

Developing Devoted Disciples

Ministering to New Believers
within the first 72 hours

Instructor's Guide

Vibrant Church Renewal
USA/Canada Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene, International

Evangelism Resources

USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department

International Church of the Nazarene

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Director of Course Development - Dr. Lyle Pointer

Authors of Module - Scott Dement, John Ford, Amy Frunz, Wes Gibson, Ben Vavold, Mike Voudouris

Curriculum Re-Designer - Jackie James 2011

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MODULE AT A GLANCE

Section	Time	Page	Brief Description
I. Introduction	5 Minutes		Introduce module, objectives, outline
II. Bible Study	10 Minutes		Facilitator will provide the biblical basis for this module.
III. Lecture	25 Minutes		Facilitator presents overview of disciple making process and the feelings of new believers. The participants will be informed on how to be relational, define needs, and encourage the new believer.
IV. Small Group Exercise	25 Minutes		Participants use the case studies provided to diagnose how to build relationships with and define the needs of the individuals in the case studies. Participants will complete a relational plan of action.
V. Discussion	10 Minutes		Participants share thoughts about the information presented and insights about how the information will assist in their leadership. Two possible questions to start the discussion in addition to the questions answered during the exercise are: What new ideas or thoughts did God reveal to you? What new methods will you use as you think about others in your church?

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Section	Time	Page	Brief Description
VI. Action Planning/ Reporting	10 Minutes		Participants prepare their homework assignment: The homework assignment has three components: 1) Answer the questions in their workbook about their own relationship building skills. 2) Develop a plan to improve. 3) Write a relational action plan for a specific individual discussing how, who, when, and expected results of the encounter. Participants will report the results of the activities.
VII. Wrap-Up	5 Minutes		Close the module with your final comments regarding the topic.

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PREPARATION CHECKLIST

The following information will help you prepare to instruct this module.

- ◇ Review the material and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis.
 - ◇ Check to insure the following materials are available:
 - ◇ PowerPoint presentations/transparencies (transparency masters can be produced from the PowerPoint slides)
 - ◇ Participant booklet (copy as needed)
 - ◇ Gather the following materials:
 - ◇ Transparency markers
 - ◇ Pens and/or pencils
 - ◇ Other material you want to use
 - ◇ Make copies of the following material (one for each participant):
 - ◇ Participant booklet
 - ◇ Handouts (if used with this module)
 - ◇ Check the classroom for:
 - ◇ TV/VCR (if necessary)
 - ◇ Overhead projector
 - ◇ Chalkboard or flip chart
 - ◇ Sufficient number of tables and chairs for the participants
- ⇒ Arrange the room so that each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

Your instructor's material contains the following icons:

- ⇒ Special instructions or suggestions



Time suggestions

PPT

PowerPoint Presentation with its corresponding number

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Purpose:

The purpose of this module is to teach the discipler how to address the needs of a new believer within the first 72 hours after his or her decision for Christ.

Objectives:

The objectives for this module are:

- Articulate the biblical basis for follow up after conversion as seen in John 9.
- Identify the possible concerns and needs of the new believer.
- Establish a framework for discipling that is relational instead of task-oriented.
- Move beyond the problems of discipling to developing relationships.

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Bible Study (10 Minutes)

SCRIPTURE FOCUS; John 9:35, Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

Read John 9:1-39

Ask: What struggles will the recently healed man face?

Allow 2-3 minutes for answers; Then say the following:

The healed man encountered completely different circumstances from what he had experienced before he met Jesus. His whole world had changed. Everything was new to him. Though the things around him did not change, only he did. As a blind man, he was an outcast because he was unable to provide productive labor. He was a beggar by trade. Now that he could see, he would be no different from his family and neighbors. Instead of rejoicing with him, the people closest to him became hostile.

Jesus healed the blind man and his neighbors became skeptical. They did not recognize their blind neighbor. They took him before the Pharisees, who questioned him. The seeing man spoke the truth as he knew it. He gave testimony. But he was caught in the middle of a controversy between religious people who rejected Jesus and the reality of his healing.

The healed man made an interesting statement (verse 27), “You do not want to be his disciples too, do you?” The religious men reacted in anger, rebuking the healed man. In telling the story of what had happened to him, he was rejected by the community, by his fearful parents, and was thrown out of the synagogue. He was alone.



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Ask: What does this scripture say to us about Jesus?

What does Jesus do?

Allow some time for responses and then say:

- Jesus went looking for the blind man.
- Jesus made certain the healed man discovered new life.
- Jesus revealed who he was to the formally blind man.
- Jesus intentionally found the man and addressed his questions.
- Jesus gave purpose to the healed man, that purpose was to worship Christ.

The Pharisees put the healed man out of the temple. The healed man was in the depth of confusion about what had happened to him. He did not understand why the people were reacting to him. He did not know how to deal with this conflict. This was a completely new experience for him.

The man healed of his blindness was not able to fully understand what had happened.

The man knew something had happened to him, but he could not understand the significance of what had happened without further explanation. He was left along with his questions. It was after Christ sought him out that the healed man declared his belief in Jesus Christ the Son of Man. That moment began the life time experience of worship for the healed man.

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Lecture  (25 Minutes)



Overview of Disciple Making Process:

The Christians who ministers to new believers must understand the significance of what they are doing, and how their involvement contributes to the development of a new believers. Relationships are key in contributing to new believers' lives.

Jesus models relationship building. New believers will give Christians permission to be a part of their lives.

Through our relationships, we can move to incorporating new believers into the body of Christ. We are introducing the convert to a lifetime of learning and discipleship. Discipler is not attempting to put a great burden on new believers, but they are attempting to help get them started.

The first 72 hours of new believers' lives will shape the direction of their her future.

Jesus invites people into relationship with him. Our role is to help new believers see they have been invited into a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church.

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The Feelings of New Believer's

New believers experience a variety of emotions. Some are positive, some are negative. Some are caused by internal conflicts and assumptions. Some emotions are triggered by external pressures.

Excitement of life.

New believers will be excited about what has happened to them. This excitement may be observed in many ways (wanting to talk about the love of Jesus, how amazing God is, how wonderfully different they feel.) We should encourage the joy of new discoveries.

Fears, concerns and second thoughts.

At the same time negative thoughts and uncertainties may tear at new believers. Some of their questions may include:

- “What do I do?”
- “Am I really forgiven?”
- “Do I have to right all the wrongs that I committed?”
- “What about my smoking and/or drinking?”

Caught between two worlds.

The blind man found himself caught between what had happened to him and what the community was willing to accept. Like the blind man, new believers may have similar feelings of being caught between two worlds.

How do we address the feelings of new believers?

Explain this tension is to be expected when there's change.

Coach them to keep their focus on Christ.

Direct them to look to other Christians for support.



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Building Relationships

Relationships are the starting point for Christian growth and assisting new believers with their emotions. We have a responsibility to initiate new relationships. Some Christians making contacts may be new territory and scary. Remember Jesus intentionally sought the healed man. We have an opportunity to be like Christ.

- The first contact should be a positive memory.
- Make your first contact in person or by phone.
- Remember whom you represent. Show an appropriate level of care and concern.
- Schedule a time to get together.
- Find a time and location where conversation can progress without significant interruption.
- Respecting a person's time is extremely important.



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Conversation starters are a way to begin the relationship and determine the best method for continuing.

Take time to get to know something about the person and his/her background and current situation.

Open-ended questions are essential to good conversation. Here are some sample questions:

- Tell me about your job. What do you like about it? What in your job is satisfying?
- What does the perfect day off look like for you?
- What was your family like growing up?
- What is your life motto?

Be open to acknowledge common interests.

Defining Needs

Learning about the needs of new believers may come naturally from initial conversations, but disciplers must be intentional about expressing concern for new believers and expressing a desire to help them. A desire to help models the love and concern of Christ. This also draws them to the body of Christ. Look for statements that indicate that new believers realize a change in their actions, motivation, or perspective. It may be necessary to ask questions such as: “In the last few days what has been the most significant moment in your spiritual life?” How has that moment changed your perspective?”

In assessing their spiritual needs, we cannot neglect other physical and emotional needs. Some new believers will be in undersirable and harmful. We should determine what other types of assistance they may need.



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Encouragement and Affirmation

The new believers needs assurance that many of the feelings, fears and concerns they may experience are natural.

An important element of assuring new believers is to develop the understanding they are not alone. They have become part of the family of God.

Remind them they can rely on the resources available to them. Help them to see how important the following are.

- Bible Study
- Prayer
- Fellowship with other believers
- Sunday School/Small Group
- Worship



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Encourage Testifying

Provide an opportunity for people to share.

Testifying to God's work in their lives accomplishes four things:

1. Testifying solidifies new believers decisions to follow Christ.
"To teach is to learn twice."
2. Testifying increases the likelihood that people will follow through on what they say (accountability).
3. Sharing encourages the church to celebrate new life in Christ.
4. Confessing God's saving work provides encouragement for others to accept Christ.

In rare situations, new Christians may not be interested in discipleship or building friendships with other believers. In this case, we should attempt to build trust, to befriend, and to pray for them.

Small Group Activity

1. In preparation for the small group activity, tell participants what happens next. They will form groups of four to five people. Find their groups and read the case studies together. They will have five minutes to do the reading. (Leaders guide of copy of case study on page 20)
2. After about five minutes, instruct the groups to...
 - Discuss ways to build friendships with new believers.
 - Define the needs of the characters in the case studies.
 - Describes ways that you could affirm and encourage new believers.
3. Give the groups about 10 minutes to discuss and then instruct the groups to:
 - Break your small group into pairs. Make sure each pair in the groups are assigned different cases.
 - Have one person in the pair assume a character from the case.
 - The other person will take the role of developing the disciple and will engage in conversation with the case character. The objective of the discipler is to define the needs of the case character and identify ways to meet the identified needs. The discipler will want to relate to the character, enabling the character to share openly. Now is the time to put your thoughts and plans into action by defining and meeting the needs of the case character in your pair.
4. After about ten minutes, bring the pairs back in the small groups.
 - In your groups, discuss the identified needs in the cases you studied. If you were a triad member and have some thoughts about the interaction, share those now. You have about five minutes to discuss.



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Discussion (5 Minutes)

The discussion portion of the module provides an opportunity for people to share their thoughts about the purpose and importance of meeting the needs of new believers.

If ahead of schedule, the discussion can go a few extra minutes. However, it's easy to lose track of time so watch the clock.

You may chose to skip the discussion portion of this module. If you do not open the floor for discussion, watch for those who may have questions.

1. What questions could we ask to help a new believer open up?
2. If we encounter resistance from a new Christian what might we do?
3. What did you learn from this exercise?
4. What new ideas or methods might help you in your particular ministry situation?
5. How can we help new believers feel safe?
6. How can we build a trusting relationship with new converts?
7. How would we go about addressing addiction?



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1. Go to a church function and practice starting spiritual conversations with your friends using vocabulary your non-Christian acquaintances would understand.
2. Intentionally practice listening to someone NEVER giving your opinion on the situation even if you are asked.
3. When visiting with your family, make as many sincere positive comments during regular conversation as you can.
4. Make a list of people you may contact and ask for prayer support from shut-ins, lay-persons, and pastors.
5. Make a list of individuals who need your prayer support: pastors, evangelists, lay-persons involved in evangelism.
6. Write out your own testimony as described in the Relational Action Plan. If you do not identify a moment of decision, write out what the Lord has kept you from, and what you have experienced positively.
7. Practice speaking your story to your family and friends even if they already know the story.



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Module Wrap-Up (5 Minutes)

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

Use this time to address any final thoughts you have regarding ministering to new believers within the first 72 hours following their conversion.



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New Believers Case Studies

Judy

Judy is a divorced single in her early 30's. She grew up in a family that had a Pentecostal church background. When Judy was a young child her family left the church with some deep wounds and never attended church again. Judy has spent much of her life searching for spiritual truth and been disappointed with her lack of certainty regarding spiritual things.

Judy's sister invited her to attend church. Judy experienced heartfelt worship, genuine hospitality, and life applicable messages. After attending church for six months Judy attends a beginner's Bible study. After the second study the small group leader shared the gospel message with Judy and invited her to begin a relationship with Christ. Judy responded positively and asked Jesus to become the leader of her life. Judy experiences great joy and excitement as a result of her decision. She feels as if she found what she had always been looking for. Judy has many questions that concern her. "What is she supposed to do now?" "Is she really forgiven?" "Did she have to make right for all the wrongs she had ever committed?" Many of her questions about the next steps had to do with the baggage that she had carried for most of her life regarding the negative church experience her family had when Judy was a young child. Judy also is living with a man to whom she is not married. She feels as if she is "in love" with him. They recently became engaged. Judy's fiancé does not attend church with her and she isn't sure he approved of her recent life changes.

How should the church respond to Judy's spiritual needs as a new believer? What about her relationship with her fiancé?

Mark

Mark grew up in the Catholic Church until his parents divorced. Mark never attended church again after his parents' divorce. Mark married young. He and his wife began a family early in their marriage. They struggled in their marriage relationship. They were often separated and many times considered divorce. Mark's search for God begins when his wife is diagnosed with terminal brain cancer.

Mark's sister and brother-in-law recently "found" God and began to share with him what has happened in their lives. Mark visits his sister's church and begins meeting with the pastor shortly thereafter. Mark struggles with his wife's condition and wonders where God is and what role God plays in life and in death. Mark and his wife accept Christ as their savior.

Mark testifies that he feels peace as a result of his decision. Mark is still facing a great deal of pain and confusion. "Could God heal his wife?" "Would God heal her?" "What

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would life be like without his wife and with the sole responsibility for his three small children?" Mark didn't know anyone in the church except for his sister's family and the pastor.

Mark is now a widower in his late 20's, with three small children. What does Mark "need?" How does the church respond to a new believer who is asking, "Where is God in all of this pain and suffering?"



Keith

Keith is in his 40's. He is married for the second time and has two young children and two grown children from his previous marriage. Keith grew up in the church as a child. Keith's pastor portrayed God as an angry God, always displeased with our sinful lives. Keith had a very negative image of God as a result. He left church as soon as he left home.

Keith leads a hard life. He developed an addiction to alcohol and had many destructive relationships. His first marriage ended badly. Keith desires to be a better person but never seems to live a consistent life. He did give up drinking but life didn't seem to get any better. He and his second wife, Mary, were having difficulty in their marriage. Mary, a Christian, started going to a new church after having been inconsistent in her church attendance for many years. She liked her new church and wanted to get her two young sons to go. They argued that they wouldn't go unless Dad went. Keith started going to church because of his wife's desire for their sons to attend. Keith was skeptical about church as a result of his childhood experience.

Keith's attitude towards church and God begins to change. This church is friendly and the God that this pastor talks about doesn't hate people, he loves them. Keith begins to feel the call of God on his life. After a message one Sunday he was convinced he needed to give his life to Christ and make things right.

Keith experienced relief. He became very emotional when he made a decision and couldn't identify what his emotions were and where they were coming from. Keith had remained aloof when he attended church. He sat in the back most every Sunday and didn't enter into conversation beyond the surface level. Immediately after his decision he felt a need to become deeper friends with people in the church, but expressed a nervous concern towards opening up his life with others. He felt as if he needed support to live his life as a Christian.

Even after Keith made a commitment to Christ his marriage was still on the rocks. How could people in the church build bridges to a relationship of encouragement in Keith's life?

