



Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus

Mark Dever

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Before ascending to heaven, Jesus instructed his followers to "make disciples of all nations." But what does this command actually entail? What does it look like for Christians to care for one another's spiritual well-being and growth? In this introduction to the basics of discipling, veteran pastor and author Mark Dever uses biblical definitions and practical examples to show how Christians can help one another become more like Christ every day. The eighth volume in the 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches series, this short book explains how discipling should function in the context of the local church, teaching pastors and church leaders how to cultivate a culture of edification and growth in their congregations.

Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus Details

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From Reader Review Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus for online ebook

John Waldrup says

A most practical and readable book about an essential Christian (and may I say Baptist) practice that is woefully neglected. How can one be an obedient Christian without immersion in the practice and art of discipleship? I don't think you can be. Dever's book is divided into three parts, with the first part that is titled "What Is Discipling?" being a very good piece of persuasion that every gospel minister and Christian should take to heart. The second part, "Where Should We Disciple?", does a commendable job of showing the central place the local Church has not only to the Christian life but to the Christian activity of obeying our Lord's Great Commission by engaging in discipling as an ongoing lifestyle. The final portion of the book is the how to part. There is only one part of the book I didn't like, Mark's advice to leave a Church for another one if you think you are not being fed. My more than forty years experience leads me to conclude that attempts to justify such departures by such claims are rarely the real reason for the departure. Oh well. What is missing from this great little book? Perhaps a few comments about terminating a discipleship arrangement. the tone of the book that I appreciate is that Mark Dever is not an ivory tower spiritual leader. We have had too many of those types. Not that a Spurgeon or a Norris or a Criswell are not men God wonderfully used, but the one's who try to copy them are so frequently engaged in self-exaltation. I am delighted to see no trace of that in this book. I think it is healthy for the cause of Christ.

Hannah says

Mark Dever does an phenomenal job of explaining how discipling fits into the life of every Christian as well as giving practical application for living it out. This is definitely a book that will point you in the right direction to help you encourage and build up your fellow Christians and church members.

Dkovlak says

This is a very good book on discipling. There are a number of good lists to be followed when beginning a discipling arrangement and carrying out a discipling arrangement.

This book would make an excellent group study. It would help each of us fulfill the great commission: (Matthew 28:19).

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, - Matthew 28:19

THIS IS A COMMAND BY GOD, NOT A SUGGESTION!

Hopson says

Fantastic little book on discipling by Mark Dever. This book is short, clear, and wonderfully practical. For anyone who is looking to make a start in personally obeying the Great Commission, this is an excellent resource. One of the most helpful sections was Dever's practical advice on knowing who to get started with. Highly recommend this one!

Peter Krol says

A helpful basic understanding of discipleship, but could have used more scriptural underpinnings to drive its points home.

Matt Tyler says

Almost any book that is short, biblical, practical, and helpful is going to get four or more stars from me-- not because I don't want to read longer books, but because I know I can give them away so easily and people will actually read it. This book meets each of those qualifications!

Reed Schafer says

“What a joy to be used by God to disciple others! Why would you not spend your life doing this?”
-Mark Dever

I loved this book. That’s my review.

Micah Lugg says

This book is a great primer on the what/why/how of discipling in the church. Dever provides the biblical support for the call for every Christian to help others follow Jesus. He also provides helpful examples of what this kind of relationships looks like. He understands the diversity of personalities and giftings in the church and thus his instruction is not a one-size-fits all approach.

I also appreciated how he places the work of discipling within the context of a local church. Much the discipling literature is written by those involved in parachurch ministries. This doesn't mean it's invalid, but sometimes it is lacking in a fully-orbed picture of the Christian life. Dever's work helps fill out that picture.

Scquest says

Point: Discipling, the act of dedicating one’s life to helping others follow Jesus, is essential and possible for every individual follow Jesus Christ.

Path: Dever divides his short book into three sections, answer the questions What?, Why?, and How?.

Sources: This book, as pretty much every other from the series, is biblical teaching supporting personal examples.

Agreement: I really appreciated this short overview to what every believer should be praying about and pursuing. It is accessible, biblical, encouraging, and challenging.

Personal App: For whom am I praying right now?

Favorite Quote: "The work of discipling occurs in the present, but it has its eyes set on the Last Day. It requires long-term thinking. It requires an investor's mentality, knowing that the return is eternal. And the investment occurs through God's Word. We must proclaim. God's Word is the seed that ultimately bears fruit, even if we don't see it in the short term. Sow the Word now. Sow with your spouse and children. Sow with other members of the church. And trust that God's Word does not return void. You will see the harvest later. Mature believers will be ready to receive Christ when he comes."

It would be worth another read and I would recommend it to someone who:

Wants to look for deeper relationships

Is nervous about the term "disciple"

Is a member of a local church

Who is questioning why the local church is important

Other books along this theme would be:

Chan, Francis, and Mark Beuving. Multiply: Disciples Making Disciples. David C. Cook, 2012.

Payne, Tony, and Colin Marshall. The Vine Project: Shaping Your Ministry Culture around Disciple-Making. Matthias Media, 2016.

Stiles, J. Mack. Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus. Crossway, 2014.

Andrea says

This short, practical book gives a great overview of discipling (why and how we do it).

It's broken up in very brief chapters and follows a natural progression from what discipling is, to where and how it should be done. It includes common objections, what to look for in who to disciple, how to raise up and equip leaders who will model discipleship and also an appendix of books to use in discipling relationships.

I loved the working definition of discipling used in this book: deliberately doing spiritual good to someone so that he or she will be more like Christ. It's vague in what is done, but specific in the outcome.

The author writes that God's love starts a "chain reaction" in which he loves us, then we love him, then we love others. We have influence with others (even just because we bear God's image) and we are called to use that influence for the spiritual good of others with our eyes set on the Last Day ("Proclaim the Word of God now; present the saints mature in Christ when he comes later.").

This influence is best used in the context of the local church. Being part of a church not only uncovers our sins as we are taught the Word and interact with other believers, but it provides a prime context for living our

lives with other believers and engaging in discipling relationships ("discipling really is just a bunch of church members taking responsibility to prepare one another for glory.") Our pastors teach us the Word which feeds all other discipling; the ordinances also teach and designate who the members are (in most cases, relationships with fellow members offer the best discipling opportunities). The congregation supports the pastor(s) and follow his example in discipling each other. Because of these reasons and more, "The local church - this Father-designed, Jesus-authorized, and Spirit-gifted body - is far better equipped to undertake the work of discipling believers than simply you and your one friend."

Discipling corrects both an overemphasis on relationships with people, and an overemphasis on doctrine. We display the power of the gospel by uniting with and learning from people who are different from us. The author writes, "Your life should attract people to listen to you; your teaching should then work for their transformation; their transformed lives should then illustrate what you taught, which in turn attracts people to listen to them." We need to be willing to take the time and "pay the cost" of discipling others and encourage them in their relationship with Christ (this relationship should be at least somewhat reciprocal). When done well, with humility, it can lead to generations of future disciples of Christ.

The only thing I didn't really like about this book was the conclusion at the very end (written by Jonathan Leeman). He has some good material about how a good pastor works to create a culture of discipleship in his church but it's a little repetitive and it's in the context of how well Mark Dever does this at his church. It felt a little out of place to me to read a book by Dever about how to do this well and then to have someone from his church (and one of the editors of this series) conclude it with what the reader is missing out on from not experiencing "the great illustration that is his own life." Leeman writes that while the biblical material in this book can be replicated, "some of the things that Mark does in discipling are the properties of his personality and cannot be." This is thankfully true of all pastors since God works in them and their congregations uniquely, but it felt to me like Leeman thought we were all missing out because we don't go to Dever's church. While I'm sure Mark is a great, godly pastor, I didn't love that this book was wrapped up with the praise and example of how one man is doing this well since all pastors, through God's grace, can be used by God in exactly the way their congregation needs. I wish the book would have just left it with the previous material and not ended by focusing specifically on Mark Dever, however, maybe this conclusion will be helpful to other pastors/church leaders who can benefit from real-life examples. There are some helpful questions for application/development in it as well as a good discussion about "exercising authority while passing out authority."

Overall, this is a really helpful primer about discipleship. It covers a lot of ground and gives a biblical foundation for the many facets of this type of relationship. It's easy to read, challenging and inspiring. I think it would be very helpful in setting the tone for discipling at a local church.

Eduardo Escobar says

ABC del discipulado

Excelente introducción al discipulado en el contexto de la iglesia. Breve, claro y certero, útil para todo cristiano que desee adentrarse, recordar o refrescar la idea del crecimiento cristiano.

Justin Heck says

This is the best book on discipling I've read. Concise, practical, and inspiring.

Chuck Shorter says

Great, Little Book.

Although 5"x7" dimensionally & 113 pages in length, this book contains a depth of practical information about establishing a culture of discipleship in a local Church.

What I found most excellent:

- Centers around the local Church ministry
- Makes references other books which I will be adding to my list
- Very practical, immediate action, types of application
- Provoking!! Am I doing "deliberate spiritual good" in the lives of others?

This is one book in a series of 9. I'll have to look for the others 8 and get them on the list.
HIGHLY Recommended.

David Chung says

A brisk read that should help Christians understand, and perhaps recover, the "plainness" of discipling one another. According to Dever, "Discipling others now is how I try to leave time-bombs of grace." And as good as the book is, the conclusion by Leeman might have been my favorite part.

Bill says

Fundamental stuff. The local church centric approach was a helpful complement to the parachurch oriented discipling material so many of us have been trained in.
