

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Spiritual Leadership Study Guide

EXPLORING DISCIPLESHIP LESSON 9: MULTIPLYING LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module titled Exploring Discipleship. This series of lessons studies the spiritual formation of a follower of Jesus Christ – the process referred to as discipleship. The discipleship process occurs after someone comes to faith in Jesus Christ, beginning with a desire to live out God’s plan for their life. When we undertake the task of helping a new believer to grow in their faith, we are said to disciple them. This material will benefit anyone wanting to disciple others, especially those who are practising evangelism, following up with new believers and helping them grow in their faith. Discipleship is the duty of every believer, especially those in spiritual leadership!

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.



EXPLORING DISCIPLESHIP

LESSON 8: MULTIPLYING LEADERS

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

This lesson addresses the need to multiply leaders as well as disciples. It will explain why training others in leadership is necessary, and how to effectively prepare someone to become a leader.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

How would you feel if someone suggested you training another leader to help you in your work? Would you feel relieved, insulted, afraid you were not doing the job well enough? God's Word advises us to bring other people along side us to help lead. This is part of discipleship – identifying when someone is ready to take on leadership, and training them to do so. It can be risky. A new leader won't do everything in the same way as you – however we must overcome our fears and not selfishly hold onto our place serving others. The truth is that we cannot do all the work ourselves; we will accomplish more for the Kingdom of God through training other leaders to partner with us. Spiritual multiplication refers to growing leadership, and spreading it to leaders who will train other leaders.

GETTING STARTED

1. Are people around you eager or hesitant to become leaders? What are the dangers when everyone wants to lead? What are the downfalls when no one wants to be a leader?

2. What is the best piece of advice you have ever received from a relative? How eager are you to receive advice from your family?



STUDY

❖ **MANY HANDS:** There is a saying in English that ‘many hands make light work’, meaning that the work is easier if there are many helpers. You probably know this to be true in your life. However, sometimes the opposite is true when too many people are assigned to one task. Without good leadership it can become overly complicated.

- **One Body, Many Parts:** God’s intention is that the church be made up of many people sharing the work of the Gospel under wise leadership. This concept is seen throughout scripture. We are not to carry any burden alone – leadership included! Read the following verses and write down what you learn.

1 Corinthians 12:14-16	
Galatians 6:2	
Proverbs 11:14	

❖ **A LEADERSHIP PROBLEM:** Our churches and ministries become weak when there is only one leader with vision trying to do all the work alone! This problem is actually a lack of leadership and it may have many causes, but it is not a new problem! Moses was chastised by his father-in-law for not building up others in leadership and giving them permission and authority to lead.

- Read Exodus 18:13-27 and answer the questions below:

What was Moses doing?	
Why did Jethro say that what he was doing was wrong?	
What was Jethro’s solution?	
How did Moses put Jethro’s suggestion into practice?	
What were the benefits to Moses, and all the Israelites of this plan?	



❖ **IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL LEADERS:** In order for your ministry to survive and for God’s work to be done effectively, each leader must be developing other leaders. Not everyone will become a top level leader, but many can lead in smaller ways and be encouraged to further their leadership development. But who do you choose? And when are they ready?

➤ **Careful Observation:** You probably have people around you who can be encouraged to take on more than they are currently doing. These potential leaders should meet the following criteria:

- **Followers:** They are faithfully and obediently following the leaders in their life, and demonstrate a spirit of obedience rather than rebellion.
- **Visionaries:** They have ideas, vision or dreams of ways to do the work more effectively. They may suggest solutions to problems. They may have failed, but are still willing to take risks and move forward. Visionaries and risk takers show great leadership potential. They choose not to let fear stop them from action.
- **Respected:** They demonstrate respect to others, and are respected by those around them. They don’t have to be perfect, but they should demonstrate the ability to form good relationships with others.
- **Faithful:** They should be faithful people who put their trust in God and seek Him for wisdom. Faithfulness is also evident in ones dependability and integrity.

➤ Can you think of other signs that someone is ready for leadership?

➤ Jesus told a parable that shed some light on when a person is ready for leadership. What does Matthew 25:23 say?

➤ **Biblical Qualifications:** God’s Word has much to say about selecting leaders. No one is perfect, but a person should demonstrate godly living before they are assigned to lead others. Look at the following passages that outline some Biblical advice on who should lead:

1 Timothy 3:1-13	
1 Peter 5:2	
Titus 1:7	



❖ **INVITING POTENTIAL LEADERS:** Many people may not see themselves as a leader. That's okay! In fact, sometimes the people who are accustomed to serving, rather than having others serve them, make the best leaders! These are the people you should invite to join you in leadership – but they will require encouragement and equipping.

- **Encouraging:** Once you have identified someone who could be trained to take on leadership, they will need encouragement.: Set up a meeting with them in which you will:
 - Let them know your desire to multiply leadership.
 - Let them know the potential you see in them.
 - Let them know you believe in them.

What have people said to you that was encouraging? How could you make your encouragement meaningful?

- **Equipping:** A leader is not the same as a worker or volunteer. A leader is someone who has vision – knowing where they want to go – and inviting others to follow them. Their vision might target a new way to serve, or a renewed passion for sharing the Word of God. A leader must be capable of making difficult decisions, guiding others, and being a person of influence. They need to possess the following attributes:
 - **Responsibility** to oversee a specific area of ministry whether large or small.
 - **Authority** to make decisions affecting that area of ministry.
 - **Knowledge** of the purpose and scope of their ministry, the personnel involved, and how their area fits into the bigger picture.

What happens when a person is given responsibility but not authority or knowledge? What is the danger when someone has authority, but no knowledge of how their decisions will affect other areas? Why are all three of these things necessary?

- **Emancipating:** When you invite someone to take on an area of leadership (maybe it is a worship team, a small Bible study, an evangelism team, hospitality group or a new church plant), you must release them and allow them to make mistakes. This means:
 - Letting go of some control of that area (which may be very hard).



- Allowing them to learn from failure (we sometimes learn best this way).
- Allowing things to be done in a different way (God will use their particular gifts and personality which are not the same as yours).

❖ **STAGES OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Once a leader has been identified and invited to lead, they should receive some training. The four stages of this leadership training will allow the person to transition from being a follower to becoming one who can assume the necessary responsibility and authority of leadership. This is discipleship for leadership. For each of the stages below, write down what this stage would look like while training leaders to serve alongside you:

Stage	What Happens	How I could do this...
1. Watch Me	At this stage, the potential leader should watch someone else lead and pay careful attention. They should be invited to observe a leader in the environment of their possible area of leadership.	
2. Do it with Me	At this stage, the potential leader should be invited to lead alongside the existing leader. This could involve leading a small portion of a Bible study, followed by feedback on how they did.	
3. I'll Watch You	Once the potential leader has gained experience alongside someone else, they are likely ready to lead by themselves. This should begin with a period of observation, where the existing leader can give feedback, encouragement, advice and further training to the potential leader.	
4. Do It without Me	Finally, the new leader begins to lead on their own. They still require encouragement, and sometimes advice, but they should be able to successfully lead others.	



❖ **FOLLOWING JESUS:** This path of identifying, inviting and training leaders mirrors how Jesus Christ trained His disciples.

- Jesus’ disciples first observed what He taught and did (Matthew 11:1).
- Jesus invited His disciples to participate in the work – they helped serve lunch to the people, and picked up pieces of bread left over after it had miraculously multiplied (Mark 8:1-10).
- Jesus then sent out the disciples in pairs to teach and perform miracles. Jesus gave them responsibility and authority (Matthew 10:1-15).
- Jesus left the disciples to do the work He had given them on earth, and did not leave them unequipped. He sent them the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

If even Jesus saw the need to train other leaders, we should not see ourselves as exempt from this imperative. What can you learn from Jesus example?

Just as a farmer prepares the soil, plants the seeds and cares for a young plant until it is mature enough to produce fruit, a discipler should keep the end goal in sight: a mature Christian who is able to plant seed in the lives of other people.

❖ **MULTIPLYING LEADERSHIP:** When we develop new leaders, they can do more work for the Kingdom of God than we could alone. When they in turn identify and train new leaders, the work done grows even more. Think of it this way – when you willfully choose not to multiply leaders, you are hindering the potential work of the Gospel!

- What does Matthew 9:37-38 say? Who will train and send these labourers out?



IN SUMMARY

- ❖ God's intention is that the church be made up of many people sharing the work of the Gospel.
- ❖ Churches and ministries become weak if there is only one leader trying to do the work alone.
- ❖ When identifying potential leaders, look for people who are following well already, have vision and ideas, are respected among their peers, and living a faithful life.
- ❖ When we have identified a potential leader, we should encourage, equip them and then give them the freedom to lead on their own.
- ❖ When we mentor people for leadership, we enrich the church, and increase the labourers doing God's work. Discipling new leaders should be a high priority for us!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What hinders people from taking on leadership roles, or from being successful in them? How could you as a discipler help ease this transition?

2. What areas of leadership or responsibility do you have in your life right now? How could you share some of this responsibility with another person?

3. Why is it important to consider the Biblical qualifications for leadership – especially for positions of teaching or pastoring others? If someone you identify as a potential leader does not meet all the Biblical qualifications, what can you do?