

I. The Centrality of Relational Disciple-Making

THE GREAT COMMISSION OF JESUS IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matt. 28:18–20

Making disciples—leading people to faith in Jesus and helping them grow to live and love like Jesus—is the core priority for us before Christ returns. This must dominate the church agenda in all of our ministry areas, purposes, and plans. The people we influence for Jesus will be the source of our joy and reward in eternity (Galatians 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20).

Regardless of the career you've chosen, your calling is **bigger!** Your purpose is to be a part of God's plan for reaching the world for Christ. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ is to make disciples of all nations.

There's no greater joy than to see God working through you as you help others become more like Jesus. He came that we "may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). There's no better abundance than generations of disciples who result from a life spent laboring to make them.

If you've been walking with Christ a short time, you're in a great spot to grasp the significance of God's calling on your life to be a disciple and make disciples. If you've been walking with Christ for a longer period of time, you have so much to offer the next generation! No matter where we are in our walks with God, we can have the same goal as Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1:

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

Multiplying disciples who go on to make disciples will enable us to fulfill our mission of leading people to live and love like Jesus.

THIS GUIDE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU IN THREE AREAS:

1. Provide a biblical definition and framework for making disciples as Jesus did.
2. Elevate the importance of a relational approach to disciple-making.
3. Offer proven practices and strategies for making disciples.

RELATIONAL DISCIPLE-MAKING

Jesus' approach to ministry and life was fundamentally relational. The gospels are filled with accounts of Jesus' living alongside his followers and others. From His initial call to follow him to the way that he cultivated a more intimate relationship of three followers—Peter, James, and John—Jesus operated in a close relational context. We should do the same.

Often we depend on groups for deeper spiritual connection and training. But disciple-making relationships are different. The focus is on the individual relationship or webs of relationships, not the group identity. A group can exist as people leave—disciple-making relationships end if people leave.

Typically, people volunteer for groups. But a disciple-making relationship should involve a disciple-maker prayerfully *selecting* disciples. This simple practice follows the example of Jesus and develops a sense of identity and worth in the disciple who has been selected.

In our culture today, a group often feels like a commitment. People are cautious to make deep commitments to something else on their calendar. But people are hungry for relationships—especially relationships where someone is focused on growing and developing them. We want to engage people in relationships that they love and appreciate. This relational context is where people can flourish as disciples.

Relational disciple-making starts with genuine friendship. Our disciple-making influence can only extend as far as our relational connection with a disciple.

DISCIPLE-MAKING CONVICTIONS

These convictions are not exhaustive, but they are central to our practice of disciple-making at Foundry Church.

1. Disciple-making is Jesus' strategy for redeeming the world

In his book *Master Plan of Evangelism*, Robert Coleman comments on Jesus' approach. He writes, "Like a general plotting His course of battle, the Son of God calculated to win. He could not afford to take a chance. Weighing every alternative and variable factor in human experience, He conceived a plan that would not fail."

Jesus' strategy didn't focus on large gatherings, gifted preachers, or excellent programming. He focused on relationships with those he had selected, to form the priorities of the Kingdom in their lives.

2. All Christians are called to make disciples

The Great Commission was not given to a select few people who are called to vocational ministry. The call to make disciples has been given to all Christians. If we don't make disciples, we are actively ignoring and disobeying Jesus' call on our lives.

3. You have to make a friend before you make a disciple

Relationships are not a nice add-on or an accidental outcome of disciple-making; they are at the heart of what it means to be and make disciples. We have to focus on connecting at a deep relational level as we make disciples. We will only be able to make a disciple if we have made a friend first.

4. You reproduce what you are

John Maxwell coined the statement, "Leadership ability is the lid that determines a person's level of effectiveness." Jesus shared the same truth with his disciples centuries ago. "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). I cannot take my disciples **beyond** my own commitment and maturity. The extent of my life transformation determines how effectively I lead others into spiritual growth. I must allow my own life to be continually transformed by the Holy Spirit.

5. Disciple-making and mission go together

The practice of disciple-making must include a commitment to reach those who are far from Jesus. Embedded in the call to be a disciple—to live and love like Jesus—is a call to share Jesus' heart for the lost. As we make disciples, we should model and lead our disciples to be on mission with Jesus to reach the lost.

6. Disciple-making should produce disciple-makers

A disciple is not fully formed until he or she is making disciples. Jesus didn't model disciple-making that *simply* transformed people. He modeled a movement-making, world-changing commitment to multiplying disciple-makers. Our goal is nothing less than his—to make disciple-makers who make disciple-makers. Multiplying disciple-makers is how we lead people to live and love like Jesus.

7. Disciple-making is shaped by the personality of the disciple-maker

The disciple-making relationship will take on the feel of the disciple-maker. Jesus showed that disciple-making should be relational, so we should embrace the personal nature of what He has called us to do. Let your personality and convictions shape the relationship. If you are gentle and mercy-filled, let your heart for the disciple come through. If you are intense and passionate, allow your conviction to inspire the disciple. Use your experiences, convictions, knowledge, and personality to shape those you form as disciples!

II. The Identities of a Disciple

The apostle Paul put it this way: “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...” (Galatians 4:19). Paul “labored,” which is to say, “he worked hard” to see Jesus formed in others. That’s what it means to be a disciple—to have Jesus formed in our lives. Here’s a simple definition of a disciple:

Disciples who live and love like Jesus understand what Christ has done for them (Grace), who they are in Christ (Identity), and have set their hearts to pattern their lives after Christ’s until they look and live like Jesus (Life Patterns).

A DISCIPLE IDENTIFIES AND LIVES AS AN:

- **Obedient Worshiper:** Love God wholeheartedly and do His will
- **Empowered Witness:** Point people to Jesus with the Spirit’s help
- **Called Servant:** Embrace the character and mission of Jesus
- **Fruitful Disciple-maker:** Make disciples who make disciples

There are many indicators of following Christ, but at Foundry Church we have concluded the four basic identities with corresponding life patterns above encompass the **core characteristics** of a follower of Jesus.

You don’t have to be a spiritual giant to recognize God’s call on your life, to follow Him with your whole heart, and begin to pass on to others what you’ve learned. Paul’s confidence in stating “follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” didn’t flow from personal pride or an abundance of technical knowledge. Paul had a deep-seated faith in God, practical experiences in being discipled, and a conviction to disciple others.

IDENTITY AND LIFE PATTERNS

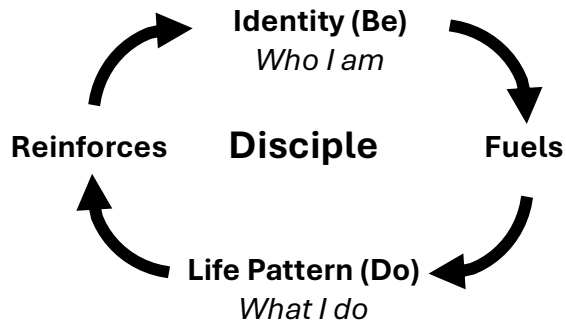
There are two important distinctions critical to making disciples: who we are and what we do. Identity is who we are; it is shaped by God. He determines who we are and what is best for us. Our identity is then revealed in what we do. The Bible further clarifies that our basic God-given identity can be summarized in four important categories—**Obedient Worshiper, Empowered Witness, Called Servant, and Fruitful Disciple-maker.**

We all desire to live for a purpose bigger than ourselves (Obedient Worshiper), and we all love to talk about what excites us most (Empowered Witness). In addition, we all serve something or somebody (Called Servant), and we love it when people join us in what we love to do (Fruitful Disciple-maker). As we live out these four identities, we experience a satisfaction and joy that comes from living for the God who created us and loves us.

My identity (who I really am) fuels my life patterns (what I actually do) and my life patterns, in turn, reinforce my identity. The life-changing reality of Jesus Christ re-

shapes my being, which leads to Christ-like ways of living. This illustration shows how it works.

How to Make Disciples



ESSENTIAL LIFE PATTERNS

- **Identity**—What we are equipping our disciples to realize and believe, who we are, our identity given and formed in Christ
- **Life Patterns**—What we are equipping our disciples to do, what we do, and the ways we live out our identity

As a minimum, ensure that your disciples cultivate the following essential life patterns:

Obedient Worshiper

Love God wholeheartedly and do His will

- Practice personal worship through daily time in God’s Word and prayer (include your FRANC list).
- Worship weekly with the church family.
- Be engaged in biblical community with other believers.
- Give to the Kingdom of God, including a tithe to the local church (stewardship of treasures).
- Exhibit godly priorities and holy living
- Deal with anything that replaces God (idols).

Empowered Witness

Point people to Jesus with the Spirit’s help

- Begin with prayer
- Listen with care
- Eat together
- Serve with love

- Share your story (personal testimony) and God's story (the gospel)
- Pray for the naturally supernatural (healing, provision, prophecy).

Called Servant

Embrace the character and mission of Jesus

- Develop a servant's heart, humility, and character
- Identify spiritual gifts
- Develop a sense of calling and take a next step explore/live into it
- Serve regularly in the church and community

Fruitful Disciple-maker

Make disciples who make disciples

- Identify people to engage in relational disciple-making.
- Enter disciple-making relationships. (Pass on what is learned and practiced.)
- Embrace their role in our movement of changed lives.

These identities and corresponding life patterns describe a fully formed follower of Jesus, not a perfect one. Regardless of when you came to faith, these are the identities and life patterns you grow in and build into others. If your disciples are not practicing these minimum life patterns, you're not done forming them as disciples!

III. THE FOUNDRY DISCIPLE-MAKING APPROACH

The word *disciple* refers to a student, learner, or apprentice. Disciples in Jesus' day would follow their rabbi (teacher) wherever he went, learning from the rabbi's teaching and being trained to do as the rabbi did. A disciple left everything to follow the rabbi and was committed to imitating the rabbi in every way until he was ready to take on his own disciples.

Jesus stated in Matthew 4:19, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He was clear that His end goal would be that 1) His disciples would be committed to Him, 2) that He would transform their lives, and 3) that He would train them to reach and impact others. At the end of his ministry with them, He told them in Matthew 28:19 to "go and make disciples of all nations." What did He do with his disciples in the short time He had with them? He made disciples who could make disciples and sent them out to complete the work He started! As fully formed followers of Jesus, we must live out Jesus' example for others and send them out to continue His work.

Disciple-making does not mean that people just go through classes, attend Sunday school, or listen to sermons. **Disciple-makers teach and model attitudes and actions that others can imitate.** Disciples live out their faith in practical ways and are able to pass these on to others (*1 Thess. 2:8; 2 Tim. 2:2*).

INTENTIONALITY IS KEY, SO OUR METHODS MUST BE:

- 1. Relational**—Build great relationships because they are foundational to our work. Always seek to know someone personally, discover where they are spiritually, and help them take steps toward Jesus. The disciple-maker must model vulnerability to develop trust. A person will have difficulty following you if they don't trust you. The closer the relationship, the more trust is built. As a disciple-maker, you set the culture of the relationship. Be proactive in the relationship. Pursue your disciples with friendship, support, and encouragement.
- 2. Transformational**—Focus on understanding and applying Scripture, not just Bible information. We cannot transform people, but we can help them seek God and be sensitive to His Spirit. As they experience life-change they will be excited to help someone else experience the same. In addition, you must experience transformation so you can effectively lead your disciples. We're never done growing!
- 3. Missional**—Jesus' mission was "...to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke. 19:10). We cannot say we're making disciples as Jesus did without personal

evangelism. Disciple-makers must practice BLESS and model a personal evangelism that others can imitate. If your disciples aren't consistent in each aspect of BLESS, you're not done forming them as disciples.

- 4. Transferable**—Expect your disciples to make disciples. Your goal is to train your disciples to pass on what they learn from you. Keep it simple, practical, and impactful, and it will be more memorable. Be sure they pass it on!

DISCIPLE-MAKING IS NOT A COURSE

The temptation is to turn everything we do into a program or an informational course. Here's a chart that helps us see some of the differences between a discipleship course and making disciples.

A Discipleship Course	Making Disciples
Is a curriculum to complete	Is a person to equip
Is something I did	Is someone I'm becoming
Is information-focused	Is transformation-focused
Results in addition	Results in multiplication
Is about becoming better Christians	Is about becoming better disciple-makers
Is my personal growth class	Is a movement of changed lives
Is a program of the church	Is a command of Jesus

OUR DISCIPLE-MAKING TOOLS

1. Weekly meeting

Consistency is key when making disciples. You should have a regular weekly meeting scheduled with your disciple(s). A recommended length for the meeting is 60-90 minutes. You should do your absolute best to prioritize this meeting time.

In the disciple-making process, you should model and emphasize relationship. You can meet with a disciple one-on-one, or lead multiple people together. Only in rare cases should a disciple-making relationship be larger than four people (3 disciples + 1 disciple-maker). A larger number of people will prevent the disciple-maker from being fully engaged with the lives of the disciples.

A general meeting should follow this format:

- Connect relationally, address biblical or life questions your disciple has.
- Each share how God spoke through a HEAR journal from the previous week.
- Share about one of two questions:

- How did God answer prayer for someone on my FRANC list?
- How did God use me to BLESS someone on my FRANC list?
- Discuss one of the four identities or a resource connected to the identity (following the order)
- Pray for each other

2. One Year Bible

The One Year Bible forms the backbone of the disciple-making process. For newer Christians, you may choose to start with just the New Testament reading plan. However, reading both the Old and New Testaments is recommended.

Teach your disciples how to journal using the HEAR method outlined in the One Year Bible. These HEAR journals will form the backbone of the disciple-making process and the meeting time.

3. Identity Overviews

Each of the four disciple identities is described and outlined in an overview. Use these overviews to guide your teaching and conversations around the identity. Key resources are provided in the identity overviews. You want your disciples to understand each identity, the key Bible verses that teach it, and the life patterns that reinforce it.

4. FRANC List

Early in the disciple-making process, you will lead your disciples to create a list of people in their lives who are not yet Christians. Use the following categories to create the list.

- Friends
- Relatives
- Acquaintances
- Neighbors
- Coworkers

Both the disciple-maker and disciples should know the names on the FRANC lists by heart.

5. Prayer for disciples

You should pray daily for your disciples. Disciple-making is embedded in human relationships but it is empowered by the Spirit's work in those relationships. We plant and water in people's lives, but God gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6). You should seek God every day on behalf of your disciples.

IV. Go and Make Disciples!

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Starting well assumes that you, yourself, have been discipled! Next to that, experience tells us that finding people to disciple is difficult for most of us. We work hard to network relationships within the church, but disciple-makers must learn to take initiative constantly in relationships. Build ministry relationships by keeping our Three-Step Approach to Ministry in mind. Find out 1) where people are personally, 2) where they are spiritually, and 3) how you can help them take a step toward Jesus.

1. Always begin with prayer!

Pray that God would lead you to the people He wants you to invest. The disciple-making relationship will be most effective when it is connected back to an organic relationship. When identifying a disciple, consider the following relational circles:

- Ministry area—leaders or volunteers
- Foundry Group
- Workplace
- Neighborhood
- Family
- Someone you have recently led to faith in Christ

In general, seek people who are...

- **Faithful**—To what degree is the person committed and dependable? Will they be consistent?
- **Available**—Does the person have time to meet regularly and do assignments?
- **Teachable**—Does the person accept advice or challenge? Can you see a desire in them to learn and change?

If these three characteristics are present, multiplying disciple-makers will be much more successful. Common commitment is key to success.

2. Making the ask

Jesus took initiative with all his followers. He found them and engaged them in conversations. He called them to Himself. We also need to take initiative! All ministry is based on relationships. Get to know people better, find out where they are spiritually, and put yourself in a position to help them grow spiritually. This gives you a “pool” of people from which to call some into following Christ with you.

We should model our call to be a disciple and make disciples after Jesus’ call to be a disciple in Matthew 4:19. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of

men.” Following Christ is costly and, therefore, life-changing. We should never “under-sell” commitment, but be clear on what it means to follow Jesus!

Next, explain our definition of a disciple (someone who lives and loves like Jesus) and the importance of understanding our identity in Christ and how we live that identity out (life patterns). Focus on the four characteristics of a follower of Jesus and how we will develop life patterns as Obedient Worshipers, Empowered Witnesses, Called Servants and Fruitful Disciple-makers together. This will impact every role in our lives—husband, wife, father, mother, child, employee, neighbor, and friend. Walk through the Common Life Patterns with them.

Finally, ask them to prayerfully consider the commitment to become a disciple-maker by spending time reading and praying through Jesus’ call in Matthew 4:19 and his command in Matthew 28:18–20. Let them know that you will follow up in a week to get their answer.

3. It’s time to Start Meeting!

In the first meeting:

- Connect relationally
- Set the meeting schedule for a day and time participants can consistently attend.
- Review Matthew 28:16–20 and gather a commitment to make disciples.
- Share a brief story of how you came to faith in Jesus.
- Discuss how to have a daily time in the Word and prayer using the One Year Bible.

In the second meeting:

- Connect relationally
- Share how God spoke through One Year Bible reading from the previous week.
- Share a short story of how they came to faith in Jesus.
- Review the FRANC list and have them fill it out.
- Assign One Year Bible and prayer for the FRANC list.

Third meeting and beyond:

- Connect relationally
- Share how God spoke through a HEAR journal from the previous week.
- Share about one of two questions:
 - How did God answer prayer for someone on my FRANC list?
 - How did God use me to BLESS someone on my FRANC list?
- Begin discussing what it means to be an Obedient Worshiper.
- Pray for each other

CONTINUING WELL

Identities and Life Patterns

Help your disciples develop the disciple identities and Life Patterns, but don't start until they understand how to have a daily devotional time and are consistently doing it. Being a member of the disciple-making relationship means daily Bible reading and prayer, including praying for their **FRANC lists**.

Explore scripture with your disciples to discover what the Bible reveals about our identity in Christ starting with **Obedient Worshiper**. Use the Identity Overviews to help guide your study and conversation around each identity. Observe what Jesus said about His own identity and have them write a simple and short identity statement for each identity. Help them develop their own specific life patterns using the set of common life patterns as a baseline. Do this for each of the other characteristics of a fully formed follower of Christ—**Empowered Witness, Called Servant, and Fruitful Disciple-maker**—as you work through them.

Seek to know the spiritual maturity of your disciples. If one or more are new believers, you'll need to spend more time at the beginning explaining how to have devotional time, what to look for in the biblical text, and how to listen to God's Spirit.

How Quickly Do I Move Through the Identities?

Although you will be reinforcing all four identities throughout the whole disciple-making process, start with Obedient Worshiper. When your disciples understand and have embraced that identity, and they are consistently (although not perfectly) displaying the life patterns which support it, begin to move to Empowered Witness and then Called Servant. Remember, our goal is not information transfer but **life-transformation**. Our disciples must be living out their identities, not merely receiving biblical information concerning an identity. Stress Jesus' mandate to make disciples throughout. You start with a commitment to make disciples and then discuss how to train disciples in the other three identities—Obedient Worshiper, Empowered Witness, and Called Servant.

The FRANC list should be introduced very early in the process as an integral part of daily prayer and that some amount of time be given during each meeting to ask and answer one of these two questions:

- How have I seen God answer my prayers for people on my FRANC list?
- How have I BLESSed someone on my FRANC list this past week?

What Do I Do with the Uncommitted?

There will be times when a disciple isn't making sufficient progress. If a disciple is inconsistent, not completing assignments, or gives off a bad attitude, here are some suggestions for what to do:

- Have a private conversation with your disciple to discover reasons for the issue. Perhaps they need to deal with extenuating life circumstances, personal sin, or other priorities prior to entering a high-commitment disciple-making relationship. Affirm your commitment to their spiritual growth.
- Have the conversation in the moment (don't put it off) during the meeting time when you see that a disciple isn't following through on what's required. You are training your disciples on how to disciple others, and part of that is giving them accountability.
- After time is given to deal with the issue and no progress is made, initiate another conversation either individually or during a gathering. Offer a choice to either commit to the disciple-making process or step out of the relationship and try again later.

Taking such action can be embarrassing or hurtful for a person. You'll need to reassure your love and concern for them and always go back to the original, agreed-upon commitments you established for all participants.

Asking someone to step out of disciple-making relationship doesn't mean that they are a bad person. It only means that the disciple-making relationship may not be the best thing for them at that moment. A disciple-making relationship works well because of common commitment and not common maturity, age, or stage of life.

FINISHING WELL

We're Finished When They're Making Disciples

There's a temptation to "let your disciples go" before they've begun making disciples of others. The best practice is to discuss making disciples throughout the whole process together. Making disciples means that you help your disciples learn to recruit and begin making their first disciples.

Previous disciple-makers have found that if the current disciple-making relationship stops meeting before the new disciple-makers have started their own relationships, there's a tendency to stall out. Remember, we can't call ourselves "disciple-makers" until our disciples go on to make disciples. This is our goal. The goal is not to "finish" taking people "through fully formed followers."

Coaching Our Downline

"Know well the condition of your flocks and pay attention to your herds." Proverbs 27:23

Continue to coach your new disciple-makers. We've realized that there needs to be some level of ongoing check-ins with them to encourage, further equip, and ensure they're living out their commitment to life-long disciple-making.

This doesn't mean we still meet weekly, but there should be some regular get-togethers to question what's working well and what's not going well as they disciple others.

We can't "launch" our disciple-makers thinking they'll flourish without any follow up. A few may have great success without further help, but the majority will need some input in order to persevere and be fruitful.

Once you have made a disciple who is making disciple-makers, you should continue to be a friend and resource to them for life. In eternity, we will be able to discover the impact that God has created through your spiritual family tree.