



Radical Together

THE BIG
PICTURE
OF SMALL
GROUPS AT
BROOK HILLS

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small group. He Shared the Word, Showed the Word, Taught the Word, and Served the World with His small group and ultimately through His small group. Small group leaders should lead their group intentionally toward multiplication as they make disciples in their group and through their group. We equip participants to be disciple-makers and then we send them to be disciple-makers. We believe Paul and the early church imitated and practiced disciple-making the same way as Jesus did.

9 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1 The Word of Christ and the Life of Christ provide the foundation, example, and authority for small group ministry in the local church. We believe that Jesus intentionally gave us the mission, the message, the model, and the method for effective small group ministry. His method of relationally making disciples in and through His small group is a model for our small groups to follow as we intentionally make disciples together.

2 Jesus gave only one mission for the church and effective small groups should align themselves with His mission for His church- to make disciples in all nations for the Glory of Christ. Sharing the gospel and turning small group members into missionaries (disciple-makers) is the singular mission Christ

has for all of us. All small groups need to understand their mission from inception. Everything they do together should support the mission of multiplying the Life of Christ through them to the world around them.

3 Biblical Evangelism and Biblical Disciple-Making are inseparable. Jesus' primary method of evangelizing the world was through disciple-making with His small group community. He shared the gospel with the masses, but equipped a few men to multiply the gospel through them in order to reach the entire world. Disciple-making begins with Sharing the Word (the gospel).

4 Jesus practiced four components continually as he made disciples in and through His

5 Biblical Community and Biblical Mission are inseparable. Biblical Community is intended to support the Mission of Christ and the Mission of Christ fuels Biblical Community. Our community as followers of Christ is around The Word of Christ and the Mission of Christ. Jesus' method of disciple-making was primarily through the Biblical Community of a small group, not through independent one-on-one relationships. As small group members study the Word together (Teaching the Word), practice the one another's in Scripture, and utilize their spiritual gifts to build up one another (Showing the Word); everyone in their group is better equipped to fulfill the Mission of Christ (Sharing the Word as they Serve the World). As small group members actively seek to make disciples together, they realize the importance of the support of the Body and of living life transparently together on mission for the glory of Christ.

9 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

cont.

6 **Spiritual Transformation and Biblical Mission are inseparable.** The three primary tools the Holy Spirit uses

in our spiritual transformation are: The Word of Christ, The Body of Christ, and The Mission of Christ. Our transformation best occurs as we connect our lives to all three resources in the context of small group community. God transforms each of us as we intentionally engage in making disciples for His Glory both locally and globally. We grow into His Image as we depend more and more on the work of His Spirit in us and through us. Our transformation is for our good, but most of all, for His Glory as we bear His Image to the nations.

7 **Disciple-making through small groups should have both a local and global focus.**

At Brook Hill's we encourage small groups to leverage all the relationships in life that God has given them locally for disciple-making, but also to seek out cross-cultural and social justice ministry opportunities too in order to platform the gospel as they Serve the World alongside our partners. In Acts 1:8, Jesus commanded His disciples to make disciples everywhere, locally, globally, and cross-culturally.

8 **Disciple-making is primarily relational and takes time.** Disciple-making is not accomplished by just attending a class

once a week and/or completing a course or curriculum. Jesus' strategy was to invest Himself in a small group of men over a couple of years where He intentionally led them through specific stages for their personal transformation so that He could multiply His life through them. He **Enlisted** His group; **Established** His group; **Engaged** His group; **Equipped** His group; and then **Empowered** His small group to make disciples.

9 **Multiplication of small groups is challenging, but necessary.** As small groups grow in Biblical community,

share life together, and intentionally make disciples together, they naturally do not want to multiply. However, it's vitally important that they set a date to multiply from the inception of their group in order to embrace the vision of developing and multiplying disciple-makers around the planet. We have found that groups multiply best when the leader leaves to go start a new small group and when they can multiply into at least three groups.

Our community as followers of Christ is around the Word of Christ and the Mission of Christ.



Practical Nuts and Bolts of Small Groups at Brook Hills

We teach that every small group exists to make disciples for the glory of Christ. Thus, every small group needs to develop an intentional local and global strategy for making disciples and developing new disciple-makers. Our staff supports small group leaders in that process.

We write a weekly small group guide complementing each Sunday's message that is designed to help mature and train up disciple-makers. Emphasis is placed on application of God's Word together and seeking to help each other grow into disciple-makers. We also encourage each group to develop same gender time together as part of their disciple-making plan especially for those in their group that God seems to be raising up as new disciple-makers.

Locally, small group members are encouraged to intentionally maximize God-given relationships at home, at work, at school, at leisure, and in their neighborhoods to make disciples. Sometimes they join together through opportunities like Backyard Bible Clubs or cookouts to leverage those relationships. They also might embrace a cross-cultural or social justice service opportunity together in the Birmingham area where they can intentionally build disciple-making relationships which will impact their growth and those whom they are serving in Jesus' Name. As they 'Serve the World' together, they seek opportunities to Share the Word, Show the Word, and Teach the Word so they can reproduce the life of Christ in them and in others. They are encouraged to involve their whole family as much as possible in local disciple-making and to give attention to intentionally making disciples in their own family.

Globally, small groups are encouraged to embrace a global disciple-making opportunity annually where they can 'Serve the World' together and support nationals and field missionaries who are committed to disciple-making in their area of the world. They are

also encouraged to involve their whole group in prayer support and sending of some of the group if they cannot all go together. They are also encouraged to involve their families as much as possible in that global focus.



Every small group is asked to multiply their group within two to three years of inception in order to empower new disciple-makers to lead. Most small groups are open for the first year as they begin to build community and begin to practice local and global disciple-making together. We encourage new small groups to use our Small Group Leaders Guide as they are forming. Small groups are allowed to close for intentional training after they have set a date for multiplication in order to more intentionally develop new disciple-makers in their group. After multiplying, they are again open for a season as they seek to form a new group of potential disciple-makers.

Small groups can meet together either Off-Campus or On-Campus, but every attendee at Brook Hills is encouraged to be in only one small group. On campus space is given as a matter of priority to seniors, parents of preschoolers, and single moms. On-campus groups have childcare support on Sunday mornings and evenings, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, and Wednesday evenings. Off-campus groups can apply for childcare reimbursement vouchers.

Sunday morning groups are usually always

open. Larger Sunday morning groups, called Community Groups, are encouraged to form small groups within them. These smaller groups are organized around intentional disciple-making and may close when they are preparing to multiply. Community Groups are defined as small groups meeting together in the same place. Our desire is for small groups within Community Groups to spin off and become independent small groups that are intentionally making disciples together and multiplying their small group too.

We use periodic GroupLink type gatherings to bring unconnected people together to join or form new small groups. GroupLink attendees choose which group they want to be in and who their leader will be based on relationships built at that GroupLink event. We often have specialized GroupLink gatherings for specific seasons of life such as young singles, college, moms, ladies, young couples, or seniors. All GroupLink type gatherings are designed to move people into small groups where they can begin to intentionally make disciples together and grow into disciple-makers.

Our Adult Local Disciple-making staff functions as equippers facilitating moving people into groups, birthing new groups, and equipping and coaching small group leaders how to effectively make disciples together. All church staff members are asked to model involvement in a small group and to be personally involved engaging the culture locally by intentionally 'Serving the World' in some way. Time away is often given during office hours with the approval of supervisors to intentionally engage the culture locally and globally to make disciples.

Also, our Next Generation Ministry helps equip parents and the church to effectively make disciples at home and within specific age groups. All of our age-group ministries are seeking to help support parents in their role of making disciples at home.

4 Components of Disciple-Making

Jesus practiced four components continually as He made disciples within and through His small group.

He Shared the Word, Showed the Word, Taught the Word, and Served the World with His small group and through His small group. Small group leaders must lead their group the same way as they make disciples in their group and through their group. Paul and the early church imitated and practiced disciple-making the same way as Jesus did it.

SHARE THE WORD

The first component of disciple-making is 'Sharing the Word', the gospel, with others. Jesus' strategy of disciple-making with His small group was focused on preparing His disciples to effectively Share the Word after He left them. From the beginning of His ministry, He told them to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. He then shared the Word (the gospel) with clarity to His group, modeled sharing the gospel everywhere they went, and equipped and involved them in sharing the gospel alongside Him so that He could eventually 'Share the Word' through them. Disciple-makers likewise should clearly Share the Word to their small group, model sharing the Word in front of them, involve and equip them to share with others, and eventually 'Share the Word' through them as they multiply their group and begin new groups.

TEACH THE WORD

The third component of disciple-making is 'Teaching the Word'. Jesus' strategy of disciple-making involved helping His group understand the Word of God so that they could 'Show the Word' by their lives and so they could 'Teach the Word' to one another and to others. The Word was always central in their fellowship with one another and was the supreme authority for understanding everything about God and life. Disciple-makers likewise should make studying, understanding, and applying the Word central to the fellowship of their group. They should encourage their group to study the Word in a way that they can teach it and demonstrate it to others as they engage in making disciples locally and globally.

SHOW THE WORD

The second component of disciple-making is 'Showing the Word'. Jesus' strategy of disciple-making did not revolve around a class where He just told His followers how to live, instead His life and the Word was the curriculum. In the context of spiritual community, He sought daily to demonstrate to His group how to live in obedience to the Father as they did life together. Jesus, the Living Word, showed them how to live, and then encouraged them and equipped them with His Spirit to demonstrate to one another and the lost world how to live a life that pleases the Father. Disciple-makers likewise should seek to demonstrate to their small group how to live a life that pleases God by his/her own lifestyle, and should encourage and equip their group to 'Show the Word' to one another as they do life together in spiritual community and as they seek to fulfill the mission of Christ making disciples locally and globally.

SERVE THE WORLD

The fourth component of disciple-making is 'Serving the World'. Jesus' strategy of disciple-making was not to hold classes in a building and invite lost people to come to Him, but to go where the people were and demonstrate God's love to them up close by His actions (Showing the Word) so He could Share the Word, the gospel, with them. He did not go alone to serve the world, but took His group with Him so He could show them how to serve the world, involving them in serving the world with Him, and equipping and sending them into all the world to make disciples in His Name as He sought to reach the world through them. Disciple-makers likewise should seek to lead their group to serve the world locally and globally so that together they can 'Share the Word' and make disciples for the glory of Christ. Paul the Apostle followed this same strategy.

