



Searching for the Most Effective Discipleship Curricula

By Dr. Daryll Stanton

Shortly after joining the Global SDMI team, I was asked: “What are the most effective discipleship curricula/models that you have seen around the globe?” I have given a lot of thought to this question since becoming part of SDMI and since our mission includes discovering, developing, and delivering God-inspired discipleship resources globally. Here are some of my thoughts.

A lot depends on the disciple

Foremost, we must select discipleship resources according to the needs of our disciples. We need to find resources that fit where each disciple is on the journey toward Christ or with Christ. Three questions to consider in this regard are:

- Is the person moving toward a saving relationship with Christ?
- Is he/she beginning a personal born-again relationship with Christ?
- Is he/she maturing in a personal born-again relationship with Christ?

We need relevant resources to encourage disciple makers to move others toward a saving relationship with Christ. We need resources to guide disciple makers to encourage new Christians to grow in their relationship with Him so that they, in turn, become disciple makers.

Must be aligned with our commitment to live out the Great Commission

As Nazarenes, we want resources that fulfill our commitment to the Great Commission: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV).

Interestingly, the NIV translation of the Greek phrase, “πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε” reads: “Therefore go and make disciples,” while some others translate it more literally: “Therefore having gone, disciple” (Berean Literal Bible) or “having gone, then, disciple” (Young's Literal Translation). The

implication is that discipleship resources should lead disciples to become disciple makers, guiding others in becoming mature Christ-followers.

Matching the Disciple Makers with the Right Methods and Resources

In Sunday School and Discipleship International (SDMI), we strive to help our disciple makers find the right methods and resources to faithfully walk with Jesus and join others along the Journey of Grace. So we systematically try to come alongside those individuals in and outside of the Church, leading them to a growing relationship with God and challenging them to invite others to join them on that journey. The best discipleship resources are joint adventures—a disciple maker journeying with a possible new disciple or with another maturing disciple.

SDMI has a great task that requires expansion of our connection with Nazarene churches globally. Check out the design of our [Journey of Grace](#) page on [Nazarene.org](#). Current viewers can locate resources in 55 additional languages by clicking the arrow next to “English” near the top right.

Also, check out the new [SDMI webpage](#). You will discover it is guided by a Journey of Grace approach to discipleship. A Journey of Grace challenges us to “be disciples” as well as to “make disciples.” On the new website, you will find a number helpful links to Journey of Grace resources on [The Foundry Publishing](#) and to the Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library ([WHDL](#)) resources.

While WHDL contains thousands of helpful resources, we have identified a few key Journey of Grace resources in our [SDMI Collections on WHDL](#).

The new design of our 2021 [SDMI brochure](#) also reflects the new concept of Nazarene discipleship. Our aim is to become agents of God’s prevenient grace, joining hands with God as He goes before people to make a way and draw them into relationship with Him. But we also want to establish believers in God’s saving grace, helping new believers understand how Jesus rescues us from sin and leads us into the truth that sets us free. And we desire to see disciples established in God’s sanctifying grace wherein the Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life fully consecrated to God.

There is still more...

Regional training events, such as [LC2021](#) for the USA/Canada region, are excellent opportunities to learn about favorable models and access great resources. These topics will no doubt be pursued in the training sessions at other regional conferences. At the 2023 General Assembly, SDMI will share other ministry models and resources during workshops and plenary sessions.

Please share with us your church’s discipleship plan. We are interested in learning about what is working for you. We would like to share your discipleship story with others for the advancement of the kingdom of God. You can connect with me at dstanton@nazarene.org