

embrace your *greater purpose*
through handcrafted relationships

small batch *discipleship*

AUDIOBOOK RESOURCE

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WELCOME

Hello, and welcome. I'm so excited that you're joining my friends and I on this *Small Batch Discipleship* journey. This resource was designed with you, the audiobook listener, in mind. In order to maximize your small batch experience, it's recommended that you invite someone to join you along this journey. Then, individually listen to the audiobook, and take some time for personal reflection, jotting down your answers to the discussion questions included in this resource in a journal or notebook. (Note: it also works fine if your partner chooses to read a hard copy of the book.) Get together with your small batch partner or group to discuss your overall takeaways from each chapter, as well as your responses to the discussion questions. Consider also digging in practically to each of the foundational faith practices you hear referenced throughout the book together. Embrace uncomfortable and messy conversations as they come, stretch yourself, and grow closer to one another and to God "as you are going."

If you'd like more resources to fuel your discipleship journey, please visit <https://tracysullivan.com/small-batch>. There you'll find discussion kickoff videos from the author, the resource-packed *Small Batch Discipleship* Leader's Guide, tools for church leaders, fun small batch items in the shop, and more.

Okay, now you're ready. Press the play button, and get listening!

Tracy

DEFINING DISCIPLESHIP

Key Concepts

- The Great Commission: who, what, when, where, how and why
- God’s purpose for your life should be the “why” behind everything you do.
- A disciple is a lifelong learner and follower of Jesus.
- Disciples make other disciples.
- You make time for what’s truly important to you.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you feel like there might be more to life than what you’ve experienced so far?
2. Why do you think the words Jesus spoke in Matthew 28:18-20, known as the Great Commission, were the final words Jesus chose to say to His followers?
3. Based on the definition found in this chapter, would you describe yourself as a disciple of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?
4. Review the “who, what, when, where, how, and why” of the Great Commission. In what ways does this explanation help you better understand Jesus’ expectations for you as His disciple?
5. What fears or concerns do you have about teaching others, if any?
6. Do you agree you make time for the things most important to you? Explain. What is one way you can start freeing up time in your life to live out the Great Commission?

DISCIPLESHIP IS RELATIONSHIP

Key Concepts

- When seeking someone to disciple, look for the people all around you who know the least about Jesus and those who are the hungriest for more - more of God and more purpose for their lives.
- Disciples are teachable, available, committed and others-oriented (T.A.C.O.).
- Be thoughtful and protective about the purpose of your gatherings when you bring your small batch together. Create cultural norms in your small batch where everyone feels safe, use empathy to connect, and don't avoid difficult conversations or questions that arise.
- True hearing involves listening with an open mind and a willingness to be changed by what you've heard. When it comes to the Word of God, this is what it means to have a heart with "good soil."
- You are responsible to steward the truth God entrusts to you beyond yourself.

Discussion Questions

1. How do the T.A.C.O. characteristics of a disciple resonate with you? Explain.
2. Have you participated in or hosted personal gatherings that incorporated a clear purpose, meaningful cultural norms, or included an element of "heat"? Describe your experience.
3. Do you ever have difficulty focusing on what others are saying to you in conversation? Why or why not? How might using empathy help you connect more deeply with others?

4. Reread the parable of the soils in Matthew 13:3-9. Which obstacle most often gets in your way of hearing or obeying God: distraction, indifference, competing allegiances, or sin?
5. Is it possible to have fertile soil in some areas of your heart and not in others when responding to the Word of God? Explain.
6. In what ways might you share God's Word and His love more intentionally with others?

EMBRACING YOUR GREATER PURPOSE

Key Concepts

- God is in the business of remaking lives.
- God has a great plan for your life, including your spiritual maturity, a mission in the gospel movement, and a personal ministry of multiplication.
- If you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, you are a new creation.
- Your new position as a Jesus-follower is “in Christ.”
- Your new possession is Christ in you.
- Your life’s new product is fruit that will last.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do you define yourself today? What about others who know you well? What more does God see in you?
2. How has Jesus set you free from the things in life that once had a stronghold on you? Or, how might you need him to do this?
3. God sees not only the person you are today, but also the person you are becoming. What excites or scares you most about God’s plan for your spiritual maturity, mission in the gospel movement, and personal multiplication through discipleship?
4. Spiritually speaking, is your position today in Adam or in Christ? What next step might you need to take to be sure your position is secure in Jesus Christ?
5. Would you say that your life is characterized by spiritual fruit? Explain.
6. Read the poem *Only One Life* by C. T. Studd in its entirety. Discuss your reactions and reflections.

ABIDING DAILY

Key Concepts

- Your part in living out God's plans for your life is to faithfully abide, or stay in relationship with Jesus. If you do, He will cause spiritual fruit to grow.
- An intimate relationship with Jesus is cultivated through regular communication and time spent together.
- Spending time with God should be your first and greatest priority.
- Your daily quiet time is a time to turn aside and allow God to reveal himself to you.
- Set aside enough time during your daily quiet time to forget about time.
- When reading your Bible, exploring the cultural context and original language of a passage of scripture brings greater understanding about the meaning of the text.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you recently been more focused on your own fruitfulness or faithfulness? How might it lighten your burden to remember that your part in God's work in and through your life is to abide daily with Him?
2. Do you struggle with comparing yourself to others? Explain. What is one thing God's Word says about you that you can cling to for encouragement when you feel you don't measure up?
3. What has been your greatest adventure in life so far? Are you being nudged toward any adventures now?
4. Do you need to make time with God and reading His word a greater priority? Explain why or why not.
5. What barriers or interruptions make it difficult for you to focus on God?
6. Share an example of a time when God revealed something to you in His Word that was exactly what you needed to hear that day.

LOVING GOD: BIBLE STUDY & PRAYER

Key Concepts

- The foundations of the Christian faith include loving God and loving others. You live these out as a disciple of Jesus by studying the Bible, praying, talking about God, cultivating authentic relationships with other believers, and serving others in love.
- The Bible is the primary way God speaks to us today, and prayer is our response to God.
- G.P.A. Bible study technique: What do you learn about *God* and *people* in the text? What *applications* can you make to your own life?
- A.C.T.S. Prayer Method: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Specific Needs
- Praying scripture back to God aligns your heart with what He has revealed to be on His heart.
- Praying for others helps take your mind off your own issues and refocus it on God's purposes at work around you.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had someone walk alongside you personally to help you mature as a Christian? Describe that experience.
2. Do you have a Bible? If so, how are you currently interacting with your Bible? What Bible study techniques or tools have you used to study God's word? How have those helped you?
3. How has the Holy Spirit helped to illuminate or bring God's Word to life for you? If not yet, why might this be an important request of God as you begin your quiet time studies?

4. Do you sense yourself becoming more like your friends, including those you only “know” from a distance, because of the time you spend with them? In what ways have you become more like Jesus over time?
5. What is your current comfort level with prayer, both individually and with others? In what ways would you like to improve your conversations with God or your practice of prayer?
6. Select one verse of scripture from the Bible (either one verse per person or one common verse). Practice personalizing the verse back to God in prayer together.

LOVING OTHERS: FELLOWSHIP & EVANGELISM

Key Concepts

- Worship and fellowship with other believers, as well as inviting those outside the family of God to meet Jesus, help you more fully know and adore God.
- Life-on-life relationship is an important part of discipleship.
- The good news of the gospel is this: God Himself came down into His own creation in the form of a man, Jesus Christ. He lived the one and only perfect life, died a sinner's death on a cross as our substitute, was buried, and was raised back to life with victory over death. God offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe in Jesus and follow Him.
- Jesus said to “repent and believe in the gospel” in order to be saved.
- You are here on earth today to be God's presence and truth in the lives of all the people He has placed around you.
- The Holy Spirit prepares and tills the “soil” of people's hearts to hear and respond to the Word of God.
- Evangelism methods: *God, Man, Christ, Response*; One-verse evangelism (Romans 6:23); Listening to others' stories with an ear for a bridge to the gospel; Sharing your own faith story; Asking how you can pray for others (i.e. waiter or waitress)

Discussion Questions

1. In what areas of your life have you experienced an authentic, life-giving community? What characteristics of that community would you like to extend into your small batch experience?
2. Are you comfortable sharing who you really are with others and the struggles you're going through? What hurts or hangups get in the way of your ability to be vulnerable with others?

3. Have you ever had the privilege of leading someone else to Christ? Describe that experience. If not, has this ever caused you to feel ashamed, embarrassed or guilty? Read 1 Cor. 6:3-9. How might this truth encourage you?
4. Share a brief version of your faith story, or the testimony of your journey with God, with one another now.
5. Practice sharing the gospel now in your own words using the *God, Man, Christ, Response* method.
6. Who do you know that needs to hear the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ? How will you share it with them? Take a moment now to pray for these people by name.

YOU ARE A LEADER

Key Concepts

- Leaders cast a meaningful vision and engage others to bring it to life. They invest in the next generation and cheer them along. They serve from a foundation of love.
- You are a leader because of the influence you have on all those around you, and influence is a matter of relationship.
- Disciple-makers often serve in the roles of: teacher, coach, mentor, spiritual parent, and friend.
- Paul led many men and women to Christ in Thessalonica and quickly began to disciple them in their newfound Christian faith. Paul and his small batch ministry partners loved the new believers so much that they were delighted to share with them not only the gospel of God, but their own lives as well.
- The measure of great leadership is others' success.
- Your greatest leadership opportunity is impacting other people's lives with the hope of Jesus Christ and building them up through discipleship to stand firm in the faith.

Discussion Questions

1. Can you relate with the “turtle on a fence post” idea? Explain.
2. Describe your relationship with one of the people on your personal influencer list. Why did that person have such a special influence in your life?
3. Which role of the discipler mentioned in this chapter do you most identify with: teacher, coach, mentor, spiritual parent, or friend? Why?
4. What do you think must have transpired between Paul and the new Thessalonian believers in order for them to grow from new Christian converts to a healthy, self-sustaining church within just three weeks time? What lessons can you take from this?

5. The new believers in Thessalonica faced tremendous hardship upon professing faith in Jesus Christ and chose to give up the societal privileges they once knew. What worldly things, experiences, or relationships do you struggle to hold before the Lord with open hands?

6. Paul says, “For now we truly live since you are standing firm in the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 3:8) What do you think he meant by “truly living”? How might this connect with Jesus’ statement in John 10:10?

VISION & MULTIPLICATION

Key Concepts

- Spiritual vision is having on our hearts that which is on God's heart.
- The vast majority of the world's people today are at best poorly evangelized, with nearly half of the billions living today never having heard the name of Jesus Christ.
- The early church focused intensely on equipping normal, everyday people to love God and to do the work of the ministry, which is sharing Christ and making disciples of others.
- If you are a Christ-follower, then you are both qualified and called to make disciples. The difference you make in this world for the Kingdom of God is greater when you make disciples, because your impact is multiplied.
- If every Jesus-follower today discipled one other person each year, and they each repeated the process every subsequent year, the church could impact all of humanity with the gospel of Jesus Christ in less than thirty-four years.
- A Great Commission lifestyle involves: falling in love with God, seeking out the wisdom and encouragement of more mature believers, praying for and inviting others to join you as you follow Christ, putting a plan in place to study and practice the fundamentals of the Christian faith with your disciples, allowing God to make you more Christ-like as you grow, sending out your disciples to make other disciples when they are ready, and repeating this process until Jesus returns or calls you home.

Discussion Questions

1. Reflecting upon this statement, "You will become what you behold," how does what you look at or watch influence who you are today and who you are becoming? (Hint: Consider books, websites, t.v. shows, people, scripture, etc.)
2. Do you ever struggle to see how your everyday tasks fit into the big picture of God's Kingdom work? What encouragement can you take from this book as you ponder the special role God has for you to play?

3. How does Jesus' earthly example of making disciples, as well as your own unique personality, life experiences, passions, and talents, inform how you see yourself living out a Great Commission lifestyle in the future?
4. Search through the book of Acts to find all instances of addition and multiplication. What does this tell you about God's strategy for the growth of His Church?
5. Read Revelation 2:4. Discipleship starts with loving God. Thinking back on the time when you first loved Jesus, has your love for the Lord grown colder over time or warmer? If colder, how might you stir your affection for God today?
6. Have you ever sought out the wisdom of a more mature believer as a source of challenge and encouragement in your life? If so, describe that person and your experience with them. Who can serve you in this way today?
7. Who has God placed on your heart to invite to join you in your adventures with Jesus? What fears do you have about talking to them about discipleship? Pause now and pray for God's help in this area.