

The Compass

a tool for disciplers



Equipping Believers for Ministry

Challenging to Discipleship

Conversation On the Journey

Oftentimes, we tend to initiate discipleship relationships without making clear what we are really talking about. A person might think you have agreed to get together every once and awhile for Godly advice, while you are thinking she has agreed to meet for in-depth one-on-one theological tutorship. If my own experience is any guide, often neither disciple, nor discipler, has a clear vision of what discipleship is.

That tends to lower the overall quality of our discipleship, and set us up for the discipleship equivalent of the “Let’s just be friends” conversation. You’ve been discipling someone who isn’t all that interested in having a ministry. Then you hear a talk on investing your life in the right people, and realize you aren’t. So you get together with your disciple to “break up” so you can go train the next Billy Graham. You feel like a jerk, she feels like you’re a jerk, and it’s just plain lousy. Ah, the joys of ministry.

Here’s a better idea. How about if, from the very beginning, you communicate a clear and compelling vision of discipleship that is consistent with Scripture and the mission of our church? That way, you can help your potential disciple discern if discipleship is for her. If so, great! Let’s get to work. If not, that’s okay. The body of Christ is large, and there may be a better place for her in another situation. It’s much better to learn that now, rather than later. And if she is on the fence, an attractive picture of how she can participate in God’s purposes just may catch her heart and compel her to come with us. No matter what happens, it’s good to be clear up front.

What follows is a sample script for that conversation. I can’t anticipate every response you might get, but this should give you an idea of what and how to communicate. Bring your own personality to bear, but don’t stray from the key concepts. They are proven winners.

The Conversation

“Thanks so much for getting together this afternoon. I was really glad you told me you were interested in learning about these one-to-one discipleship relationships. Have you been able to get a sense of what discipleship is all about?”

[They respond.]

“Yeah, those things are all true. It’s crazy how many things are going on all the time. But if there were one verse I’d put as a banner over our purpose, it would probably be Matthew 28:18-20. Are you familiar with that at all?”

This Week’s Excursion

This lesson will teach you a method for challenging people to discipleship in a way that casts vision and makes clear what we mean by discipleship.



[They respond.]

“Let me read it to you. Jesus is talking and He says this:

‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

“Those are the last words Matthew records from Jesus’ mouth. In that passage, Jesus says the key thing He wants us to do is go and make disciples. Really, the purpose of our church is to obey that verse. We want to be His disciples, and help others to be, too.”

[On the top of a sheet of paper write “Matthew 28:18-20 – Make disciples.”]

“There’s a lot that is involved in being His disciple, but I think of three things, primarily. A mature biblical disciple is one who walks by faith, communicates his faith, and multiplies his faith.”

[Write “Walk by faith,” “Communicate your faith,” and “Multiply your faith,” down the left side of the paper as section headings, leaving plenty of room between each.]

“We are all in the process of growing in each one of these all the time, and we never completely finish any of them, but there’s kind of a progression, nevertheless.

“If someone is a new, or younger, believer, and they’re learning how to walk by faith, what sort of things do you think they’d need to learn about?”

[Let her respond while you write down her answers under “Walk by faith.” Some answers might include prayer, Bible study, going to church, etc.]

“Yeah, that’s great. We all need to learn and apply those things. God loves faith and He wants us to learn to trust and obey Him. In addition to what you said, I think about really believing that He has forgiven us, and that His love can’t be earned, because it’s a gift, and how we should live in response to that.”

[Jot down whatever you said to augment her response.]

“A lot of Christians sort of stop right there, and never experience all that it means to be His disciple. He doesn’t only want us to be His disciples. He said that He wants us to make disciples [refer to Mt. 28:19], and that means we need to tell others about Him.

“If you were to be a disciple who didn’t only walk by faith, but also communicated your faith, what sorts of things do you think you’d need to learn?”

Next Steps

I’d recommend you role play this twice. First with you as the discipler, and then with your disciple in the lead. Make sure your disciple is able to give this challenge well. The obvious application is that she does this when she challenges someone to real life discipleship, which is not an opportunity you can necessarily manufacture. If she is already discipling someone, but never challenged them properly, it’s not too late to go over this so as to clarify expectations.



[Let her respond while you write down her answers under “Communicate your faith.” This may be harder for her than “Walk by faith.” Some answers might include how to share the Gospel, answer questions about Christianity, get past her fear, etc.]

“Yeah, there is a lot of stuff that someone would need to know, but it’s kind of hard to put it in words if you haven’t thought about it much. It would be great to be able to tell the story of how you became a Christian in a way that can help others understand the Gospel. It’s good to know some illustrations that make clear why Jesus died, or Bible passages to explain it. There are a ton of things that can be helpful to someone who wants to communicate their faith. I just know that I hate feeling stupid, so if I don’t know how to start and have a conversation with somebody about Jesus, I’m probably not going to do it. That’s why our church is so interested in helping people learn, and be comfortable sharing their faith. It’s hard. But it’s also really important, so we want to help you comfortably succeed.

“So, a mature biblical disciple is one who walks, communicates, and finally multiplies his faith. Take a look at verse 20. Jesus says, ‘Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’ If you think about the immediate context here, what would you include in the things the new disciples are supposed to obey?”

[Let her respond. What we’re driving at is the command to make yet more disciples.]

“That’s right. Jesus is basically telling His disciples to make more disciples who will love and obey Him, and make yet more disciples who will love and obey Him, and so on. In fact, that’s supposed to continue indefinitely so that two thousand years later you and I would be able to hear the Gospel and become His disciples. But it would be a tragedy if the chain broke with us. I want to be His disciple, which means I want to walk by faith myself. And I want to communicate my faith, so that others can know that He loves them, too. But I also want to help those new, younger believers to do the same. I don’t only want to pass the torch to them. I want to teach them how to pass it to others. I don’t only want them to be followers of Christ, as great as that is. I want to help them be leaders for Christ. That’s what it means to multiply your faith.

“That’s what Paul was talking about in 2 Timothy 2:2. He said to Timothy, ‘And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.’”

[Draw a little chart of multiplication: Paul to Timothy, Timothy to the reliable men, The reliable men to the others.]

“It’s supposed to keep going.”

“Imagine you were trying to multiply your faith into the lives of others. What kinds of things would you need to know?”

Side Trails

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Leroy Eims. Zondervan

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[Let her respond while you write down her answers under “Multiply your faith.” This may be the hardest yet. Some answers might include how to lead a Bible study, disciple someone, follow up a new believer, be a leader.]

“Now, when you look over what we’ve come up with here, do you get a sense of what we mean by discipleship? A mature biblical disciple is one who walks by faith, communicates her faith, and multiplies her faith.”

[Let her respond.]

“I’m only able to disciple a couple of people, but my commitment to them is to do whatever I can to help them become mature biblical disciples, with the ultimate goal that they would walk by faith, communicate their faith, and multiply their faith. That is the Great Commission. Does that sound like something you are interested in participating in?”

[Let her respond.]

“Where do you think the entry point is for you? I mentioned earlier that we never really graduate from one level to the next, but would you say that mostly the next step for you is to learn to walk by faith, communicate your faith, or multiply your faith?”

[Let her respond.]

“That’s great. We believe that a few years of your life can shape the trajectory for the next 50 years of your life. You can be in a place now where you get the encouragement, training, and experience so that you can have a fantastic impact for Christ for the rest of your life. Not only would you enjoy the adventure of walking with Jesus, and not only would you leave behind a legacy of people who are influenced by you, but everywhere you go, for the rest of your life, you can help men and women know the purpose for which they were made. You can have a huge impact, and literally change people’s lives.

“That’s what we want to do. We help people walk by faith, communicate their faith, and multiply their faith, so that God gets the praise that He deserves, now and always.

“If this sounds like something you would like to do, too, I’d be thrilled and privileged to disciple you. We’d get together every week for an hour or so and do these things we’ve talked about. It’s a big commitment for both of us, cause it’s serious stuff. So why don’t you hang on to this sheet, and think about it, pray about it, and then later on this week, we can talk and see what you decide. Any questions now, though?”

[Let her respond.]

“Thanks again for letting me tell you about this. I really appreciate your time.”

End

Notes to Self

The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ’s Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We’d love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at centerfield@uscm.org

Your notes might look something like this when you're done:

Matthew 28:18-20- Make Disciples

