How to build a Gospel Advancing Ministry!

A Disciple Multiplication Strategy Guides It

Today we cover Value #4: A disciple multiplication strategy guides it (do quick review of Gospel Advancing and first 3 values….)

Pray…

Have you ever experienced an outbreak of some kind? All of us have experienced…

A cold virus outbreak

Some interesting facts:

* There are around 200 different viruses that can lead to what we call “a common cold.”
* Common cold viruses can survive up to 48 hours outside the body. They can actually survive on your skin or other surfaces for two days. Think elevator buttons, kitchen counters, keyboards, light switches, toilet paper rolls, doorknobs and more!
  + It’s time to Purel up! (have a big bottle there)
* I’ll never forget speaking at a camp where one of the high school counselors, sneezed in the tub of ice cream right before he was going to serve it to me…I was like “No thanks! Not the kind of topping I want.”

-A flu virus outbreak

The Spanish flu of 1918…

In 1918 the Great Flu Epidemic killed an estimated 40 million people virtually overnight. If such a plague returned today the latest estimate would twice that.

The flu outbreak in our house a year ago…it spread to everyone but my son….it absolutely slaughtered my wife and me…felt like a Tough Mudder or Spartan Race just to push my body up from the ground to make my way to the bathroom.

Outbreaks are powerful and they spread quickly.

-A spiritual outbreak

This is when believers are reaching those around them with the Gospel and equipping the believers to grow in their faith and duplicate the process with others.

When you look in the book of Acts you see several disciple outbreak events. These aren’t just the times where Peter or Paul preach and a large number of people respond. These include new believers reaching others with the message of Jesus and then arming them with the mission of Jesus.

* Acts 2:47, “*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*
* Acts 5:14: *“Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.”*
* Acts 6:7, *“So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”*
* Acts 12:24, *“But the word of God continued to increase and spread.”*
* Acts 13:49, “*The word of the Lord spread through the whole region*.”
* Acts 19:20, “*The word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power*.”

These were the spiritual outbreaks that took place throughout the book of Acts. Each of them helped to accelerate the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome in less than 30 years, without cell phones, airplanes or theApostlePaul.com.

The viral message of the Gospel spread from person to person and city to city in a socially viral way. By the time you get to Ephesus in Acts 19:8-10 you see the entire region of the Province of Asia, what we know as modern turkey, saturated in Gospel conversations.

And these outbreaks were what we would call today, disciple multiplication. People got saved and told their friends, family, neighbors and co-workers. And the ones who responded did the same.

It’s interesting that you see that this kind of multiplication is a natural response to the good news of salvation. You want to tell others.

The 4-generation baptism with Dave Chittenden.

This kind of thing was the norm in the book of Acts!

I ended up writing a book that was inspired by the movie Outbreak, The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell and Unleashing your Idea Virus by Seth Godin.

My book was simply called…Outbreak…Picture of Outbreak book

But these kinds of outbreaks are not just reserved for the book of Acts. We see outbreaks like this, not just throughout the book of Acts but throughout church history.

“The Methodist movement became epidemic in England and North America, tipping from 20,000 to 90,000 followers in the US in the space of five or six years in the 1780’s…Methodism’s founder, John Wesley…realized that if you wanted to bring about a fundamental change in people’s belief and behavior, a change that would persist and serve as an example to others, you needed to create a community around them, where those new beliefs could be practiced and expressed and nurtured.” Malcolm Gladwell, The Tipping Point

*“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.**Join with me in suffering….”* 2 Timothy 2:1-3

Rewritten this passage with outbreak as a key “*You then, my sons and daughters, be fully infected by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the holy virus I sneezed on you in front of a bunch of other infected believers, sneeze on others who will also be qualified to sneeze on even more people.”*

Disciple multiplication is an outbreak! And, like with any outbreak, there needs to be certain conditions in place for this to happen.

What is the disciple multiplication strategy that we see laid out clearly in the first three verses of 2 Timothy 2?

1. Get fully infected by grace.

*“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”* 2 Timothy 2:1

In 1995 there was a movie called “Outbreak” that was popular in theaters…tell story…every outbreak needs a carrier…in the movie it was an infected monkey… whole theme of “Be the monkey”…the youth leader needed to be fully infected by the gospel of grace.

* 1. Live out grace!

Here’s how Spurgeon described 2 Timothy 2:2, “*This is an exhortation to everyone of us, not only to have grace, but to be strong in it. There are many professing Christians who are content so long as they are just saved. We are not content with being barely alive spiritually. We do not wish to have our life shivering with cold, but we seek after comfort as well as existence. We seek to be in health as well as to be in life. So should it be with the Christian. He should pray, “Lord, make me strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*”

How often do we try being strong in and of our own selves, instead of the grace that is in Christ Jesus? You can see it and sense it during decision night at camp with our teenagers. Tears are shed, resolutions are made and, within 15 minutes of dropping off their luggage at home they’re in a fight with mom and dad and those resolutions disappear like dew in the morning sun.

But, as Major Ian Thomas, Founder of Torchbearers, used to say, “The key to living the Christian life is Christ.” We must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” We must not look to ourselves but to Jesus.

When we look to ourselves we will continue to fail and flail, like a broken off apple tree branch, trying to bear apples apart from the sap of the tree.

To be strong in the grace of Christ begins with recognizing our weakness apart from Christ!

How do I know? I experienced it firsthand. I went to a strict Christian school that preached the message of grace to the unbeliever and the message of legalism to the believer. The list was firmly placed in my hands and I tried to obey every rule. They told me that if I wanted to be spiritual to read my Bible everyday, so I did, religiously. They told me that I also needed to memorize Bible verses, so I did. As a matter of fact I memorized entire books of the Bible. They told me to witness, so I did. I estimate conservatively that I witnessed to over 5,000 people by the time that I graduated from high school. They told me to learn how to preach, so I did. By the time I was in high school I had won several “preacher boy” competitions locally and nationally. They told me to become a leader so I became student body president. They told me to study hard so I graduated with a 4.0. They told me a bunch of stuff, and I tried to do my best to do it all to the letter…and I was absolutely miserable inside.

Something happened my freshmen year that broke me. I remember crashing and thinking to myself I can’t do this. And that was the beginning of the beginning.

I realized that I couldn’t but that Jesus could. I realized I was weak but his grace was strong.

We must live out of grace and help our teenagers live out of it! We must help them be strong, not in and of themselves, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We live out grace and then we….

* 1. Give out grace!

*“I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!’”* Galatians 2:21

Larry was a member of the church I used to pastor. Larry was part of a Christian heavy metal rock band. He and a group of his fellow musicians decided to break off from my church, Grace Church, and start their own, appropriately called “The Asylum.”

But before he left he wanted to confront me over something.

I was used to that. I was a pastor and pastors get confronted all the time…just like youth leaders do. So we set up a meeting at the Dare 2 Share headquarters and he pulled up. I met him in the parking lot and, as soon as he got out of the car I greeted him and I asked him how his fellow musician, a guitarist who happened to be named Greg, was doing.

I wasn’t ready for the torrent of anger that followed…I really encouraged Larry to forgive him, but he said that he never could and never would. So we made our way to the office and we both sat down and I asked him, “Well, Larry, what would you like to talk about?”

Tell story… “Sit down Larry. You need an infusion of grace brother. You can’t live in the house of cards you’ve developed brother, how can you expect an unbeliever, who doesn’t even have the Holy Spirit, do it?”

So, let me ask you, are you preaching grace to your teenagers?

Have you fully embraced grace yourself? (Give Gospel)

Are you fully infected by grace?

If you want to kick off a disciple multiplying outbreak, it starts by being strong that is in the grace of Christ Jesus our Lord. Get infected by grace! Secondly,

1. “Sneeze” on the right people!

I know that sounds kind of gross. But I’m talking about a spiritual sneeze with spiritual boogers. Here’s how Paul put it in 2 Timothy 2:2,

*“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people….”* 2 Timothy 2:2

The Gospel I sneezed on you, then sneeze on others, who can sneeze on even more people!

* 1. The ready and willing can be made able.

*“…reliable people….”*

One of the things I love about this passage is that the one you sneeze on is reliable. They don’t have to be flashy or have great speaking gifts. They just need to be reliable. In other words,

This is what to look for in leaders, leaders who are reliable, leaders who ready and willing. In his classic little book, Dedication and Leadership, Douglas Hyde tells a story I’d love to share with you.

Early in the last war I was conducting a leadership training course for a group of Communists in a London borough. I ended my last lecture in this series by saying that the Communist Party could take anyone who was willing to be trained in leadership and turn him into a leader. I stepped down from the rostrum and there, awaiting me, was Jim. A relatively new member of the Party, he was almost pathetically anxious to be turned into a leader. He took me up on the words with which I had concluded the lecture. And as I looked at him I thought that I had never seen anyone who looked less like a leader in my life. He was just about the most unprepossessing man I had ever seen. He was very short, grotesquely fat, with a flabby white face, a cast in one eye and, to make matters worse, a most distressing stutter. I am not making fun of him—it is very germane to my story—when I say that quite literally he came to me and said: “C-c-c-comrade, I w-w-w-want you to t-t-t-take me and t-t-t-turn me into a l-l-leader of m-m-m-men.” I looked at Jim and I wondered how I was going to do it. Then I thought to myself. “Well I told the class that we could take anyone who was willing to be trained in leadership and turn him into a leader, and here is Jim pathetically anxious for me to do it. This is a challenge.” So I set about the job. It will be observed that I had made only one qualification. This was that the would-be leader must be willing to be trained. This presupposes a certain attitude of mind, which Jim already had. It was, so far as I could see at that moment, almost the only thing I had to build on.

Although Paul told Timothy to look for reliable people, Timothy knew that there were some of those reliable people who could have a ton of potential in making and multiplying disciples. In other words…

I think of Chris Selby. He’s reliable...solid…passionate and he is multiplying a movement! A grinder…but he is grinding out a movement!

* 1. “*Super Sneezers*” can take it to the next level.

*“Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.**He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed.*” Acts 18:24-27

William Dawes verses Paul Revere illustration in The Tipping Point

Are you sneezing on the right people?

1. Wait for it.

When you are infected by the Gospel of grace, sneeze on the right people, and are waiting on the Lord in prayer, it’s only a matter of time before the outbreak begins.

It’s hard for us to wait isn’t it? We want it now. But movements take time and are in God’s perfect timing.

*“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.* *Join with me in suffering….”* 2 Timothy 2:2,3

We read it like this all happened simultaneously.

But Timothy traveled with Paul for almost 20 years before this was written. He had been listening for years and training others for years and waiting for years.

We most likely will have to wait too! And what are we waiting for? Two things:

* 1. An outbreak of multiplying disciples.

*“…who will also be qualified to teach others.”*

Steve Addison, expert on spiritual movements that go viral, wrote these words, “Overwhelmingly, early Christianity was not spread by professionals but by ordinary people whose names and deeds went unrecorded. Through their social networks of relatives and friends they reached the Hellenized Jews”…and when their leaders were persecuted it didn’t work “because early Christianity was a mass movement with a highly committed rank and file who were active in spreading the faith.”

The multiplication I witnessed in youth ranch growing up. We grew, not because of gimmicks or games. We grew, not because of pizza and pizzaz. We grew because it was an outbreak. We were infected and we were sneezing until others caught it.

How do you create this viral atmosphere? How do you begin to multiply disciples? I recommend the website and book: 4chairdiscipling.com. It is what we use at Dare 2 Share as the primary disciple multiplication strategy we recommend.

It is based on the ministry of Jesus and his approach to discipling (quick overview)

* 1. An outbreak of suffering disciples.

*“Join with me in suffering….”*

The invitation to disciple making is an invitation to suffering. Why? Because Satan hates it and it disrupts that status quo.

Satan hates it because he knows that the church grows fastest with multiplication and not addition.

Disciple making disrupts the status quo…Operation Arvada story

Steve Addison wrote an amazing little book called “Movements that change the world.” In it, he tells the story of St. Patrick, a vastly underestimated Saint who God used to literally shake a country for Christ. It is the textbook case of how all of these points fit together and an unstoppable outbreak begins.

Patrick was 16 years old when Irish raiders stormed his village in Roman Britain and took him slave in 405.

He was a child of privilege suddenly thrust into the role of a shepherd where his life of ease was replaced with cold, isolation and hunger. But this pain taught him humility and drove him to God. Soon his long days and nights became powerful and unending prayer times.

This is where **Patrick got fully infected by grace**. This is where he became strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Escaped (200 mile walk through dangerous territory) and went back home to his life of privilege a changed man.

In a dream heard the cry of the Irish, “Come and walk with us again!” and he knew he was called to be a missionary.

The religious world of the Celts was a bizarre mishmash of gods, goddesses, spirits in the sky, earth and water as well as ancestral magic and divine animals.

Patrick was uneducated but preached with passion from city to city, baptized new converts, established leaders and called people to join his ragtag missionary band.

Here is when **he began to sneeze on the right people**.

Young men from all over Ireland responded to Patrick’s call. Burning inside of them was this same missionary passion, waiting to be unleashed.

Patrick established monasteries as places of spiritual instruction, equipping and devotion…but they were also sending centers. They called it “going on pilgrimage for Christ.”

These monasteries eventually became the spiritual, cultural and learning centers across Ireland which would establish cities across this nation of villages.

And, then, **they just had to wait for it**.

Eventually Ireland would become the missionary sending hub for youth all across Britain and Northern Europe…all due to the white-hot faith and commitment to a cause in Patrick and his crew.

For 500 years after Patrick died this movement kept growing and advancing, all because of the clear commitment to the cause of Christ.