



Movements of God

A Summary

May 2019

We are living in unprecedented times. Where Christianity is spreading, it's spreading faster than it ever has in the history of the world (Trousdale, 31). For most Westerners, that's hard to even begin to understand, since most of them have witnessed a sharp decline in Christian influence. However, right now, the Gospel is spreading like a virus all around the world making the book of Acts seem almost tame...

There are movements in India that have seen millions of new followers of Jesus and tens of thousands of new churches. Similar numbers exist in China over the last couple decades (with some estimates saying that 10,000 new disciples are made daily). Indigenous movements are taking over Africa, and tens of thousands of churches have been planted out of new believers in the past decade alone. In the last five years similar things are happening in countries like Honduras and Cuba, where Discovery Bible Studies and new fellowships are in the tens of thousands... and it's not slowing down. The underground church in the Middle East is not only seeing similar results, but it's actually the place where movements are growing fastest. God seems to be specifically doing a new thing among Muslims. Every region of the Muslim world is experiencing multiplying Disciple Making Movements (over 100 in the last 17 years).

Much like the mustard seed kind of Kingdom-growth Jesus describes, what started small is now exponentially growing. In the year 2000 there were somewhere around 10 Disciple Making Movements around the world. In 2003 there were maybe 30. 2008 saw a total around 80. Now we're seeing movements birth

movements, and as of October of 2019, we can track over 1,000 Disciple-Making Movements globally with no signs of slowing down.

The question for many Westerners is this: Why not here? We can track less than 10 movements currently in the West... but that doesn't seem to fully define what God is doing. The tide is beginning to shift. The Church is beginning to wake-up and not only remember it's missional identity, but now are humbling ourselves and learning from what God is doing in the Global South.

Prayer movements are spreading across the country. Like-minded apostolic leaders are boldly stepping out, and although we haven't seen movements yet, we're seeing momentum: From college students & Millennials in Boston (hundreds of groups over the last decade) to prisoners in Chicago (18 generations deep in one jail), to immigrant populations in Dallas (130+ indigenous led DBS groups), God is on the move in a new way. He is stirring his Church to join what he is doing: to see a multiplying Gospel planted among the unchurched in every sphere of our culture where disciples make disciples, churches make new churches, and the Kingdom breaks through in new and powerful ways.

DISCIPLE MAKING MOVEMENTS

DEFINED: "A Process of disciples making disciples, and churches planting at least 100 churches, with four or more generations of replication." ("The Kindgom Unleashed")

DMM is both a label of a phenomenon as well as a way of ministry. We label this rapid growth of new disciples and churches as DMM, but by studying and emulating the way in which these movements come about, we have discovered principles present in all movements. *This strategy of ministry is reverse engineered from divine movements– what we call DMM are these critical elements that have been compiled from actual movements.*

The primary engine of these movements are **DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDIES** – which are simple and reproducible groups that consist of spiritually interested people who read a Bible story together, discover what it says about God and man, and then are presented with the simple and transforming challenge to obey what they read there.

Paradigm Shifts Needed To Be A Movement Missionary

If one were to look under the hood Disciple Making Movements, what becomes clear over time is that there are certain elements that fly in the face of traditional western ministry assumptions and practices. Below are 12 Paradigm Shifts that must take place over time if we are to function as movement catalysts.

- Think: **EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER**
- Think: **PLANTING the Gospel** in existing networks of relationships instead of **EXTRACTING** people so we can "disciple" them in church
- Think: **OBEDIENCE-BASED DISCIPLESHIP** instead of the **KNOWLEDGE-BASED DISCIPLESHIP**
- Think: **DISCOVERY BASED LEARNING** instead of **LECTURE-BASED TEACHING**
- Think: **SEND the ORDINARY & WILLING**, not the **EXPERTS** who are **GIFTED & EQUIPPED**
- Think: **DISCIPLE GROUPS** and not just **INDIVIDUALS**
- Think: **DISCIPLE TO AND THROUGH CONVERSION** instead of **EVANGELISM THEN DISCIPLESHIP**
- Think: **VIRAL MULTIPLICATION**, not **ADDITION**
- Think: **FUNCTION FIRST**, instead of **FORM FIRST**
- Think: **EMPOWER & RELEASE** instead of **DRAW TOWARDS**
- Think **TARGETED TEAMS** instead of **GENERAL AUDIENCE**
- Think **"GATHERINGS"** and not **"CHURCH"**

21 DMM Distinctives

(Adapted from Novo)

Movements and Obedience

1. DMM is about the dynamics needed to generate movements. These dynamics are different than simply winning someone to Christ or planting a church. Starting a movement of multiplying groups that evolve into churches when the groups come together is very different than starting one church.

2. DMM is most effective when focused on people who are unreached, unchurched, or dechurched. It is not primarily a strategy for making those who follow Jesus better followers.

3. DMM emphasizes obedience to the commands of Jesus and the mandates of the Bible as normal for anyone who decides to follow Jesus. Long before anyone in the process may make such a followership commitment, they know that obedience to Jesus is a non-negotiable.

Jesus and the Supernatural

4. The DMM process is patterned after the model of Jesus in Mt 10, Mk 6, Lk 9, and Lk 10, when he sends out the 12 & the 72 to minister to people. In these passages, Jesus commands his disciples to do four things: *Proclaim repentance & the presence of the Kingdom, Heal the sick, Cast out demons, Raise the dead*

Finding a Person of Peace

5. Jesus commands his disciples to observe people's responses to these supernatural events and to be specifically on the lookout for a "person of peace." Such a person is one of the individuals who responds positively to the supernatural, is open to spiritual things, and has been prepared by God to be engaged. The person of peace is also one who has relational equity in a larger community and is welcoming to the disciples. Jesus also issues some sobering commands about what to do when no such person emerges in a particular setting.

6. Identifying and cultivating people of peace may be quick and instantaneous, or it may be a time consuming and drawn out process that takes many months. However, once ready, a person of peace is an individual around which we can begin to catalyze a DMM.

Beginning a Discovery Bible Study

7. DMM uses a simple tool called a Discovery Bible Study (DBS) with a person of peace and that person's family, friends, or network of social relationships.

8. To move from simply finding a person of peace to forming a DBS, a variety of intentional questions can be helpful: ◦ What's your religious background? ◦ Where are you now in your interest in spiritual things? ◦ Would you like to know more about this? ◦ Who else do you know that has spiritual interests similar to yours? ◦ Would you like to explore this together? ◦ Who else can you bring?

9. A Discovery Bible Study (DBS) / Discovery Group: (see ***DBSgroups.com***)

◦ Requires 3 things to be done with the passage:

■ Read or write out the passage.

■ Put it in one's own words. What does it mean?

■ Assuming the passage is true, answer the question, "What must I do?" These are "**I will statements.**"

10. Ideally, the person of peace facilitates a DBS. Not the the outsider to the group.

11. DBSs are all about self-discovery. No teaching. No experts. No answers other than what the text says. DBS has a high view of the power and authority of the Bible to speak. We believe God can work in power through his written word to accomplish his redemptive purposes. DBS also has a bedrock conviction that the Spirit of God is at work in such a process, wooing people toward Jesus. This combination—Word and Spirit—is irresistible.

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12. When a DBS group meets, there are other components that are included in the group experience, such as:

- What are you thankful for this week?
- What struggles do you or others have that you would like to share? / How can we help meet those needs
- How did you do with your "I WILL STATEMENT" from last time?
- With whom did you share what we learned last week?

Going from a DBS to a "Church"

13. When multiple DBS groups grow and multiply, there may be natural opportunities for them to gather together. These opportunities occur best around natural social and cultural events: weddings, funerals, holiday celebrations, etc. These can be organic ways for groups to have a larger sense of celebration and identity.

14. In addition, the groups will begin to see functions from Scripture that are natural and expected for groups of people who are together committed to following Jesus. As these functions are determined from within and implemented, DBS groups will gradually evolve into a "church."

15. All leadership of a DMM should emerge from the movement itself. Persons of peace are not necessarily the leaders; rather, they are the initial catalysts around which groups may form. Gradually, people with pastoral gifts may emerge to care for the needs of these groups. Leadership emergence in this process is natural, relational, and highly organic.

16. As a DMM evolves, the primary role of the missionary or the outsider is to coach, mentor, and train the emerging leadership of the DMM. The ongoing momentum of such a movement is directly proportional to the effectiveness of such leadership development. In many respects, a DMM is really a demanding leadership development process.

The Ecosystem of Movement

17. Movements, particularly in urban settings, are rarely linear, but on the ground these elements generally are present:

Teams: People together on mission to reach a specific people/geography/affinity/etc

DBS groups: With pre-believers in natural networks discovering & obeying Jesus

Gatherings: Biblical communities of faith emerging from new disciples/groups

Embracing Multiplication at Every Level

18. In a Disciple Making Movement, every element multiplies. New Leaders and New *Teams* make New Disciples in New *Discovery Groups*, which form New *Gatherings* which launches more teams, groups, & gatherings...

Prayer and Spiritual Dynamics

19. Where DMMs exist, there is universally an underlying foundation of fervent and prevailing prayer, as well as a practical understanding of the realities of Ephesians 6; knowing how to deal with these supernatural dimensions is an essential component of launching and sustaining a DMM. When the reality of the supernatural is understood and exercised in a DMM, the process moves at least 50% faster.

The Role of Apostolic Teams

20. The Church in its local form is not well-equipped structurally to cross cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, or geographical barriers to generate DMMs. This reality highlights the necessity of apostolic or missionary teams to generate this process. While not the Church in its local form, they are the Church in its missionary form and equally valid.

21. If existing local churches determine to stimulate a DMM, they will be most effective when 3 things happen: 1. They focus on near neighbors. 2. They do not expect the fruit to become part of their existing local body. 3. They partner with a missionary structure dedicated to DMMs

Emphasise something else here