

INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLE-MAKING CULTURE

Introducing the Panelists

Brandon Guindon, Lead Pastor, Real Life Ministries Texas and Author of *Disciple-Making Culture*

He has a Master of Arts degree in church leadership and New Testament theology from Hope International University. He was ordained at Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho, and he is coauthor of *Real-Life Discipleship Training Manual* and chairman of the Relational Discipleship Network Board of Directors.

Bob Reed, Senior Pastor, Cylife Church

- Has known Brandon Guindon since around 2010.
- First met Brandon at a DiscipleShift1 conference in Post Falls, Idaho, where Brandon was his facilitator.
- Had the opportunity to do a lot of trainings with Brandon, and when Brandon planted Real Life Texas, he served on the temporary board for the church launch.

Bob is passionate about disciple-making because he saw the impact of disciple-making on his family, wife, and kids. Seeing them live out disciple-making gave him a deep conviction and passion for making disciples the way Jesus modeled.

Derrick McNeil, Small Groups Pastor, Cylife Church

- Has known Brandon Guindon since around 2013.
- First met Brandon as a staff member at the church Derrick was attending.

Derrick is passionate about disciple-making because he's enamored with the idea that God has chosen him to be on his team and help other people gain the understanding of what it means to be in relationship with God and others.

Sherri Miles, Training and Development Leader, Real Life Ministries

- Has known Brandon Guindon since the early 2000s.
- Sherri and Brandon were on staff at Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho together.

Sherri is passionate about disciple-making because she didn't grow up in Christian home. Learning both who Jesus is and what being a disciple means now fuels her because she knows that lives are going to be changed through making disciples.

David Garison, Senior Pastor, Northside Christian Church

- Has known Brandon Guindon since around 2016.
- First met through a small groups pastor they both knew.
- Brandon mentored and discipled David and his church's leadership team through a disciple-making culture shift.

David is passionate about disciple-making because he was never quite discipled himself and never intentionally discipled anyone else. When discipleship came to define his life, he could not—and cannot—get enough of it.

Initial Questions to Consider

1. What is the reason behind your passion for disciple-making?
2. In what ways do you hope to grow through this video course?
3. Who else can you ask to join you on this journey?

Key Takeaways

- Learn how to view Scripture through the lens of relationship, not rules.
- Focus on the goal of making disciples who make disciples.
- Understand the importance of pursuing relationships.
- Be inspired to live in such a way that you are characterized by love.
- Get excited about following after Jesus' heart and model for disciple-making.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we best address the phenomenon of Christians and church-goers who have never been *truly* discipled?
2. What is involved in building a healthy disciple-making culture?
3. How can looking at Scripture through a lens of disciple-making and relationship affect us?

Action to Implement

From Sherri Miles: Know that Scripture is there because it is good for us. Scripture is not merely rules that we have to adhere to.

Quotes to Remember

"You are called to be Jesus' disciple, and what will characterize you is love." —Bob Reed

"The greatest characteristic throughout all of Scripture is love." —Bob Reed

"The end goal in Jesus' church has always been to make disciples that can make disciples." —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 1 Notes

Key Takeaways

- Learn how to make disciples by training people to love God and love others.
- Find the importance of living out the culture relationally.
- See how to reflect what Jesus taught and what he modeled.
- Gain a sense of what it means to keep biblical love at the forefront of your actions.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we model what Jesus modeled?
2. How can you challenge the people in your circle of relationships to live out disciple-making culture?
3. In what ways can we reduce the noise of knowledge in the church and fill it instead with loving relationships?

Action to Implement

From David Garrison: Look upon everyone as God would, which is with love. Living out discipleship is the greatest way that we can love people.

Quotes to Remember

"If I can accept the love of God, I can love those around me." —David Garrison

"It starts with you. Disciple-making is who you are, not what you do." —Brandon Guindon

"We have nothing to export to our church until we choose to live out disciple-making culture relationally first." —Bob Reed

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Chapter 2 Notes

Key Takeaways

- Learn the importance of creating a common language among church leaders and volunteers.
- See the impact of creating common language in your church.
- Understand how to work together as a team to create common language.
- Identify what it means to have “ownership” of the culture.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we create common language in our church?
2. Why is it critical for a leader to go to their team and redefine language *together*?
3. What does it mean to have “ownership” of the culture?

Action to Implement

From Derrick McNeil: Identify definitions and terms that are most critical for promoting the culture. Create a common language that permeates the whole organization.

Quotes to Remember

“Culture is the attitudes and beliefs of people and how they live.” —Sherri Miles

“Bringing your team together to process and frame common language helps build the culture.” —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 3 Notes

ADHERE TO IT

Key Takeaways

- Gain examples of what it looks like to live out disciple-making culture.
- Learn the importance of abiding both in Christ and in relationship with other believers.
- See where culture starts.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we continue to cultivate our church's culture?
2. How can we make sure that we are abiding in relationship with Christ?
3. What does it look like for us to be in intentional relationship with one another?

Action to Implement

From Brandon Guindon: We will either abide in Christ and in relationship with each other and hold on to culture, or the rest of the culture will fall apart. Let cultivating a disciple-making culture start with your own walk with Christ and with each other.

Quotes to Remember

"Things change, but one of the things that remains the same is Christ's method for making disciples."
—Derrick McNeil

"To 'adhere to it' means to make sure disciple-making permeates every area of our ministry." —Derrick McNeil

Chapter 4 Notes

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Key Takeaways

- Understand that we are all called to make disciples.
- Learn from the challenges and experiences of others.
- See how important it is to live out culture in your own life as a matter of first importance.
- Be encouraged to live out Jesus' calling for your life.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. Are we willing to live out disciple-making culture simply because Jesus said so, regardless of what people will say or do?
2. In what ways can you personally grow in living out disciple-making culture?
3. How are we going to encourage other leaders to live it out?

Actions to Implement

- *From Bob Reed:* Live it out in your home. Be a primary disciple-maker in your home.
- *From Sherri Miles:* You have to “be” before you can do.
- *From David Garrison:* Live it out. Disciple those who are living it out alongside you.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Live it out from “the top” to see it expressed throughout the whole of your organization.

Quotes to Remember

“You cannot be a shepherd of the flock without living it out and being a disciple-maker yourself.” —David Garrison

“If you’re not living it out, people will see you and think, Why should I?” —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 5 Notes

Key Takeaways

- Gain advice for consistently communicating disciple-making culture to your leaders.
- Learn from the experiences of others in overcoming the temptation to move away from teaching disciple-making.
- Receive encouragement about your role as a leader.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we overcome the temptation to creep away from teaching disciple-making culture?
2. In what ways can we protect the core of living out disciple-making and talking about Jesus' methodology?
3. What can be done to counteract the assumption that people know enough about disciple-making already?

Actions to Implement

- *From David Garison:* If you are in a position of leadership, you are a Chief Reminding Officer. Communicate it by constantly reminding people of it.
- *From Bob Reed:* Keep reemphasizing the culture. Keep your culture in front of your teams.
- *From Sherri Miles:* Communicate the culture over and over. Don't assume that people know it.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Be clear in your articulation of what your goals and values are. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat.

Quote to Remember

“Disciple-making culture needs to be communicated both on a grand scale and specifically to the leaders.”
—David Garison

Chapter 6 Notes

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Key Takeaways

- Learn a few ways to assess the fruit of your church's disciple-making methods.
- See how pruning can be turned into a positive experience of connection and affirmation.
- Be encouraged to be honest with yourself about the fruit of your organization's ministries.
- Know that pruning requires personal sacrifice.
- See the importance of spending more intentional time asking questions, intently listening, and keenly observing what is being done.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. Is what we're doing producing disciples that can make disciples?
2. How can we strengthen our courageous and tenderhearted leaders to follow through with pruning?
3. Does our process of disciple-making demonstrate fruit and forward movement?

Actions to Implement

- *From Sherri Miles:* Coach your people through not holding too tightly onto a ministry or placing identity in that ministry.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Look in the mirror and evaluate if you are making disciples. Don't ask people to be something that you aren't willing to be yourself.
- *From David Garison:* Just do it.
- *From Bob Reed:* If you're going to do the job of pruning, be tenderhearted *and have thick skin*. Listen and connect with people at a heart level.

Quotes to Remember

"You cannot ask the church to shift if you are not willing to shift personally." —Bob Reed

"We have to be honest with ourselves in asking: Do we change and tweak the ministry, or do we prune it?"
—Brandon Guindon

Chapter 7 Notes

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Key Takeaways

- Learn why establishing and maintaining a solid foundation for culture is important.
- Get a glimpse into why guidelines in culture make a big difference.
- Understand the value in explaining the “why” and the heart behind cultural guidelines.
- Remember that guidelines need to be centered around God.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. What are the ramifications of not establishing the “why” or the heart behind guidelines?
2. Why is it important to maintain a loving cultural and relational environment?
3. What are some of the other aspects of a disciple-making foundation?

Actions to Implement

- *From Bob Reed:* Remember the goal is to make disciples who can make disciples.
- *From Sherri Miles:* Define and communicate the vision of making disciples.
- *From David Garison:* Establish a relationship. Lead people to Christ through relationship. Don’t see people as a “project.”
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Go first. Be willing to put yourself out there.

Quote to Remember

“Creating guidelines that are clear and have heart behind them will encourage people to buy into disciple-making culture.” —Derrick McNeil

Chapter 8 Notes

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Key Takeaways

- Learn what keeps people from fighting for relationships.
- See how to handle conflict in a biblical way.
- Understand how discipline can be necessary in order to operate in a healthier way.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. What can we do to fight for relationships in a healthy, restorative way?
2. What does it look like to engage in conflict resolution?
3. How can we be peacemakers instead of peacekeepers?

Actions to Implement

- *From David Garrison:* Especially when you're the one who is offended, fight for it, because it's going to be worth it.
- *From Sherri Miles:* Define it. It's conflict for the sake of restoring relationship.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Peacemakers are willing to go into areas that peacekeepers aren't.
- *From Bob Reed:* The end goal is relationship reconciliation. Stay curious instead of having a posture of assuming.

Quote to Remember

| “Often, we are more concerned with keeping the peace than with making the peace.” —Derrick McNeil

Chapter 9 Notes

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Key Takeaways

- Learn that modeling relational discipleship is a choice.
- Understand that leaders may have discipled others more than they think they have.
- Be reminded of the spiritual element to this: the devil *does not* want leaders to live this out.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How can we intentionally build relational a disciple-making culture?
2. In what ways has God challenged you to grow through building disciple-making culture?
3. How can we walk alongside those who feel they have failed at making disciples in the past?

Actions to Implement

- *From Derrick McNeil:* Proximity and time: the more time people can spend in proximity to you, seeing how you live, the more they are inclined to imitate what they see.
- *From Bob Reed:* Be transparent, deep, and open with those around you. Model what you're teaching.
- *From David Garison:* In looking back, realize that you have done great things. As you look forward, step into it and model it.
- *From Sherri Miles:* It's a choice to ask God to bring people into your life and to help you disciple them.

Quotes to Remember

"Modeling and living it out is essential to build disciple-making culture." —Brandon Guindon

"We have to trust God at a bigger level than just ourselves." —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 10 Notes

TRAIN IT

Key Takeaways

- Learn why creating a “place to play” is so important for creating a disciple-making culture.
- See how Jesus created places to play.
- Understand that giving people places to play offers them opportunities to grow as disciples of Jesus.
- See how to begin raising up others into disciple-making.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. What does creating “places to play” look like for us?
2. How can we, as a team, give more opportunities to people?
3. In what ways can we implement disciple-making culture and principles into our training systems?

Actions to Implement

- *From Bob Reed:* Provide quality while giving opportunity. Prepare people to develop.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Give feedback. Don’t just offer good information. Learn how to do pre- and post-assessments with people.
- *From Sherri Miles:* You don’t have to go outside your church to look for a star player.
- *From David Garison:* Never miss an opportunity to capitalize on a training moment.

Quotes to Remember

“We rob people of the blessing of teaming up with God to do great things and grow spiritually when we don’t give them places to play.” —Sherri Miles

“Creating a place to play starts with observation.” —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 11 Notes

MULTIPLY IT

Key Takeaways

- Learn what holds people back from reproducing disciples.
- Understand the value of celebration.
- See how you can keep your disciple-making culture from drifting.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. How are we going to combat the drift back to a classroom model?
2. In what ways can we celebrate better?
3. Are we more concerned with knowing things or with being who Jesus called us to be?

Actions to Implement

- *From Sherri Miles:* Celebrate as much as you possibly can—not just what’s going on, but the people—and keep it simple.
- *From Bob Reed:* Be both a student and a disciple-maker.
- *From David Garrison:* Stay the course with the fact that the culture you’re helping to create is about discipleship. Keep celebration of disciple-making in front of people.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Keep it simple in terms of the reproducible process that happens. Keep casting vision for the end result, which is making disciple-makers.

Quotes to Remember

“Disciple-making happens with an intentional leader in a relational environment with a reproducible process.”
—David Garrison

“When you’re constantly talking about disciple-making culture and living it, you’ll notice when it starts to drift.” —Brandon Guindon

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Chapter 12 Notes

Key Takeaways

- Understand the impact of budget on disciple-making culture.
- See what it looks like to emphasize disciple-making.
- Learn how to measure and evaluate the money you are spending.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. What does it look like for us to emphasize disciple-making in our budget?
2. How can we strengthen our disciple-making goals through our budget?
3. In what ways can we better budget our time?

Actions to Implement

- *From Derrick McNeil:* When disciple-making is your culture, that should be your filter for everything else. You should be able to see the elements of disciple-making happening in all areas of your organization or church.
- *From Sherri Miles:* Define and have an aligned definition of a disciple. Doing so makes budgeting decisions easier.
- *From David Garison:* Jesus said where your treasure is there your heart will be also. It's important to have your treasure be discipleship.
- *From Bob Reed:* When you budget, prioritize your culture.

Quote to Remember

“Try to create alignment within your budgeting to make sure it communicates what’s most important to you.”
—Bob Reed

Chapter 13 Notes

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ALIGN IT

Key Takeaways

- Understand the importance of being culturally aligned.
- See that listening well and understanding where people come from works toward unity.
- Learn how to align people around disciple-making culture.
- Find that it's a choice to take responsibility, make a difference, and lead culture.

Questions to Consider and Discuss

1. Are we making excuses for why our culture is not aligned?
2. How can we take responsibility and lead our culture into better alignment?
3. What exactly is being produced by our culture?

Actions to Implement

- *From Bob Reed:* Choose to look in the mirror and see what you're actually producing. Take personal ownership and responsibility for what is being produced.
- *From David Garrison:* Keep at it. Keep moving in the right direction.
- *From Derrick McNeil:* Stop, look, and listen. Look at what's going on and hear what's being said. Pay close attention to what fruit is being produced.
- *From Sherri Miles:* Think about the things that kill culture and the things that build culture.

Quotes to Remember

"You can either make excuses or make a difference." —Sherri Miles

"When you step in and model who Jesus was to others and challenge people to do the same, you're going to make an impact on your community." —Sherri Miles

Chapter 14 Notes

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Closing Encouragement from the Panelists

Bob Reed: If you are a parent, you have been called and designed to be the primary disciple-maker of your kids. Don't neglect that responsibility. The church is there to support, encourage, and equip you—but not to do it for you. If you are a staff member, don't think that you can't do it without them. Lead by example. If you are a senior pastor, don't take your calling or responsibility lightly.

Derrick McNeil: If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you have been given the commission to make and send disciples. It's going to be hard. But you're not alone. Lean into God and into relationship with others.

David Garison: Jesus chose twelve ordinary men, and with those men he changed the world. You can do this. Jesus chose ordinary people to do extraordinary work.

Sherri Miles: You are valuable in the kingdom of God. God made you for a purpose. There is a calling on your life. Step in and embrace disciple-making. For parents, it's hard to disciple your children. If you have a child that is struggling with addiction, staying aligned with being a disciple is difficult, but you can do it. Don't give up.

Brandon Guindon: God empowers us. We walk in his authority. You can do this.

Questions to Consider

1. How can you go and live out disciple-making?
2. How have you been encouraged by this course?
3. What in your life and church needs to be realigned to make disciples who can go out and make disciples?

Conclusion Notes

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