

WEEK TWO, DISCIPLE MAKING

Continuing in God's Word and Sharing Personal Testimonies

After a brief time of fellowship, ask if there are prayer requests. If there are, make sure and pray for them. Praying for each other is an essential discipline to seeing hearts and lives united. As the leader of the group, pray for these requests during the week and bring them up the next time you meet. This communicates that not only do you take prayer seriously—you also take their needs seriously.

Since (hopefully) everyone has been working on his or her Scripture memory verse, go over that first—everyone relaxes more after they have said their verse!

It is vital that you are leading out in this discipline! **You teach what you know; you reproduce what you are!** You need to take God's Word as seriously as He does. If you are doing your very best to memorize, to internalize God's Word, those in your group will follow your example. However, (*and I'm being very honest here*) if you don't take internalizing God's Word seriously, neither will they.

Last week, you went over "Meeting God in His Word." From that study guide and also from our first verse, John 8:31, 32, **discuss** the importance of "continuing" in God's Word. "Jesus said, 'If you **continue** in My Word, then are you truly disciples of mine . . .'" The Greek word for "continue" is "*meno*." It is a fascinating word and we can learn much from the various ways it is used. The following are some examples of how this Greek word is translated:

- "*Abide*." "**Abide** in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it **abides** in the vine, so neither can you unless you **abide** in me" (John 15:4). Our connection with the Word of God is not an occasional act, but a continuing action. We are to live in it and it is to live in us.
- "*Remain*." "And Jesus was saying to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, **stay** there until you leave town'" (Mark 6:10). We are not to visit God's Word; we are to stay in it, allowing it to make its home in our heart.

- “Lives.” “The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God **lives** forever” (1 John 2:17). The Word of God is not merely to be something we read; it is the living Word that is to bear fruit in our lives.

Exhort (*that’s a Christian way to say “challenge”*) them to write down daily a truth that God impresses upon them from His Word. It doesn’t have to be a page or even a paragraph—it can be a short sentence! God will speak. We just have to be still enough to listen.

One of the main actions you will have **every week** is allowing them to share what God has said to them from His Word. **We have one textbook, the Bible.** As the members of your D group come in week after week hearing you and other members share what God has said to them—they will hunger for those fresh, insightful words for themselves!

The second main focus of this week is for each person to share his or her personal salvation testimonies. If you didn’t share your testimony last week, you’ll want to do that first this week. The guidelines are on the “Sharing Your Testimony” sheet you handed out last week. You can find it on our website www.bellevue.org/disciple-making.

As you listen to those in your group share, you’ll want to give **very encouraging**, but very **honest** feedback:

- If it was too short or too long, let them know.
- If they didn’t smile when they got to the good news of salvation, let them know that their words said one thing, but their face said another.
- If they glossed over what it means to be convicted of sin, let them know. People have to get lost before they can be saved. Our testimonies should communicate the desperate need we have for Christ.
- If they did not share HOW they were saved, let them know. It’s not enough to say, “And then I got saved.” We need to let people know HOW we were saved.

“I made a U turn. I repented. I was headed one direction and then I turned and headed the opposite direction. I prayed and asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins and to be the Lord (the Master) of my life.”

- If they used church words (*walked the aisle, came forward during the invitation, was at a lock-in, Vacation Bible School, DNOW*), remind them that we are talking to people who don't speak our language. We need to communicate in words lost people understand.
- If they got too graphic (regarding sin) in their life before Christ, remind them that we are to glorify God, not sin.

While you need to lovingly and humbly communicate feedback on how they share their testimony (and ask them to do the same with you!), **make sure and encourage them!** For some, this is the first time they have tried to share what Jesus did for them.

As you leave:

- Remind them to bring their Bibles and their notebooks next week.
- Tell them that you'll look forward to hearing what God says to them from His Word.
- Encourage them to read the Introduction and Chapter 1 in *Growing Up* for next week and be prepared to **discuss it**. Let them know that you will not be teaching it, but **leading the discussion**. They need to **highlight and mark** their book.
- Remind them that next week's verse to internalize is 2 Timothy 2:2.