



SUNDAY SCHOOL | DISCIPLESHIP
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Make the Connection

*The Invested Life: Intentional Discipleship through ...
... Prayer and the Word*

Growth Campaign

By Raquel Ramos Torres

When we read the book of Acts, we see that the church grew in two ways at the same time.

1. Continuous growth in numbers. The large number of people who believed the Word in Acts 5:14. The early church was active with members engaged in evangelism (Acts 8: 4).
2. They grew in doctrine, love, knowledge of Christ, and prayer (Acts 2:42). This growth is remarkable throughout the book of Acts. Peter exhorted, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) Biblical growth, then, must include these two forms of growth – numerical growth and becoming more like Christ.

The following is a rough plan which we believe will help local churches to grow.

Emphasis: "DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES"

Objective: To encourage the church to be intentional in fulfilling the mission of making disciples through Prayer and the Word.

Strategy

- Meet with the SDMI council and the church board to pray and organize the Growth Campaign. Help yourself with these clarifying questions:
 - How many new people have we incorporated into our church in this last year? What can we do to improve our level of incorporation of new members?
 - Are there obstacles that must be removed in order for my church to grow? Which ones?
 - Is there a disease in the church that slows its growth? If so, what is it? What treatment would you recommend?
 - Does our organizational form favor the growth of the church? If not, what should we change or improve?
 - What should be our main objective?
 - When will we know that we have reached it?
 - What method or means of evangelization do we need to implement?
 - What should we improve and in what way?
- Organize the congregation into bible studies or cell groups for Prayer, Bible study and Fellowship.



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PRE-CAMPAIGN 5 Sundays

- **Week 1**
 - Publicize the campaign or plan together with the goal (s)
 - Put a large notice on the church notice board
- **First Month**
 - Organize permanent prayer. If for you, one month is insufficient, pray for two or three months, until you have the vision and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - Pray for consecration, for prayer life, vision and God's direction, for evangelism, discipleship and multiplication.

1. Specific prayer. The first month is a time for intensive and specific prayer.

- In the services: Most of the normal church services will be dedicated to prayer during this month, or you can establish a special time of prayer 3 times a week, where cards will be distributed with the names of unsaved, fallen, and cold members for whom the church can pray. There should also be a prepared list or cards of the goals and needs of the church. The cards are important to help people pray specifically. The members can suggest names for the cards, of neighbors, relatives or friends. You can pray in small groups to get more participation.
- Half night prayer vigils: During the same month of prayer, the church should hold half night prayer vigils, praying specifically for the needs in the church, the unconverted (always using the cards) and for the local evangelistic work and in the whole world. There should always be a special time to thank God for the blessings received in response to prayer.
- Prayer Chains: One day of the month will be chosen for 24 hours of prayer - in the church from six in the morning until nine at night, and then from 9 at night until 6 the next morning in homes. To be sure that the chain is not broken, make a list of the hours of the day and make sure that at least one person is committed to be present in the church praying during each hour (or half hour) of the day and then in homes at night.
- Prayer cells: You can divide the church into zones and choose a home in each zone. Then, during a day of each week, the members should meet in the chosen house in their area for a prayer meeting to pray by name for the lost souls who live in their area. These cell meetings should not be during the hours of the established church services.



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▪ **Second month**

2. United Families. The emphasis of the second month is to establish family cell groups in each church home. Each group will study the book of Acts at the same time,. Here are some ideas for this month:

- Studies in Acts. In each church service, the pastor will preach from the book of Acts emphasizing how the early church served with fervor. Provide notes to help with this study. At the same time, during each service, ten minutes should be set aside to continue in prayer.
- Family devotional time. Make sure that each family has material on how to celebrate their family service and emphasize its importance. Also give opportunity in the services for short testimonies in which the members tell of the blessings they have already received through family worship. Families should use the book of Acts for devotional time during this month. They can ask three questions: What does the chapter or passage teach about the early church? What does it say to us? How does it apply to our church? What can our family do to put what we have learned into practice?
- Family Evangelism. Each family can choose another unconverted family to pray for. The Christian family must make a goal in prayer to win this family for Christ during these months. So not only will they pray for them, but they will also try to tell them about Christ and invite them to church.
- Plans for visitation. It is important to start the preparations for the house-to-house visits immediately. Make a map of the town, area, neighborhood, community, including all the streets and alleys to ensure that no house should be overlooked and that the visiting is done in order. Also have a card printed presenting the church, including the schedule of services with a cordial invitation to come along and visit us. If necessary, at the end of this month ask for the help of other members who are ready to give instructions on how to do the visitation well. Send invitation cards by mail to: People who do not regularly attend, friends, other people that are known, etc.
- Keep on praying

▪ **Third month**

3. Systematic visiting. The only way to saturate a town with the gospel is through house-to-house visitation. It is time for the evangelical people to mobilize in sowing the precious seed of the Word of God [with more vision than the false sects have].

- Share the Word. We do not know of a better way to reach and penetrate the town with the gospel than through Christian literature.



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We suggest that you form teams of two people supplied with Bibles, New Testaments, evangelical magazines, biblical portions, etc. Upon arriving at the house, they need to say who they are, give out a Christian tract and the card inviting them to the church activities. Where possible, they can give their testimony of their faith in Christ.

- Revival meetings. Carry out special services for believers in order to clarify the doctrinal bases, emphasize obedience and the place of the Holy Spirit in the victorious life. It is preferable to celebrate these services during the week when the members are doing the visits. Use short dynamic visual messages to get the message across.
- Second visitation. In this second house to house visitation, members can take with them portions of Romans or John in order to explain the plan of salvation. These portions can be presented in each house as a gift from the church, giving them the opportunity to accept Christ right there.
- Keep up praying believing God is working

THE CAMPAIGN

▪ Fourth month

4. Different Sundays of the campaign. Now the atmosphere in the church and the town is ready for impact. To attract the unconverted, you should use a program that catches attention while teaching doctrinally. We believe that we must tell them what we believe and also give them a doctrinal basis to understand what they should believe.

- Announcements. Distribute flyers from house to house about two days before the start of the campaign. It will also be a help if you announce the campaign in the streets with a loud-speaker on the days of the campaign. Contact can be made through social networks (internet sites). Identify the cell groups that will come and organize transportation for them.
- Counselors. Well-trained counselors are the key to the success of a campaign. They should be ready to deal with those who will want to accept Christ and to talk with other friends after each service about their salvation. Training classes should be given to counselors before and even during the campaign so that they can do the job well. They need to write down the names and addresses of each person who makes a decision or that visit.
- The program. A program that draws attention in a campaign uses several messages (7 minutes or less each), special music, choruses, testimonies, and other means to deliver the message. (For example, an artist who can present a picture that carries a message.) The emphasis is not on a great preacher, but on the participation of many members in a variety of



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presentations. Those who accept Christ in the campaign can also give a testimony of salvation in Christ during one of the services.

- Classes for children. During the campaign, it is important to have separate classes for the children. You must have at least two teachers prepared. Arrange a large place where children can receive their instruction. If you prefer, the children could be in the service with the adults for a film and other interesting things in the beginning, and then move them on to receive their class separately.
- Home services. During the week of the campaign, services can be held with interested friends at home during the day. A select group of the church can provide special music, sing choruses, give testimonies, present a short message, and invite the person to accept Christ.
- Ushers. When many people are arriving, the ushers need to help maintain order and find seats for visitors. Instruct the ushers beforehand.
- New believers. It is important to write down the names and addresses of the new believers in order to be able to contact and visit them immediately. The church should begin to instruct them even during the campaign regarding the assurance of their salvation and the meaning of water baptism as public testimony of their faith in Christ.
- The ushers who are at the door receiving the people:
 - Must give an affectionate welcome, and hand out the cards to write down the names of visitors.
 - Be sure to follow up.
 - Make phone calls to those who came.
 - On Monday, visit the people who attended and give them the sheet with the first discipleship study.
 - Make sure they have an older brother or sister mentor to help them grow.
 - Help them to enjoy the rest of the growth campaign
- KEEP ON PRAYING

DISCIPLESHIP IN SMALL GROUPS

From the fifth month, onwards

5. Individual conservation. God's will is that we “might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.”

(John 15:16) The church must take care to follow up with the people who were converted in the campaign. These new believers urgently need personal instruction.

- Instruction of new believers. Now it is the counselors' turn to do the great and important work of personally discipling the new converts, in their own homes.



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Discipleship must be personal, because each one needs individual help, according to their needs and understanding, in the principles of the Christian life. Organize the fellowship and the Bible study cell groups, and decide the material to be used. We suggest that a lesson should be given in each meeting of the cell or study group. Invest time in friendship relationships. Invest your life in people in three ways: The cell groups, the public services and the groups of mature Christians (the disciples who are making disciples).

- Participation of new believers. An important part of following up a new Christian is put them to work. Get them to give their testimony and sing the hymns that will become precious to them. Just as the new believers in the book of Acts went to work, today's believers need this spiritual exercise right away.
- Children. It is important to take into account children who accept Christ during the campaign. Plan Sunday classes for them and special discipleship lessons (they can be trained by other children – disciplers).
- Multiplication. Christ wants us to multiply believers, disciples, leaders, pastors, cells groups, congregations. If the church expects to multiply, it has to think with vision on how to extend its ministry. There are many fields that are still ready for harvest.

MULTIPLICATION

- White fields ready for harvesting. With this new fervor that the church feels, opportunities must be provided to extend the testimony to a new field (each cell group could become a new church). New believers need to give their testimonies; there could also be special music, choruses, messages from several brothers and sisters as well as the personal work. If this work is strengthened with enough prayer and personal evangelism, the church may well see a new congregation become established.
- More Sunday classes. With the numerical growth among adults, youth, and children, you will have to train more teachers and more leaders. This is an important part in the conservation of the fruit of evangelism.
- Defined and Contextualized Plans. The believers will not be happy to return to a routine and indefinite program. This is why it is urgent to continue with new creative plans that always lead to spiritual and numerical growth. It is time for church leadership to make a functional and effective plan for their environment or context and launch a new church every two years. This plan should include prayer, personal work, teaching biblical doctrines, sharing a missionary vision. The church should not think only of its own needs, but also of distant places.

Note: You can start organizing this campaign at any time