

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.”

—Matt. 28:19

Small group leaders have an incredible privilege to make disciples. What must come before discipleship? Salvation. It is the launching point of discipleship. Every follower of Christ should be equipped to minister salvation to others.

Ministering Salvation

Ministering salvation should never be reduced to a formula. Your relationship with the one seeking salvation determines the way you go about it. Ultimately, when there is an opportunity to pray with someone for salvation, invite him or her into relationship with Christ. Have them ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior. There is no greater joy than knowing God used you to change someone’s eternal destination. This joy should motivate us to see people come to Jesus!

Some people want a relationship with Jesus but don’t know what they’re doing. Salvation can be discussed in great detail, but if nothing else, cover the basics.”

1. Sin separates them from God.
2. Jesus paid the penalty for their sin by dying on the cross for them.
3. Have them repent of their sins and ask the Father for forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
4. The resurrection of Jesus Christ conquered their sin and death. This made it possible for them to spend eternity in heaven.
5. The Holy spirit now lives inside of them (1 Cor. 3:16). He wants to be their spiritual helper (John 16:7).

“There is a connection between the attitude of your heart and the words of your mouth. When leading someone in a prayer for salvation, have him or her *verbally* proclaim Jesus as Lord and Savior. This internalizes the decision. It increases their faith. It fuels belief [Romans 10:9].

Salvation is a spiritual change, not an emotional one. Some will feel no different. Others may feel completely different! Remind them that their relationship with Christ is based on His promises, not their emotions.

God’s not done!

Someone made the decision to have a personal relationship with Jesus! Now what? This is not a one-time event. They’ve signed up for a lifetime journey with Christ. And, it’s wonderful! You can be a source of encouragement and wisdom for them. However, your goal is to create a self-

sustaining Christ-follower. To do this, new believers must read God's Word, pray, share their faith, and belong to a Bible-believing church.

New believers don't know where to start when reading the Bible. Tell them to start in John or James. These books are easy to understand and highlight Jesus Christ. Make attainable goals. Tell them to start reading Scripture for 10 minutes a day. Reading God's Word should be their primary spiritual food. Podcasts, Christian books, and their pastor's sermon should not replace their own Bible reading.

Encourage prayer. Pray with them so they can hear an example. They can keep it simple. If they don't know what to pray for, encourage them to start thanking God for a list of His blessings (eg. food to eat, a place to sleep, health). Tell them that they can talk to Jesus like a friend. God loves when they take time to listen to Him. The more time they spend with God, the more their relationship will grow.

Make them eager to share their experience with others. No Christ-follower is too new to share their faith. Help them develop an effective testimony.

Get them connected in a Bible-believing church. Every Christian needs to fellowship with other believers (Heb. 10:25). A good church provides corporate worship and opportunities to serve in the body of Christ. These are irreplaceable aspects of discipleship. Don't let a new believer go without it.

Be ready to bring others into relationship with Jesus. In Proverbs it simply says,

'And he who is wise wins souls.' —Prov 11:30
