

What's new? For the last year, the pastors and ministry directors have been studying, discussing, and strategizing how we can be more effective to make disciples as a church. We have been hosting special equipping sessions on discipleship, working on shared strategy and language, and have even been consulting with a group of churches that have been exceptionally fruitful in making disciples. So, in the weeks ahead, I will be sharing tips and ideas of what we believe will be helpful.

For this week, here are three ideas to consider:

- 1) Plan to be relational. I need to have in my plan for group time something to help build relationships. Hence, the idea you will see below.
- 2) Facilitate rather than teach. I want to sharpen my skills to ask good questions, listen well, and avoid being the center of attention.
- 3) Modeling transparency and vulnerability. I can't expect others to be 'real' if I am not.

Here is my plan for group time this week:

I. Sharing time (10+ minutes): "This summer"

- Set-up.
 - Plan for your time together to be in a circle facing each other
 - Give everyone a bunch (25ish) of something that they can toss into a bucket. It could be pennies, poker chips, whatever
 - Put a bucket in the middle of the circle
- One person shares, "This summer I /we . . ."
 - For example, went on a great vacation
 - Swam a lot
 - Felt like I was in a drama
 - Etc.
- Then, start with the person to their left, and every person who throws in a penny (or whatever) that did something similar
- Then the person on the left share, "This summer I/we . . . and then pitch in
- **On the second time** around the person who shared can ask one person that pitched in to share their experience
- On the third time around, the sharer would say, "This summer, I felt ..."
 - Every person who felt something like this would pitch in a penny
 - This is the final round

II. Time in the Word and application

- a. ASK:** Have you been able to follow the series in “Romans?” What has stood out to you so far?
- b. ASK:** On the first page of notes are four truths in Romans. Is this a helpful summary? Do you agree with this summary?
- c. FOLLOW THE NOTES FOR “DISCUSSION OF APPLICATION FROM GOD’S WORD”**
 - i.** Ask someone to read the opening paragraph
 - ii.** Read Romans 8:1-17 together
 - iii.** What do you notice in this passage?
 - iv.** What are your feelings when you think about “condemnation.” (See 8:1)
 - v. DISCUSS:** Can you identify with Paul’s “war” with and being “captive” to sin? (See 7:23)
 - vi. DISCUSS:** What has God revealed that we need to believe and practice to succeed in this war?
 - vii. SHARE:** What is a next step for you? How can we pray?

III. Time in prayer

- a.** For each other, needs, etc.
- b.** For ministry and mission
- c.** For other burdens

IV. Time in worship

- a.** Read the passage out loud noticing the many things that God the Holy Spirit does in our lives and give thanks and praise.