



## **Life Group Work Sheet (Leader's Guide)**

Discipleship  
November 3, 2013

### **Getting to Know Each Other**

1. In your own words, what is a disciple? Have you ever been discipled or discipled someone else? Share your experience.

Having your group start with this question will allow all of you to get on the same page when discussing discipleship. A helpful follow-up question would be to ask whether there is a difference—in your group's opinion—between a disciple and a Christian. The answer, biblically, is no. If some in your group say that there *is* a difference, then explore their reasons for thinking that way.

### **Disciples...**

Read Mark 8:34-48 and Luke 9:57-62.

2. Jesus' words here seem rather harsh to potential followers (especially those found in Luke 9), but they show us the commitment needed to follow Christ. With that in mind, consider the following questions:
  - a. What do these passages tell us about being a disciple? Complete this sentence and discuss: "A disciple is one who \_\_\_\_\_."

These passages reveal the radical call that it is to follow Jesus. In today's cultural Christianity, many people claim to be Christians (recent studies show that over 80% of America claims Christianity), but have no idea what that means (of those 80%, less than half believe that the Bible is God's word, that Christianity is the only religion that saves, etc.). Before we can look at what it means to make disciples, we must first understand what it means to be a disciple.

Throughout Scripture, we see that a disciple is simply one who "follows Jesus" (the fill-in-the-blank above).

These followers are the ones who have "counted the cost" (Lk. 14:25-32), understand the great cost of Christianity and submit their lives to God because they find what he offers to be more valuable than anything else (Matt. 13:44-45). This will be discussed more in question 2c below.

- b. What do Jesus' words show us about the call to follow him?

After your group has defined a disciple as one who follows Jesus, follow up by asking this question. The answer to this question should bleed into question 2c, so it may be appropriate to ask questions 2a, 2b, and 2c all at the same time. Focus on the Luke 9 passage as you answer this question.

- c. The cost of following Jesus is great. What have you left behind to follow him? What might he be calling you to give up to follow him?

It may be appropriate to bring up the importance of counting the cost by looking at Luke 14:25-32 as you discuss this question. This will provide the context for a healthy discussion. Be prepared to answer the questions of "what you have left behind" and "what you could give up" to start the conversation in your group. As Western Christians who do not suffer for their faith and who are oftentimes able to live relatively comfortable lifestyles while maintaining a faithful Christian witness, we can sometimes frighten ourselves as we ask these types of questions.

While it is good to ask how God is calling us to sacrifice for him, don't neglect the things that you have sacrificed for God. Some of you may share that you give up your Wednesday evenings to help out with AWANA or student ministries. For others, it may be that you force yourselves to get up early to pray and commune with God through Bible reading. Don't forget that these are legitimate sacrifices that may not seem like much, but are important nonetheless.

3. In a very real way, a Life Group is a gathering of disciples. How can your Life Group help one another grow as disciples of Christ?

Sermon-Based Life Groups are valuable in that they get people into relationships with one another. In these relationships, the content is as important as the practice of gathering together, opening God's word as a group, praying with one another, and encouraging one another. Try to shy away from specific "curriculum" that people suggest for how to make your Life Group more discipleship-focused and instead focus on questions of intentionality, accountability, and openness.

## **...Who Make Disciples**

Read Luke 5:1-11.

4. In this passage, we see the calling of the disciples to follow Jesus. For what purpose does Jesus call them?

Jesus calls his disciples to follow him so that they can eventually go and make disciples themselves. This second section of the Life Group Worksheet moves from being a disciple to making disciples. Notice that even in this passage the two are not mutually exclusive. After Jesus says that he will make them "fishers of men" (v. 10), the narrative concludes this section by saying the disciples "left everything to follow him" (v. 11).

The disciples counted the cost and as such they left everything; they counted the cost so that they could go and make their own disciples.

- a. Is this call to make disciples reserved for the spiritually "elite" among us, or is this a call for all Christians?

A follow-up question to the opening question asks whether there is a difference between disciples and Christians. If you didn't have the chance to ask at that time, now would be a good question to ask that question. After your group concludes that disciples are the same as Christians and it is impossible to be a (biblical) Christian without being a disciple, it is time to move forward to this question. The answer is clear that all Christians are called to make disciples, not just the few spiritually "elite".

Many in your group will probably say, "I don't know enough" or "I've never been discipled, so I wouldn't know where to start". If that is the case, encourage them to think of one spiritually-mature person in the church and ask that person to disciple/mentor them. Encourage them to check out the resources mentioned below for possible ways to disciple others.

- b. Are you discipling someone currently? Are you being discipled? If not, what is holding you back in either of these situations?

If you didn't already discuss these questions under 4a, explore these different reasons why your group isn't making disciples. Again, encourage them to both be discipled and make disciples, as this will help them overcome the lack of knowledge by giving them a resource to work with.

For those who are new Christians in your group, it is especially important for them to get out and make disciples. Christians are much more likely to share their faith and make disciples if they begin shortly after becoming a Christian, so be sure people don't use their lack of familiarity with the church as an excuse. If they don't know enough, encourage them to start inviting people to church or to Life Group, as that is a way for them to share with others without having to have "all the answers."

Read 2 Timothy 2:2.

5. This verse contains four generations of discipleship: Paul-Timothy-Those Timothy Teaches-Those Taught by Timothy's followers. The key to the future of the church is discipling others right now.

This final section will help everyone in your group to plan and be intentional about making disciples in your community. Guide your group through these questions, but there is no need to share specific answers aloud for 5a. For 5b, it would be helpful to have something prepared beforehand (i.e., how you disciple others) so

that you can offer a suggestion to those who are at a loss. Check out the resources below for more information.

- a. Take a moment and reflect on who God is calling you to disciple in your life. Write down the name of the person that God is laying on your heart.
- b. How do you plan on discipling this person? How can your Life Group focus on multiplying disciples among your community?

Pastors Kurt, Dave, Leland, and Jordan would be more than happy to help you as you see to disciple those in your group as well as equip them to go and disciple others. They each will have a different approach to disciple-making, but they each would be a valuable resource for these questions. For the more goal-oriented people, be sure to check out David Platt's "Personal Disciple-Making Plan" for help in getting things started.

Interested in making disciples, but don't know where to start? Check out this website for a "Personal Disciple-Making Plan" that will give you the tools to start:

[http://www.brookhills.org/new/personal\\_disciple\\_making\\_plan.html](http://www.brookhills.org/new/personal_disciple_making_plan.html)

Still need some help? Talk with one of our Pastors about practical ways you can disciple those around you.