Who is multiplying spiritually?

The Ripple Effect

The Ripple Effect happens when disciple-makers intentionally invest in others who eventually disciple others.

This creates:

- * spiritual reproduction
- * multiplying influence
- * sustainable mission
- * deeper transformation
- * long-term kingdom impact

Multiplication Illustration

The seminar compares two approaches:

Growth by Addition

A church gains members slowly over time at current growth rates (3-4 per 100 members per year).

Growth by Multiplication

Disciple-makers reproduce disciple-makers exponentially.

The long-term impact of multiplication dramatically exceeds simple addition.

Core Convictions of the Seminar

Transformation happens through relationships.

Disciple-making requires intentionality.

Jesus modeled small relational discipleship.

Spiritual formation happens over time.

Healthy churches create disciple-makers.

Mission begins with compassion.

Multiplication is the goal.

WHO ARE YOUR THREE?

One of the final challenges of the seminar is deeply practical. Identify three people you can intentionally invest in spiritually.

These may be:

- * friends
- * family members
- * coworkers
- * church members
- * young adults
- * seekers
- * new believers

The goal is not perfection.

The goal is intentional investment.

Personal Action Plan

Who are My Three

Next Steps

This Week

- Pray daily for my three.

- Initiate one intentional spiritual conversation.
- Practice listening before speaking.
- Invite someone into shared experience.

This Month

- Begin a consistent discipleship rhythm.
- Share a meal or meaningful conversation.
- Study Scripture with someone.
- Serve someone intentionally.

This Year

- Help someone take spiritual steps toward Jesus.
- Develop reproducible disciple-making habits.
- Invest in multiplication, not just attendance.

Final Encouragement

The mission of the church is not simply to gather crowds.

The mission of the church is to make disciples who make disciples.

Like ripples spreading outward across water, intentional discipleship creates multiplying influence that extends far beyond what one person alone can accomplish.

Suggested Resources Mentioned or Referenced

- * The Disciple-Making Pastor – Bill Hull
- * The Church as Movement
- * David Kolb – Experiential Learning Theory
- * Kingdom Come
- * Ellen G. White – Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing / related discipleship writings