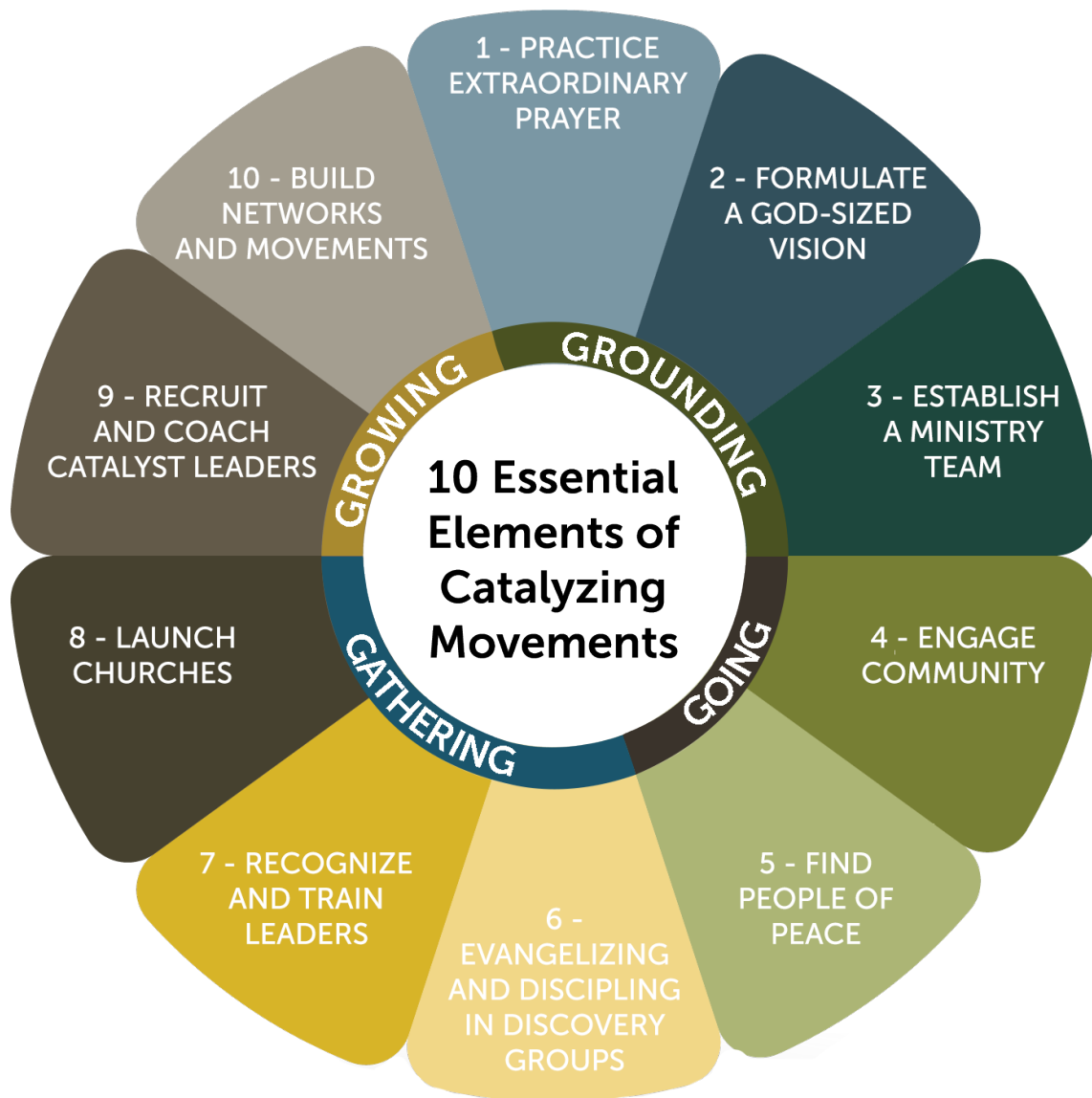


Introduction to the 10 Essential Elements of Catalyzing Movements



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Introduction to the 10 Essential Elements of Catalyzing Movements

Title: Catalyzing Movements (CMs)

Full Title: 10 Essential Elements of Catalyzing Movements through Disciple-Making Churches (CM-DMC)

Glossary

- **Abundant Sowing:** intentionally engaging with non-believers in your community to share the Gospel of Christ with them. ([DMMFrontiers](#)) “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6 (ESV)
- **APEST:** the Apostolic, Prophetic, Evangelistic, Shepherding, and Teaching intelligence that Jesus gifted to His Body (as named in Ephesians 4, and seen throughout Scripture). ([5qcentral](#))
- **Catalyst or Pioneer leader:** those who identify, recruit, and build a team of people who commit themselves wholeheartedly to launching a movement of multiplying disciples and churches among a people group and/or region of the world where Christ is not known.
- **Catalyzing Movement:** a process of disciples making disciples, and churches planting at least 100 churches, with four or more generations of replication, often happening within a short period of time. Four characteristics of Catalyzing Movements are: fast-growing, indigenous (of the local culture), multiplying groups, consist of obedient Jesus-followers (disciples).
- **Church:** a company of immersed believers, called out from the world, separated unto the Lord Jesus, voluntarily associated for the ministry of the Word, the mutual edification of its members, the propagation of the faith and the observance of the ordinances. We believe it is a sovereign, independent body, exercising its own divinely awards gifts, precepts, and privileges under the Lordship of Christ, the Great Head of the Church. We believe that its officers are pastors and deacons. (Doctrinal Statement and Affirmation of Faith of The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada)
- **DBS:** stands for “Discovery Bible Study” and is a discipleship study which enables people to read the Bible and discover what it has to say to them, what it means, and how to apply it to their lives. Simple, memorable questions allow participants to understand the character of God, encourage them to obey what they are learning, and help them to share it with others. Through DBS we are helping seekers to know Christ as Lord and Saviour, and discipling believers toward maturity in Christ. ([Discovery App](#))
- **Gospel:** the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, dying for the sin of mankind and rising from the dead, making the way of salvation for all those who repent and believe in Him.
- **Local Leader:** believers who are indigenous to the region and culture (culturally close) where they are living and following Jesus. The terms “nationals” or “national believers” have been used to describe these local leaders. ([team.org](#))
- **Obedient Disciple:** a believer who is maturing and growing in the knowledge of the Lord and following Jesus Christ on a daily basis.

- **Person of Peace:** someone who is accepting of you and open to the Gospel message, even though they are not yet believers. He or she is a gatekeeper to their network of relationships (family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, etc.) and encourages the exploration of the Gospel message.
- **Priesthood of all Believers:** the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers states that all believers in Christ share in His priestly status; therefore, there is no special class of people who mediate the knowledge, presence, and forgiveness of Christ to the rest of believers, and all believers have the right and authority to read, interpret, and apply the teachings of Scripture. (Gospel Coalition)
- **Simple church or Rabbit church** (vs. tiger church, elephant church): “A ‘simple church’ can meet anywhere. They may or may not have trained leaders, formal liturgy, programs, or structures. A simple church is usually a small group of no more than 20-25 people. The term *simple church* is often used interchangeably with other terms like *house church*, *organic church*, *essential church*, *primitive church*, *relational church*, and *micro-church*. The emphasis in simple churches is on building relationships within the small group and missionary outreach.” (GotQuestions.org) “As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may *spread rapidly* and be honored, just as it was with you.” (2 Thessalonians 3:1, NIV)

Introduction to Catalyzing Movements through Disciple-Making Churches (DMC)

The elements in this document are based on research where Disciple-Making Movements, Church-Planting Movements, and church planting have thrived. We have identified three ways this document could help further the Gospel:

1. These Elements can help international missionaries implement movements.
2. These Elements can serve the local church, in whatever location it’s ministering in, by empowering the local church to intentionally reach its community with the Gospel.
3. These Elements could help church planters in their church planting strategy, in whatever country they find themselves in, as one model of making disciples who are making disciples.

Historically, the most significant advancements in the spread of Christianity have happened when common, ordinary people are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to make obedient disciples in fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). In recent decades, a revival of relational disciple-making is bringing excitement and renewal to missional efforts as the Church experiences significant and unexpected growth among least-reached peoples in many regions of the world.

The *10 Essential Elements of Catalyzing Movements* describes a process whereby multiplying disciples form multiplying churches, particularly in areas where the Church is not otherwise present. *Catalyzing Movements* result in disciple-making churches. This is the end goal. For the purposes of this document, we'll use the term "Disciple-Making Churches" (or "DMC"), to refer to this process.

Disciple-Making Churches, regardless of the number of their worshipers, are groups of Christ-followers who long to see a movement of disciple-makers forming disciple-making churches which then launch movements of disciple-makers in Canada and around the world for God's glory!

The *10 Essential Elements*, or methodology, of Disciple-Making Churches is being used by the Spirit of God in our day as disciples are obeying the Word of God and promptly learning to make other disciples, who then repeat the process. Depending on the context and a variety of other factors, God's Kingdom grows as many new DMC are planted and multiplied. For the sake of simplicity, and to point out that there are differing contexts in which DMC find themselves, we will speak of the 4Ps. These reference four wide-ranging contexts in which the work of making Christ known takes place. The 4Ps are: Persecution, Poverty, Prosperity, and Presence. It goes without saying that certain areas in which Kingdom work is being done would have a combination of these contexts.

Fellowship International is committed to the *10 Essential Elements* process that results in and drives disciple-making churches. These *10 Essential Elements* have been identified as common to God-movements that make reproducing disciples who in turn form reproducing churches, and vice versa.

The Kingdom grows as many new DMC are planted and multiplied in the 4Ps' areas globally.

Disciple Making Churches are characterized by an expectation and intentional effort to equip every believer to reproduce spiritually. They are Holy Spirit-driven to form healthy DMC in the various contexts around the world (4Ps). The established churches have high levels of structured accountability based on allegiance to Jesus in which the believing disciples conform their lives to what they have discovered in the Bible about God's will, character, and mission—*What does God want? What is God like? What is God doing?* DMC emphasize generational growth with active disciples who are making disciples and planting DMC churches in the 4Ps areas.

Why DMC?

Fellowship International believes that God's plan for the world is to connect and empower local churches in communities across the world. For many years, the local church has been effective in the areas of worship and the instruction of believers but has struggled to genuinely embrace the making of new disciples in obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The intent of the DMC elements is to create a movement of healthy local churches reproducing around the world and multiplying through disciple-making disciples for the advancement of God's Kingdom.

The 10 DMC Elements – Four Stages

The *10 Elements of Catalyzing Movements* outlines how Fellowship International has chosen to describe the disciple-making churches process. Each element is essential in the process of making multiplying disciples who form multiplying churches and vice versa. The 10 elements are not a step-by-step manual in seeing God create such a movement but are more like the ingredients in a recipe. If you leave out one ingredient, you may still be able to produce a meal, but it will be lacking in some way, and limited in what it could be.

Following the biblical pattern of the Gospels and the book of Acts, the 10 DMC elements have been grouped into four stages. These stages are titled: Grounding, Going, Gathering, and Growing.



Grounding (Elements 1-3)

Jesus gathered around Him followers whose lives were centred around King Jesus, who were grounded in Kingdom truths, and who were called to join Him in His mission. They knew what it meant to totally depend on God and for Him to work in and through them, and so they were committed to prayer. Movements are started by men and women who are driven by God-sized visions for the multitudes needing to hear and respond to the Gospel. They gather in DMC Teams with others who are called to the great work of making multiplying disciples who form multiplying churches and vice versa.



Going (Elements 4-5)

Jesus sent His followers into the harvest to give testimony to the accessibility of God's Kingdom for those who repent and believe. This involves entering communities, seeking out men and women of peace, and helping people discover for themselves, through God's Word, their calling in God's rescue plan.

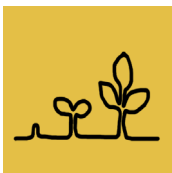


Gathering (Elements 6-8)

It's no accident that while Jesus spoke often about the Kingdom of God, it wasn't until after His ascension that we see the emergence of the Church. It is evident that the two are intimately related. It has always been God's plan to see His followers forming local Disciple-Making Churches where believers would be nurtured, equipped, and sent out as Christ's witnesses to the nations.

Following the example of Jesus and the Early Church, "seekers" discover in group settings, facilitated by Christ-followers, how to trust Jesus as Lord and Saviour and walk in obedience to Him.

Furthermore, Christ-followers discover in those same group settings how to grow in their obedience to Him, allowing the Spirit to transform all aspects of their lives in conformity to Kingdom truth and values.



Growing and Reproducing (Elements 9-10)

Catalyzing movements made up of DMC require many trained leaders on different levels, serving out of their giftedness (Ephesians 4:11-13) as given by the Holy Spirit to build the newly formed disciple-making churches.

As the Early Church grew in numbers, it followed through on Jesus’ missional vision to bring the Gospel into new regions. Jesus has provided for His Church leaders who are tasked “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12, ESV). Part of this work involves the development and maturing of planters and catalysts who catch the vision to plant DMC, build networks, and accomplish their call to bring the movement to new regions and people (Matthew 28:19-20).

The 10 DMC Elements Diagrammed



GROUNDING



1. Practice Extraordinary Prayer

Extraordinary Prayer is the first of three of the DMC elements that fall under our first stage, *Grounding*.

Extraordinary prayer is an intentional group initiative of focused prayer through which dependency on God for the establishment of a disciple-making church is demonstrated. Movements happen because God makes them happen. Without dependency on God, there is no reason to believe that a movement will occur. Dependency on God involves different elements, but it always includes prayer. We call it “extraordinary” because it specifically looks to God to create a movement of disciple-making churches.

What does extraordinary prayer look like? Practically speaking, various times of corporate prayer are planned: days, nights, scheduled times of prayer and/or fasting. Here are some examples of prayer that have been seen amongst hundreds of ministries around the world:

- Christians meeting together to pray and fast every week at least two meals in one day, listening to God as they ask Him for a movement of disciple-making amongst the people or region for which they are concerned.
- Gathering together regularly for all-night or six-hour prayer vigils (two to four nights per month).
- Daily committed prayer for a disciple-making church. At times, one to three hours of committed prayer is not uncommon.

What extraordinary prayer reveals:

1. The work belongs to God.

Disciple-makers recognize that if a movement is going to happen, it is God who must do it, and they look to the Lord to show them what it will take.

2. Extraordinary prayer is a genuine movement of the Spirit.

At the foundation of all DMC is a group of people crying out for God to fulfil His vision. They are desperate in prayer and plead for God to bring salvation to their people group. They live out the cry for His “Kingdom come” of Matthew 6:9-10. They pray like the church in the book of Acts.

3. DMC practitioners do not rely on methods and tools.

There’s a danger that one may rely on the human aspect of engaging in the methods or means of DMC. However, disciple-making is relational not mechanical. Our actions do not determine the establishment of a movement since the crux of ministry is changing peoples’ hearts, and that is entirely the purview of the Spirit. Rather, we must adopt the vision of our Lord, who told His disciples, “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:12-13, NIV) The only means to change a nation or to fulfil the Great Commission is through prayer to the One who sits in power and authority with the Father.

4. The price of personal sacrifice.

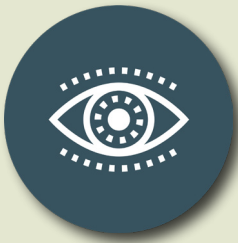
In extraordinary prayer we seek God’s strength and wisdom for the challenges, discouragements, temptations, and attacks of the enemy that will come our way. Setbacks are not viewed as defeats, but as opportunities to look to God to show us what we need to learn and do in response.

5. The need to enlist many to pray.

Dependence on God for movements involves training, maintaining, and reproducing intercessors who understand well the strategic nature of extraordinary prayer.

How do we ensure commitment to extraordinary prayer?

- Greatly desire and look for God to show up and work in the hearts of many people.
- Cultivate a growing passion for God’s glory and a great love for lost people.
- Embrace a God-sized vision for a region or people group.
- Persevere in the vision for hundreds if not thousands of churches to be established.
- Continually build each other up to renewed commitment to the cause.
- Occasionally review the “what’s it going to take” mentality to keep coming back to God, pleading for His intervention.
- Remember that prayer keeps us in the heat of the battle. It helps prevent yielding to the call of comfort that tempts us.
- Do not rely on exciting experiences of extraordinary prayer in order to begin or maintain prayer; rather, dive in, persevere, and allow the vision to drive you on to greater prayer and towards growing dependence on God. *“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”* (Colossians 1:29, ESV)



2. Formulate a God-Sized Vision

Formulate a God-sized Vision is the second of three of the DMC elements that fall under our first stage, *Grounding*.

A God-sized vision begins at the end with workers envisioning what a reached region or reached people group would look like. Then they work backwards to set in place a plan to reach their end goal. These God-sized visions emerge as populations are researched and strategic centres are identified in which the work will be initiated. This God-sized vision will likely foresee hundreds if not thousands of churches established in the 4Ps contexts. God-sized visions are not limited by the DMC Teams' resources or abilities, but instead, the team members imagine what a great moving of God's Spirit can accomplish. In light of that vision, they don't ask, "what can I do?" because the vision is beyond their resources. Rather, what guides their actions is the question, "What's it going to take to accomplish the vision?"

*"God be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us;
That thy way may be known upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.
Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee.
Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy"*
— Psalm 67:1-4a ASV

Many such verses encourage us to see a movement started among the people or in the region God is calling us to reach. We join Jesus in His mission to make God's great salvation known to the nations so that many are filled with the knowledge of God and thus able to raise their voices in praise to Him. John Piper stated it this way: "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't."

A God-sized vision leads DMC Teams to saturate entire people groups or regions with multiplying disciples forming multiplying churches. Thousands of Christ-worshippers are now serving and obeying God in local churches where formerly there were none.

It is important for DMC Team members to understand how vision relates to and drives the work of making disciples and planting churches. When the reverse is the case and methodology drives vision, our reliance on our resources can severely limit what we can accomplish. DMC encourage us to flip the equation around. A God-sized vision demands a different way of planting churches, a different way of making disciples. When a God-sized vision encompassing a region or a whole people group — a humanly impossible vision — directs the methodology, that is what determines the priorities and plans of the DMC Team. Each day, the team members will plan not only based on their immediate tasks, contacts, and programs, but will strategize and prioritize for the larger vision. This work is what the 10 DMC elements describe.

Without a powerful and overwhelming vision of what God wants for a people or region, the DMC Team will not be mentally or spiritually prepared to do what is needed so that the vision becomes reality. At the same time, a powerful and overwhelming vision must not incapacitate the team because of limited resources. Rather, the team is moved to accomplish a specific action, one small step forward, relying on God to uphold the responsibility for His vision. The team maintains the vision of a multiplication of disciples and churches, and works towards that knowing that such a God-sized vision reflects the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer in Matthew 6:9-10 (ESV):

“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’”

Jesus taught us to pray that our city, neighbourhood, nation, or people group will so reflect His glory and reign that it is like heaven on earth. God’s will is done on earth by people, just as His will is done in heaven by angels.

God-Sized Vision:

1. Centre on God’s glory among the nations

“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” Habakkuk 2:14 (NIV)

“For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 1:11 (ESV)

Other texts: Psalm 72:19, Romans 15:18-21

2. Reflect God’s heart for the nations

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.” Psalm 67:1-2 (ESV)

3. Reveal a great passion for the lost

DMC practitioners are burdened for those without Christ. They are taken up with Jesus’ call to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2). They look for God to impact large populations through multiplying churches.

4. Are well researched and strategic in nature and implementation

Research influences the creation, development, and implementation of the God-sized vision. Steps towards the vision are taken through a contextualized DMC strategy.

5. Be undergirded by extraordinary prayer

A God-sized vision can only happen when it is something God can do and desires to do. The DMC team looks to God to accomplish the vision and to guide the team in what steps they need to take to participate in His mission.

6. Drive movements

Just as being a disciple requires an all-in commitment to Jesus, so disciple-making churches require an all-in commitment to join Jesus in His mission. DMC are not merely a new way to do Bible study or lead a small group. They require an all-consuming vision for the multiplication of disciple-makers and church planters that is pursued with relentless determination.



3. Establish a DMC Ministry Team

Establish a DMC Ministry Team is the third of the DMC elements that fall under our first stage, *Grounding*. Establishing a DMC ministry team will be unique and different depending on what its 4Ps (Persecution, Poverty, Prosperity, and Presence) global region context is.

God uses particularly gifted individuals to launch disciple-making churches. Known as pioneer leaders, church planters, and catalysts, they possess a great hunger for God and His Kingdom. They are vision-driven and incredibly persevering in their efforts to see these God-movements permeate entire people groups and/or regions where Christ is not known. They are uniquely gifted servant leaders who can identify, recruit, and build a DMC Team of people with complementing gifts who will follow the vision for ministry. God uses men and women more than methods, and intends for His people to work together in community with a common vision.

Pioneer leaders identify, train, and mentor DMC Team leaders

No one can launch a movement alone. Developing a team of like-minded individuals is a necessity. Pioneer leaders identify, recruit, and build a DMC Team of people with complementary gifts who commit themselves wholeheartedly to the God-sized vision for a people group or region where Christ is not known. These leaders build team spirit within a group of people with diverse backgrounds, expectations, and characteristics. Pioneer leaders seek to identify the right team members and train them in the DMC elements. Ideally, pioneer leaders will also be in a coaching relationship with someone committed to DMC elements and sensitive to their background and 4Ps ministry context.

Trainer of trainers

Providing “just in time” training (appropriate training for the moment and the individual) to prospective team members serves to filter out those who do not put the training into practice. Train only those who immediately apply what they have learned. Once team members have been identified, they are trained until they can train others. This is the process of *multiplication*. Lead one person to follow Jesus and train them to obey His commands; they go and train another, who trains another. In this way the Kingdom multiplies and grows.

Required competencies for DMC Team members:

- Team members are faithful disciples of Jesus with the desire and ability to be disciple-makers.
- Team members grow together in their allegiance to Jesus, conforming their lives to the biblical revelation of God’s will, character, and mission.
- Team members understand, can articulate, and are committed to the God-sized vision of the team.
- Team members are committed to extraordinary prayer.
- Team members have unity in the theological and biblical understanding of God’s Word, with adequate education to fulfil their role and gifting.
- Team members embrace and live out Kingdom values and practices.
- Team members are willing and able to be trained in how to make multiplying disciples (2 Timothy 2:2).
- Team members are willing to be learners who work together by following the biblical principles that characterize DMC principles.



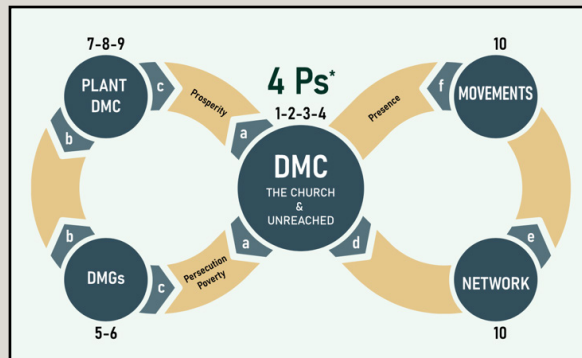
B. GOING



4. Enter and Engage the Community

Enter and Engage the Community is the first of two DMC elements that fall under the second stage, *Going*.

A successful DMC team will discover ways to relate the Gospel to those within the people group in its particular 4Ps (see Figure 1) region(s) in a manner that works towards the God-sized vision. This entry phase prepares the foundation for the work that will follow. Knowing how to connect well with people in a spiritually transparent way is crucial. This involves gaining a good grasp of the culture, knowing how to communicate (language skills), learning ways to be appropriately visible to and connected with key individuals, and finding ways to become a caring member of a local community. Often, but not always, entry strategies involve establishing humanitarian actions in response to the pressing needs within the population. Where an entry strategy is absent, a Disciple-Making Church will never see the light of day. The key is to proactively build connections for fruitful relationships.



The authors of *Beyond Church Planting* emphasize ways to interact with the community and relate to people, especially in the poverty and persecution areas.¹

- Observe the people God is calling you to reach. Sit and watch, walk and drive. God will give you discernment and wisdom to know what your style of ministry needs to be, and your strategy will emerge.
- As you get to know the people God is calling you to reach, listen for attitudes, interests, and needs. These are the clues you need in order to discover what God is calling you to do.
- As you observe, listen, and interact, you will collect soft data and understanding. When led by the Holy Spirit of God, this information can help you understand what style you need to have, so that you can relate appropriately to people, and so that they ultimately come to know Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

¹ Robert E. Logan, Neil Cole, and Holly Morgan (editor), "Beyond Church Planting", (Churchsmart Resources), 2005

- The apostle Paul changed his dress, his diet, and his forms of communication to be able to reach people (1 Corinthians 9:19-23).
- There is no need to market yourself. The ultimate person who modelled relational communication and incarnation was the Lord Jesus Christ. When God became a man and lived among us, he took on Jewish culture and form. He grew up in Galilee and even learned a trade. All of that is a demonstration of “incarnational” ministry. Good research of the harvest field is essential to relating to people and reaching them with the Gospel.



5. Find People of Peace

Find People of Peace is the second DMC element that falls under the second stage, *Going*.

As we disciple the nations, we do so with the anticipation that there are those who will respond to the Gospel, and that there is a harvest to be reaped. God goes before His labourers, preparing people who will respond to the message. Therefore, Jesus instructed His disciples to look for those who are open and may be “a person of peace” (Luke 10:6).

A *person of peace* is someone who is accepting of you and open to the Gospel message, even though they are not yet believers. He or she is a gatekeeper to their network of relationships (family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, etc.) and encourages the exploration of the Gospel message. With the support of this gatekeeper, the Gospel may be accepted and disciples born. The door the Spirit opens becomes a gateway through which others can respond within their own social structure.

A person of peace:

- is open to the Gospel. A person of peace is a seeker who has been prepared by the Holy Spirit and is ready to receive the Gospel.
- has a reputation such that they have influence within the community. A person of peace is well known in their community, whether for good or for bad. Some biblical examples of people of peace had a good reputation, like Cornelius. Others were well known for their bad reputations, like the woman at the well and Zacchaeus. Yet when each accepted Christ, their character was radically changed. God gained the glory for this transformation.
- has a circle of influence. A person of peace is willing to introduce their circle of influence to Christ. They tell others about the great things Jesus has done for them.
- is helpful. A person of peace is willing to help Christian workers.
- once a follower of Christ, could facilitate Discovery Bible Studies in groups and make disciples in discovery groups.

How do you find a person of peace?

In one way or another everyone in your target area must have the opportunity to respond to the Gospel.

In the abundant sowing of God's Word, we find people of peace. In this way the abundant sowing of God's Word becomes a filter by which we find the people of peace. They are the ones open to the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15).

Examples of people of peace found in Scripture:

- Jesus: Mark 1:14-20, 2:13-17, 5:1-20, 10:46-52; Luke 19:1-10; John 1:43-51
- Disciples: Acts 8:26-40; 10:1-8, 34-38; 16:11-15, 25-34; 18:1-4, 5-8, 24-28

When sowing God's Word abundantly, it is important to realize that many will not listen. Find a time with those who will. These people of peace are those open to the Gospel who are your doorway into their social networks. Walk with them to the point that they give their lives to Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15), and after conversion, focus on equipping them to share the Gospel, including the power of their own personal testimony.

The great comfort for all believers lies in the sovereignty of God who never rests in His tending and nurturing of the coming harvest. No reasonable farmer sows the seed without the harvest in mind. And no reasonable farmer sows one day and expects to reap the next. Only those committed to the harvest will see the fruit.

Principles/Practices:

- God is Lord of the harvest and responsible for the growth.
- Share when and where people are ready to hear.
- When you find people of peace, work with them.
- Help seekers from the beginning to discover their need for salvation.
- Engage an entire family or group, not just the individual.



GATHERING



6. Evangelizing and Discipling in Discovery Groups

Using Discovery Bible Studies, known as DBS, to begin Discovery Groups in order to evangelize seekers and make disciples of believers. These Discovery Groups are the first to fall under the third stage, *Gathering*.

Discovery Bible Studies (DBS)

Discovery Bible Studies are first done in groups that consist of spiritually interested people who read a Bible passage together as a revelation of God's will, character, and mission, and discuss and discover the implications for their lives. Believers are then challenged to immediately live out what they learned and to share it with someone else. Through Discovery Bible Studies we are helping seekers to meet Christ and receive Him as their only Lord and Saviour, and discipling newly born-again believers to mature in Christ and become disciple-makers. As God's Spirit works through this reflective process in a group setting, believers will learn a path of obedience that occurs in the context of group accountability. On their spiritual journey, seekers will be drawn to Christ (repentance, belief, baptism) and follow Him. The key to making disciples is for the participants to be challenged to conform their lives to what they have discovered about God's will, character, and mission. They are kept accountable by the group for their commitments (John 14:15, 21, 24).

The Discovery Bible Study (DBS) is one application of the DMC method that is designed to be quickly reproducible. In most situations, there will need to be some contextualization of the process depending on the field where the DMC Elements are applied. It is important to start a DBS with two or three (or more) people belonging to the family and or social network of the person of peace, thus reaching a community, not just an individual.

DBS is a disciple-making process, not just another way to study the Bible. It is an invitation for the newly converted believers to enter into a life of commitment to follow Jesus. People are invited to discover God's story, the big picture of what God is doing in the world, and how that impacts their lives. A person's worldview is being reshaped as they are challenged to enter into a relationship that requires them to give up their lives. This must be a work of the Spirit, and, for many people, this will take time.

The Basic DBS Format

Discovery Bible Studies (DBS) consist of a set of well-designed questions that seek to instill in believers the DNA of discipleship.

From the beginning, the aim is to guide a group of seekers so that they discover for themselves who God is, the nature of their sin, and their need for salvation in Christ. DMC practitioners trust that the

Holy Spirit is sufficient (1 John 2:20-21, 27) as the people together engage God's Word with a desire to know Jesus. Self-discovered truth stays with the person; it is personal and owned. Jesus used this approach frequently in His discipleship. He rarely answered people's questions directly, but rather pointed them to significant truths that could be drawn out of their own experiences.

Start by choosing a passage of Scripture that is simple and not too long or complicated. Select a passage that is relevant to the seekers'/believers' group and their spiritual/discipleship journey.

As you meet with the group, a Christ-following facilitator begins by asking questions that instill in the participants a discipleship DNA and provide a pattern for an expression of the Body of Christ, when the group develops to that point.

Connecting Questions

- *"What are you thankful for this week?"* - This becomes the basis for prayer and worship.
- *"What has stressed you out this week? Have you faced any challenges?"* - This becomes the basis for intercession.
- *"What did we talk about last week?"* - This becomes the basis for accountability/obedience for converts, and opportunity to meet Jesus for seekers.
- *"Do you or does someone you know have needs?"* - This becomes the basis for service.
- *"As a follower of Christ, did you follow through on the commitment that you made as a result of last week's story?"* - This becomes the basis for accountability and obedience.
- *"Did you share the story with someone?"* - This becomes the basis for accountability, worship, and evangelism.
- *"We identified several needs last week and planned to meet those needs. How did it go?"* - This becomes the basis for service, accountability, and worship.

Discovery Questions

- *Read this week's passage (Scripture) two or three times. Different people can take turns reading.*
- *Ask for someone to retell the passage in their own words.* - This becomes the basis for accountability and evangelism.
- *Ask the group: "Is there something they added or left out?"* - This becomes the basis for the priesthood of believers, group correction, and Scripture.
- *If someone states something that isn't in the passage, ask, "Where did you find that in this passage?" Reread the passage, if necessary.* - This becomes the basis for the priesthood of believers, group correction, and Scripture.
- *"What does this passage teach us about God? What does God want in this passage? What is God like in this passage? What does God do in this passage?"* - This becomes the basis for discovery, Scripture, the priesthood of believers, and the development of their theology.
- *"What does this passage teach us about humanity?"* - This becomes the basis for discovery, Scripture, the priesthood of believers, and the development of their theology.

The key is for the facilitator not to teach. Let participants think and talk. What do they see in Scripture? If they ask you to explain, turn it around by asking, "What do the others think?" Don't be afraid of awkward silence. Sometimes it is good to simply be quiet and wait for the participants to come up with the answers. If you must respond, ask another question. It is important not to act as a teacher. They need to depend on God's Word, not on you. This is very hard to do, as we are so used to providing all the answers, but it is vital to this process. The key is autonomous discovery so that

they take ownership of what God says. The facilitator's job is to give space for everyone to learn and to put what they see in their own words.

Discovering truth on your own (or in a group) is more powerful than simply being told the truth:

- Simple questions like the ones above allow everyone to be on the same page.
- These questions help create spiritually hungry disciples who are “self-feeding”. They teach people how to hear from God, not just what others say.
- These questions are theologically “safe” as well as spiritually deep.
- These questions are reproducible in every setting. This empowers anyone and everyone to make disciples wherever they are.

Response or Application Questions

- *“Given what you have discovered about God’s will, character, and mission from this passage, what action will you take this week to conform your life to the way God wants you to live?”* - This is the basis for discovery, Scripture, obedience, and priest-hood of believers.
- *“Who in your life could also benefit from what you have discovered? Is there someone you plan to share your experience with before we meet again?”* - This is the basis for evangelism, replication, and multiplication.

The facilitator should give people time to not only think about the questions but also to provide personal commitments to the group that can be followed up in the next meeting. This part of the process grounds the discussion in obedience steps. Jesus described making disciples as teaching people to obey everything that He commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). When people come up with their own personal obedience or action-based applications, the Holy Spirit can convict and guide them into commitments better than anything we might suggest. At first these may be simple applications but when followers of Christ obey in little steps, it soon becomes significant as God’s Word is lived out.

Make Disciples in (Discovery) Groups

Discovery Groups are intentional training grounds for multiplying disciples. These groups provide a process that leads to a set of desired outcomes. The previous paragraphs focused on how to facilitate a Discovery Bible Study. This DMC Element describes the work of making disciples who make disciples. This work is done in the context of groups called “Discovery Groups”.

The Discovery Group dynamic reshapes participants’ (seekers and converts) worldview around a new, biblical worldview: the story of God and His message to humanity. The process results in making obedient disciples of God’s Kingdom who reach out to those around them and multiply their discipleship in others. The discipleship process is best done in community with others.

Jesus’ Method

We define a disciple as someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus (see Matthew 4:19). How did Jesus make this kind of disciple?

Answer: He was intentional, relational, and formational.

- Intentional: Jesus was deliberate and guided by a master plan. (God’s will)
- Relational: Jesus was personally engaged, and guided by a cross-shaped love for people (John 13:34-35). (God’s character)

- Formational: Jesus formed His disciples by teaching, coaching, challenging, and modelling so they could become more and more like Him. (God’s mission)

Jesus’ method of disciple-making is about calling people to an allegiance to Him in a relational, personal way – the way of cross-shaped love. Disciple-making occurs in a life-on-life environment, going deep into the significant concerns of life (heart-to-heart), and in a community commitment to obey Jesus as Lord. Disciple-making is motivated by love and fuelled by the Holy Spirit (who convicts and sustains): the result is dramatic transformation, both personally and communally. Jesus disciplined people in groups for this purpose.

Jason Dukes writes:

“The meaning of the word ‘disciple’ actually implies something more like this: I am a learner and will always be a learner. I’m more like an apprentice who learns from a Master and imitates Him, doing what I’ve seen Him do in my everyday life. I’m more like a son or a daughter who lives in the presence of my Daddy and thus lives on purpose to invite others along like He is their Daddy, too.”²

Why disciple people in groups rather than individually?³

A group has the power of communal identity, reinforcement, accountability, and multiplication. A multiplying strategy of making disciples leading to Kingdom communities would be extremely unlikely if groups, and the group process, were not part of it. Underestimating the power of groups, and the importance of a group process, is one of the biggest mistakes a disciple-maker can make.

- Groups remember more than individuals.
- Groups learn faster than individuals.
- Groups replicate faster than individuals.
- Groups replicate more often than individuals.
- Groups self-correct.
- Groups are a protection against bad leadership and heresy.
- Groups keep individuals accountable.

Discipling in Groups

Discovery Groups need to keep the Bible central as their source of teaching to discover the will, character, and mission of God in His Word; to transform their lives through allegiance to Jesus and obedience to God’s Word; and to share the benefits of their discovery with friends and family. Groups don’t do these things naturally; they have to be disciplined into them so that it becomes as natural as breathing.

The DNA of the group must be set from the first meeting of the group, although it will take some time to have all the various dynamics of the process established. Groups are resistant to change so get it right from the start. Again, what you win people *with* is what you win people *to*.

Establish Disciple-Making Churches’ DNA through action. When people develop personal convictions and act on them, they begin new habits.

² Jason C. Dukes, “Shifting from Learn-ed to Learn-er”; Discipleship.org blog

³ Adapted from David and Paul Watson, “Contagious Disciple Making: Leading others on a journey of discovery” (Thomas Nelson Publishing; Nashville, Tennessee), 2014.



7. Recognize and Train DMC Pastors and Leaders

Recognize and Train DMC Pastors and Leaders is the second of three DMC Elements that fall under the third stage, *Gathering*.

With the goal of healthy churches, training leaders and pastors is a priority. In the DMC process taking place in different 4Ps areas, all groups will require leadership (pastors, elders, deacons); and will need to identify, recruit, and train leaders, planters, or potential planters at various levels who will give direction over churches.

The priesthood of every believer is an important Biblical truth (principle) that is foundational to DMC. A primary role of the movement leaders will be to maintain and develop this truth in and through the lives of all believers.

Priesthood of Believers

The priesthood of every believer is about God's plan to use common, ordinary people (and not just professionals) to make God and His Kingdom known in this world.

“But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you – from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.” 1 Peter 2:9-10 MSG

God uses ordinary people to accomplish His purposes. This certainly was the way of Jesus when He invited simple fishermen to be those who would eventually launch a world-wide movement.

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13 (ESV)

This doctrine is incredibly important in disciple-making churches and defines servant leadership. Leadership in a disciple-making church serves the priesthood of every believer. (The following points are adapted from chapter nine of David and Paul Watson's *Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery* ⁴)

Servant leadership...

- Affirms the work of the Spirit in the life of every believer.
- Recognizes the giftedness of each person and opens the door for any believer to become an apostle, prophet, evangelist (disciple-maker), or pastor/teacher (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- Ensures that the believer moves from a profession of faith to a lifestyle of faith.
- Promotes the health and involvement of all believers in the communities where they live and serve.
- Treats with dignity and worth each follower of Christ no matter his or her status in life. Recognizes that Christ has commissioned and sent His followers (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). As Jesus said, *“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”* (John 20:21b, ESV).

⁴ The following points are adapted from David and Paul Watson, *Contagious Disciple Making: Leading others on a journey of discovery* (Thomas Nelson Publishing; Nashville, Tennessee); 2014; chapter 9.

- Recognizes that multiplication in a disciple-making church happens because of the power of personal testimony and discipleship that is carried out by common, ordinary people.

For those who are church planting in Canada, Advance 1.0 Greenhouse by Rev. Tom Haines may be a helpful resource for more information on the Leader/Pastor’s Personal Life (see pages 41-53).



8. Launch Disciple-Making Churches

Launch Disciple-Making Churches is the third DMC Element that falls under the third stage, *Gathering*.

We recognize that different contexts (4Ps: Poverty, Persecution, Prosperity, and Presence areas), will certainly require different tactics. For our missionaries serving among the unreached, especially in the hostile, persecuted areas, churches will take the form of simple churches – often known as “rabbit”, “underground churches”, or “house churches”, etc. For our missionaries who follow the DMC process as outlined in our 10 Essential Elements, Discover Groups develop into these churches

Furthermore, our missionaries might serve in areas where churches already exist. In these cases, and based on the nature of the context, our missionaries would hope to influence and mobilize the churches in order to embrace the DMC model and help them to launch the DMC process or launch and plant healthy DMC.

What is a church?

“We believe that a church is a company of immersed believers, called out from the world, separated unto the Lord Jesus, voluntarily associated for the ministry of the Word, the mutual edification of its members, the propagation of the faith and the observance of the ordinances. We believe it is a sovereign, independent body, exercising its own divinely awards gifts, precepts and privileges under the Lordship of Christ, the Great Head of the church. We believe that its officers are pastors and deacons” (Doctrinal Statement and Affirmation of Faith of The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada)

From a “Gathering” to a Healthy Church - Characteristics of a Healthy Church

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

“Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the



Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Acts 2:36-47 (ESV)

Members of a Healthy Church

Repent of sins and believe in the name of Jesus (v.38)

[Luke 19:1-10](#)

Functions of a Healthy Church according to Acts 2:36-47

- **Baptism (v.41)**
[Acts 8:26-40](#)
- **Multiplication (v.41, 47)**
[Acts 1:7-8](#)
- **Prayer (v.42)**
[Acts 4:23-31](#)
- **Fellowship (v.42)**
[Luke 10:25-37](#); [1 Peter 4:8](#)
- **Praise (or worship songs) (v.47)**
[Acts 4:23-31](#)
- **Lord’s Supper/Communion (v.42)**
[Luke 22:7-20](#); [1 Corinthians 11:17-34](#)
- **Giving/Offering/Generosity (v.45)**
[Mark 12:41-44](#)
- **Preaching/Apostles’ Teaching (v.42)**
[Acts 4:33](#); [2 Corinthians 4:5](#); [Ephesians 2:20](#); [1 Corinthians 1:17](#); [Acts 5:42](#)
- **Leadership (elders/deacons) (v.42)**
[1 Timothy 3:1-16](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#)

Spiritual Gifts of a Healthy Church

- Apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds/pastors, and teachers ([Ephesians 4:11](#))
- Prophecy, faith, service, teaching, exhortation, generosity, leadership, and acts of mercy ([Romans 12:3-8](#))
- Peter’s combination of all spiritual gifts into two categories: speaking and serving ([1 Peter 4:10-11](#))

For those who are church planting in Canada read *Advance 1.0 Greenhouse* (pages 7-35 and 61-73).



GROWING



9. Recruit and Coach DMC Catalyst Leaders

Recruit and Coach DMC Catalyst Leaders is the first of two DMC Elements that fall under the fourth stage, *Growing*.

As the Early Church grew and reproduced in numbers and began to extend itself into new regions, it adapted to new needs and challenges (see Acts 6, for example). Jesus has given His Church a variety of gifted leaders who are tasked in equipping “the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12, ESV). Some are pastors/teachers who build up local believers so that they are multiplying disciple-makers. Some are prophets who speak into the life of the church to correct and guide. Some are evangelists who ensure that the message is spread throughout the people group. Without these leaders, movements can plateau or be stunted in their progress. Other leaders develop a vision for God’s mission beyond the boundaries of the current movement. These are the apostles/missionaries who grasp the missional vision to move across boundaries and initiate DMC in new places. They are catalyst leaders who have developed a vision for movements beyond the movement in which they are currently involved. They have the ability, relationships, and tools to create new teams for new 4Ps contexts, and to create networks that lead to movements so that the DMC cycle begins again. We refer to these leaders as “catalysts”.

The roles of DMCs movement catalysers – Church Planters⁵

Catalysts grow movements and initiate them in new contexts. This requires them to have a number of skills and roles, such as:

1. **Seed Sowers:** They engage the lost with the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (John 4:35-38).
2. **Church Planters:** They engage the receptive, using the Word of God to nurture the growth and birth of new disciple-making churches (1 Corinthians 3:5-11).
3. **Church Planting Multipliers:** They successfully multiply through new generations of disciple-making church planters and churches to the second, third, and fourth generations (Titus 1:5-6; Colossians 1:3-9, 4:7-17).
4. **Movement Trainers:** They introduce pre-existing autonomous networks to biblical training for multiplying disciple-making churches (2 Timothy 2:2).
5. **Strategy Coordinators:** They train and release leaders and mobilize networks and resources to saturate a specific population segment (Romans 15:15-24, Acts 20:17-35).

⁵ Adapted from Nathan Shank, “Five Levels of Movement Leadership”

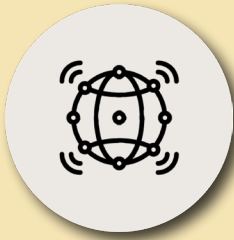
DMC Catalyst Leaders are identified by their giftedness

For there to be movement or growth in any context, a team should draw upon the natural energy and momentum inherent in each member. Every person functions in unique ways. It is remarkable when a group allows each member to function out of their natural capacities, thus contributing to the overall movement, direction, and wisdom of a team.

DMC Catalyst Leaders need to be identified, trained, and coached

- Develop and multiply Catalyst Leaders based on their obedience to Christ. Just because someone can do a job, it doesn't mean they should. Leaders are appointed in Scripture based on their obedience to God, their Christ-like character, and the active presence of the Holy Spirit in their life, not solely on availability.
- Constantly filter for emerging Catalyst Leaders. Keep in mind that all of these plans are often implemented concurrently as new people at various levels of obedience are coming into the Body of Christ. Let their faithfulness (obedience) and fullness of the Spirit be your guide. Maturity is marked by a life of obedience and self-sacrifice, not the length of time one has been a believer.
- A good plan operates under the John 14:12 and John 3:30 principles of leadership. The good leader expects and encourages emerging leaders to do greater things than they themselves have done. A good leader also desires that they might decrease so that the emerging leaders might increase. Existing leaders must earnestly desire that God use their potential leaders in marvellous ways for His glory. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing someone who, after being trained, does great things for the Kingdom of God.
- Follow Christ's model of filtering from crowd, to faithful followers, to "come and be with me" disciples. Invite a group of potential leaders and planters – catalysts – to "come and be" with you and with other faithful leaders on a leadership training journey. Meet with them together and do ministry with them separately as well (both iron-sharpening-iron time between themselves, and field-mentoring times are required). Train, equip, and coach them to multiply themselves into others and then go and find another batch of potential leaders, planters, and catalysts to mentor. All leaders should have a group of faithful men and women they are discipling in depth.
- Remember, one of the most important things you can do with your potential Catalyst Leaders is to make sure they understand fully how to intentionally move toward God's purpose and goals.

Catalyst Leaders invest a major portion of their time in equipping other leaders. We "go slow in order to go fast and far" is a principle that underlines deeper discipleship which lays the foundation for future rapid growth. We invest extensively in one person in order to reach and train many. As leaders multiply, disciple-making churches grow and multiply.



10. Build DMC Networks and Movements

Build DMC Networks and Movements is the second DMC Element that falls under the fourth stage, *Growing*.

Building bridges with like-minded networks helps facilitate movements. This will reflect the heart of Jesus for His church globally. Jesus said, “I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:22-23, NIV) That’s why we must be part of local and international networks. We must pray and work toward a great collaboration among churches, denominations, and networks in order to see movements established for Kingdom multiplication.

Collaborating with other churches, networks, denominations, and movements is a Kingdom victory. It goes directly against the worldly concept of competition and allows for maximum use of Kingdom resources. There are many different types of networks but the critical part when working with others is to make sure that we are aligned theologically on the essentials of the faith. This will ensure that we are ultimately working toward the same end of establishing biblically sound DMC movements. We can work together through the sharing of best practices, tools, resources, and even personnel.

Creating a network

Creating a network where there has previously not been one is often a good idea. It provides peer support and encouragement as well as the sense that one is not in this alone. Six key ingredients to a healthy network are as follows:

1. Number of participants can start at as few as two or three
2. Participants are theologically like-minded
3. Common objective of starting DMCs
4. Open-handed sharing of tools, resources, and best practices
5. Relationship-building among leaders is vital
6. Trust that motivations are genuine

A DMC movement is a work of God’s Spirit that produces indigenous, healthy, growing, reproducing, Disciple-Making Churches that reproduce in an ongoing cycle.