LAY LEADER DEVELOPMENT AND THE MODEL OF CHRIST: INTENTIONAL SMALL GROUP ORGANIZATION FOR MULTIPLYING GROUPS AT GREEN ACRES BAPTIST CHURCH

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT

A Thesis Project Submitted to Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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by

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Acknowledgements

To my wife, Katie, who tirelessly serves our family with a contagious Christlikeness. None of this would have ever been possible without you pushing me, believing in me, and serving with me. To my children, Ryleigh, Reagan, Rowan, and Lincoln who inspire me constantly to be more like Jesus.
ABSTRACT
LAY LEADER DEVELOPMENT AND THE MODEL OF CHRIST: INTENTIONAL SMALL GROUP ORGANIZATION FOR MULTIPLYING GROUPS AT GREEN ACRES BAPTIST CHURCH

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The purpose of this thesis is to develop a strategic process for leader development utilizing small groups at Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. The development of lay leaders will determine the efforts of starting and sustaining small groups and ministry efforts in the local church. The structure of groups and the strategy to develop leaders should be a replicable system formulated within biblical parameters. The biblical research is concentrated toward the methods practiced by Jesus with his disciples. Biblical discipleship is examined for the purpose of assessing adequate organization that cultivate leader development and group multiplication. Effective small group systems will be identified for the purpose of leader development and group multiplication at Green Acres Baptist Church. The efforts of multiplication will cease to occur if leaders are not adequately equipped and trained to begin new small groups. This thesis will give a replicable system of how to organize small groups in the local church as well as a strategy to equip lay leaders to identify and develop other lay leaders for the purpose of starting new groups.

Abstract length: 180 words
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The concept of discipleship is not distant to most evangelical church attendees. Literature is filled with the words of Christ compelling believers to go and make disciples of all nations. There are persuasive arguments for the emphasis on discipleship to be the frontrunner of church strategy and function. However, there is a disconnect from the practice of discipleship and the product of lay leadership. A more strategic approach would be to develop spiritual leaders within the biblical understanding of discipleship. In most cases, it appears that two separate vehicles exist, running alongside one another. Resources would be better utilized by structuring the small group system to achieve both discipleship and leadership development within the same effort.

Scripture commands that God’s people should aim toward one primary objective. Matthew 28:19–20 says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (ESV). This is the ultimate mission of the church. Since discipleship was the primary responsibility of those who walked closely with Jesus in the New Testament, every follower of Christ should be compelled toward that command. Making disciples must be the overflow of God’s people and the chief aim of every church activity.
The Ministry Context

Green Acres Baptist Church (GABC) in Tyler, Texas is near the center of Smith County and located between two major cities, Dallas, Texas and Shreveport, Louisiana. The primary targets for GABC are residents of Tyler, Texas, although communities reached expand beyond the city limits. Tyler has a population of 105,729 according to the United States Census Bureau. Christianity is a normative aspect of Smith County and the neighboring communities that represent nearly 300,000 people.¹ East Texas is considered a part of the Bible Belt with speculations that it could be the belt buckle. According to 2018 census data, Smith County has experienced a population growth of 9.4 percent.² This community data provides insight into the effectiveness of ministry efforts preceding proposed changes to future ministry strategy.

Church Structure

The identification of current structure will aid in contextual understanding of GABC. There are four distinct church models that are described by Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey.³ They are the traditional model, the attractional model, the organic model, and the hybrid model. These models share similar goals but are different in their practice and approach to ministry. Each of the four models possess positive attributes that can be judged as effective along with structural elements that are not as fruitful. The hybrid model combines characteristics from the other three and seems to be most conducive in disciple making. The hybrid structure carries

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¹ https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/tylercitytexas
² Ibid.
ambitious aspirations to create a culture with high impact and intimate community.\textsuperscript{4} GABC’s operation mostly aligns with a combination of the traditional model and attractional church model. It is considered a traditional church in its commitment to certain strategies and structures.\textsuperscript{5} It exists within the parameters of and could be identified as a single elder congregational led church.\textsuperscript{6} Like many traditional churches, it appears that GABC has been satisfied with where they are and is less concerned about what it would take to produce growth.\textsuperscript{7} The mindset is appears the same within a traditional church. Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey give insight by saying, “The saints who attend this church like their pastor, but their mindset is that they were here before he got here, and they will be here after he leaves! So, they kind of tolerate his suggestions for improvement.”\textsuperscript{8}

The polity of GABC is ambiguous, preventing a pathway for precise governance within staff which is common to many traditional churches.\textsuperscript{9} The pastor or a group of people make decisions and then bring them before the congregation for voting. GABC has a heavy emphasis on buildings and what occurs on Sunday morning. Within this structure, there is little priority on evangelism, even though this model does base success on addition. Primarily, the traditional


\textsuperscript{5} The methods used by GABC would fall under the same as a “Sunday School” model. The Sunday School model also would have the same understanding as the worship model. This model is attractional in method because it carries the expectation of “come and see.” After you come and see, the goal then becomes getting that individual or family into a Sunday School class.


\textsuperscript{8} Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, "Four Church Models."

model is congruent with the function of GABC. This structure produces an attitude that is more
concerned about maintaining ministries than growing people. The staff team appears to be under
challenged in their efforts of recruiting, expanding and utilizing lay leaders within their ministry
areas. There is little attention given to training or overall development. As a result, there is
some dysfunction among the staff in terms of clarity and vision. The silos that have resulted from
ministry divisions working in isolation must be addressed. John Maxwell says, “The belief that
one person can do something great is a myth.” The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit place a
metaphorical emphasis that the church as a whole should function together in step toward the
same purpose each with a unique role.

The components of the attractional model are mostly aesthetically inclined. GABC has
aligned with this model as its exterior is pristine. The parking lots are freshly striped, clean, and
full of volunteer staff ready to engage. Signage is hopefully visible and clear for incoming
visitors and members. Like most attractional churches, GABC is filled with greeters ready to
point visitors to their destinations. There has always been a welcome center for the purpose of
greeting visitors and answering their questions. The staff have tried to reduce the moments of
awkwardness that would make someone feel uncomfortable. For example, this would include a
preface to greeting times, a preface to giving opportunities that place no expectation of
participation of a guest. GABC members are encouraged to invite their friends as often as

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10 Larry C. Ingram, "Leadership, Democracy, and Religion: Role Ambiguity among Pastors in Southern
Baptist Churches."

2001), 3.

12 Ryan T. Hartwig and Warren Bird, Teams that Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church
possible to the many activities the church provides for outreach. The members are also intentional to speak with the people near them.\textsuperscript{13}

The visitor is seen as the guest of the show. As a result, the expectation is to care for visitors, ensuring the worship experience will not deter further expansion of the local church. The perceived emphasis on evangelism focuses on how to widen the front door and decrease the size of the back door but does not necessarily give emphasis to church participation. The overall goal of this church model is to make guests feel welcome.\textsuperscript{14} There is a significant difference in the expectation of members and visitors regarding participation in services. The goal is to “attract unbelievers to ‘come and see’ what God is doing in their church.”\textsuperscript{15} Many characteristics of the attractional church can be seen within the walls and campuses of GABC.

GABC is working toward becoming more of a hybrid model church. The efforts of this thesis project is the greatest catalyst for the church of becoming aligned with the hybrid model. The existing Sunday Morning Bible Studies design is based off a traditional Sunday School model. The reach toward a hybrid approach is seen in the way the Sunday Morning Bible Studies are being offered at non-traditional times. Currently, there are two worship service options every Sunday, with two simultaneous venues. Sunday Morning Bible Studies are offered during each of the worship service options and have now widened the scope of opportunity to one Sunday night option. Within the structure of the model, the aim is to assimilate congregants into a Sunday School class. The Sunday morning options and one-night opportunity function much like a traditional Sunday School class. Each class has one to two teachers and tends to be greater than

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{14} Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, \textit{Disciple Making Is . . .}, 253-254.
\textsuperscript{15} Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, "Four Church Models."
\end{flushleft}
twenty in group size. The format of the classes varies. It appears that the vision of the class framework and functionality could benefit from modification. Currently, the class structure does not foster the ability for leaders or disciples to be replicated.

In the worship center, at each service time option, there is a traditional service with a choir, orchestra, and live preaching from the Senior Pastor, David Dykes. Simultaneously, there is another venue with a contemporary atmosphere and worship band. There is also a south campus that offers an additional venue for one of the two hours. The contemporary service, which is held in a spacious conference center on campus, has historically had Pastor David piped in through simulcast to the screen. The same technology is utilized for the south campus where the campus pastor facilitates the service and the message is watched on the screen.

**Church Values**

Certain characteristics of GABC are central to our culture and easily discerned among the people and function of the church. Generosity is one such essential component that the church prioritizes as a primary value. GABC is consistently one of the top givers to the Southern Baptist Convention. Missional efforts are another primary focus for the church. Through the missions’ ministry, the church mobilizes hundreds of people on mission locally, nationally, and internationally. The church provides funds and human resources to many strategic partnerships around the world. However, generous giving to the Cooperative Program and missional living are mistakenly viewed as equivalent. The value on generosity could serve as a substitute for actual mobilization for mission.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{16}\)The amount of missional giving has remained the same and has increased over the past five years. GABC has continued to be one of the top givers of the Southern Baptist Convention. However, People actually going on mission and participating in mission trips locally and around the world have not increased.
From its inception, Green Acres has also placed a high value on teaching God’s Word. Pastor David Dykes has continued this trend of powerful preaching in the way he carefully exegetes Scripture. God’s Word is the only authority our church has, and it is understood that it has the final say. Sunday morning worship is not the only place a high view of Scripture is identified. The Sunday Morning Bible Study ministry of the church is grounded in biblical exploration. Many of the teachers hold seminary level degrees as well as vocational ministry experience. Another example of the high value placed on studying Scripture is the seminary-level class that covers various topics each Wednesday night.

**Demographic Study**

The Barna Group completed a study for the 282,900 people within the reach of GABC. This demographic study gives a greater spiritual understanding within the ministry context. Of the population, 82% believe in an orthodox view of God, which essentially holds the truth or understanding that God is the all-powerful, all-knowing, perfect creator of the universe who rules the world today. However, of the same 282,900, only 42% consider themselves active in church attendance. Within the same vein, 36% claim to be unchurched completely. Out of the group surveyed, only 36% consider themselves Baptist. Also, 61% hold to a high view of God’s Word. This suggests that the Bible is highly valued and considered as accurate. Among the population measured, 38% strongly agree that good works result in heaven.\(^{17}\) Barna Group released a similar report in 2015, and the comparisons give specific nuances that should be considered in relation to the 2018 report. The results showed the weekly church attender is in decline by 3% from 2015. For the person claiming to be Christian, with or without sound doctrinal conviction, attendance

declined by 7%. Attendance for people who were not churched grew 3%. This is over a three-year period.18 These numbers offer insight for Green Acres to help evaluate ministry efforts within the trends of attendance in worship as well as the small group ministry.

Ministry Data

At GABC, there is a current trend of declining attendance in worship as well as Sunday Morning Bible Study. The data reveals that this has been progressively occurring over the past five to seven years. The current average year to date worship attendance is 3,994 people with an average small group attendance of 2,625. From 2014 to 2019, the average worship attendance has declined by 8%.19 This number is taken from an individual headcount in each worship service. Sunday Morning Bible Study saw a decrease in average attendance in 2014 of 2,817 to 2019 average attendance of 2,625, a decrease of 7%.20 The data also reveals a decrease in the number of new groups formed from year to year. The number of adult groups has been stagnant since 2014-2015 with a drop of 58 groups to 56, a net 3% decline in new group multiplication.

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18 These statistics were retrieved from Barna Group, “Tyler-Longview-Lufkin-Nacogdoches, TX City Report 2015 with comparative data from the Southwest region.”

19 The data used for the attendance comparison of the worship attendance as well as the small group (Sunday Morning Bible Studies) attendance was collected from and used with permission from the Senior Associate Pastor of GABC.

20 Current YTD averages include all worship attendance through the end of October, 2019.
Table 1

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Statement of Problem

The problem this project will address is the lack of leader development and multiplication within the small group organization of Green Acres Baptist Church. Group structure fosters the ability for leaders to help other leaders grow so that they may be deployed into another group. Currently, there is no system for equipping group members with the goal of leadership multiplication. This project demonstrates the decline in small group attendance directly correlated to the void of training and deploying new leaders within a replicable system.

Presently, no goal exists for new groups to start or new leaders to be developed within the small group ministry. This will not take place without a defined strategy. Leaders need the power of a
vision to accomplish anything in the church. As new leaders emerge, this will serve as the catalyst for starting new groups with the same replicable elements that are necessary for making disciples.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this project is to establish a process of lay leadership development within the small group ministry of Green Acres Baptist Church. It will be consistent with what is observed from the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and will include three distinct phases that are consistent with Jesus’ model of discipleship. He spent approximately three years in ministry for the purpose of building leaders for the establishment of the Church. Leadership development is the primary means of continuing discipleship efforts in the local church. If leaders are not being shaped, then the ministry endeavors of the church will decline, eventually ceasing to exist. The lack of clarification in small group organization and leader function within the local church is the catalyst for this project.

1. The first goal of the project is to establish a new small group structure that will foster a discipleship culture within the existing small group ministry, recognized as Sunday Morning Bible Studies. The format may be utilized by every group for each ministry age.

2. The second goal for the project will be to provide a leader development guide that will be used for current and future lay leaders to help develop a new leader.

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3. The third goal for this project is to create a three-week curriculum for starting a new group. This will be utilized by the group leader to establish the biblical foundations and the vision for the purpose of the new group.

4. The fourth goal will be for the writer to institute a beta group to serve as the pilot group for the developed curriculums and tools. The tools, systems, and curriculums put in place will be congruent with the scriptural understanding of the model of Jesus Christ. This project will help Green Acres Baptist Church advance its mission, which is to make disciples of all nations.

Definitions

There are a number of words that need to be defined before beginning this project.

Church: In the 21 times the word church is used in Acts, it is presented as the active body of believers who come together for the work and mission of Christ. The local church is the embodiment of Christ here on earth. It carries the responsibility to actively follow the model of Jesus. The church ministers on behalf of Jesus. When Jesus tells Peter of his Church in Matthew 16:18, we know He is speaking of something that will come in the future. Jesus says, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (ESV). Jesus declares that He is the founder, builder and sustainer of the Church. Paul reiterates this ecclesiology in Ephesians chapter 5 through his description of Jesus’ role of head of the church. The local church is an organism that displays the living life of Christ accomplishing his work through his people. This is the church model that seems most acceptable among the landscape of the New Testament ecclesiology as well as Pauline ecclesiology.

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The second word is Disciple. The disciple is someone who follows Christ and his commands. He is committed to the Great Commission that states all disciples are to go and make disciples. In essence, the disciple is a disciple-maker. The word disciple appears 266 times in the New Testament. Jesus declares in Luke 14:28 that the disciple is committed to following Him and surrendering completely to his will. The disciple is willing to sacrifice personal ambition for the sake of following Christ. He is willing to give up earthly gain, including present or future possessions. The disciple is a learner of God’s Word, working in accordance with the Spirit to apply it daily. In studying the Bible, the disciple is challenged to love others. Through divine ambition, the disciple abides in Christ through prayer, resulting in fruit-bearing. Through this same ambition, the disciple is filled with the Holy Spirit, obediently following the desires of Jesus instead of his own. The disciple must be compelled toward personal involvement in missions and the command of Jesus to make other disciples.

The third word to understand is Lay Leader. A lay leader is a male or female in a church leadership role who is not compensated by the church for their service. This clarification is necessary because the project’s objective is to develop non-staff leaders within the church known as lay leaders. The term laity or lay leadership will indicate non-clergy or non-employed church leaders in various ministries across the church.

Limitations and Delimitations

This project does not seek to exhaust all facets of leadership within secular or biblical understandings. The writer will discuss aspects of lay leadership within the functions of Green

26 Ibid., 22-25.
Acres Baptist Church. The study of lay leadership will not go beyond that of GABC, nor expand across all possibilities of laity involvement within the local church. The lay leaders discussed will be primarily, but not limited to, small group teachers. The groups studied will come from the current small group format of GABC and will not exhaust every existing group. The research will examine the small group structure and organization within the hybrid model. This project will not give an entire strategy for leadership recruitment, but rather concentrate on the foundational elements of developing leaders within the small group structure.

Additionally, a curriculum will be drafted and implemented among existing small groups and will serve as the process for discipleship strategy and leadership development moving forward. The completion of this project is not determined by new small groups utilizing the established components within the process. This project will not seek to prove the flaws or successes of the new group structure based on future practice or metrics. Instead, it will produce a format to cultivate leader development that is congruent with Scripture.

Thesis Statement

This thesis project will provide a replicable system for organizing small groups in the local church by equipping lay leaders to develop new leaders for the purpose of starting new groups.
Chapter 2

Foundations

Chapter one will introduce the problem based upon the ministry context of the writer. Context will be explained with key elements providing a clear understanding of the problem presented. Additionally, the reader will have been introduced to the purpose of the project based on the presented problem and provided supporting demographic results and church attendance data. The reader will also be provided with foundational definitions for key terms. There will be an explanation of the limitations and delimitations of the project within the first chapter.

In chapter two, the reader will be introduced to the research and its application to the ministry context. The results of research taken from a broad literature review will be presented. The reader will also understand the research findings for biblical and practical leader development in the small group structure.

In chapter three, the results of the research will be discussed and examined. The church surveys will be highlighted to provide clarity for the best route of developing leaders within the local church and small group ministry. The research, as well as the ministry context, will grant insight into how the problem should be addressed. The reader will be introduced to the intervention design, including suggested modifications moving forward.

In chapter four, the writer will present recommendations for the solution to the problem. The strategic plan for leader development in the small group ministry of Green Acres Baptist Church will be revealed. The three phases of the process for leader development will be discussed. Implementation of the research findings within the small group will be explained.
In chapter five, project elements will be analyzed. Evaluation of the research will produce a plan for future implications of the project and research direction. The analysis of lessons learned as well as the possibility for future research needed will be applied.

Review of Literature


Putman provides a foundation and practical advice for how the church can make disciples while producing leaders who do the same. As a pastor, Putman recounts strategies that have produced fruit. Putman emphasizes discipleship as the primary role of the local church. He separates the discipleship process into five distinct stages. The stages describe someone who is spiritually dead ultimately progressing to a spiritual parent teaching others. He illustrates this process through the analogy of a child growing and learning. His strategy for developing leaders provides insight into the writer's research topic.


Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini discuss different aspects of leader development. The topics range from the importance of developing leaders, obstacles along the way, Jesus’ model for producing leaders, and the process which yields results. The writers provide guidelines a church can adapt when looking to establish a leadership development strategy.

The book attempts to give the reader a biblical perspective for discipleship solely based on the ministry of Jesus. Hull takes the reader through understanding the approach of come and see, come and follow Me, come and be with Me, and remain in Me. These four stages of discipleship and how Jesus accomplished each phase are explained in the required readings of the class. Hull applies Jesus’ model of discipleship as a template for the current landscape of cultural churches today.


Hull applies the definition, process, and implementation of discipleship through the pastoral office. His book admonishes pastors to prioritize the Great Commission. He not only provides biblical evidence for the pastor’s role in disciple-making, but also in overall leadership. He provides insight into the pastor’s influence upon church polity maximizing effectiveness in leadership development within the framework of discipleship.


Smither highlights the meaning and practice of mentorship. The historical insight is beneficial for constructing a format for mentoring within the model of discipleship. Augustine’s reflections on mentoring and lessons from his methods are also presented.

In this book, Bruce offers a biblical view of Ephesians chapter four. He unfolds a better understanding of how to equip the saints to accomplish the work of the ministry. He does this by offering specific pictures of how Jesus accomplished this task with His twelve disciples. An overview is provided, showing how Jesus instructed His disciples, equipping them for the ministry tasks ahead. The book furnishes insight into the elements needed to adequately equip leaders to facilitate God’s work within the church.


Edmund Clowney presented extraordinary biblical and philosophical evidence pertaining to many topics discussed throughout the class. In the book, Clowney addresses several critical discussions that are currently taking place in the church. One of the most valuable sections analyzed the responsibility the pastor carries regarding discipleship and leader development. Clowney offered insight for the pastor’s role in biblical terms as well as practical application. He offered pragmatic advice for implementing discipleship within church governance.


This book examines how the process of discipleship is accomplished. In the beginning chapter, the writers explain the familiar concept of discipleship. Next, they present the idea that not all discipleship is transformational. There is a significant difference between discipleship that
is driven by the Holy Spirit and by men. The end goal for Christian discipleship is to transform the life of the disciple and then be replicated in others.


In this book, the reader can observe the process for a neighborhood-driven small group ministry. Eddie Mosley provides astute and biblical support for why their church is pursuing neighborhood groups. The book also describes a sustainable approach to the complex facets of small groups. It also illustrates the process for developing and implementing neighborhood groups.


This book offers observation into the church and pastor’s role in evangelism. The author provides data that raises the question of how well the church is accomplishing this mission. The book beseeches church leaders to refocus their programs toward evangelism. McIntosh also analyses patterns for church attendance choices.


Sanders offers a compelling call for all Christians to pursue spiritual leadership in some capacity. Christians are called to develop the gifts God has entrusted to them for the work of ministry. The author demonstrates how leaders are to reproduce other leaders, thus having an
exponential effect. The references and support for his ideas are biblically centered and theologically rich.


The last resource I chose to read was from Robby Gallaty. Robby detailed his personal experiences of discipleship and explained how the church could replicate the same life change that he experienced. Gallaty draws from the model of Christ for making disciples. The biblical foundations of discipleship through Jesus’ model, as well as the practices shown in Paul’s epistles, helped Gallaty formulate a discipleship system. Robby proposes that there are three distinct relationships every believer should cultivate. These relationships determine specific elements of small group systems and how they develop leaders.


This book detailed a significant theological and biblical outline for the call and stages of discipleship. The text portrayed a portrait of spiritual development while illustrating a process to grow leaders. It also discloses a biblical explanation of Jesus’ method of discipleship and leadership development. The framework for building leaders is found within the purpose and mandate of the Great Commission.

David Marquet is a retired US Naval Officer with expertise in leadership development. Marquet was entrusted responsibility for command of the *Santa Fe* submarine. Immediately, he began to assess leaders on his ship regarding preparedness for battle. He deducted that fellow shipmates and officers were ineffective because they had never been empowered to lead. Church leaders also need to entrust and empower leadership to others for maximum impact.


Aubrey Malphurs presents much of the top research on leadership and leader development. He proposes that each element supports the same goal, which is the growth of the church. The author identifies church growth methods while providing practical planning strategies. He presents ideas for building leaders individually, as well as strategies for identifying them.


This text further examined how Jesus practiced leadership among his disciples and others. It analyzed the methods employed by Jesus in communicating with and leading his followers. The book offered a valuable model while corresponding well with the text by Hull.

Max DePree was quoted several times throughout *Spiritual Leadership* by Blackaby. This sparked my curiosity to look further into DePree's literature. *Leadership is an Art* offered profound leadership lessons taken from biblical principles without citing extensive biblical references. DePree offered solutions applicable to differing leadership environments.


Stedman clarifies biblical parameters for how the church should function as a whole. He details each church member’s responsibility within the local congregation. Every believer not only possesses an integral role within the church but carries the mandate for discipleship and leadership development.


Bonhoeffer shares a rich explanation of what it means to live a godly life in community with other believers. He provides essential wisdom into the philosophical and theological perspective of a small group community. Bonhoeffer expounds on the necessity of spiritual formation within small groups.

Ed Stetzer offered crucial understanding for empowering lay leadership to do the work of the ministry. This article helped the reader clarify Ephesians 4:12 regarding critical terms that help and prohibit the ministry of discipleship.


In this journal article, Dallas Willard expands on the meaning and implications of spiritual formation. Willard analyzes the facets that comprise discipleship and spiritual formation among believers. This article contributed invaluable ideas for multiplying spiritual leaders within the local church.

Scripture References

Genesis 1:28

In Genesis, God commands man to pursue dominion over the earth. The responsibility of leadership is implied by God’s mandate. From the beginning, man has been entrusted with leadership responsibilities on the earth.

Ephesians 4:12

Paul instructs the leaders of the church in Ephesus to equip the saints. His admonishment suggests there should be an effective strategy for ministering to people. The implication is that leaders should not serve alone, but rather train others for the work of ministry.
Acts 2:42-47

Acts portrays the church functioning in a biblically designed community. The call to and priority for community is displayed within the people of God. Many of the same elements seen in the early church should also be displayed within small group ministries.

Matthew 28:16-20

Jesus makes an explicit command regarding believers’ activity during the Church Age. His call to make disciples of all nations is explained in these verses. This passage serves as the foundational litmus test for all small group programming as well as every church endeavor.

Luke 14:28

Jesus proclaims the high cost of becoming one of his followers. He reiterates to his disciples that discipleship requires complete surrender. This verse clarifies the cost of true discipleship.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Paul sets forth a metaphor for how the Body of Christ should function in unison. Using the analogy of the human body, Paul emphasizes the importance of each leader taking his or her place within the church. As a result, everyone’s commitment to the corporate Body of Christ strengthens the ministry of the whole.
Exodus 18

This passage shows the need to organize ministry for maximum effectiveness. There is substantial evidence shown that small groups should be structured according to this biblical pattern. Lack of organization will hinder ministry efforts by stifling leaders.

Ephesians 5:1-21

Paul describes the characteristics of a believer who is maturing in Christ. The first two verses call the follower of Christ to be an imitator of God. This is the objective of spiritual formation. The growing disciple should help others deepen in their faith, just as Paul describes in this passage. The disciple should be careful to follow the commands of Christ, learning to walk in love and mature spiritually.

Ephesians 5:22-33

Leadership is analyzed within these verses. Ultimately, it is the call to love others as Christ modeled. The husband should provide leadership for his wife just as Christ leads the Church, his bride.

Matthew 16:18

Jesus declares that He will build his church. Nothing will be able to prevail against his established community of believers. The ecclesiological implications from this passage help formulate an effective structure for the local church’s function in the world.
Theological Foundations

The Great Commission reveals that the primary purpose for Jesus’ Church is to make disciples. Matthew 28:19-20 says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (ESV). This verse has transcendent value for the local church, providing the ultimate purpose for its existence. In clear terms, discipleship is the practice of helping others follow Jesus. The disciples were called to go, meaning they were sent out on mission for the purpose of discipleship. The result should be learning to live and minister like Christ. Ultimately, the disciple must repeat the process through evangelism, developing others in Christlikeness, and multiplying disciples for the mission of Christ.27 The Great Commission will be the focal point of understanding the model of Christ and the expectation for discipleship and lay leader development.

Understanding the Great Commission

Jesus begins the Great Commission declaring his authority before arriving at the central command to “make disciples.” He proclaims that “all authority” which is in Christ Himself will be given to the disciples as they adhere to the task of discipleship. The authority transferred to the disciples will allow them to proceed in the same power they have seen in Jesus during his ministry. Jesus’ mandate in the Great Commission exposes the only primary means to glorify God and live out their purpose the remainder of their time on earth.

27 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, Disciple Making Is . . ., 59.
The structure of the Great Commission gives specific indicators as to the method required that will fulfill God’s plan to rescue the world. This command begins with the participle “go.” Within the understanding of Jesus’ intentions of the Great Commission, there is essentially unanimous agreement among evangelical and biblical scholars that the main thrust is to “make disciples” (μαθητεύσατε). The weight of the sentence structure is placed on the verb, “make disciples.” Bill Mounce prescribes to the belief that the participle πορευθέντες (go) is best understood in the framework consistent with Daniel Wallace who states there is an expectation tied to the command “make disciples” (μαθητεύσατε). Mounce and Wallace emphasize that the command to go and make disciples is the expectation of every believer. The participles to baptize and to teach all that Jesus commanded relay the intentional efforts for the individual disciple and church community at large. Understanding the participle is important to the process of discipleship, but also to the understanding of the verb μαθητεύσατε “make disciples.” You must go in order to make disciples, which means you must participate in the local context as well as the culture of the nations beyond.

Understanding the Great Commission in this way speaks directly to the application of biblical discipleship in the context of the local church. To go must carry the same weight as the command to disciple because it is necessary for the fulfillment of discipleship. Making disciples cannot occur apart from the participles listed in the Great Commission. The three participles,


πορευθέντες ("go"), βαπτίζοντες ("baptizing"), and διδάσκοντες ("teaching") serve as the formula and expectation that Jesus gave for the discipleship process. This understanding allows the emphasis to stay on the imperative verb which should also be the center of the church’s commitment to be and make disciples. The Great Commission is the centerpiece of the gospels and the New Testament. It is also the continued expectation throughout the Church Age.

**Evangelism and the Model of Christ**

The first directive of the discipleship process is to baptize. Jesus taught His disciples in Luke 19:10, that the reason He came to earth was to seek and save the lost. The lost are those who do not understand the truth of Jesus and who lack a saving relationship with Him. Therefore, discipleship must include the act of evangelism. Jeffrey Arnold and Stephanie Black say, “The message of evangelism, called the ‘Good News’ in the New Testament, is that salvation has come through Jesus Christ.” The efforts of evangelism are the strategic actions taken to help people understand the gospel and then know how they should respond. Dave Earley and David Wheeler talk about the importance of evangelism by saying, “To the follower of Jesus, lost people are of utmost importance. Jesus had a heart for lost people. If we are to be His followers, we too need to have a heart for lost people. The eighteenth-century pastor Charles

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Spurgeon once stated, ‘Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that.’ Jesus had a heart for lost people, and so will His followers.”

People must first convert to following Christ before baptism should occur. This substantiates that as part of biblical discipleship, evangelistic efforts are vital. The process must include proclaiming the gospel, helping others come to know Christ, and leading them through a public profession of faith through baptism. In preparation for Jesus’ arrival, John the Baptist preached repentance to all who would listen. Jesus continued this theme, modeling baptism in the first step of his discipleship process. In John chapter three, Jesus confronts Nicodemus, teaching what it means to repent and be born again. Jesus was evangelizing and teaching Nicodemus about the new life received through the gift of the Holy Spirit. A similar instance took place in John chapter four with the woman at the well. In this encounter, Jesus explained what it truly meant to be a disciple. He told her to repent of her sins and current lifestyle. Jesus modeled for his disciples the example of connecting with others at all cost for the purpose of evangelism. Nothing deterred Jesus from associating with this woman for the purpose of revealing the gospel to her.

God desires for all men to repent and be reconciled unto Himself (2 Peter 3:9). John 3:16 proclaims, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in

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Him should not perish but have eternal life” (ESV). There is further support of this understanding throughout the book of Acts. In Acts 14, Paul and Barnabas are living out the Great Commission on their first missionary journey. As Paul preached the gospel, he helped people understand the truth, giving them an opportunity to respond by faith. Mark 16:17 expresses the same expectation for evangelism by calling the believer to go in all the world and preach the gospel. The beginning of the Great Commission in the second participle is a declaration to go and evangelize.\textsuperscript{38} After the new believer is baptized, they are then a part of the Body of Christ.

**Teaching and the Model of Christ**

The third participle, but the second phase that is seen in the Great Commission, is to teach or observe all that Christ commanded (Matthew 28:20). Jesus’ mandate does not end with evangelistic efforts but gives explicit expectation for growth through teaching and fulfilling his commands. Teaching implies a pattern of ongoing training and development within the disciple’s life.\textsuperscript{39} Jesus modeled this for the disciples throughout his three-year ministry on earth. He continuously taught and developed the disciples so that they could eventually go and minister on their own. When Jesus called the disciples, saying, “Follow Me” this was the first step of abiding in the teachings of Jesus seen in Matthew 4:18-22. After the disciples abandoned all to follow Jesus, they pursued intentional personal relationships with Him for the purpose of developing


Christlikeness. Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey said, “For the twelve, the call to discipleship was a call to immerse their lives in the words of Jesus.”

The teaching component of the Great Commission is the primary route in which the disciple grows in his relationship with Jesus. Paul states that the aim of the disciple is to imitate God and walk in love just as Christ loved us (Ephesians 5:1-2). As disciples are being taught and nurtured, Christlikeness will flourish. The Great Commission admonishes believers to teach or observe all that I have commanded you. When Jesus was pressed by one of the religious scribes to give an answer to what the greatest command is, Jesus answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40, ESV). In this summation of the commandments, Jesus reveals to his disciples that this is the focus of their development.

In Matthew 4:17, Jesus’ public ministry is introduced. Jesus announces his intentions, emphasizing his desire to seek the lost. This announcement begins the ministry of Jesus as He calls disciples to follow Him. The remainder of His time with the disciples becomes the training ground He utilizes for the purpose of spiritual growth. Matthew chapters five through seven show that He trained the disciples through what they witnessed as well as what they heard. These chapters reveal the mentoring nature of Jesus’ relationships during this teaching phase. The ultimate purpose found in the training and teaching of the disciples was to become more like

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40 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, Disciple Making Is . . ., 73.
Christ. Therein lies the foundational understanding for the discipleship process to produce Christlikeness. Jesus proclaimed, “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40, ESV). Jesus’ words to believers assumed each would teach his commands, leaving no room for a disciple not to participate.

During Jesus earthly ministry, discipleship occurred when men and women spent time with their mentor. The relational method of discipleship was widely known among the Greeks and Jews. The purpose for discipleship was realized only through the example and commission of Jesus. In the examples of discipleship before Christ, Hull notes, “It meets the human need for friendship, guidance, and intimacy.” As in the process of evangelism, discipleship occurs by grace alone through faith alone. Likewise, growth of the believer through Bible teaching is completely dependent on God. Jesus’ model for maturing believers through teaching is illuminated through the lens of Hebrews 12:2, which reminds us that by the Holy Spirit our eyes are fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. The purpose of the teaching stage of Jesus’ ministry is for disciples to be conformed to his likeness. According to Pettit, there are three primary elements necessary for people to grow in the likeness of Christ after salvation. The first is the Word of God, the second is the Spirit of God and the third is God’s people.

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48 Paul Pettit, Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A community approach to becoming like Christ (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 44.
Multiplication and the Model of Christ

As the disciple matures, the next step is multiplication, which consists of active participation with others in the process of discipleship. The disciple is no longer just a learner, but an active contributor in fulfilling the mission to go and make disciples. The charge to become fishers of men was inherent in Jesus’ call of his disciples in Matthew 4:19. From the moment He chose them, He intended to mature them for the purpose of sending them out. This is the third aspect of discipleship. Jesus’ followers were never expected to stay in place, but rather to go. This correlates back to the essential first participle, “Go.” If there is no indication of an imperative value for the first participle, the Great Commission could end with development. However, the deduction is that due to maturation and continued growth into Christlikeness, disciples obey the command to go and make more disciples. At its core, discipleship is cyclical. Earley and Dempsey give further clarity by saying, “In a very real sense, a disciple is a person who has been ‘summoned’ to be sent. Any discipleship strategy that eliminates personal ministry is ineffective. Jesus trained his disciples to fish for men and preach the gospel.”49 Every disciple carries the call for multiplication by going and making disciples of all nations.

Jesus leaves his followers with the Great Commission, propelling them toward their primary responsibility to make disciples who are also making disciples. This passage reminds every follower of Jesus that discipleship efforts do not occur in the power of man, but rather the power of God. Believers carry out the mission through Jesus’ authority. Dodson gives explanation to this by saying, “Jesus is the ground of going. When Jesus sends, He sends not merely to evangelize but, in His power, to make disciples. Under His authority, the so-called Great Commission begins with Jesus, not our great effort, and ends with Jesus – ‘I am with you

49 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, Disciple Making Is . . ., 74.
always, to the end of the age.’” Discipleship anchors every church’s purpose for existence and each believer’s primary responsibility. The church must summon all who know Christ toward this mission. John Koessler makes this very clear by saying, “Discipleship is not primarily a matter of what we do. It is an outgrowth of what we are.” This is the commissioning of all disciples until the return of Jesus. The Great Commission gives a greater understanding to the unique model of discipleship Jesus prescribes for all believers.

Theoretical Foundations

Historical Development of Small Groups

The New Testament serves as a historical catalyst for the inception of small groups. Joel Comiskey says, “Jesus developed His own group of twelve and hung out with them for three years. In the atmosphere of the group, these disciples were molded, shaped, trained, and then sent forth.” It is implied that Jesus intended for the apostles to continue developing others in small groups as He had modeled. The entirety of Jesus’ earthly ministry was spent in a small group with these men. Soon after He enlisted the disciples, He sent them to teach, heal, and minister to others as He had done. This small band of men led by Jesus would become the catalyst to move small groups forward throughout the next three hundred years. Eugene Peterson gives similar insight about Jesus’ time by saying, “Jesus, it must be remembered, restricted nine-tenths of His

ministry to twelve Jews.” 54 Throughout the three years of Jesus’ ministry, it is evident that his time with the twelve disciples was spent for the purpose of development.

The disciples received the charge from Jesus with resolution and zeal. They continued in ministry just as Jesus had taught them throughout the previous three years. Throughout the first century, the ministry of small groups advanced. Due to increasing persecution of Christians, small groups were spread across the cities. These groups, which met in homes, were often mentioned throughout the epistles. The absence of physical church structures does not inform the modern church’s prescription regarding buildings, but it does suggest the effectiveness and need for small groups. Acts 2:42 states, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Apparently, home groups met on a regular and even daily basis. This frequency differs from what is regarded as today’s small group culture. Despite increasing hostility and persecution throughout the first century, home groups continued to thrive.

The politicizing and legalization of the Christian faith in 313 A.D. presented new trials and tests for the followers of Christ. Although unintentional, an unhealthy professionalism arose within the culture of the clergy. As political freedom increased and persecution decreased, the disparity between clergy and laity grew. Clergy members continued to meet in small groups, however, laity was removed from small group structure. 55 The lack of separation between the church and state provided opportunity for political influence to gain control over many aspects of the Christian faith.

54 Eugene Peterson, Travelling Light: Reflections on the Free Life (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982), 182.

55 Joel Comiskey, Chapter 2: History of the Cell Movement, Provided by Dr. Dempsey in DSMN 820.
Martin Luther boldly challenged the unhealthy political climate within the church, calling for major reform. He purposed to restore the structure and function of the church to resemble the leading of the early apostles of the first century. Church groups, theologians, and religious leaders had recognized the need for change, but reform ultimately began with Martin Luther in 1517.\textsuperscript{56} Luther’s ideas emerged as he studied the Bible, and his doctrine of Sola Scriptura informed many of the conclusions he reached. Martin Luther helped reestablish the biblical concept that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone. His doctrine of the priesthood of all believers pertains to small group ministry directly. Martin Luther embraced the charge of Ephesians 4 to equip the saints for the work of ministry. This implies that believers must commit to service and shared community. Martin Luther and Martin Bucer declared that small groups were vital for those serious about their faith and obeying the commands of Jesus. Both also agreed that small groups were given as a gift, not only for community, but also for the cultivation of personal holiness. Martin Greschat says of Bucer, “There was no doubt for Bucer, however, that it was the small groups that bore the greatest importance; it was they who would ultimately set the tone of and determine the greater church.”\textsuperscript{57}

The attempts to capture the essence and power of the ‘primitive church’ became more prominent and effective during the post-Reformation era.\textsuperscript{58} Philip Spener instituted what is now commonly referred to as home groups, where he offered sermon-based small group discussions. The groups, known as \textit{Collegia Pietatis}, consisted of prayer, Bible study, and discussion regarding previous sermons. Spener regarded community within a small group as vital for true

\textsuperscript{56} Dr. Dempsey, \textit{Video Lecture for Week 3 in DSMN 820}.


\textsuperscript{58} Joel Comiskey, \textit{Chapter 2: History of the Cell Movement}. 
life change in a believer. The Moravians structured their groups like Spener’s model, regarding them as little churches within bigger churches. This movement influenced the Methodist church’s format and function for small groups. John Wesley appropriated what is called the band system from Zinzendorf that resembled Luther and Bucer’s philosophy for helping believers grow in personal holiness. Wesley’s basis for these groups was found in James 5:16. He believed that each church member needed personal encouragement and support, which only came from community within the parameters of small groups.

**Discipleship Models**

Analyzing discipleship models offers critical insight into how the process of leader development should be established and practiced within small group dynamics. In Jesus’ model, disciples were developed into leaders who were commissioned to go and become change agents in the culture through the gospel. The men, according to A.B. Bruce, who were formerly ignorant, narrow-minded, superstitious, full of Jewish prejudices, misconceptions and animosities are developed into leading the church. The multitude of models provide a significant foundation of understanding how to practice discipleship in specific contexts. The following models are not an exhaustive list but a primary list of how the project built the contextualized model for GABC.

A.B. Bruce divides Jesus' equipping model into three primary stages of development. The first stage, belief in Christ, leads to the second stage, following Christ. A.B. Bruce notes that the first and second stages could easily blend into one phase within the process. Bruce gives

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specific insight to this by noting, “Professions of faith in Jesus as the Christ being immediately followed by the renunciation of secular callings.”

The third stage is being trained in the formation of apostolic service. Bill Hull affirms Bruce’s phases but adds a fourth element to the process. Hull understands Bruce’s process as “come and see,” “come and follow Me,” and “come and be with Me.” Hull then adds a fourth phase, “remain in Me.”

Rick Warren’s church-wide discipleship model takes the shape of a baseball diamond that progresses from first base to home plate. The first base, Class 101, is titled “Committed to Membership – The process of knowing Christ.” The second base is “Committed to Maturity – The process of growing in Christ.” The third is “Committed to Ministry – The process of serving Christ.” Fourth base is called, “Committed to Missions – The process of sharing Christ.” The visual of a baseball diamond represents the progression of discipleship, starting at conversion and ending in maturity.

Robert Coleman offers a discipleship process that consists of eight distinct phases. The first phase is the selection process of Jesus, as shown by Him appointing His disciples. Luke 6:13 shows that Jesus chose from them [the crowds] twelve. Coleman’s interpretation of Jesus’ model is that He concentrated on the few instead of the large crowds. The second phase from Coleman’s understanding is association. Jesus stayed with the people that He chose. In the third phase, consecration, Jesus conveyed the value and expectation of obedience. In the fourth

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60 A.B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, 11-12.
64 Ibid., 33.
65 Ibid., 43-44.
phase, impartation, Jesus gave Himself away so the disciples would discover deeper levels of living in the Spirit.66 The fifth phase, Coleman identifies as the demonstration phase. This describes the intention with which Jesus showed the disciples how to live. John 13:5 explains that the disciples were given an example. Jesus’ early life emphasizes the priority of prayer, Scripture, and evangelism.67 In the sixth phase, delegation, Coleman identifies the mission given to the disciples, “make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Jesus delegated the process to the disciples at the time He determined.68 The seventh phase from the Coleman process is supervision. Coleman suggests that after delegating ministry responsibility to the disciples, Jesus monitored them closely to help them mature as leaders.69 The eighth and final phase from Coleman’s process is reproduction. Jesus told His disciples to go and bring forth fruit (John 15:16). Jesus’ expectation was that they would ultimately reproduce.70

Allen Hadidian identifies three distinct phases of discipleship. The first phase is described as “Evangelizing Men.” Hadidian asserts that the initial step for any disciple is to become a believer in Jesus through “a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”71 Phase two, “Edifying Men,” is the process of teaching new believers to obey the Lord and encouraging them in their faith walks.72 Hadidian’s third phase is “Equipping Men.” He contends that receiving salvation

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67 Ibid., 63-64.
68 Ibid., 71.
69 Ibid., 81.
70 Ibid., 89.
72 Ibid., 22.
and then gaining knowledge is not enough. God intends for all believers to become spiritual reproducers, as shown through the model of Jesus.⁷³

Harold Longenecker has a similar approach, identifying five distinct categories in Jesus’ model for discipleship. The first step in the process is that Jesus called. Longenecker explains that the second step is Jesus’ men followed. Revealed next is that the disciples lived with Jesus. In the fourth step, the disciples became leaders, and lastly, they trained others.⁷⁴

Allan Coppedge divides discipleship into two defined categories. The starting point of the Great Commission is outreach. Coppedge identifies baptism as the first aspect of the command of Christ. In the New Testament, baptism is an outward sign for displaying one’s salvation through Christ and commitment to follow Him.⁷⁵ The second component of the Great Commission is training. Jesus’ expectation for disciples to observe all that He commanded implies the partnership with others as they grow into the likeness of Christ. Coppedge states, “He [Jesus] is looking for men and women who are 1) like Him, 2) living in fellowship with Him, and 3) doing His will in the world.”⁷⁶

Jim Putman divides the discipleship process into four categories that help people identify their progression in spiritual maturation. The first stage is share, derived from Jesus’ calling of the disciples and revealing to them that He was the Messiah.⁷⁷ The second phase is “connect.”

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⁷⁶ Ibid., 117.
Jesus intentionally connected in a saving relationship with the disciples. Putman identifies the next phase as minister. Jesus “trained the disciples to minister to the people that came to hear Him.” During this stage, disciples begin to participate in ministry efforts. The last phase is disciple, exhibited when the believer reproduces this process of discipleship with others.

In their study of Jesus’ ministry, Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey have developed a process of three significant divisions. Discipleship begins with declaration, described as a personal relationship with Jesus that began after investigation. Development follows. In this phase, the disciple is immersed in the commands of Jesus for the purpose of spiritual maturity. In the last division, deployment, the believer mobilizes to disciple others. This disciple is equipped and sent on mission with the Gospel of Jesus.

Leader Development and the Model of Christ

The culmination of Jesus’ teaching was the Great Commission, but the leadership of Jesus was best understood through John 13. Jesus tells the disciples, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (John 13:14-15, ESV). God intends for all believers to grow into servant leaders. J. Oswald Sanders says, “It has been said that in achieving His world-purpose, God’s method has always been a man. Not necessarily a noble man, or a brilliant man, but always a man with capacity for a growing faith. Granted this,

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78 Jim Putman, Real-Life Discipleship, 63.
79 Ibid., 65.
there appears to be no limit to the pains God is willing to take in his training. He is limited by neither heredity nor environment.”

Too often, discipleship has been diminished into a system to mature Christians in their faith. This definition minimizes Jesus’ broad model to evangelize, teach, and multiply. Discipleship has been analyzed by many theologians, but the challenge remains to determine the best way to cultivate true disciples within the context of the local church. Discipleship encompasses both the art of growing in faith, as well as developing leaders, for the purpose of ministry. Jesus fostered intentional relationships with His disciples, strategically allotting His time and energy to build them up. His relational investment resulted in intentional development.

It is seen in John 3:22 that Jesus’ disciples spent time with Him. “The word for ‘spend time’ in Greek is pronounced ‘dia-tree-bo.’ Dia means ‘against,’ and tribo means ‘to rub.’ Diatribe literally means ‘to rub against’ or ‘to rub off.’ The concept means ‘to spend time together rubbing off on each other.’” During Jesus’ intentional time spent with His disciples, He helped them emulate Himself. Any discipleship curriculum will only be as effective as the relationship that it’s being built around. Paul understood and practiced this principle in his mentorship of Timothy. In their relationship, Paul presented a model for Christian ministry for Timothy to follow.

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81 Sanders, J. Oswald (John Oswald), Robust in Faith: Men from God’s School (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1965), 9.


83 Reference to John 3:22, emphasis mine.


The Great Commission is the blueprint, as well as the command, for developing disciples who go on to make disciples. Believers must embrace missional living, which informs their purpose in life to reach others with the gospel. If this truly is the aim of the believer, it will go beyond short-term mission trips to a way of life. Jesus’ command to baptize is the public identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. He also wants believers to teach others to obey His commands.\(^{86}\) The church must maintain a sustainable discipleship model that fosters an environment for biblical multiplication.

According to the pattern of Christ, discipleship that focuses solely on spiritual formation is not enough. A strategy for leader development and deployment must also be constructed.\(^ {87}\) This projects intends to show that GABC lacks group multiplication, due to the stagnation in generating mature leaders. No process exists for developing leaders who can serve in the small group ministry outside of paid staff efforts. Ephesians 4:12 calls churches to pursue the essential practice of multiplying leadership.\(^ {88}\) While Jesus’ mission was to seek and save the lost, the majority of His focus was on cultivating disciples for the continuation of ministry.\(^ {89}\) Likewise, the local church must prioritize discipleship and leader development. A church that focuses on making disciples will foster leaders to further that vision. Research shows that replicating disciples who are equipped for ministry is lacking in many modern churches. Multiplication of leaders will not occur without an intentional strategy for development.

\(^{86}\) Gary L. McIntosh, Growing God’s Church, 18-19.


\(^{89}\) Gary L. McIntosh, Growing God’s Church, 48.
All believers must commit to Jesus’ model of discipleship set before the church. This pattern, while utilized by Jesus, was not developed by Jesus Himself. It was an adaptation of discipleship that already existed. Students and Jesus alike were familiar with the traditional mentoring system, where an apprentice devoted himself to learning from a master, following him through life. Jesus’ model deviated, in that He sought out the student, as opposed to the learner seeking the teacher.

As Jesus mentored his twelve disciples, He understood that eventually He would physically depart from them. In order to equip them for ministry, He provided not only opportunities for observation, but also participation. As He observed them ministering to others, He sent them out two by two to carry His message of hope. In Jesus’ final stage of discipleship, He commissioned them with His authority. Jesus instructed the disciples to proclaim the nearness of His kingdom as they carried out daily life. All believers are called to emulate this pattern through evangelism, developing, and deploying others. Within churches, every leader should watch for those to mentor. Three distinct phases will be used in the strategy to develop leaders. The first is mentoring, the second consists of apprenticeship, and the third phase will be coaching.

92 Gary L. McIntosh, *Growing God’s Church*, 11-12.
Phase One - Mentoring

Jesus was masterful in his practice of mentorship. The concept of mentoring has existed for centuries. In certain African cultures, the term referred to a boy growing up to become a man. At the core, mentoring is the further maturation of an individual. For the purpose of this project, the term development is defined as helping someone become more Christlike in the way they live and interact with the world around them.

This first phase is demonstrated by Jesus’ calling of His disciples. The invitation described in Matthew 4:19 is to come follow Jesus and He will make the disciples “fishers of men.” Jesus trained His disciples thoroughly for this most essential role. Every disciple of Jesus also carries this duty to likewise invest in others. After the call to become fishers of men, Jesus immediately began instructing His disciples. Mentoring is an intentional process of teaching and demonstrating a definitive set of values. The values intended to be shared are those modeled by Christ. Simply put, they are to evangelize, teach others to live like Christ, and to multiply. Bill Hull describes Jesus’ initial relating with the disciples as the “come and see” phase of His ministry. Paul also modeled this type of mentorship. After Jesus addressed the crowds, He enlightened His disciples privately, going into greater detail (Mark 4:34). This additional time and teaching saturated them in the Word of God and reinforced sound doctrine.

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In every moment, Jesus modeled ministry before His disciples. They beheld miracles, heard Jesus teach, watched how He responded to the Pharisees, and most importantly, observed Jesus as a servant leader committed to the will of His Father. Everything they witnessed and heard prepared them for the next phase of growth with Jesus.

Phase Two – Apprenticeship

During the apprenticeship stage, the disciples were invited to participate with Jesus in His ministry. One of the greatest hindrances to fostering leaders is the void of participation and empowerment. Both can emerge organically through an apprenticeship. Captain L. David Marquet, a retired Navy officer, offers principles for bolstering leaders that churches can apply. According to Captain Marquet, lack of participation stems from a top-down command and control system of leadership. Participation flourishes in a bottom-up philosophy of leadership that empowers team members to thrive according to their skill set and giftedness. The apprenticeship phase should create a collaborative and engaging atmosphere so ministry can flow. Empowered leadership enables learning and growth in the maturation process.

During this stage of development, Jesus shared a deepened level of intimacy with His disciples. As Jesus’ level of expectation elevated, they moved from casual observers to active participants. “Apprenticeship is true to the intent and expression of how Jesus did

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discipleship.” According to Bill Hull, when Jesus states, “I will make you,” He imparts a level of responsibility to the disciples. In Matthew chapter 9, Jesus illustrates the necessity for His followers to advance the Kingdom of God. The mandate to fish for men moves into the forefront as the expectation is that they are now becoming ministers.

The apprenticeship phase provides the opportunity to implement what you have gained as you continue to learn. During this phase, the teacher stays near to offer clarification and encouragement during this critical time of training. This stage of leadership multiplies effectiveness as more people participate in Kingdom work. John chapter six elaborates on the mentorship that Jesus shared with His disciples. Mike Breen describes this stage as “I do, you help.” During the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000, He exhibited intentional actions that allowed the disciples to share in the ministry. They moved beyond the role of observers to serve others in the name of Jesus. Paul continued this pattern when he invited Timothy to join him on his second missionary journey and to partner with him in ministry.

Phase Three – Coaching

In the third phase of Jesus’ leadership development for the disciples, He began to dispatch them into ministry opportunities without Him. The gospels describe Jesus calling to the disciples and sending them out for ministry. Jesus charges them to go and do as you have seen

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107 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciplemaking Is...*, 161.

Me do, assuring them of their calling and authority. During this period, Jesus sends the disciples out two by two to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick (Luke 9:1).\textsuperscript{109} It is important to note that Jesus was still available to the disciples. Mike Breen describes this third phase as “You do, I help.”\textsuperscript{110} After the disciples returned, Jesus offered coaching after hearing the reports of how they ministered in His name. Robert Coleman identifies these interactions between Jesus and the disciples as a checkup regarding ministry activity.\textsuperscript{111} During this critical time, the disciple initiates ministry without the presence of the mentor or master present. 

Small Groups as the Primary Vehicle for Leader Development

The analysis of small groups should determine that they are moving toward the target of discipleship and developing leaders according to the model of Jesus. Genesis 2:18 states, “It is not good for man to be alone.” Although it can be argued that this passage describes a man and woman in the binding of covenantal marriage, it still would not eradicate the truth that man was meant to live in community. The most basic instinct for man is to not be alone. Carolyn Taketa says, “What is striking about this statement is that God makes it before the Fall. There's no sin yet and no disobedience; man is in perfect intimacy with God. And yet, God declares that man is alone and that it is not good.”\textsuperscript{112}

The small group ministry reflects the nature and character of God when it functions in unity. Bill Hull says, “The small group is the most strategic training environment used by Christ

\textsuperscript{109} Robert E. Coleman, \textit{The Master Plan of Evangelism} (Grand Rapids: MI: Revell, 1993), 73.

\textsuperscript{110} Mike Breen, \textit{Multiplying Missional Leaders}, 85.

\textsuperscript{111} Robert E. Coleman, \textit{The Master Plan of Evangelism}, 83.

to make the kind of disciples that glorify God.”113 Healthy groups reflect Christ when they reach the marginalized, express hospitality to people not connected to a church, and aid those in physical need.114 As growing believers gather, they are encouraged to commit themselves to the values of God’s Kingdom rather than their own. At the heart of the Great Commission, we see a need for small group ministry. According to Ephesians 4:12, Paul aspired to equip the saints for service just as Jesus had done with the twelve. When Jesus proclaimed the Great Commission, He spoke with a small group. In the book of Matthew, this is prescriptive as well as descriptive, meaning it is charged to the men present as well as all believers. The small group (the disciples) is now charged with the task of making disciples of all nations.

Jesus’ illustration about mending nets correlates to the delicate process of maturing disciples.115 Both the model of Jesus, as well as the model found in the epistles, serve as a foundation for a healthy church to implement God’s plan within the small group ministry. Mark Dever examines Jesus’ pattern of discipleship by suggesting, “But the goal is always to present people mature in Christ.”116 Those who are in the small group learn this by growing in community with others. Ferguson identifies a pattern for growth consistent with Acts 2 where the house church celebrated, connected, and contributed.117 To celebrate implies worshiping God in community with other believers. The connect aspect describes the healthy relationship patterns found within the small group. This fellowship with other believers is described in Acts 2:42.

114 Joel Comiskey, Biblical Foundations for the Cell-Based Church, 56.
117 Dave Ferguson and Jon Ferguson, Exponential: How You and Your Friends Can Start a Missional Movement, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 93.
Jesus commands that believers are to love the Lord and love others. Joel Comiskey makes note and says, “Koinonia is the fellowship that we have with the Trinity that needs to be practiced with other believers.” Christians are expected to serve in unity with brothers and sisters for the purpose of Kingdom advancement. Jesus declared the world would recognize His disciples based on their love for one another. Contributing time, energy, and resources are essential components for deepening the bonds of a small group. While individual growth is important, the disciple flourishes as he serves in community with other believers pursuing the same calling. As seen through the example of Jesus, discipleship and leadership are fostered through small group relationships.

The practice of love within the church is experienced primarily in the presence of others through the gift of community. Love is never intended to end with the individual, but rather to express itself to a recipient. Love serves as a badge of discipleship; it is by love for one another that we will be identified as followers of Jesus. Christlike love is beautifully expressed in the church through a small group. God designed man to reflect His likeness, according to Genesis chapter one. Comiskey also adds, “The Trinity dwells in perfect unity and community. God is not a lone individualist, and this fact should stir God’s people away from a rugged individualism (‘How can I do my thing?’) to community-oriented living (‘How can I serve the Body of Christ?’).” God Himself functions in perfect community, putting Himself on display as the example of how individuals can interact with one another. The Trinity, consisting of God the

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Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, exemplifies the art of living in complete unity. Small groups help to fight the tendency for disciples to hide in anonymity. When a believer is separated from community, it is not healthy for the individual or the church. Instead, Christians should live in the openness and accountability that biblical fellowship provides. Within the context of small group and individual growth, the foundational practices of prayer and devotion to God’s Word transform lives. The small group ministry of the local church should be the primary vehicle for discipleship and leader development.

**Small Group Multiplication**

According to research, there are many churches missing the link between church attendance and discipleship. Attendance is not the chief end for the existence of a healthy small group ministry. The vision from the Lord described in Ezekiel chapter 10 should incite a healthy attentiveness and fear for all small group and ministry leaders. The temple is still in place, God’s people are still present, but God is not there. Without the overarching theme of discipleship guiding ministry purpose and group multiplication, it would be easy for the activities of the church to proceed without the presence of God’s Spirit. If multiplication is no longer the driving purpose, the mission can diminish as people participate in ministry efforts without the presence of God.

“Too often, churches launch a small-groups ministry without instilling the birthing of new groups into its DNA. Those leading and attending first generation groups experience community like they never have before, and they don't want to see that experience come

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to an end. The beauty of the experience is so fantastic that when you request that they birth another group, you have a mutiny on your hands.”

The purpose embedded in discipleship will drive the ability and willingness for small groups to multiply. Group members who are unwilling to expand have never understood or embraced the vision for the group’s existence according to the model of Christ and the New Testament.

Small group multiplication is the aim for every group rooted in biblical mission. Multiplication is the effort of launching new groups for the purpose of reaching people who are far from God. It is the natural outcome of additional leaders developing. When new groups cease to form, it reveals an interruption within the process of maturation. The goal of every existing small group should be to multiply in order to advance the Kingdom of God. Dave Ferguson and Jon Ferguson says, “God’s people have been charged with the mission of connecting the unconnected ever since His dream of perfect community fell apart in the Garden of Eden.” With this in mind, it is essential for each believer to seek relationships with those not yet connected to God’s community.

Biblical leaders should yearn to foster initiative in others. Groups will inevitably grow stagnant unless small group leaders are reproducing themselves. Larry Stockstill notes, “Our

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126 This definition derived from the biblical understanding of multiplication based on Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey’s Disciplemaking is... pages 117-122. The understanding is to reach people who have no relationship with Jesus and to continue this pattern through multiplication efforts. These standards should be applied and expected of every small group.

127 Dave Ferguson and Jon Ferguson, Exponential: How You and Your Friends Can Start a Missional Movement, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 91.
primary goal, therefore, must be to develop leaders who will facilitate that multiplication. Remember: Don’t focus on cell attendance as much as on leadership development.”128

Ferguson proposes three frameworks for beginning new groups. The first option is sending out members with leaders, the second is sending an apprentice with members, and the third option is when everyone becomes an apprentice who is sent out to create a new group.129 The argument is that small groups are the best place to develop and replicate leadership for further ministry. Stockstill, Breen, Yongii Cho and Ferguson all share the same belief in leader development within small groups. Each takes a slightly different approach in the methods, but they all agree that the context which most naturally fosters leaders is small groups.130

Jesus empowered and equipped men to build the church.131 Paul poured into Timothy, giving him the charge to teach others what Paul had taught him.132 Paul understood that the mission would only be accomplished if leaders came behind him who were equipped to continue the work. Leaders must be committed and trained before they can be deployed on behalf of the mission. The three phases of leadership development outlined previously are best utilized in a small group setting, just as Jesus modeled.


130 For more see Larry Stockstill, *The Cell Church: Preparing Your Church for the Coming Harvest*.


Small Group Structure

An effective small group should serve the church as a tool to foster discipleship, develop leaders and multiply groups. In addition, small group structure boosts ministry effectiveness at all levels of the church. In the Old Testament, God’s people experienced challenges that changed the organizational structure. Moses was forced into a new pattern that would facilitate growth within the Kingdom of God. This is now known as the Jethro model of small group structure and organization.133 When the framework changed for Moses, opportunities opened for other people to participate in serving and leading. In Ephesians chapter 4, Paul describes organization and structure for the purpose of building one another up (Ephesians 4:11-16, ESV). This pattern allows for all people to have a place of ministry within the church. For the follower of Christ, no exceptions were given regarding the call to serve in some capacity. There is something that should be noted to help understand this service in A Handbook on Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians, “Christian service translates a Greek noun meaning ‘service, work,’ a general term for all that a Christian is called on to do.”134 Paul explains the implications of Christ’s discipleship model for small group ministry and the function of group members.

Church members must understand that every believer in Jesus is an active minister for Him.135 Greg Ogden observes, “The church in its most fundamental essence is nothing less than an interdependent, life-pulsating people who are indwelled by the presence of a resurrected and

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133 Bob Deffinbaugh, “18. What happened to Discipleship in the Epistles?”
reigning Christ.”

This understanding is most aligned within a biblical interpretation of individual expectation as well as New Testament ecclesiology. To support the whole, every person in a small group should participate in some way. Through opportunities provided, each group member should discover the gifts that God has entrusted to him or her. Bruce Bugbee says, “Your gift indicates the role, function, or particular way in which God has intended you to serve.”

There are times when small group ministries become stagnant and are no longer growing. In this case, the overseers should ascertain whether leaders are being fostered, disciples are being made, and God’s Word is being taught. Small groups should share the same vision and commit to the same values as the church. They should equip the saints to do the work of the ministry as Paul commanded in Ephesians chapter 4. The structure will determine the effectiveness of the group in accomplishing its mission.

As Jesus modeled, and as Paul prescribed, each person in the small group will be given an opportunity to lead through one of various roles. There will be specific practices in place to train and equip each saint within the group. Each group member should practice pastoral care, evangelism, helping others discover and develop spiritual gifts, and leader development. Maturing within the group should result from the mutual care and support given to one another. All efforts of the church should be bolstered by small group involvement. Conveying this vision will require intentional and patient leadership from every minister and lay leader.

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136 Greg Ogden, Unfinished Business, 41.
Everyone is expected to lead in some capacity, as illustrated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. In the description of the body of Christ according to Paul, there is an expectation that every member is doing their individual part within the body. The healthy function of the body is dependent on each individual member expressing the gifts and utilizing those gifts for the edification of the church. The intended goal, as seen throughout Paul’s epistles, is that every believer participates in ministry activities.\(^{139}\) Each member of the body has a definitive role in discipleship and leader development. Jim Putnam writes, “Many Christians believe that they are unimportant to the cause of Christ and that the work of the church is the job of the clergy.”\(^{140}\) Paid ministry leaders have mistakenly placed a divide between laity and themselves. Ed Stetzer exposes the ideology that paid ministers are the only ones expected to make disciples. Church leaders cannot advocate any further that lay people are excluded from making disciples and building leaders. According to Stetzer, language such as “laypeople” creates a mindset that there are those within the church who participate in ministry and those who receive ministry.\(^{141}\) Greg Ogden understand the church is an interdependent people that is directed and steered by the indwelling Spirit of God.\(^ {142}\) This understanding is most aligned with a biblical interpretation of individual expectation as well as New Testament ecclesiology.\(^ {143}\) Frank Damazio agrees and says, “The New Testament presents all Christians as ministers in the sense that all have definite


\(^ {142}\) Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business*, 41.

ministries to perform within the Body of Christ.”\textsuperscript{144} The small group structure provides every believer the opportunity to engage in Kingdom work for the purpose of discipleship.

\textsuperscript{144} Frank Damazio, \textit{The Making of A Leader}, 3.
Chapter 3
Methodology

This chapter will serve as the description of the research and implementation of the ministry project for Green Acres Baptist Church. The purpose of the project was to develop a small group structure that would enable an environment for lay leadership development and group multiplication that are in line with the model of Christ. The project began with assessing the leaders’ overall spiritual health. The Spiritual Growth Assessment gave indications of the understanding of discipleship, as well as the reality of practicing spiritual disciplines. This assessment was accomplished through a survey, which gave insight into the discipleship culture of the church. Following the survey, a new structure for small groups was designed to help organize the efforts of leader development opportunities. The system was then applied to a beta group which implemented the structural design and utilized the three-week curriculum developed through this project to launch the new group.

Spiritual Growth Survey

The survey, given to current small group leadership, was utilized for the purpose of establishing an understanding of the spiritual maturity of the lay leaders of Green Acres Baptist Church. This assessment gave the writer insight into the problems presented in chapter one. It also helped to determine the effectiveness of current small group structures and the overall health of the discipleship efforts of the church. This survey, administered through Google forms, was vital to understanding the overall discipleship culture of the church’s small group leadership. For the project purpose, the participants in the survey were small group leaders and deacons. The
results provided a synopsis of deficiencies in discipleship that could cripple leadership development and stagnate group multiplication.

Implementing Spiritual Growth Survey

**Obtaining Permission**

On July 1, 2019, I received permission from Green Acres Baptist Church to begin assessing the spiritual health of the lay leaders. Participants were asked to visit a link to complete an attached survey that was formulated and anonymously kept through Google forms. The data was analyzed to discern the spiritual maturity and leadership competency of current lay leaders. Participants were presented with informed consent information prior to beginning. Taking part in this study was completely voluntary, and leaders were welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

**Administering the Survey**

After receiving permission from Green Acres Baptist Church, the survey was sent via email to potential participants. Prospects were limited to those eighteen years of age or older who were currently serving in a leadership position at Green Acres Baptist Church. The adult ministers at GABC provided guidance for compiling the list of prospects who met the criteria. The email, which included a link to the survey, stated that the assessment should take approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. It also assured recipients that participation would be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information would be collected.
Spiritual Growth Survey Design

Obtaining Permission from Participants

After a participant clicked on the link for the Spiritual Growth Assessment, he or she was asked to consent in order to proceed. The design of the Google form did not let anyone continue unless they agreed upon the information provided in the consent section of the email. Additionally, background information explained the reason for the assessment, to ascertain overall spiritual maturity and leadership competency in order to develop a structure within small groups for facilitating leadership development. Next, the necessary procedures for completing the survey were detailed.

The participant was also provided clear understanding of any risks involved with the study. Risks were minimal, meaning they were equivalent to the risks of daily life. The email explained that participants would receive no compensation or direct benefit from completing the survey.

Participants were also provided with a confidentiality form and the assurance that the results of the study would be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to them. To further clarify confidentiality, the participants were reassured that the responses would be anonymous. Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted. As part of the consent, it was understood that participation in this study was voluntary. The decision to complete the survey would not affect current or future relations with Liberty University or Green Acres Baptist Church. If someone decided not to participate, he could simply not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey.
Participants were then given clear directions on how to withdraw from the study, even if they had begun the assessment. If choosing to withdraw, they could exit the survey to discontinue participation prior to submitting the answers. The responses would not be recorded or included in the study. The participant was also given contact information for further questions or concerns that might arise in reference to the Spiritual Growth Assessment. Adequate contact information for the researcher, the faculty involved at Liberty University, and the Institutional Review Board was provided.

**Process for Participation**

The “Spiritual Growth Assessment” was produced by LifeWay Christian Resources. This assessment has been utilized and adapted to fit the verbiage of Green Acres Baptist Church. The participants were asked to select a rating using the Likert Scale for each of the statements within six different categories. Those surveyed could answer the statements with a number one through five, based off a five-point Likert Scale. The number one is equivalent to “never” on the Likert Scale, two means “seldom,” three means “occasionally,” four means “frequently,” and five means “always.” The six sections gave an overview of spiritual health and leadership competency. They measured worship, spiritual maturity, loving and serving others, evangelism, small group involvement, and making disciples.

On July 7, 2019, the assessment was emailed to the list of lay leaders compiled by the ministers of GABC. It included a description of the assessment as well as an explanation of my status as a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University. It clarified that I am

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145 Lifeway Christian Resources, *Spiritual Growth Assessment*, first accessed on October 3, 2018, http://blog.lifeway.com/growingdisciples/files/2013/08/Spiritual_Growth_Assessment.pdf, 3-4. The growth assessment from Lifeway had more elements involved in the process. However, the only element used for the purpose of this project were the survey questions.
conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctorate of Ministry degree. The email revealed that the purpose of the research was to ascertain the spiritual health, maturity and leadership competency at Green Acres Baptist Church. Along with an invitation to participate, parameters were listed. One must be 18 years or older, in a leadership position at Green Acres Baptist Church (lay leader or small group leader) and willing to participate. A confidentiality agreement concluded the email. To provide easy access, a link to the Google form was included.

The email was sent to 158 leaders within the church. Over the course of two weeks, 52 participants completed the survey. A follow-up email was sent on July 22, 2019. After this email was sent, an additional 18 leaders completed the survey, bringing the total leader participation to 70 individual leaders.146

Survey Questions and Results

The sections analyzed in the study included personal health and the relationship to the church. The questions in section one regarding worship helped the researcher understand the cultural insights for leadership involvement, as well as the understanding of worship. The results of the survey also offered insight into the overall spiritual growth among the leadership. In section two, statements of spiritual maturity were analyzed. The questions allowed the participant to think more clearly on growth disciplines that would help develop Christlikeness in their personal lives. This section was aimed toward the practice and disciplines of personal holiness and spiritual growth. In section three, participants assessed how their faith is displayed toward others. This section evaluated how leaders are serving and loving others in and out of the

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146 According to M. G. Saldivar in *A Primer on Survey Response Rate*, on page 9, the average online survey had a 30% response rate. This gives indication that the 44.3% response rate is above average. For more, see article at https://mgsaldivar.weebly.com/uploads/8/5/1/8/8518205/saldivar_primer_on_survey_response.pdf
church. Section four analyzed the practice of evangelism in the leader’s life. It surveyed the intentionality for evangelism, as well as the priority level for the leader. Section five evaluated small group involvement. This assessment allowed the leader to reveal their level of understanding of small group function and necessity. Section six evaluated personal discipleship methods and understandings.

**Results of Section One – Worship**

Table 2.

![Section 1 - Worship chart](image-url)
Based on the results of the survey in section one, worship carries a high priority among the leadership in the church. The worship section gave opportunity for the participant to contemplate many angles of worship. This section offered insight that participants view worship as a lifestyle instead of simply attending church. Attending the local church seemed to be a non-issue with most leaders, as 82.9% replied they always make weekly worship a priority in their schedule, and 87.1% responded they always attend corporate worship. As seen in the figure above, tithing does not rate as high. 74.3% responded that they always tithe 10% of their income. The tithing aspect of worship reveals spiritual maturity and spiritual discipline.

**Results of Section Two – Spiritual Maturity**

Table 3.
This section is insightful for evaluating if spiritual maturation is taking place under the current structure of small group organization. In terms of prayer, 8.6% of participants revealed that it is seldom or occasionally a part of the leader’s daily life. Participants also shared that 25.7% seldom or never read and study God’s Word daily.

**Results of Section Three – Loving and Serving Others**

Table 4.

![Diagram](image)

This section allows the participant to ascertain personal involvement in serving and showing love toward others. Only 15.7% of leaders always participate in local missions.
Additionally, 40% of participants responded that they occasionally, seldom or never participate in local mission or community service.

**Results of Section Four – Evangelism**

Table 5.

As seen in the figure above, the spectrum of results for evangelism is broad. In recognition of sharing their personal testimony, 12.9% of the leaders who took the survey always share their testimony with others. 2.9% of the leaders responded to never offering their testimony to others. 32.9% reported that they occasionally share, while 10% replied that they seldom relate
their testimony. Of the participants, 7.1% are always developing a list of people with whom to witness. 10% of the leaders never develop lists of people who need to hear the gospel.

**Results of Section Five – Small Group Involvement**

Table 6.

According to participants, there is a clear understanding that most groups could improve in the spiritual growth process. Of those who participated in the survey, 27.1% reported that their circle of healthy, transparent relationships is always growing. While 55.7% responded frequently, 11.4% said occasionally, and 5.7% revealed that seldom are these relationships growing.
Results of Section Six – Making Disciples

Table 7.

![Chart showing responses to questions related to making disciples.]

The last section analyzes the topic of discipleship. In the realm of making disciples, 22.9% always connect with others for the purpose of helping them grow toward maturity in Christ. 1.4% stated they never meet with others for the purpose of helping them grow. 25.7% consider themselves a catalyst in helping people connect with each other.
Development of Small Group Structure and Leadership Manual

The small group structure will not limit the number of participants within a group but will maintain a clear organization to ensure maximum leadership and growth. The commitment to structure will maximize the ability to develop lay leaders. The framework will provide the opportunity for every individual to discover and practice their gift within the small group ministry, according to the model of Christ. The format creates an optimal environment for discipleship and lay leader development to occur. Formulated from the model of Christ explained in chapter 2, opportunities will be given to evangelize, teach, and live on mission. The parameters of the small group will undergird the efforts to minister effectively. The project goal was to create a framework, along with a supporting small group manual, to guide existing and new groups.

The format will provide eight distinct positions for individuals to receive the opportunity to serve in their small group. The eight roles are facilitator, director, secretary, prayer coordinator, outreach coordinator, member coordinator, social coordinator, and greeter.\textsuperscript{147} It must be noted that it is not required for every role to be filled for the small group to exist. The positions offer an organizational structure that provides leadership function for maximum care of each group member. The goal of the small group is to help each member take the next steps in their relationship with Jesus. Whether they have walked with Christ for a short or long time, there is an opportunity for them to serve and lead within the small group structure. At Green Acres, the goal is the same for every individual participating in a small group, to develop and grow as a disciple of Jesus.

\textsuperscript{147} The roles utilized for the project were modified from Steve Parr from, \textit{Sunday School that Really Works}, 112. GABC currently has in place a teacher, director, as well as a secretary but no positions beyond those three. The aim of the roles is to give more opportunity to more individuals that would help meet the needs of the group.
The leadership manual will provide guidance, expectations and explanations of varying roles within the structure. It will also explain clear communication routes to promote healthy organization and maximum effectiveness. Additionally, it will offer tools to assist the facilitator and director with different ministry scenarios. While the manual will not include an exhaustive theological or biblical explanation of each role, it will offer guidance for the execution and purpose of the ministry.

**Expectations**

Each person active in the small group ministry will bear the expectations based on the foundations of the discipleship model of Jesus found in chapter two. The summary of that model is evangelism, teaching, and multiplication. For the purpose of the small group ministry at GABC and as a portable and memorable way to discuss the process, it will be stated as connect, grow, and multiply. Before this adoption of the new vision statement, there was not a vision statement outside of the “mission statement” that is found only in the church constitution. The expectation of every participant in the small group ministry will be to “connect” to Christ and to one another. This is the evangelism and community aspect discussed in chapter two. The next expectation is to “grow” in the likeness of Christ. This consists of the leader development plan, according to Jesus’ three phases outlined in chapter two. The next expectation is to “multiply,” as members actively develop new leaders. Ultimately, the group is designed to expand as new leaders emerge and are sent out to start new groups.

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148 Connect, Grow, and Multiply will be adopted as the primary vision and explanation of the discipleship process within the small group ministry at GABC.
Leadership Roles

Facilitator

The facilitator, traditionally known as the teacher, leads the small group discussions based on the lesson each week. As the primary spiritual leader of the group, the facilitator is responsible to lead his or her small group members and guests through biblical discussion. The facilitator collaborates with the director and leadership team to form a small group that is committed to evangelism, growing in Christlikeness, and multiplication. This person will serve as the lead champion for the vision of group multiplication. Small group members will engage in meaningful Bible study, based on approved curriculum and God’s Word, with the Holy Spirit as ultimate guide. The leader will prepare lessons with the needs of the group in mind. He or she must also participate in church-wide training events and individual discipleship methods, along with the apprentice facilitator.

The facilitator is expected to find an apprentice facilitator for the purpose of developing a new leader. By utilizing the designated materials to walk through the three phases of development, the facilitator fosters leadership in the apprentice. The apprentice facilitator will assist with leading responsibilities, every four to six weeks, to prepare him or her to eventually lead a new small group. Once the apprentice facilitator has progressed through the three phases of the leadership development plan, they are then ready to lead by starting a new group.

Director

As the primary administrator of the group, the director is responsible for overseeing overall function. This person maintains and fills ministry roles to ensure coordination and effectiveness. The director’s main responsibility is to relieve the facilitator of administrative
duties, so he or she may devote time to biblical study. The director must be surrounded by others who will serve alongside to meet ministry needs. Facilitator and director collaborate to ensure that the group mobilizes to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ and establish them in Christian living. The director focuses on enlisting leaders and encouraging them as they fulfill their specific roles within the small group structure. He or she also coordinates the group meeting, including announcements, games, and other essential details. The director and facilitator oversee group leadership meetings, where they design, develop, evaluate, and implement plans to reach group objectives.

Every director is required to enlist an apprentice director and to train them to become director in a new group. The director will strategically progress the apprentice director through the three phases of leadership development. As the apprentice approaches the second phase of development, he or she should be entrusted with leadership responsibility. The director will serve as a primary encouragement for new leaders and apprentice leaders to begin additional groups.

Secretary

The secretary serves as the primary link between the small group and the church staff. This leader’s responsibilities include completing weekly attendance records as well as guest information. Accurate records must be maintained for effective group development to occur. The secretary should organize information, so it is readily available to group leaders and included on the church database.
Prayer Coordinator

The prayer coordinator facilitates effective prayer time during the group meeting, as well as communicating prayer needs throughout the week. This leader must also update appropriate staff and group leadership regarding the group’s prayer needs and ministry opportunities. The prayer coordinator prays daily for the needs of the group and the church, maintaining prayer as a key element of the group. Lastly, prayer requests should be documented in a way that fosters group celebration after a petition has been answered.

Outreach Coordinator

The outreach coordinator provides leadership for following up with guests and those disconnected from a small group. This leader maintains the posture of looking outside the group for those not connected to a group. The outreach coordinator organizes a team for follow-up and implementing evangelism strategies within the community.

Member Coordinator

The member coordinator ensures individual participation within the small group. This involves contacting those who have missed three consecutive weeks, as well as inviting members to group and church events. The member coordinator provides care for group members and checks on them regularly.

Social Coordinator

The social coordinator plans meaningful activities for existing members to cultivate relationships and for new members, as well as prospects, to assimilate into the group. This
person partners with group leadership to safeguard the unity of the group. The social coordinator works directly with the outreach coordinator to plan events every six to eight weeks. The goal for each social is to provide an avenue for guests and new members to forge community within the group.

**Greeter**

Greeters are charged with creating an environment where guests experience a positive, friendly first impression and returning members are welcomed. Group greeters bear the responsibility for the guests from the moment they enter the door to the time they leave. They should strive to talk with everyone and ensure no one is sitting alone. Greeters should recruit volunteers who will also engage people, serving as hosts to new members and guests. A host is someone who will sit with visitors, making them feel comfortable and welcome throughout the duration of their visit, including worship. As members are trained, this should occur organically, which is why the host is not an assigned role.

**Development and Implementation of Curriculum**

The curriculum developed is a three-week series that explains the expectation of discipleship and leader development within the new small group, according to the theological and theoretical foundations in chapter two. Every new group will begin with this curriculum, and every existing group will eventually utilize it. The curriculum analyzes Jesus’ process for discipleship. Additional tools and resources are also provided for the group. The format will be group discussion, rather than lecture, to foster conversation.
In order to communicate the vision for small group participation, the curriculum will be employed during the first phase of the leadership development plan. The facilitator and director will also study it one-on-one in the first meeting with their prospective apprentice. A supplemental curriculum, used between the leader and apprentice, is Greg Ogden’s *Discipleship Essentials*. This will examine the discipleship foundation for fostering leaders as the core purpose of the small group ministry. Ogden offers a doctrinal understanding, along with necessary tools, to seek personal holiness as a leader. It will serve as the conversation guide as the leader and apprentice meet each week.

**Week One – Connect**

During the first week, the curriculum will provide an overview of the small group’s purpose. The elements connect, grow, and multiply will be introduced, but the focus will be on the first phase of discipleship, according to the model of Christ. Week one will examine the doctrine of evangelism through studying Jesus’ calling and training of His disciples. Connect is derived from the evangelistic efforts of Christ and the outgrowth of community portrayed through the disciples. The gospel of Jesus will be explored through the three circles of evangelism. By utilizing this tool, the group members will glean a fuller understanding of the gospel and be equipped to share it with others. Bruce Larson says, “As seen with the model of

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Jesus, evangelism should be the role of every disciple.”

The teaching will be drawn from John chapters 3 and 4, which were also referenced in chapter two of this project.

Week Two – Grow

During week two, the curriculum will explore what it means to live in community and grow into the likeness of Christ. Members will examine the model that Jesus used to foster discipleship. The week’s study will also address the phases of leader development, which are mentor, apprenticeship, and coaching.

Week Three – Multiply

Week three will illustrate Jesus’ process for sending out the disciples two by two. At this point, the expectation of healthy multiplication within the group will be discussed. The curriculum will prescribe the small group structure and explain ministry roles within the group.

Leadership Development Plan

The leadership development plan will primarily be employed by the facilitator and director of each group. These two are the only roles required to have an apprentice, although the other roles are not excluded from the opportunity to participate in the leadership development.

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151 Bruce Larson, *Mastering Pastoral Care*, Mastering Ministry (Portland, OR; Carol Stream, IL: Multnomah Press, 1990), 129.
plan. The primary resources used as the curriculum for the leadership development plan will be from Greg Ogden.\textsuperscript{152}

**Phase One – Mentor**

For the mentor phase of the leadership development plan, the apprentice for the director, as well as for the facilitator, will be identified and begin meeting one on one with their mentor. The purpose of the meetings will be to discuss the small group ministry format and train in leadership for the purpose of starting a new group. The director or facilitator will schedule to meet with their apprentices for one hour every other week. In the beginning, the apprentice will be considered a level one leader and progress will be tracked for the purpose of development.

The first meeting should consist of cultivating friendship, as well as establishing the small group purpose. “Start,” the curriculum which covers the three elements of discipleship (connect, grow and multiply), will be taught and discussed. This will provide an overview of the small group purpose. It will also establish the expectations for the apprentice to launch out in starting a new group. This aspect should be clarified from the beginning, so there are no surprises as development progresses toward multiplication. During this first meeting, the apprentice will receive all necessary materials. The needed materials are (1) the “Start” curriculum (connect, grow, multiply), (2) the leadership manual, and (3) Greg Ogden’s *Discipleship Essentials*. The homework for week one will be to complete chapter one of section one in Greg Ogden’s book, *Discipleship Essentials*.  

After the first meeting, where direction for the small group is clarified, the leader and apprentice will continue bi-weekly meetings for the remainder of phase one, which should last no more than twelve weeks. This portion of the one-on-one meetings will consist of the leader and apprentice committing to Greg Ogden’s *Discipleship Essentials*, Part One: Growing Up in Christ. Part one of Ogden’s book consists of six chapters. The leader and apprentice will discuss one chapter in each meeting, with the workbook serving as their conversation guide.¹⁵³

During each meeting, discussion will cover the previous two weeks of homework, as outlined in each chapter of Ogden’s book. The first phase of development should be completed within twelve weeks. During this timeframe, the apprentice will attend the small group, observing the practices of either the director or facilitator. The apprentice leader will help in any capacity the leader judges beneficial, although he is not expected to lead in the group setting. Once the apprentice has completed the first section of Ogden’s book with the leader, he or she will advance to phase two, with the leader’s approval. The leader will periodically provide progress updates regarding the apprentice to the appropriate church staff member.

**Phase Two – Apprenticeship**

During this phase, the leader and apprentice will continue to meet bi-weekly, examining Ogden’s part two and part three. They may take up to thirty weeks to study the thirteen chapters

¹⁵³ See Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*. Part one is “Growing Up in Christ,” Part two is “Understanding the Message of Christ,” and part three is “Becoming Like Christ.” These two sections provide the necessary training and biblical knowledge for the apprentice to have a good foundation in the primary theological concepts that will help the apprentice as they begin to lead Small Group Discussions. See also Dave Earley, *Turning Members into Leaders: How to Raise Up Your Group Members to Lead New Groups* (Houston, TX: Cell Group Resources, 2004), 82. Dave Earley contends that each leader that is being developed should use expert resources to further their biblical foundation.
within these sections of the Ogden curriculum. If bi-weekly meetings continue, the process could be completed within twenty-six weeks. During this phase, the apprentice is not only observing, but also participating with the leader in ministry. The apprentice will lead the group discussion at a minimum of four times, before moving on to phase three of the process. Each week the apprentice leads, the following one-on-one meeting should yield adequate evaluation from the leader regarding progress and effectiveness.

During the thirty weeks, the apprentice and leader will begin the multiplication process. Both the facilitator apprentice and director apprentice will be sent out to begin a new group. Depending on the number of members, the apprentices could bring an additional person or couple with them. The group leaders should be cognizant and supportive of the new group, initiating dialogue and praying for the multiplication efforts. Adequate information and support should be provided as the new group begins. At the end of phase two, with the approval of the leader, the group, and appropriate staff member(s), both apprentices will be sent out to start a new group together.

Phase Three – Coach

During this phase of the newly formed small group, the leader is now the coach to the newly commissioned leaders who were once the apprentices. Bi-weekly meetings will continue as part four in Ogden’s book is examined. Questions about spiritual life and new group dynamics will also be discussed. During this last phase, which should last no more than twelve weeks, the new leader should begin praying for an apprentice that he will now begin the process with at the

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154 The director apprentice is not required to start with the facilitator apprentice. Each apprentice could start their own group as an option with working closely with the overseeing ministry
end of phase three. When phase three concludes, the new leader will begin at phase one with that newly appointed apprentice. During this time, the original leader of the sending group will also start looking and praying for a new apprentice with whom to commence phase one. The goal of the leader development plan is to sustain a cyclical motion of development within the small group structure.

The Beta Group

The beta group, which included the author of this project along with two other couples, launched the group in full understanding of the project elements. In June of 2019, three couples, who were already leading in the church, began meeting and discussing ways to multiply more groups. The beta group was established as the test pilot for the leader development plan as well as the “Start” curriculum. The Adult Minister used the Green Acres Baptist Church database to create a report of the targeted demographic who were not attending a group regularly. The group leaders called the people on that list to personally invite them to join the new group. The three couples who began the group had two primary targets, young couples who were not connected to a group, as well as potential leaders who could be equipped to start a new group.

The targeted demographic for the beta group was under forty with families, categorized as “young families” at GABC. The list created from the database was substantial, so it was narrowed down to those who had attended within the past year. For the first group meeting on August 11, 2019, there were twenty-two people in attendance. The group noted the large size and determined quick multiplication efforts would be beneficial. Immediate utilization of the three-week “Start” curriculum began among members. The group embraced the Biblical foundation of
connect, grow, and multiply. After the “Start” curriculum concluded, the group began a Bible study on the book of James.

The facilitator and director identified their apprentice leaders before the group began meeting. The apprentice leaders were chosen based on current small group ministry involvement, as well as potential for starting a new group. The facilitator and coordinator began meeting with their prospective apprentices on a weekly basis to expedite the process for the project’s benefit and to test the plan of development.

The group met on campus on Sunday evenings at 5:30 PM. The leaders decided to utilize childcare at the church, which involved elementary and preschool children attending the Awana program, which meets during the same time. The option for children was the primary factor for the time and location for the group. Ministry programming was provided for children, but adult ministry was absent. This factor provided a favorable opportunity for young families with children to participate in the small group ministry.

Conclusion

The beta group provides a clear opportunity for the testing of the elements proposed in this project. Those elements include a structure, with specific roles and assignments, to ensure the overall function and health of the small group. Within the beta group, each person will be given a specific role as predetermined in the leadership structure. Apprentice leaders will also be appointed for the purpose of intentional leader development. This will allow the leader and apprentice to test the curriculum and the leadership development plan. The beta group will also utilize the “Start” curriculum to launch the first three meetings of the group. At the conclusion of
three weeks, the group will then move into a small group curriculum predetermined by the
groups minister of GABC. The intention of the beta group is to demonstrate the use of the
curriculum and leadership development plan within the small group structure. The success of the
project will be gauged by leaders developed and new groups started in the understanding of
multiplication efforts.
Chapter 4

Results

This project sought to research lay leader development within the context of small group structure and organization, as seen in the model of Jesus. As recognized through the theoretical and theological foundations, Jesus’ model of leader development consisted of three primary phases. These relational stages were identified by the writer as a mentoring relationship, an apprentice relationship, and a coaching relationship. Leader development is focused on equipping group members to start new groups through the method of multiplication demonstrated by Christ. Jesus’ discipleship model was to connect with those who are far from God, to grow them in His likeness, and to multiply leaders into the same field of discipleship. The small group framework should imitate Jesus’ progression, so that leaders may be matured, and new groups will multiply.

Church Data in Comparison with Survey

As mentioned in the ministry context of chapter one, GABC has experienced a decline in worship attendance, as well as small group attendance. A deeper understanding than quantitative figures is required, but the data offers a start to comprehending the nature of the problem. Qualitative measurement offers insight into the health of the church, providing understanding for the overarching issue. It is imperative to study the survey results that measure worship attendance, as well as small group attendance.
Paul declared that the church should grow in all areas into Christ (Ephesians 4:15).

Numerical growth is not the agenda for the church, but it corresponds to the qualitative growth, as well as growth in the likeness of Christ. Thus, numerical data should not be ignored.\textsuperscript{155} The attendance numbers indicate a downward trend. As seen in the figure above, there has been a decrease in worship attendance since 2014.\textsuperscript{156} In the traditional worship service, during that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{155} Ken Hemphill, \textit{Bonsai Theory of Church Growth} (Tigerville, South Carolina: Auxano Press, 2011), 88-89.
\item \textsuperscript{156} There was significant church growth from 1991-2003. From 2003-2008 the there was a seen plateau in attendance and worship participation. From there, a decline began to be seen. For the purpose of this project, a five-year understanding is sufficient.
\end{itemize}
timeframe, no known factors have changed, which could be identified as contributors to the drastic decrease in attendance. David Dykes, the pastor, preaches with the same strength and intensity as he always has. Additionally, the worship pastor has remained the same. The south campus has not made changes in worship either but has added an emphasis on group ministry. A corresponding decrease in attendance for the small group ministry of the church (SMBS) has occurred as well. The total decrease in the small group ministry is 7%, and the total worship decrease is 8%.

Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SMBS Total</th>
<th>Worship Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>2817</td>
<td>4351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>2841</td>
<td>4367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>2759</td>
<td>4087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>2643</td>
<td>3933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>2625</td>
<td>3994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The worship attendance, as compared to small group attendance, is close to maintaining its proportions throughout the year. The slower decline in small group attendance points to the fact that those who are in a group are more likely to stick. However, both areas need adjustment and attention. Within the parameters of the thesis and understanding of the problem, data reveals
the need to develop more leaders with the intention of multiplying more groups. The commonality within the survey results reveals the cause of decline. The leaders of the primary mode of discipleship, the small group ministry, provided alarming results for their understanding and practice of evangelism (section 4 of the survey) and discipleship (section 6 of the survey). These two sections measure the criteria for stagnation or decline within the church.

Curriculum Results

Based on the survey, evangelism and discipleship are the primary practices which are neglected within the small group ministry. When evangelism is not exemplified in the lives of the leaders, it will not thrive in the culture of the group. The same rule applies for discipleship, as well as leadership expansion. Only 50% of the leaders are always comfortable communicating biblical truth to others. This statistic indicates that discussing biblical knowledge in a one-on-one setting is absent for most leaders of the small group ministry.

Table 10.
In the evangelism section (31-40), there is a decrease in “always” responses, as well as a decrease in the discipleship (51-60) section.

Additionally, there is an obvious spike in “never” responses to the evangelism (30-40) section, as well as the discipleship (50-60) section. It is evident that the curriculum must begin to emphasize these two areas for the purpose of spiritual development and growth in the small group. This will better equip leaders to evangelize and disciple in order to promote more leaders within group structure. The survey reveals a common thread among questions that relate to growth within the church. Responses pertaining to evangelism, discipleship, leader development, or missional activities, reveal a downward trend on the Likert scale.

The connect, grow, multiply curriculum will establish a foundation for discipleship and urgency for evangelism. Built-in evangelism training will also reinforce skills and offer
opportunities to practice sharing the gospel. The three circles training in the first group lesson offers a practical approach to evangelism. According to survey results, this instruction is very needed.

Leadership Needs Based on Martin and McIntosh Model

The Martin and McIntosh model is not the prescription for every group or church but can serve as a principle guide for interpreting the needs of leaders. It also provides a scholarly metric that identifies leadership gaps.\footnote{Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh, \textit{Creating Community}, 140.}

Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Number of Group and Leaders Per Division</th>
<th>18-19</th>
<th>Number of Groups</th>
<th>Number of Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married (All Ages)</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single (All Ages)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth (6th-12th grade)</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (K-5th Grade)</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool (Babies - PreK)</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Campus - All SMBS</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SMBS Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2625</strong></td>
<td><strong>185</strong></td>
<td><strong>461</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The graph shows the number of active groups and active leaders serving the average small group attendance of 2,625. According to Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh, there should be seven groups for every one hundred people attending worship.158

Table 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Married Adult Group Growth</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>17-18</th>
<th>18-19</th>
<th>% Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married Division</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>1573</td>
<td>1535</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Married Adult Groups</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the corresponding attendance with the number of groups available. In the married adult division, there was a decrease in the number of groups available by 3%, and the attendance dropped 4%. This shows that leader development and group multiplication is essential for the church to grow. The project’s focus was a leader development plan for the entire church, but the married adult division was impacted because the targeted demographic fell within those parameters.

The data, based off current year to date averages, informs the need for the expansion of leaders and group multiplication to bring attendance to the levels of the worship service. As seen in the chart, Green Acres is operating at a 34% deficit in number of needed groups and 45% in number of needed leaders. More leaders are essential, and additional groups must be formed. As leaders are developed and deployed to start new groups, the decline in attendance will reverse, moving toward growth once again.

---

Table 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Martin and McIntosh Model Based on Current Worship Attendance Average</th>
<th>Number of Groups</th>
<th>Number of Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Minimum Ideal</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Actual</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Operating Percentage</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Percentage Behind</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15.

Small Group Structure and Leadership Manual Results

The small group structure provided crucial guidance for identifying leaders and training them to utilize their gifts. The defined roles afforded opportunities for group members to serve. Those who were considering leadership were given the chance to act on that calling. Historically, the GABC small group ministry had a structure which consisted of only two leaders.
The new structure yields expanded opportunities for group members to participate in ministry. Eight unique positions elevate eight new people to take ownership in the small group. The group does not have to fill every position in order to exist. More than one person can also be enlisted in each of the roles, except facilitator and director. So, the small group could go from two leaders up to eight leaders per group. The idea is to increase active engagement of an enlarged number of group members.

Table 16.

Growth and participation will increase as more participants actively serve. This concept is illustrated in Paul’s analogy of the functioning Body of Christ portrayed in 1 Corinthians 12. Within the group, roles are identified and described so people understand their options for service within the small group.
Results of Leadership Roles

The facilitator in the group, the author of this paper, carried the primary responsibility to develop small group members in Christ through biblical dialogue. The expectation from the leadership manual is for the facilitator to guide discussion centered on God’s Word. To ensure a biblical view of discussion driven small groups, the facilitator should expect to learn from the minister overseeing the represented demographic. This project has revealed that the leadership manual and curriculum alone will not be enough for every facilitator to understand how to lead a group. The overseeing minister bears the responsibility to teach and train leaders serving in their area of stewardship. Modeling should always be a part of the training process. The author, as facilitator, was able to shape the discussion in accordance with the overall vision of the small group ministry. The focus on connect, grow, and multiply must move into daily vernacular as leaders are trained and deployed. Even in the most detailed framework, “It will likely take a hands-on approach by the pastor to get the momentum going. Once you gain momentum, the role of the pastor transitions from key leader to chief cheerleader.”159 The overseeing minister must maintain supervision until other leaders are on board with the process, enthusiastically leading themselves. The project exposed that implementation of a manual and curriculum in isolation will likely not promote a new group or new facilitator.

The facilitator prepared the weekly lesson for the purpose of leading discussion. In contrast, the role of “Sunday School teacher” is designed to teach in lecture format, as opposed to fostering dialogue for the group. Members needed time to understand the shift in procedure that would occur. The emphasis on group dialogue is not explained within the leadership training

material. This will be primarily taught through modeling. The leadership manual cautions the facilitator to avoid talking more than the group, although it does not offer biblical or philosophical reasons for this directive.

As set forth in the leadership manual, the director began serving when the group launched. The role was viewed as a new function. The leadership manual did not offer comprehensive training regarding the position, so the researcher and overseeing minister offered input. One of the most unclear facets of the director’s role was recruiting leaders to fill the other leadership slots. The leadership manual states that the director is responsible to administer the total work of the group by recognizing and enlisting leaders, but there is room to interpret the practical implementation. Another area where clarification was needed was the director’s role for conducting the group meeting. Again, the leadership manual assigns this responsibility but not the specifics. Within the beta group, the director offered the welcome, announcements, prayer, and then moved the group from fellowship to Bible study. It appeared that the director would have benefited from more explicit directions concerning his role.

The project revealed that the director required modeling, in addition to the instructions in the leadership manual. This reiterates the necessity for apprenticeships in both the facilitator and director positions, as well as a detailed strategy. For the project, there was no consideration as to how the first layer of modeling would take place. The researcher provided the modeling necessary for the director. Consequently, the researcher fulfilled the director role in several group meetings.

The secretary position was the primary link between the church staff and the group. The leadership manual offered constructive details for how this position could bolster the overall health of the group. The fulfillment of this role occurred organically.
Leadership Development Plan Results

As seen in the implementation of the group structure, modeling, apprenticeship and coaching are necessary for new groups to flourish. Leadership development is most readily displayed through group multiplication and leader deployment. From the group’s start, the facilitator began meeting with the apprentice facilitator once a week. The meetings were expedited to once weekly, instead of once every two weeks as the plan suggests. The proposed meeting rate allows for weeks that the apprentice or leader cannot meet due to a scheduling conflict. It appeared that the facilitator and director were eager to develop another ministry leader.

According to Barna research in 1999, church members were asked what they were looking for in a leader. The top response, at 87%, was they sought a leader who motivates people to be involved in the local church. The highest-ranking attributes chosen for leaders were to inspire people to get involved, the ability to negotiate a compromise during a conflict, to identify and implement a course of action, the ability to make decisions in the best interest of others regardless of the popularity, and to train and develop other leaders to help.160

The project intervention offered members the opportunity and challenge of developing others. As a result of the leadership development plan, there were two leaders sent out to begin new groups, for a total of two new groups. The first three phases of development and the Ogden Discipleship Essentials benefited the leader and apprentice in establishing a foundation for discipleship. The thorough curriculum will provide the apprentice valuable tools for leading

another person through the same process. The system is easily replicated, regardless of leader demographics. The plan brought the desired result of developing a lay leader who will repeat the process with a new leader.

Table 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>17-18</th>
<th>18-19</th>
<th>% Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married Division</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>1573</td>
<td>1535</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Married Adult Groups</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18.

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<th></th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>17-18</th>
<th>18-19</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1535</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Married Adult Groups</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

There were several results of the intervention worth noting. The married adult division increased from 56 groups to 58 groups, as a result of the intervention. In addition, the married adult division increased from an average of 1,555 to 1,586 during the intervention.
Table 19.

Group Attendance Before and After Intervention

Table 20.

Number of Groups Before and After Intervention
Future Projections with Intervention Design

With the project intervention in place, the projected attendance of the small group ministry within the adult division is expected to grow 29% from 2017–2018 numerical averages (1,535) to 1,986 by the end of 2022. The projected attendance is based on the current and future group dynamics. The 29% is calculated from a new understanding of group design, which will inevitably decrease the amount of people per group. Additionally, the projected rate for group multiplication is 41%. The discrepancy between numerical attendance and the number of groups is due, in part, to the decreasing number of participants per group. The current average, twenty-seven people per group, will most likely decrease to closer to fifteen to eighteen people per group.

Table 21.
The projection of new groups is based off the intervention design, which is one group per year per group. The projections do not take into consideration current groups who may multiply as well. The projected growth is based off new groups participating in the intervention and current groups continuing in the same direction. While the researcher recognizes that current groups will participate in the intervention, projected results will be isolated to new groups in order to avoid inflation of numbers.

Table 22.

![Projected Number of Groups With Intervention](image)

Conclusion

The project provided necessary tools for developing new leaders for the purpose of group multiplication. As seen in the data, numerical growth in available groups was considered a direct correlation of the intervention. The group structure and leader development plan will allow leaders to actively serve in a replicable system for starting new groups. This will directly impact
the overall church worship attendance as well. The key to reaching more people is starting new groups, and the only way to expand groups is by developing and deploying new leaders. As leaders continue to commit to the leader development plan, members will be activated into leadership and new groups will launch.

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161 Allan Taylor, *The Six Core Values of Sunday School* (Canton, GA: Riverstone Publishing Group, 2003), 15
Chapter 5

Conclusion

The problem this project addressed was the lack of leader development and small group multiplication at Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. The aim of the project was to develop a group structure that would empower lay leaders to develop new leaders, resulting in the launch of new groups. Before this project was implemented, there was no system for equipping leaders to multiply groups. Therefore, as seen in previous data, there was stagnation and decline. The decrease in small group attendance directly correlated to the lack of tools and training for developing new leaders. With the implementation of this project at Green Acres Baptist Church, there is a new vision for the expansion of leaders within the small group ministry. The stimulus of vision is necessary to accomplish anything in the church. Additional groups will form as new leaders are activated. Evangelism is only one aspect of the church’s mission, as seen in the research for this project. Discipleship will ultimately lead to the maturing of believers who will then propel others into service with them.

The purpose of this project was to produce a strategy for lay leadership development within the small group ministry of Green Acres Baptist Church. The aim was not to present an exhaustive overview of the ministry methods of Jesus during His time on earth, but rather to discern the processes Jesus used to train His disciples for leadership over the course of three years. The process includes three distinct phases that are consistent with Jesus’ model of leadership.

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discipleship. Jesus spent approximately three years building leaders for the establishment of the Church. Leadership development is the primary means of continuing discipleship efforts within the local church. The implementation of this project has fostered the process for successful group multiplication. Small groups are the primary means for discipleship and the multiplying of leaders within the church. Without activation from member to lay minister, the ministry of the church will decline until it ceases to exist. The clarification of small group organization and leader function within the local church is the sole purpose of this project.

Evaluation and Recommendations

Process for Enlisting Leaders

As a result of the project, the researcher has compiled recommendations to be considered for ongoing research. One key component that needs further examination is the process of leader recruitment. An area where clarification is needed, is determining, under biblical guidelines, who to recruit and based on what evidence. The leader development plan assumes it is known who to approach for training. While the qualifications for leadership are found within the leadership manual, they are not extensive. Going forward, the manual must include expanded instruction pertaining to recruiting, as well as retaining, potential leaders throughout their development. The process emphasizes equipping leaders, but also must incorporate the crucial aspect of enlistment.


166 The leadership manual (found in the APPENDIX), gives qualifications for leadership and expectations of biblical leadership, but it does not speak in terms of recruitment nor does it explain how to identify these characteristics in other potential leaders.
Relating to the process of recruitment, the research should have offered a biblical framework for identifying potential leaders. The leadership manual should have outlined the recruitment protocol, which would be guided by the overseeing minister to maintain biblical integrity. Requirements for a candidate, as well as obstacles to leadership, must be specified. Also, a detailed progression of steps should be designated during this prayerful phase of recruitment.

As part of the enlistment process, group members should be assisted in identifying their spiritual gifts that may or may not be currently utilized. The project aimed to help as many people as possible use their gifts to serve in various capacities. The manual should explain the various leadership levels, along with the corresponding qualifications. For instance, a greeter does not have the same qualifications as a director or a facilitator. The leadership manual should equip group leaders to consider recruitment through scriptural considerations, so the process avoids becoming subjective in nature.

To maintain biblical standards of leadership qualities and characteristics, the specific process should be made clear. Before moving forward in the process, the leader should ask the candidate some pressing questions. Before step one of recruitment, the leader must observe a committed group member for at least six months. This will ensure that the potential leader is viewed as a faithful and mature member of biblical community. The observations must also verify this person’s contribution to the spiritual dialogue of the group. After the six-month observation period, the current leader must discuss the potential leader with the overseeing minister. If both parties agree to move forward, the candidate should be approached, and one-on-one meetings should begin. After prayerful discernment, the current leader should determine if this person is ready to start the apprentice process within the project’s development plan.
Additional Research Methods

Additional research could include a qualitative study using interviews of staff members who oversee certain ministry divisions. The interviews could have provided background information to better understand the culture of GABC from a staff member’s perspective. They would have also offered insight into past endeavors to increase leaders. The staff members could have provided analysis into what methods helped to multiply groups and what did not turn out as expected. Interviews could have provided a list of past curriculums used, as well as a list for possible studies to try going forward.

A quantitative study could have been produced by administering the original survey again after an original study participant went through the curriculum and leadership development plan. The original survey answers could have been analyzed against the participants who have not gone through the leader development plan. This would offer insight as to the program’s effectiveness in maturing leaders. After data was compared, curriculum could be evaluated and adjusted where necessary. If the survey continued to reveal negative trends, the curriculum would be redirected to influence the neglected area of development.

Continued Leadership Development

The leader development plan seems to end after one year, however, the plan for leader development should and will continue at GABC. As part of the evaluation process, there are no provisions and expectations for continuing in development. It must be noted that this project was not intended to become an exhaustive plan for development, but rather to focus on the small group structure of the church. It should be expected that each leader within the small group
ministry continue a development plan overseen by the minister who leads their division. Consequently, the divisional minister must carry the responsibility for developing leaders.

As part of the minister’s plan for continued development, milestones should be set that will aid the small group leader and overseeing minister to create accountability for each leader. This should not be limited to, but should include: weekly newsletter to all leaders to challenge and maintain continued alignment in the ministry, monthly dialogue which includes a personal phone conversation or personal email conversation, quarterly face-to-face meeting over a meal, and annual church wide leadership training.

These practices will maintain contact between the overseeing minister and the lay leader, fostering spiritual health among the leaders in their charge. The weekly newsletter should highlight upcoming church events offered to deepen spiritual development and foster fellowship among group members. It should also offer leadership coaching and advice that will benefit the small group leadership team. The monthly connection by phone or email is vital for strengthening the relationship between leaders and the minister called to shepherd them. The quarterly face-to-face meeting over a meal with the minister provides room for leaders to discuss concerns, plans for multiplication, and progress among developing leaders. This is also an ideal opportunity for the minister to check on the spiritual health of the leader, as well as the health of his or her family. Annual churchwide leadership training will sharpen and maintain vision. This will provide celebration as “wins” are shared, and team is strengthened. Experts on essential topics will be brought in to offer biblical and practical training.
Churchwide Sermon Series

An additional observation that was noted during the evaluation process is the missed opportunity to promote churchwide alignment for the advancement of small groups. As GABC continues to transition toward a groups ministry model for discipleship, momentum can be gained by utilizing the pulpit to shape the church’s understanding of the need for small groups. Under the Sunday School model, the lecture-based approach is how most members understand discipleship. A sermon series could help overcome misunderstandings of small group ministry and smooth the transition to that model.

The sermon series could be as simple as six weeks providing a theological foundation for the purpose of the small group ministry. Within the series, three weeks could focus on the implementation of connect, grow and multiply. During those weeks, every group could study the corresponding action, connect, grow, or multiply. This initiative could energize the members regarding the group model and would shift the momentum from an isolated effort to a churchwide direction. All ages would study the curriculum, including children, students and adults. The churchwide focus would communicate the value, direction and purpose of the small group ministry.

Other Church Settings

Systems put into effect for developing leaders and starting new groups are replicable in nature. Not only are they replicable for the groups ministry at GABC, but they could yield results in other church settings. The process for starting a new group could be applied to any ministry context and within any ministry model. The first goal of the project was to establish small group structure that would foster a discipleship culture. This system would translate to other ministry
contexts as well. The second goal of the project was to create a leader development guide for use by current leaders to help grow future leaders. This also is not limited to GABC and can be used elsewhere. Goal three of the project was to develop a three-week curriculum for new groups to use when they begin meeting. The beginnings of each group will vary, but the principles within the curriculum will transfer to other contexts. The fourth goal was to develop a beta group utilizing the tools established by the project. All churches should share the same objective, to disciple through all means necessary, including through the life changing power of the small group.

Conclusion

The projections considered in the anticipated outcomes came to fruition. As a direct impact of this project, new groups were launched, and leaders are being developed within the system. Two new groups began as a direct result of the project’s implementation, and six additional leaders were sent out to start new groups. The process will continue to be examined, and further adjustments will be made as new scenarios arise. The project accomplished the four goals set, considering the problem addressed. As a result of the project, Green Acres Baptist Church of Tyler, Texas has a replicable plan for developing lay leaders within the small group structure, according to the model of Christ.
Appendixes

Appendix A: Leadership Manual

We are so excited that God has led you to join our team here at Green Acres Baptist Church. We are a church that desires to lives transformed with the truth of Jesus. In order to achieve the vision that God has given us here at Green Acres Baptist Church we want to CONNECT to Jesus, GROW in Jesus and MULTIPLY for Jesus. This Leadership Manual focuses specifically on how to lead out in this way through the Small Group Ministry of our church. Small Groups serve as the primary vehicle for making disciples at Green Acres Baptist Church. Our prayer is for members and attenders to experience authentic community with other believers centered on the Gospel of Jesus and the word of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

What is the goal?

The goal of every Small Group is to help each individual take next steps in their relationship with Jesus. No matter how long or how short of a time we have had a relationship with Jesus, we can all be stretched in our faith and challenged to grow. As with any organization, one of the questions we must ask is, “What are we trying to accomplish?” Green Acres, our goal is the same across the board; from the nursery to senior adults, our goal is to make disciples. We exist to help believers grow and develop in their spiritual walk with Jesus. It is our goal to present the gospel to others in order to see the Holy Spirit transform lives. Through the ministry of Small Groups, we can accomplish an atmosphere where people can grow in Christ through relevant and relational ministry.

This guide serves to answer 3 main questions that most people have:
1. How do Small Groups function?
2. How are Small Groups organized?
3. How can Small Groups transform lives around us?

DISCIPLESHIP IS THE GOAL

CONNECT to Jesus: EVANGELISM
“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Leaders create an atmosphere conducive to those who are disconnected from the church enabling them to connect to Jesus and a local body of believers. The church

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167 The leadership manual was created based off of the research provided in chapter two as well as modifications from GABC’s current manual. This will serve as a replacement to GABC’s current leadership manual. The positions and explanation of positions are also based off of the positions given by Steve Parr in Sunday School that Really Works.
must lead in actions to help new members and guests become assimilated into the life of the group. Leaders create an atmosphere in which members and guests experience direct care and concern for life needs.

**GROW in Jesus: Spiritual Development**
“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Leaders create an atmosphere that encourages people in their sphere of influence to help others become more like Christ in daily living. It is the job of the leader to help believers understand their purpose in helping others come to know Christ and establish them in Christian living.

**MULTIPLY for Jesus: MISSIONAL**
“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

Leaders create an atmosphere of multiplication among the group with individuals and the group at large. Living on mission fuels the focus of the believer from self toward others for the glory of God. Groups on mission are concentrated on how to share the gospel with others and by making room for new believers and new members by multiplying groups.

**IDENTIFIERS FOR GROWTH**
If the target is unclear for the group, then it will be difficult to know whether or not the group is on the correct path or not. Here are some helpful tools to understand what success and growth looks like for the member of a Small Group as well as the leaders in the group.

**FOR THE MEMBER:** The Small Group is successful if he or she is personally experiencing authentic community and spiritual growth. Here are some questions each member should ask in order to help evaluate success:
- Am I growing in intimacy with God? (CONNECT)
- Am I meeting with members of my group regularly for the purpose of accountability? (GROW)
- Am I growing in my personal witness with unbelievers? (MULTIPLY)

**FOR THE LEADER:** The Leader is successful if he or she is facilitating individual and Life Group growth. The leader should ask the following:
- Am I becoming more like Jesus each day? (CONNECT)
- Am I applying what I am encouraging others to apply? (GROW)
• Are our members experiencing accountability, a sense of belonging and love? (CONNECT)
• Are our members’ priorities becoming more aligned with Scripture? (GROW)
• Are our members sharing Christ and pointing others to Christ more and more? (MULTIPLY)
• Are our members thinking about multiplication, missions and others-focused? (MULTIPLY)
Qualifications for Leadership

- A leader must be a follower of Jesus
- Lives a life that reflects the love of Christ to others
- Shows indication of a servant’s heart
- Committed to the reading and application of God’s word
- Attends Green Acres Baptist Church worship services faithfully
- Has been a member of Green Acres for at least 6 months
- Reflects our Church Values of “CONNECT. GROW. MULTIPLY.”
- Committed to developing new leaders through the leader development plan
- Is a fully functioning member of the church
  - Worships privately and corporately faithfully
  - Gives financially to the mission of the church
  - Prays as a committed prayer warrior

Small Group “Wins”
What does a win look like? We win when our values are fulfilled:

- Growing people to live on mission and lead others to Christ
- Members serving on mission in the city and around the world
- Starting new Small Groups and developing new leaders
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

FACILITATOR

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
As the primary spiritual leader of the group, the Facilitator is responsible to develop his or her Life Group members and guests in Christ through biblical discussion. The Facilitator works closely with the director and other team members to promote and accomplish biblical community.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Lead Small Group participants in meaningful Bible study by:
  - Using approved curriculum with God’s Word and God’s Spirit as your ultimate guide
  - Prepare discussions with the needs of the group in mind
- Participates in leadership trainings as they come available through the church
- Expands his or her influence of leadership through enlisting and training an Apprentice Facilitator through the leader development plan
- Arrives at least 15 minutes early to greet guests and members

A Facilitator should consider the following:
- APPLY THE WORD OF GOD: Allow God to challenge you personally and prepare the discussion adequately.
- LEAD THE GROUP BY EXAMPLE: Live on mission and be involved in outreach, establish relationships with group leaders and others, and keep your life transparent while pursuing holiness and purity.
- BE ACCESSIBLE: Be available to your group, utilizing personal notes, calls, texts and email. Greet and get acquainted with as many members and guests as possible each weekend.
- READ WEEKLY EMAILS. Updates, announcements and special instructions are sent week to week and it is the responsibility of the Small Group Leader to read the emails and stay up to date with church happenings.

Please consider the following bad habits to avoid as a Facilitator:
- Talking more than the group – a good goal is 30% from the leader and 70% from the group
- Lack of personal application in your discussion
- Only being in group the week you are leading

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES

CONNECT
- Make attending worship a priority.
• Encourage all group members to attend and participate in worship

**GROW**
• Utilize series resources and refer to what God is teaching you.
• Be a learner of God’s word continuing your growth and the growth of the Apprentice Facilitator.
• Assist other members in meeting pastoral care needs of group members.

**MULTIPLY**
• Be intentional about developing the Apprentice through the leader development plan.
• Be intentional about going on mission trips in the community and around the world and promoting those opportunities in the group.

*SUBSTITUTION POLICY*: If you cannot lead your Small Group for any reason and need a substitute, please try to work out the dates with your apprentice Facilitator first. If you cannot coordinate your schedules, please contact another approved leader to fill in or contact the overseeing minister of your ministry.
DIRECTOR

Main Objective:
As the primary administrator of the group, the Director is responsible for overseeing the overall work and function of the group, relieving the Facilitator of administrative responsibilities. It is the role of the Director to be surrounded by other individuals who will come along side to meet the various areas of ministry needs. The Director works closely with both the Facilitator and other team members to ensure that all key areas of ministry are addressed. The Director ensures the group is properly organized and mobilized for its mission of leading people to connect, grow, and multiply.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Plan and administer the total work of the group by recognizing and enlisting leaders and encouraging them as they fulfill the responsibilities of their specific role
- Direct the group meeting (welcome, announcements, prayer, etc.), starting and finishing on time to allow for an adequate Bible discussion time
- Arrives at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the group to set up the group room and to greet guests and members
- Assists leading group leadership meetings to plan, develop, evaluate, and implement plans to reach group goals and objectives regarding the church values.
- Work closely with the Outreach Coordinator to ensure prospects are being contacted each week.
- Enlists and trains an Apprentice utilizing the leader development plan
- Ensures a Godly lifestyle is being promoted in the group and implemented among group members.
- Encourages and equips leaders to launch a new group

A Director should consider the following:
- BUILD YOUR TEAM: Recruit a team that has a strong desire to connect the disconnected, follow your lead, and has great team chemistry with the director as well as the facilitator.
- MULTIPLY LEADERS: Ensure the leader development plan is being utilized to raise up, train, and send out leaders from your group to start new groups. More groups mean more opportunities to grow and reach others for Christ!
- LEAD THE FLOW OF YOUR GROUP: Ask group greeters and other leadership to arrive 15 minutes early. Ensure that discussions start and end on time.
- STAY INFORMED: The group email will contain all details needed for group each week.
  - Refer to the announcements that are sent each week via email.
  - The Secretary is responsible for retrieving the group roster and keeping it with the group folder as well as recording attendance.
The group folder will be available weekly in meeting rooms on campus. Group folders are as needed for off-campus groups.

- FOR SUCCESS: Be aware of people in the church and community who are not connected to Christ or the church. Invite them to the group!

A Director should consider the following bad habits to avoid:
- Failing to delegate
- Failing to assist in leading bi-monthly or quarterly group leadership meetings
- Working closely with the Facilitator

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES

CONNECT
- Regularly plan outings like lunch after worship or sitting together in worship to build a desire and habit of worship.

GROW
- Incorporate social events into your calendar that encourage Small Group members to engage, invite, and converse with those who are not connected to a church.
- Work with your Facilitator to coordinate activities (inside and outside of the group) that allow members to experience what is being discussed in Small Group.
- Establish clear and consistent communication in the group for any events or needs in the group.

MULTIPLY
- Be intentional about being involved on mission in the community and around the world and help promote these opportunities within the group for members to participate with you.
- Help members serve and get connected in various ministry opportunities on campus.
SECRETARY

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
The Secretary serves as the primary link between the group and the ministry staff office. The Secretary is responsible for completing the necessary group records each week and delivering them to the appropriate Minister on staff. Remember to always take a head count to ensure accuracy of attendance.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Ensure the folder is available for use by group leadership
- Ensure the Director receives the announcements before the beginning of group.
- Processes attendance and guest/new member records accurately
  - Attendance is recorded; both individual and group count
  - Only individuals physically in your group (not those serving in other ministry areas) should be counted.
  - Ensure guest have completed the Guest form
    - Invite guests to join the Small Group. If they decline, register them as a guest.
  - The original copy should be placed back in the folder (white copy); copies are given to Director and Outreach Coordinator (yellow and pink)
- Process member information changes (such as new address, phone numbers, etc.) in similar manner, noting “information change only” on form

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES

CONNECT
- Make worship a priority
- Invite guests to worship with you

GROW
- Keep your own list of prospects for the group.
  - It may be helpful to narrow down your list to 5 people that you are committing to connect to the Small Group.
- Work with other leaders to help identify other members from your group who have the desire to serve and the skills to effectively help you accomplish group goals.
- Realize that you are one of the first contact most members and guests have in the group.
- Help other group members understand the importance of following up with non-members.
- Recognize those who are missing.
  - Those missing are not growing in community with other believers.
- Give others a list of 5 prospects to follow up with as needed.

MULTIPLY
- Help guests understand the importance of joining the Small Group as a functional member of the group for growth and intimacy with Jesus.
- Go on a mission trip and serve in community projects
INTERESTING FACTS

- Enrollment is the list of people your group is committed to serve and minister to not an attendance sheet.
- All leadership should be assertive in increasing enrollment
- A person remains on the attendance roster as long as the group can provide ministry effectively
- Sustained growth in Small Group only comes with the expansion of enrollment.
- 79% Churchgoers who belong to a group are more likely to go to church at least 4 times a month according to Ed Stetzer.168
- A guest to the Small Group may join the group before joining the church

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168 https://factsandtrends.net/2014/06/05/culture-change-recognize-the-value-of-small-groups/
Prayer Coordinator

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
The Prayer Coordinator serves to lead the group in an effective prayer time during the group meeting and throughout the week by various means of communication. It is also the job of the prayer coordinator to help keep the appropriate staff and group leadership informed and updated on the prayer needs of the group.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Pray daily for the needs of members, guests and church
- Provide prayer updates to the group, Director and staff as necessary
- Develop an efficient method of collecting and distributing prayer requests each week
- Ensure that prayer is a key element of each gathering of your group
- Contact and encourage different group members and guests with prayer needs

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES
CONNECT
- Make worship a priority
- Invite guests to worship with you
- Promote prayer gatherings and prayer walks outside of regular group meetings

GROW
- Have a clipboard that can go around the group at the beginning and encourage your members to write their request and information on the paper
- Utilize different technology such as email, Facebook, Groupme, etc. and distribute the requests given in group.
- Have blank notecards available to those attending group to write prayer requests on
- Allow those attending to write prayer requests on the board as they come in then pray for the request during group time
- Have the group break up into smaller groups; then have the groups share prayer needs and then pray for one another in the small groups.
- Provide helpful tools and resources as needed to members and guests about prayer to help them become more effective in their personal prayer lives.

MULTIPLY
- Give group members and guests an opportunity to pray for:
  mission trips, in the city missions, church planters and partners, personal evangelism and group mission projects
Outreach Coordinator

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
The Outreach Coordinator gives leadership in following up with guests and those who are disconnected to the Small Group.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Coordinate the follow-up of group guests:
  - Follow-up with prospects to help move them toward group membership
  - Follow-up with prospects given to you by other church members and staff of the church
- Set the example by being personally involved with evangelism and discipleship among the group and community, and enlisting new prospects to the group role
- Commit to making sure the weekly outreach assignments are happening (note cards, follow up phone calls, texts, emails, etc.)
- Help the group by including other members in the ministry efforts of the group:
  - First Visit to Group:
    - Ensure that all guests receive a Small Group Guest Form to fill out (working with the Secretary).
    - Ensure that the white copy of the form is placed back into your group Small Group Folder, keep the pink copy and the Director is given the yellow copy.
    - Call each first-time guest and follow up with a text or email throughout the week inviting them back to the Small Group
    - Record notes such as family member names, occupation, and other conversation starters to pass along to staff and other members of the group
  - Return Visit to Group
    - Invite them to join the group
    - Indicate on guest form that they are a “returning guest”
    - Only fill out guest form for 3 consecutive weeks or until they join the group
  - Small Group Events
    - Call all group prospects to attend a group social event
  - Every 6 Weeks
    - Call everyone on group roster who is not a group member
*This could be done together with all members, not just the outreach coordinator alone. It is a good idea for the group to come together and have a “call night” with dinner together.
Member Coordinator

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
The Member Coordinator is responsible for ministering to and caring for those group members and guests assigned specifically to your group. The Member Coordinator also helps ensure member participation in Small Group, social events, as well as ministry projects. The member coordinator should be working to help identify leaders within the group and sharing them with the Director of the group.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Call everyone on the roster who is a member for special events or group socials
- Call every member who has been missing for 3 consecutive weeks
- Make notes concerning prayer needs, comments and concerns
- Work with the Director and other team members to help all members serve in the group and live on mission
- Work with other leaders in your group to determine individual needs within the group
- Contact each member of your group via phone call, text, email, hand-written note at least once a month
  - Check to see how each member of your group is doing
  - Find out if there are any prayer requests
  - Ascertain if there is a ministry need the group can meet
  - Identify information that should be shared
- It is best to assume that each member wants to know how to be involved
- Communicate any ministry needs either spiritual, emotional, or physical to the Coordinator, Facilitator, and Prayer Coordinator
- Serve as an encourager to guests and members
- Partner with other group leaders to ensure effective ministry for the group

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES
CONNECT
- Make worship a priority
- Invite members to worship with you

GROW
- Consider having a new member’s dinner or event where you introduce new members to the group leadership and explain the different aspects of purposes of ministry in the group.
- Help plan social activities to build relationships within the group
- Ensure others are assisting in following up with absent members
- Facilitate ministry needs with members
- Provide helpful tools and resources as needed to members to grow in their relationship with Jesus
- Work with other leaders in your group to determine individual needs within the
group
- Contact each member of your group via phone call, text, email, hand-written note at least once a month
  - Check to see how each member of your group is doing
  - Find out if there are any prayer requests (Working with Prayer Coordinator)
  - Ascertain if there is a ministry need the group can meet
  - Identify information that should be shared
- It is best to assume that each member wants to know how to be involved
- Communicate any ministry needs either spiritual, emotional, or physical to the Coordinator, Facilitator, and Prayer Coordinator
- Serve as an encourager to guests and members
- Partner with other group leaders to ensure effective ministry for the group

MULTIPLY
- Encourage group members to participate in mission trips and ministry projects in the community.
- Encourage group members to meet the needs of others in the group

AVOID the following bad habits of a Member Coordinator:
- Failing to contact your members each month
- Failing to communicate appropriate needs to the Facilitator and Director of your group
- Gossiping prayer requests
Social Coordinator

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
The Social Coordinator is responsible for providing opportunities for members to build relationships with one another and help assimilate new members and prospects into the group through social events.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Plan meaningful activities and fellowships for group members and prospects
- Make sure the outreach coordinator and member coordinator as well as other group leaders are aware of planning of events by working together to ensure everyone’s involvement
- Show sensitivity to costs involved for each individual
- Arrange for childcare if needed and appropriate
- Encourage the group to bring those who are not connected to a Small Group for each event.

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES

CONNECT
- Make worship a priority
- Invite members to worship with you
- Plan events after church to encourage worship attendance

GROW
- Smaller groups may need monthly social events
- Larger groups may want to have one quarterly or twice a year group wide social events
- To reach a larger demographic, social events should try to meet in homes or public places rather than the church.
- Consider posting events on a group Facebook page, text messages, emails, etc. that will reach all guests and members of the group
- Consider calling each guest and group member to ensure the awareness of a group social event and avoid leaving anyone out

MULTIPLY
- Plan a time to emphasize mission trips or to celebrate mission efforts after a mission project or if someone in the group has returned from a mission trip
- Go on a mission trip and help promote mission trips and community mission projects
- Be intentional about helping start new groups

Avoid the following bad habits for Social coordinators:
- Scheduling socials that conflict with a church wide event.
- Failing to communicate group social events well
- Having a group Social event with no purpose
Greeters

MAIN OBJECTIVE:
Greeters are responsible for creating an environment where group guests have a friendly and positive first impression and returning members are welcomed. Small Group greeters are responsible for the guests from the moment they enter the group room door to the time they leave the church.

YOUR PART ON THE TEAM
- Recruit volunteers who will greet people as they walk in the door
- A greeter will sit with new guests and make them feel comfortable and welcome through the duration of their visit including worship
- The greeter will show them around the church such as Student areas, Children areas, nursery, and sanctuary
- The greeter will take initiation in inviting guests to group socials or lunch after church
- Welcome everyone to the group
- Arrives 15 minutes early to greet guests and members
- Ensure awareness of a first time guest to the Secretary

IDEAS TO HELP FULFILL CORE VALUES
CONNECT
- Make worship a priority
- Invite members and guests to worship with you
GROW
- Do everything possible to connect guests to members making them feel welcome.
- Ensure that every guest is escorted to where they need to go. Share information about group events.
- Try to connect guests to members in your group with similar professions or interests.
- Coordinates coffee or snacks for members and guests
- Be sure to connect the guest with the Secretary, Outreach Coordinator and Facilitator and other leadership of the group
MULTIPLY
- Do everything possible to connect guests to members making them feel welcome
- Go on a mission trip and serve in group mission projects in the community

Avoid the following bad habits for a Greeter:
- Failure to be early to group
- Not connecting guests with group members
- Talking only with other greeters instead of guests
FLOW OF GROUP

THE BIG 20\(^{169}\)

WHAT IS THE BIG 20?
The first 15 and last 5 minutes of group are crucial to reaching guests

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE BIG 20
- Background Music
  - Turn on upbeat music before everyone arrives.
- Personal Contact
  - Meet, greet, and connect with all guests in group.
- Punctuality
  - Start and finish the group on time.
- Announcements
  - Make sure they are creative and effective.
- Personal Invitations
  - Extend a personal invitation to all guests to attend lunch or a social event.

SMALL GROUP TIMELINE SAMPLE
All of our Small Groups are designed to be 75 Minutes in length. Here is the breakdown of the time…

:00  Background Music
:01  Meet/Greet/Connect
:10
:15  Welcome/1-2 Announcements (Done by Coordinator)
:20  Discussion (35-40 Minutes)
:25
:30
:35
:40
:45
:50
:55
:60  2 Quick Announcements
:65  Prayer Requests
:70  Personal Invitations from members to guests- Lunch or other events
:75  Dismiss

\(^{169}\) The Big 20 was given during a lecture at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas during a leadership discussion and has been modified to fit the needs of GABC.
Scripture Passages for Ministry Occasions
Caring for others. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 says, “25 that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (ESV).

Offer yourself to be available to their needs. “15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15, ESV).

In the times that you are unsure of what you should say, don’t say anything and just be present. Become a very good listener. James 1:19 says, “19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (ESV).

Be sure that all ministry efforts are covered in prayer. “6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7, ESV).

Being in community with other believers gives greater opportunity for ministry to take place. If Small Groups are done well, it minimizes the opportunity for someone to “fall through the cracks” of Green Acres Baptist Church. Genesis 2:28 say, “It is not good for man to be alone.”

The following passages serve as a tool to help give comfort and encouragement when needed:

- Sick- Psalm 6; 41; 67
- Grieved- Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:28-31; John 14:1-3, 18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Matthew 5:4; Romans 5:1-6
- Caring for aging parents- Proverbs 23:22; Psalm 71:9; 1 Timothy 5:4
- Needy/Homeless- Psalm 121
- Coping with death- Psalm 23; 1 Corinthians 15:55, 57; John 14:19
- Guilty- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- Aging- Psalm 92:14-15; Proverbs 16:31
- Joyful- Psalm 33:18-22; James 1:17
- Bereaved- 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 21:1-7; Romans 8:35-39
- In Crisis- Job 28:12-28; Proverbs 8; Isaiah 55:6
- Terminally Ill- Philippians 4:6-7; Psalm 90:12; Psalm 23; 27; 121; Revelation 21:4; Romans 5:1-5
AGENDA FOR LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

It is recommended that Small Group Leadership Teams should meet at least every other month for prayer, sharing updates on prospects, various ministry situations, evaluation and planning. Pray for your group in each meeting for direction and strategies needed for group.

Each meeting should always consider:
- How can our group get better?
- How can we reach more people?
- How can we achieve our goals?
- How can we implement action plans and accountability?

Prospect/Guest follow-up
- Share information about each prospect and guest since the last meeting
- Who joined the group since our last meeting?
- Share any outreach or evangelism plans

Membership/Care Update
- How are we following up with each new member since our last meeting?
- Are they staying connected?
- Are we meeting the needs of our members and guests?
- Discuss prayer needs or ministry needs

Socials/Events
- Share upcoming plans
  - Include ways to communicate plans to each member and guest
- Discuss how plans can be leveraged to connect new people
NEW MEMBER FELLOWSHIP SAMPLE

An easy way to help new members understand your group structure and the people in your group better is by introducing them through a “New Member Fellowship.” A simple way of conducting a New Member Fellowship is a dinner in a group member’s home. Below you will find an agenda to help you focus the gathering in order to make it the most effective time together.

- Fellowship- make the atmosphere welcoming to allow natural fellowship to occur
  - It may be helpful to include name tags for this event
- Prayer
- Introductions
- Group Leadership Positions
- Group Calendar- upcoming events to be involved in

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTENTIONAL CARE

1 Corinthians 12:26 says that if one part of the body suffers we all suffer together. Small Group allows all members of the body to stay connected and serves as the conduit in which ministry to every need to every member takes place. Take time to help them understand the need not only for them to be ministered to, but to minister to others through them as well.
Appendix B: Leadership Organizational Chart
WEEK 1 – CONNECT to Jesus

QUESTION: How would you describe the word, purpose?

*Hint: The reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists according to Webster’s Dictionary.*

QUESTION: What would you say is the purpose of the church?

READ TOGETHER: “16 The eleven disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped, but some doubted. 18 Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:16-20)

FACILITATOR: It is very clear from Jesus’ prescribed commissioning that the church must be immersed in one primary purpose which is to make disciples. This verse has transcendent value for the church. It gives the church an ultimate aim and clear purpose for their existence. In clear terms, discipleship is the practice of helping others follow Jesus. The disciples were sent to go, meaning they were sent out in the terms of mission oriented activity for the purpose of discipleship. Discipleship should result in the disciple learning to live and minister in Christlikeness. The disciple is now to repeat the process through evangelism, developing others in Christlikeness, and multiplying others into the mission of Christ.170 The Great Commission

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will be the focal point of understanding the model of Christ and the expectation for discipleship and lay leader development. This is known as the Great Commission. These are the last words from Jesus that He gave the disciples before His ascension. Jesus essentially uses these last moments to reiterate everything that He has taught them the previous three years of Jesus’ ministry and what the disciples saw from Jesus. Jesus says the only thing you are going to be about until my return, is this. You are to make disciples.

FACILITATOR: Use the following illustration to learn about the importance of not drifting from God’s mission. It was October 25, 2010 when a massive earthquake set off a tsunami that struck the Indonesian Islands. The tsunamis leveled whole villages, hundreds were dead and missing. This came to a shock to the islanders that they were given absolutely no warning of the incoming tsunami. 6 years earlier, a tsunami warning system was put into place utilizing buoys off the island. The buoys were designed to measure unusual wave heights and transmit that information back to the islands. This didn’t happen. The buoys became detached and drifted away. Because of this drift, the buoys were no longer operating within their design leaving hundreds of people with no warning of their death. This is the danger for the church today. If the church becomes detached from its purpose, if the church begins to float aimlessly through the sea it only leaves those who are far from God and without the Gospel with no hope of having life.

Question: How do you know if you are living according to God’s purpose?

Question: How are we to defend ourselves against the dangers of drift?

Hint: VISION is the clarifying agent that keeps us as individuals and as a church attached to the purpose that God has set before us.

READ TOGETHER: Proverbs 29:18, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

FACILITATOR: It is the vision that keeps the individual and the church from drifting. It is important to recognize that the vision is what keep the church aligned with God’s design and it is the same truth of our small group. Andy Stanley says this, “The vision is a mental picture of what could be… fueled by a conviction that it should be.” But our fueling conviction is because of what God says in His word and so if we are going to be aligned in the design of God we must know what that design is. God’s word is clear as to the design of individuals and the church. Right before Jesus ascended, Jesus gives the disciples the clarifying design. He gave the disciples their mission that they are going to be about while waiting for the return of the Lord and this mission remains the same for you and for me and for Green Acres Baptist Church. The vision of Green Acres Baptist Church and for our small group is this: “Transforming lives with the truth of Jesus.” When we are asked as leaders and members in the church, and as participants in the kingdom work that God is doing here at GABC, what is our Small Group about? Our answer is “Transforming lives with the truth of Jesus.” We don’t want there to be any confusion in the community or around the city what we are about here at GABC and what our Small Group is about. Because it is only the truth, the Gospel of Jesus that will transform someone’s life. The morals of Jesus can change your behavior, but the Gospel of Jesus will transform every part of your being.
QUESTION: How are we to realize whether or not we have drifted from the mission that God has given us?

QUESTION: Do you think it is easy to see when you as an individual or us as a small group are drifting from our design?

FACILITATOR: If you imagine traveling along I-20 and you are headed all the way over to the East Coast and your final destination is Atlanta, Georgia, then this is the vision. This is where you are wanting to end up on your trip and this is where you are driving. the destination is the vision, the road is our ministry efforts, but the values are the guardrails that keep us on the right path. We have three values that will accomplish the vision based on Matthew 28:16-20. We must understand that the values that we are putting in place are not just catchy words, they serve as the guardrails of our highway. Jesus gave examples of this all throughout the course of His ministry with His disciples that will serve as guardrails for us as individuals and for our small group. The guardrails that will keep us in line with the great commission are: (1) CONNECT to Jesus, (2) GROW in Jesus, and (3) MULTIPLY for Jesus.

QUESTION: What does it mean to CONNECT to Jesus?

QUESTION: Think about your best friend growing up or your best friend currently, what does it take for you to CONNECT with that person?

FACILITATOR: If we are going to fulfill the vision of Green Acres Baptist Church, then we must connect to Jesus and HIS Church and we must also help others connect to Jesus and His church. Everything about Jesus in His ministry efforts were about connecting to others.
READ TOGETHER: *Mark 1:16-20,* “16 As he passed alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon’s brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 17 “Follow me,” Jesus told them, “and I will make you fish for [people.” 18 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 Going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat putting their nets in order. 20 Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.”

QUESTION: Who made the initial connection?

QUESTION: Why did the fishermen leave their nets? What did Jesus tell them to do?

QUESTION: Do you think the same calling applies to you and I today?

FACILITATOR: Jesus called them to follow Him. He said, “come and connect with me.” Jesus is the one who made the initial connection first. He connected to them. In the same way, we are to live out the example of Christ and connect others to Christ. Not only are we to be connected to Christ but through evangelistic efforts, we should help others connect to Him. This is how we can live out the great commission. In the first part of the great commission, Jesus says, “Go therefore and make disciples.” GO indicates that we are to Go and Connect OTHERS to Christ and TO His church. This is the first expectation of the discipleship process is to evangelize and help others connect to Jesus Christ. Jesus taught His disciples that the reason He came here on earth was to seek and save the lost.¹⁷² The lost are those who do not know the truth of Jesus and

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are not in a saving relationship with Him. Therefore, discipleship must include the act of evangelism according to Jesus. “The message of evangelism, called the ‘Good News’ in the New Testament, is that salvation has come through Jesus Christ.” The efforts of evangelism are the strategic actions to help people understand the gospel and know how they should then respond. “To the follower of Jesus, lost people are of utmost importance. Jesus had a heart for lost people. If we are to be His followers, we too need to have a heart for lost people. The eighteenth-century pastor Charles Spurgeon once stated, ‘Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that’ Jesus had a heart for lost people, and so will His followers.”

QUESTION: How does this change your perspective in how you should live as a follower of Jesus?

QUESTION: What does this mean for our small group?

QUESTION: What are some ways that we as a group can help others CONNECT to Jesus?

FACILITATOR: It is understood in order for baptism to take place, people converting to following Christ must take place. This gives evidence that as part of the biblical discipleship process, evangelistic efforts are a necessity in the process of discipleship. This would include the action of proclamation of the gospel, helping others come to know Christ, and see through their

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decision in a public profession of faith in baptism.\textsuperscript{175} In preparations for Jesus to come, John the Baptist preached repentance to all who would hear. Jesus continued this theme and modeled this theme in the first step of His discipleship process. John chapter three, Jesus confronts Nicodemus and teaches what it means to repent and be born again.\textsuperscript{176} Jesus was evangelizing and teaching Nicodemus what it means to have a new life that is found only be the gift of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{177} A similar instance took place in John chapter four with the woman at the well. Jesus connected with the woman and taught what it truly meant to be a disciple. He told her to repent of her sins and in the way she was currently living. Jesus modeled for the disciples the example of connecting with others at all cost for the purpose of evangelism. Jesus modeled that nothing would deter Him or keep Him from connecting with this woman for the purpose of making the gospel known to her.\textsuperscript{178}

God desires for mankind is that they would come to a saving faith in Jesus. God desires for all men to repent and be reconciled unto Himself (2 Peter 3:9). John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (ESV). There is further support of this understanding throughout the book of Acts. Acts 14 describes and Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey living out intentionally the great commission. Paul went only to preach the gospel on this missionary journey. As Paul preached he was helping people understand the truth of the gospel and giving

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\textsuperscript{178} M. S. Mills, \textit{The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record} (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1999).
\end{flushright}
the hearer an opportunity to respond by faith to that message. Mark 16:17 expresses the same expectation of evangelism saying to the believer to go in all the world and preach the gospel. In reality, the beginning of the great commission in the second participle is a declaration to go and evangelize.179 After the new believer is baptized, they are then a part of the body of Christ.

QUESTION: How can we as individuals be more intentional about helping others connect to Jesus?

QUESTION: Why is baptism such a clear part of discipleship according to Jesus?

QUESTION: Because of the emphasis of baptism by Jesus, how should this shape our view of baptism?

QUESTION: What can we do as we leave to be more dependent on the Lord in the things discussed?

WEEK 2 – GROW in Jesus

FACILITATOR: Review the previous week’s lesson and read together the great commission again.

READ TOGETHER: “16 The eleven disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped, but some doubted. 18 Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:16-20)

FACILITATOR: The third participle but the second value that is seen in the great commission is to GROW in Jesus. Jesus says to teach or observe all that Christ commanded (Matthew 28:20). The Great Commission does not end with evangelistic efforts or to simply make that initial connection with Jesus but gives explicit expectations for growth through teaching and abiding to the commands of Jesus. The “teaching” implies a pattern of ongoing training and development within the disciple’s life. 180

QUESTION: What are some things you do as an employee if you want to get better at your job?

QUESTION: What does it take for an athlete to master their given sport?

QUESTION: How can we develop and grow as a follower of Jesus?

FACILITATOR: Jesus modeled this for the disciples throughout His three-year ministry here on earth. Jesus continuously taught and developed the disciples to the point of ability of going out on their own. Jesus called the disciples and said, “Follow Me.” This was the first step of abiding to the teachings of Jesus. After the disciples abandoned all to follow Jesus, they set out on a course of intentional personal relationships with Jesus for the purpose of developing Christlikeness. “For the twelve, the call to discipleship was a call to immerse their lives in the words of Jesus.”

QUESTION: What can we do as individuals to observe and to abide to the commandments of Jesus?

QUESTION: How are we to keep all the commandments of Christ?

FACILITATOR: The teaching component of the great commission is the primary route in which the disciple grows in their relationship with Jesus. Paul gives a clear indication as to the aim of the disciple.

READ TOGETHER: Ephesians 5:1-2, “Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children, and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.

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181 See Matthew 4:18-22
182 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, Disciple Making Is . . ., 73.
QUESTION: How are we as followers of Jesus but still a broken people supposed to be imitators of God?

FACILITATOR: As disciples are being taught and developed, Christlikeness will be formulated within the individual. When the great commission says, teach or observe all that I have commanded you. When Jesus was pressed by one of the religious scribes to give an answer to what the greatest command is, Jesus gave this as His answer:

READ TOGETHER: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40, ESV).

FACILITATOR: There is a summation of the commandments that Jesus is pointing to for His disciples to understand that this is the focus of their development. In Matthew 4:17, the reader is introduced to Jesus’ public ministry. Jesus announces what He will be doing for the following three years before His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension and He places emphasis on reaching out to the lost. This announcement begins the ministry of Jesus as He calls disciples to follow Him. Then the rest of Jesus’ time with the disciples is the training ground that Jesus

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utilizes for the purpose of spiritual growth. Matthew chapters five through seven give the understanding that Jesus was training the disciples by what they were seeing as well as what they were hearing from Jesus. This gives great evidence of the mentoring nature of Jesus’ relationship during this teaching phase.\textsuperscript{184} The ultimate purpose found in the training and teaching of the disciples from Christ is to be more like Christ. Therein lies the foundational understanding for the discipleship process to produce Christ-likeness.\textsuperscript{185} Jesus makes this clear in the Gospel of Luke and says, “\textit{A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40, ESV)}.” Jesus said specifically to teach the commands and truth of Jesus which gives no room for a disciple not to participate.\textsuperscript{186} After Jesus called the disciples what did He say to them?

READ TOGETHER: Mark 1:17, “\textit{I will make you BECOME…. Fishers of men.}”

FACILITATOR: This indicated that Jesus is going to grow these men to mature faith. He will help them become fishers of men.

QUESTION: What expectations do you think Jesus had for the disciples? Do you think He expected them to have all things figured out?

\textsuperscript{184} A.B. Bruce, \textit{The Training of the Twelve}, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1988), 41.


QUESTION: How does this show us the importance of you and I being willing to participate and allow the Lord to grow us?

QUESTION: How is this type of growth to be developed in our small group?

QUESTION: What can we do as individuals to foster this with one another?

FACILITATOR: Discipleship takes place in the New Testament when men and women are spending time with one another in such a way that each of them are challenged to live according to God’s word. Discipleship gives the opportunity for friendship, guidance, and intimacy which can all take place within the small group. Just as through the efforts of evangelism it is by grace alone through faith alone, it is also evident that the growth of the believer through the teaching of God’s word is completely dependent on God as well. Jesus’ model of growing believers through teaching is understood through the lens of Hebrews 12:2 which teaches that by the Holy Spirit our eyes are kept on Jesus who is the author and perfecter of our faith. All of Jesus’ teachings were aimed at the disciples to be conformed to His likeness and this is seen as the purpose of the teaching stage of Jesus’ ministry. There are three primary elements for people to grow in the likeness of Christ after salvation. The first thing is the word of God, the second thing is the spirit of God and the third thing is God’s people.

QUESTION: How does this change the way you view your participation in the small group?


189 Paul Pettit, Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A community approach to becoming like Christ (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 44.
QUESTION: If God’s people are necessary for growth in Christ, how important is it to be an active participant in the small group?

QUESTION: If Jesus says we are all important to the growth of others, what does that mean about you personally?

FACILITATOR: Our story is a key element in helping others follow Jesus. Everyone has a unique story in how God saved you and helped you grow in His likeness. There is an exercise to help share our story with the group and to help foster an authentic biblical community. The Exercise is called “3X3’s.” In this process of sharing your story, you will share three significant people that influenced your life, three significant places that influenced your life, and three significant events. It is the goal for each person to share their story during our group time. We will begin this next week with two-three people sharing their story and we will do this for the next couple of weeks until everyone has had the opportunity to share. This is going to help in a significant way to better understand one another and to help others grow toward Christ.
WEEK 3 – MULTIPLY for Jesus

QUESTION: Have you ever been overwhelmed with a task or a job before?

FACILITATOR: The task of the great commission seems overwhelming to all believers. It seems like a task that could never be conquered. However, there are two things that we need to be reminded of.

READ TOGETHER: 18 Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

QUESTION: What is the first thing that Jesus said when addressing the disciples? (Hint: “All authority”)

QUESTION: What is the very last thing that Jesus promises to the disciples? (Hint: “I am with you always”)

FACILITATOR: When Jesus gives the impossible task of discipleship, He promises that we will have His power and His presence to accomplish the task. Although the task is overwhelming, we have the tools to accomplish it and the vehicle to arrive which is the Church. As disciples who CONNECT to Jesus and GROW in Jesus, the byproduct will be multiplication. Since the
beginning, there is an expectation to multiply. Multiplication takes place when God’s people are sent out in order to start new works with new people to help CONNECT others to Jesus. It is producing more followers of Christ and this is embedded from the original design of God Himself in Creation.

READ TOGETHER: *Genesis 1:26-28, “26 Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”*

QUESTION: What sticks out to you in this passage? What is the first truth that is seen?

QUESTION: Why is it important to know that we are made in the image of God?

QUESTION: What does this text say about multiplication?

QUESTION: Being the first command to man, how should this influence the way we think about multiplication?

FACILITATOR: In Genesis 1:27, you see that God created man in the image of God, and then you see in Genesis 1:28, the command to man to be fruitful and MULTIPLY! This is the first command. Multiplication is not for the purpose of adding more people to the church it is the
understanding that you are multiplying more image bearers across to the ends of the earth. The idea of multiplication is for followers of Jesus to subdue the earth in such a way that the image of God is spreading across the globe. This is why Jesus stays in the same global understanding when He says to make disciples of, “all nations.” Jesus took the command found in Genesis chapter one and gave New Testament feet to the strategy in how it would be accomplished. This did not end with the Old Testament but the efforts of multiplication are seen throughout the book of Acts.

READ TOGETHER: Acts 6:1-7, “Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

QUESTION: What was happening to the Church during this time? (Hint: disciples were increasing; people were being CONNECTED to Christ)
QUESTION: What does this passage say that the disciples were devoted to?

QUESTION: What does verse 7 say specifically about multiplication?

FACILITATOR: It says in verse seven that the word multiplied. There is no such thing as a magic formula for church growth or expansion but it is not coincidence that they were devoted to prayer and God’s word and multiplication happened.

QUESTION: What does this mean for our small group?

QUESTION: How does this speak to our core values to CONNECT, GROW, and MULTIPLY?

FACILITATOR: The design of the church is to do exactly what Jesus says to do which is to CONNECT, GROW and MULTIPLY. This is God’s design from the beginning of time.

QUESTION: How can we as a small group commit to multiplication?

FACILITATOR: We must commit to the efforts of multiplication. That means that we are not here just to connect to one another. We are here to CONNECT to Jesus, GROW in Jesus, so that we may MULTIPLY for Jesus. There will be a day that we send people out from our group to start new groups so that others may be connected to Christ as well. This is not a splitting of the group; this is the multiplication of God’s kingdom. When we have the opportunity to send people out to start a new group, we should be rejoicing that God is using our group to advance His kingdom and to raise up leaders to help lead others. As the disciple is being developed, the next step for the individual is to take part in the process of discipleship with other individuals. This
next phase of discipleship is when the disciple is no longer just a learner but an active participant in the great commission to now go and make disciples. We want a group that is committed to the one thing that Jesus called us to do.

QUESTION: How does this change your purpose as you gather each week in our small group?

FACILITATOR: As Jesus called, He told the disciples in that if they follow Him, He will make them fishers of men. Jesus from the beginning of His calling to the disciples had intentions of developing them for the purpose of sending them out. This is the third aspect of discipleship. Disciples of Jesus were never meant to stay in place but rather to go. This goes back to the importance of the first participle, “Go.” However, the indication is that because you are developed in Christlikeness and are continuing to be developed then the command is to go and make disciples. Discipleship is cyclical in nature according to the great commission. “In a very real sense, a disciple is a person who has been ‘summoned to be sent. Any discipleship scheme that leaves out ministry is ineffective. Jesus trained them to do something: fish for men and be sent out to preach.” Being sent to be is the idea of multiplication. Every disciple has the obligation to go and make disciples of all nations. Repeating the process to the ends of the earth.

QUESTION: How can we as a small group help protect against the concept of stagnation? How can we make sure that we are always thinking about multiplication?

QUESTION: How can we make sure we are starting new groups every year?

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190 Matthew 4:19.

191 Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, Disciple Making Is . . ., 74.
FACILITATOR: This is why Jesus leaves the disciples with the Great Commission to remind them of their primary responsibility to make disciples who are also making disciples. The primary responsibility of every follower of Jesus is to realize in the midst of this passage are the discipleship efforts are not taking place in the power of man but rather in the power of God. Jesus is reminding the disciples they are being sent under the power and authority of Jesus.

“Jesus is the ground of our going. When Jesus sends, he sends not merely to evangelize but in his power to make disciples. Under his authority, the so-called Great Commission begins with Jesus, not our great effort, and ends with Jesus – ‘I am with you always, to the end of the age’”192

Discipleship gives the church an ultimate aim and purpose for their existence. Discipleship is the primary responsibility that Jesus proclaimed. It is still the reason today for every follower of Christ in the church to partake in. Since these words are still true of the purpose for the church today, the church should be a vehicle used to summon all those who know Christ toward this mission. “Discipleship is not primarily a matter of what we do. It is an outgrowth of what we are.”193 This is the commissioning of all disciples until the return of Jesus. The great commission gives a greater understanding to the unique model of discipleship in which Jesus is after for all believers.194

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Appendix D: Survey Questions

Section 1 – Worship

1. Attending weekly worship services takes priority in my schedule.
2. I feel closer to God when I am worshipping.
3. Worship prompts me to give thanks to God.
4. I tithe 10% of my income to my place of worship.
5. I receive strength from praising God.
6. I am able to praise God through difficult times.
7. Worship causes me to have an attitude of wonder and awe toward God.
8. I attend a corporate worship service.
9. I give beyond my regular tithe to missions or ministry projects.
10. I receive spiritual renewal when attending church worship services.

Section 2 – Spiritual Maturity

1. Prayer is a part of my daily life.
2. My daily activities show that God is my highest priority.
3. My daily routine includes Bible reading and study.
4. When I pray, it changes how I view and interact with the world.
5. I read or listen to spiritual growth resources.
6. When life changes or issues arise, I seek biblical answers through spiritual resources.
7. My bible reading/study increases my faith in God.
8. When temptation arises, I pray for Godly wisdom.
9. I am quick to confess anything in my character that does not look like Christ.
10 I am pursuing habits that are helping me become more like Jesus.

Section 3 – Loving and Serving Others

1 When there are problems in my relationship with others, I seek to resolve them.
2 I receive joy from giving my time and talents to my church.
3 Those closest to me would say my life is a reflection of giving more than receiving.
4 I use my time and resources to bless or help others.
5 I enjoy meeting the needs of others without expecting anything in return.
6 I look for ways to use my God-given abilities to help others.
7 I give my time or resources to global mission projects.
8 I see my painful experiences as opportunities to minister to others.
9 I participate in local mission or community service projects.
10 My service in a local mission/community project brings me joy.

Section 4 – Evangelism

1 I feel comfortable explaining my beliefs to others.
2 I have a passion for sharing God with people in other cultures.
3 I look for opportunities to share my faith with others.
4 I look for opportunities to build relationships with those who don’t know Jesus.
5 I am developing a specific list of people with whom to witness.
6 I am confident in my ability to share my faith.
7 I seek out people to invite to church events or services.
8 I feel personal responsibility to share my faith with those who don’t know Jesus.
9 I invite others to church events or services.
10 I share my personal testimony with others.

Section 5 – Small Group Involvement
1 My circle of healthy, transparent relationships is growing.
2 I meet regularly with a group of Christians for fellowship and accountability.
3 I have an easy time receiving advice, encouragement and correction from other Christians.
4 I am growing closer to a group of Christians.
5 My Christian group helps me grow in my relationship with God.
6 I seek out other Christians to help me move forward in my spiritual life.
7 I meet regularly with a group of Christians for accountability.
8 I look to other Christians for spiritual encouragement.
9 I allow people in my Christian group to know the real me.
10 I have a group of Christian friends that I can call on when there is a crisis in my life.

Section 6 – Making Disciples
1 I connect with others for the purpose of helping them grow toward maturity in Christ.
2 I consider myself as a teacher of the Word of God.
3 I am developing myself as a leader who can impact the spiritual growth of others.
4 I am a catalyst in helping other people connect with each other.
5 I am comfortable in communicating Biblical truths to others.
6 Other people seek me out for spiritual guidance.
I help others understand how to share their personal testimony.

As part of my Christian responsibility I help others become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I help people become involved in serving others.

I model my faith in a way that others will see Christ in me.
Appendix E: Leader Development Plan

The expectation is for every Facilitator and Director to use this plan with their prospective apprentices for each small group. The facilitator and director are the only roles required to have an apprentice but the other leadership roles are not excluded from the opportunity to participate in the leadership development plan and are encouraged to also find an apprentice. Once you had identified your apprentice, you will then need the following resources:

- Bible
- Pen
- Start Curriculum
- Leadership Manual

The Leader and the apprentice leader will utilize these resources and will walk through three phases of intentional development for the purpose of small group multiplication. For each phase of the leadership development plan, the apprentice for the director and facilitator will begin meeting one on one. The director or facilitator will work out the schedule of the meeting once every other week with each of their apprentices. This meeting should last approximately sixty minutes each time they meet together. As the leader begins, they will be considered a level one leader during this phase for the purpose of tracking where each leader is in the process.

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Phase One – Mentor

The first meeting will consist of a time of cultivating friendship as well as understanding the small group purpose. During the first meeting, the small group curriculum called “Start,” which covers the three elements of discipleship (connect, grow and multiply) will be taught and discussed. This will give a complete overview of the small group purpose and give a clear understanding of the reason why small groups exist in the context of the church. It will also further establish the understanding of the expectations of the apprentice to be launched out to start a new group. This aspect of the apprentice must be understood from the beginning so there are no surprises as the development process continues to unfold toward the purpose of multiplication. During this first meeting, the apprentice will also receive needed materials for the remainder of the meetings. Week one will have the homework of completing chapter one of section one in Greg Ogden’s, Discipleship Essentials.

After the first meeting and clarifying the direction and understanding of the small group ministry, the leader and apprentice will continue meeting bi-weekly for the remainder of phase one which should be no more than twelve weeks. This portion of the one-on-one meetings will consist of both the leader and apprentice committing to Greg Ogden’s Discipleship Essentials, Part One: Growing Up in Christ. Part one of Ogden’s book is broken down into six distinct chapters. The expectation is that the leader and the apprentice will complete one chapter every other week and the workbook will serve as their guide of conversation during their bi-weekly meetings.

Each meeting will discuss the previous two week’s homework as outlined in each chapter of Ogden’s book. The following meeting will proceed onto chapter two. This is how the weeks
will continue to advance through the process of leader development. The first phase of development will continue through twelve weeks. The expectation is that this phase would be completed within twelve weeks.

**The Apprentice’s Part in the Small Group during Phase One**

During this twelve-week period, the apprentice is participating in the small group as an attender observing the practices of either the director or facilitator. They are simply observing ministry during this phase. During this phase, the apprentice leader is expected to help in any capacity the leader sees fit, but is not expected to lead in the group setting. Once the apprentice has completed the first section of Ogden’s book with the leader, the apprentice will then move on to phase two with the leader’s approval. The leader will give updates to the appropriate church staff to let them know the progress of their apprentice.

**Phase Two – Apprenticeship**

During this phase, the leader and the apprentice will continue to meet bi-weekly and will go through Ogden’s part two and part three. There are thirteen chapters within these two sections and the leader and apprentice have the freedom to take up to thirty weeks to get through the Ogden curriculum with a thorough understanding of the content. This process will be at a maximum of thirty weeks in length but could possibly be completed in twenty-six weeks meeting bi-weekly. Within the thirty weeks, the apprentice leader will also now participate in the small group ministry.
The Apprentice’s Part in the Small Group during Phase Two

No longer is the apprentice just observing, but is now participating with the leader in ministry. The apprentice will lead the group discussion at a minimum of four times before moving on to phase three of the development process. As a point of discussion, each week the apprentice leads, the following one-on-one meeting should give adequate evaluation from the apprentice as well as the leader on how group leadership went. During the thirty weeks, the apprentice and leader will also begin processing the multiplication effort of the group with this apprentice leader. Both the facilitator apprentice and director apprentice will be sent out to begin a new group. Depending on the number of attenders, the apprentices could bring an additional person or couple with them to help start the new group. The leaders should be cognizant of the group and begin discussions and praying collectively as a group for the multiplication efforts. The group needs to have adequate time to know what is going on within the group. At the end of phase two, with the approval of the leader, the group, and appropriate staff member(s), both apprentices will be sent out to start a new group together.

Phase Three – Coach

During this phase, the relationship will continue through meeting bi-weekly to finish part four in Ogden’s book together and follow up with questions about spiritual life and the new group. This phase should last no more than twelve weeks. During this time, the new leader should now begin praying and looking for an apprentice that he will now begin the process with at the end of phase three. At the end of phase three, the new leader will begin at phase one with
their newly appointed apprentice. The original leader of the sending group, will also during this twelve-week period begin looking and praying for an apprentice to begin back at phase one with.

During this phase, this is the beginning of the newly formed small group and the leader is now the coach to the newly commissioned leaders who were once the apprentices. The goal of the leader development plan is to continue a cyclical motion of development within the small group structure.
Appendix F: IRB Approval Forms

May 23, 2019

Michael Gossett  

Dear Michael Gossett,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP  
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research  
Research Ethics Office

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY  
Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971
CONSENT FORM
LAY LEADER DEVELOPMENT AND THE MODEL OF CHRIST: INTENTIONAL SMALL GROUP ORGANIZATION FOR MULTIPLYING GROUPS AT GREEN ACRES BAPTIST CHURCH
Michael Gossett
Liberty University
School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study on the spiritual health and leadership competency of Green Acres Baptist Church. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older and are considered to be in a capacity of leadership in one or more areas (lay leader or small group leader) at Green Acres Baptist Church. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Michael Gossett, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to ascertain the overall spiritual maturity and leadership competency in order to develop a structure within small groups to facilitate leadership development.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1. Take the following survey. The survey should take 15-20 minutes to complete.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.
☐ Participant responses will be anonymous.
☐ Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Green Acres Baptist Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey to discontinue your participation prior to submitting your answers. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.
Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Michael Gossett. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at mgossett@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty mentor, Dwayne Milioni at damilioni@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.
Bibliography


Comiskey, Joel. Chapter 2: History of the Cell Movement, Provided by Dr. Dempsey during lecture.


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