

LAMPLIGHTERS INTERNATIONAL – DISCIPLE-MAKER TIP #25

TITLE: "NOT-SO-SUBTLE DIFFERENCES"

Many Christians are intrigued by the Lamplighters' discipleship ministry. They ask me why the Lamplighters' small groups are inclined to grow and multiply when their groups often struggle to exist. The answer to this question is found in understanding the not-so-subtle differences between a small group Bible Study and a Discipleship Bible Study.

The primary differences between a typical small group Bible Study and a discipleship Bible Study are purpose, focus, and intentionality.

The primary purpose of a normal small group Bible study is usually spiritual growth in the lives of the Bible Study participants through the systematic study of God's Word. Sometimes it is just Bible knowledge. The focus is on God's Word or selected books written by respected Christian leaders. There is no intentional plan to reach other people and assimilate them into the group or train new leaders who the Holy Spirit might prompt to start new groups.

On the other hand, a Discipleship Bible Study's primary purpose is to equip lay believers to become effective disciple-making Christians. The focus of the Lamplighters discipleship Bible Study group is on God's Word (and the systematic study of it), but there is also a co-focus on training group members for effective ministry to their families, within their churches, and to the world. While the group is working through the weekly Bible Study, future leaders are being trained to become effective disciple-making leaders. Outreach and assimilation of new people into the small group is deliberate and intentional as compared to accidental for a typical small group.

If you are struggling to reach new people and assimilate them into the group, it may not be the curriculum you are using. It may be that you are leading small groups Bible Studies when you should consider taking them to another level – discipleship Bible Studies.

If you have additional questions about how to do this, contact the Lamplighters' office (800.507.9516) and we can help you.

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