

Fellowship International DMM FAQ Sheet: How we understand Disciple Making Movements

What is a Disciple Making Movement (DMM)?

A Disciple Making Movement exists when churches plant multiple churches (within a few short years), through Gospel activity, that has abundant fruit among the lost, that multiplies these disciples (people growing in obedience to all of Jesus' commands), who in turn replicate themselves in others, so that we can see at least four generations regularly produced in multiple streams of disciple making activity and these streams multiply consistently into churches.¹

Practitioners desiring to see God create a Disciple Making Movement engage in fruitful practices that result in groups of Christ-followers who seek to multiply disciple makers through the power of His Holy Spirit – both around the block and around the world – resulting in a movement of reproducing churches that are defined as Christ-centered groups with leaders who multiply disciple makers.²

How is a movement defined?

A movement is at least 100 new churches that have multiplied to the fourth generation.³

Is there a difference between DMM and CPM (church-planting movement)?

The terminology of CPM came first and it describes the same process as DMM – the difference being a change from a focus on the community (church) to a focus on the activity of the community (disciple-making).

DMM describes the disciple making activity; CPM describes the result.⁴ The transition to “church” is one of identity and maturity, rather than of essence or activity, as disciple making groups maintain their purpose and function while developing longevity and stability as an expression of the body of Christ.

¹ Discipleship.org

² Adapted from *Can Kingdom Movement Strategies Work in North America?* Dr. Curtis Sergeant, Doug Lucas and Dr. David Garrison, *Mission Frontiers* January 01, 2021

³ New Generations definition ([Approach - New Generations](#))

⁴ *Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery*, Paul and David Watson, 2014, kindle 239.

DMM and CPM represent the same church planting model.

Both follow the *same* pathway resulting in the multiplication of churches.

- Making new disciples who form new churches -



What is the Discovery Bible Study (DBS) method?

Discovery Bible Study is a Disciple-Making Process Leading to Personal Transformation and Reproduction through the use of key questions in a cohort setting. It is one expression of a discovery strategy that trains people to personally read, understand and respond to God's word in obedience.

Through a set of simple yet profound questions ([e.g. Moerman's 7 Questions](#)), DBS guides people to both explore the meaning of a passage of Scripture and discern how the passage reveals the character and nature of God. Principles of life are discovered for a disciple, for a Christian leader, and for the church so that people will align their lives to who Jesus is and what He wants for his people. So the primary purpose of the DBS is to help people (nonbelievers and believers) discover and understand the teachings of Jesus in a way that leads them to obedience (2 Timothy 3:15-17).⁵

For a list of some Discovery Bible Study passages for a Muslim audience see [The Discovery Bible Study App for Android and iPhone \(discoverapp.org\)](#)

The process of group discovery of God's nature and will through the Bible together with ongoing group accountability to obey God takes an investment of time, energy and relationship, but it yields remarkable transformation of whole families and communities when it is coupled with obedience.⁶

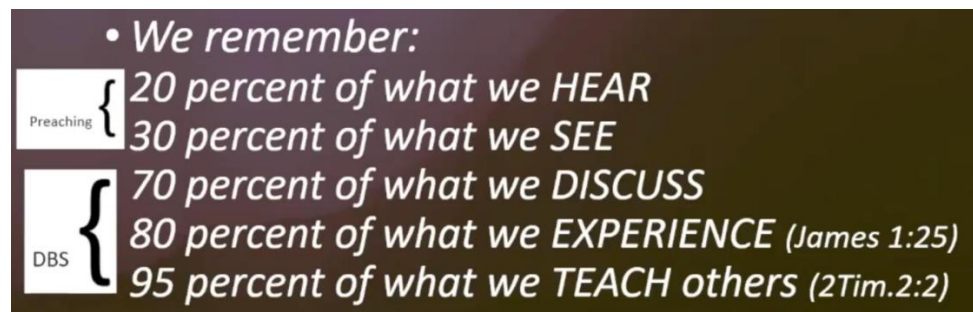
⁵ Adapted from *Miraculous Movements*, Jerry Trousdale page 107

⁶ Ibid. page 42

Discovery-Based Learning

In contrast with the lecture method or the transfer of information from the knower to the learner (both valid methods when used appropriately), discovery-based learning relies solely on the exploration of a group to discern the meaning and significance of a passage. The leader is a facilitator who asks questions and does not teach, relying on the group's ability to understand the main message and the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide and convict.

Discovery learning is widely accepted as the most effective means of adult education.



In DMM, is DBS the exclusive method used for teaching?

While the discovery method is prominent, other more traditional forms of teaching can have their place as long as they do not create undue dependence on a human teacher or undermine the principle of reproducibility.

Is there a difference between the terms, ‘making disciples’ and ‘discipleship’?

By Jesus’ practice, making disciples starts with lost people and ends with Biblically functioning churches. Discipleship has often been used to focus upon Bible knowledge or the growth of Christians. In DMM, disciple making is viewed as a broader framework, grounded in the teachings of Jesus that includes traditional discipleship, but encompassing the engagement of others in all stages of their spiritual journey.⁷

Disciple people to conversion

While some might want to argue that one can’t be a disciple outside of conversion, the Gospels give evidence to the contrary. “*Conversion is a process and Jesus loves His disciples well by letting them get to know Him before He calls for a commitment.*”⁸

Discipleship is a process – it is a process before conversion (could be described as “come and see” – John 1:35-39), and it is a process after conversion (could be expressed in the words of Jesus, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:18-22).

Discipleship is an invitation for spiritually hungry people to discover Jesus; who He is, what He has done for them, and His call on their lives to wholeheartedly follow Him as Saviour and

⁷ *Toward a definition of Disciple-Making Movements*, Roy Moran

⁸ *The Stages of Disciple Making* by Bob Harrington of discipleship.org

Lord. In that discovery process, just as was the case with Jesus, some ‘disciples’ will decide not to continue with Him (John 6:66), while others will go on in powerful demonstration of God’s Spirit at work in their lives.

Obedience-based discipleship

In the making of multiplying disciples, DMM emphasizes the command of Jesus to, “*teach them to observe all that I have commanded you.*” (Matthew 28:20)

A disciple is someone who is “following Jesus, being changed by Jesus and is committed to the mission of Jesus”.⁹ (Matthew 4:19)

Faith is neither activity that earns salvation, nor mere acknowledgement of Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Rather it is a conviction and commitment that expressed through obedience. For further on this see [Defending DMMs](#).

How does DMM understand church?

DMM churches are local gatherings of believers under Biblical leadership, growing in their obedient walk with Jesus as disciples and disciple makers.

Acts 2:37-47 provides some details concerning these churches:

- Made up of believers – repentance, belief in Jesus and baptism by immersion (41)
- Recognition of leadership (42); see as well Ephesians 4:11-12
- Devoted to Biblical teaching (42)
- Fellowship (42)
- The Lord’s supper (42)
- Prayer (42)
- Generosity (44)
- Worship (47)
- Testifying (47)

In addition, the great commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20) are seen as defining elements of the nature of church.

Because the focus of DMM practitioners is the multiplication of healthy churches that are reproducible, the expression of church is usually that of house gatherings. However, in time, it is not unusual for these house churches to buy land and erect their own buildings. Nonetheless, the primary concern is to maintain the momentum of a multiplying disciple making movement.

Who are the leaders in these movements?

In these movements, the laity is empowered to serve and lead. Unpaid, non-professional common men and women are equipped to lead the churches through disciple making activities.¹⁰

⁹ [Jesus-style Disciple Making and True Discipleship - Discipleship.org](#)

¹⁰ *Church Planting Movements, How God is Redeeming a Lost World*, David Garrison (Kindle Locations 2894-2895).

One challenge of the leadership of movements is the identification, encouragement and training of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers from within the movement. Such individuals are essential to maintain the movement and keep the vision intact. Without them, movements fail.¹¹

Can non-believers obey God?

Yes, non-believers can respond to God through acts of obedience. The Apostle Paul states as much when he says, “*For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.*” (Romans 2:14-15). In the early chapters of Romans, Paul’s argument, for both those with and those without the written law, is that their imperfect obedience is what condemns them.

To be clear, this obedience of non-believers is not synonymous with being declared righteous, or good as a result of Christ’s redeeming work in the life of someone. This is not the, ‘*obedience leading to faith*’ of which Paul speaks in his letter to the Romans (1:5), nor is this referring to the obedience that characterizes the Christian’s life (1 John 5:2)

Is DMM the only strategy?

While we do not believe DMM is the only way to reach the nations for Christ, it does intentionally seek to obey Jesus in the great commission by affirming the multiplication of disciple makers as the primary work believers are called to do. At the current time in the missions world, DMM has proven to be the most effective means to reach large numbers of the unreached with the transforming power of the Gospel.

Six reasons why we are committed to DMM

1. We believe that these movements are the result of God’s supernatural work in the lives of individuals, families and communities. We seek therefore to align ourselves with what God is doing today among the nations, particularly among those unreached with the Gospel. DMM practitioners demonstrate this belief through a work that is characterized, among other things, by extraordinary prayer.
2. DMM fulfils the disciple-making mandate of Matthew 28:18-20. From multiplying disciples come multiplying churches.
3. It is Biblically-based. David Garrison (Executive Director for New York City-based Global Gates) calls the Biblical principles behind these movements, ‘Kingdom Kernels’.
4. Nationals lead these movements and as such, new churches take on the cultural expression of their context, which facilitates rapid multiplication. The work of

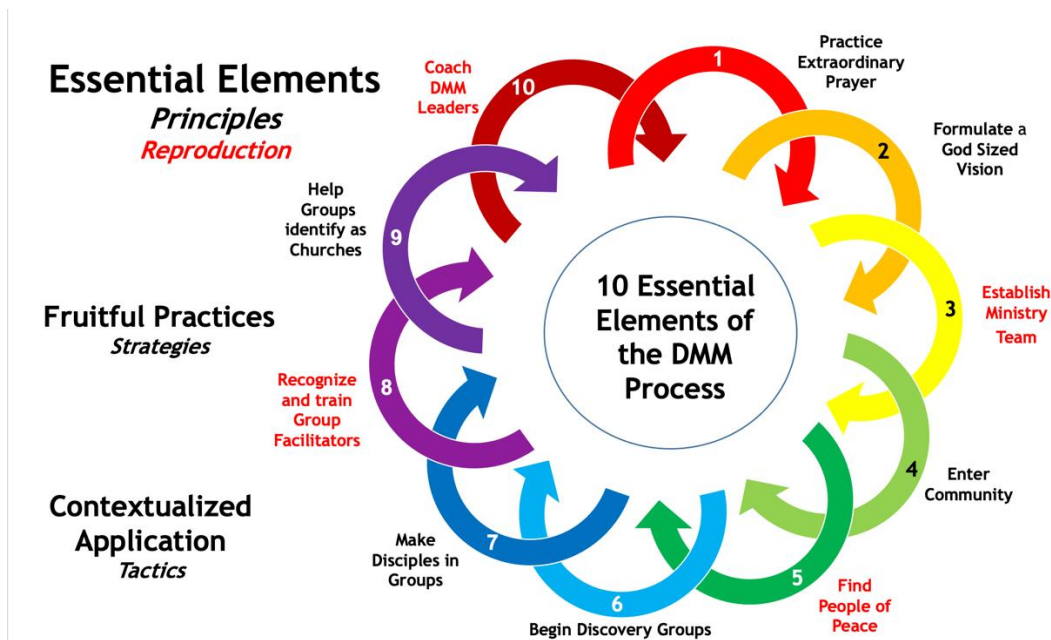
¹¹ *The Role of the Pastor/Teacher in Disciple-Making Movements*, David Watson, 2013.

missions around the world has often planted churches that have been viewed by nationals as being foreign in nature, thus preventing significant penetration among those being reached.

5. DMM is a suitable strategy for the size of the mission task. Past strategies alone will not get us to our goal.
6. First appearing in the 1990s, today these movements represent the single most significant shift in global missionary strategy in the past century. As of June 2020, researchers have found evidence of 1,369 movements involving over 76 million people and 4.8 million groups or simple churches (see the dashboard at <https://2414now.net/resources/>). This data points to a sea change in missions.¹² (Note that in Watsons' book, Contagious Disciple Making, he cites 68 at the time of writing the book in 2014).

Disciple making process

Fellowship International has a list of 10 Essential Elements it has identified as core principles that guide our strategies and practices as disciple-makers.



¹² Can Kingdom Strategies Work in North America? by Dr. Curtis Sergeant, Doug Lucas and Dr. David Garrison, Mission Frontier Jan-Feb 2021