

WMU of Texas
Missional Disciple-Making Bible Study



PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Changing Lives One Prayer at a Time

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BIBLE STUDY

Jamye Richmond grew up in a mission-minded church where her passion for missions began as a four-year-old Sunbeam® and she has never looked back. She serves with the college ministry at church as well as the Baptist Student Ministry at Texas Woman's University. Mentoring college students is the absolute best part of life.



INTRODUCTION

Teri Ussery is a wife, mom, and “Gigi” to five grandchildren. Teri has a passion for sharing the transformative power of God's Word. Her heart for discipling others has led her to teach Bible studies and speak at women's events and conferences for over four decades. Teri holds a Master's in Theology from Dallas Baptist University and serves as the Adult and Young Adult Strategist for WMU of Texas in Dallas, Texas.



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INTRODUCTION

What is Your Mission in Life?

How has God called you to live as a Christ-follower? What is His challenge for your life's journey?

Some question why God doesn't immediately dispatch us to heaven when we become a Christ-follower. Why would He leave us here on this fallen earth to endure the hardships and trials this life brings?

Jesus provides the answer as He tells His disciples, who are being left behind, that they are to bring the Gospel message to the lost. What we call the **Great Commission**.

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20

We are commissioned to make disciples of Jesus. He leaves us with the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the task of bringing others into a saving faith, and then discipling them in how to live out the Christ-life.

To learn more about WMU of Texas and national WMU's missions disciple-making curriculum for all ages, visit wmutx.org/resources.

To download our mentoring resources and missional disciple-making Bible studies, visit wmutx.org/mentoring.

The Principles of Missional Disciple-Making

WMU of Texas has created Bible studies to help you on your disciple-making journey. We hope to equip you in the following ways to accomplish the task for which God has called you.

Consider the following four foundational principles as you begin your disciple-making experience.

MISSION

Luke shares the departing words of Jesus before He ascended to the Father, leaving His followers to consider His mandate.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Jesus assured His followers that the power coming of the indwelling Holy Spirit would surely compel them to be His Witness. He instructed all Christ-followers to be on mission to share the Gospel locally, regionally, and to the ends of the earth.

MENTORING

While the mandate to share the Gospel with the whole world seems overwhelming, we are also given instructions for how we are to fulfill such a great command. The writer of Proverbs gives us a hint.

“As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.”

Proverbs 27:17

This Proverb refocuses our disciple-making. Here, we are encouraged to build relationships one by one. We are instructed to sharpen each other as we invest in missional relationships through mentoring. So the question becomes, ***whose life are you pouring into? Who are you discipling?***

METAMORPHOSIS

What is the purpose of disciple-making? Paul tells us that our goal in disciple-making is to equip and encourage another to realize the heart-transformation God longs to bring.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:1-2

The purpose of our investment in others is to bring about transformation. We derive the word “metamorphosis” from the Greek word for transformation, which is best seen in the life cycle of the caterpillar. Metamorphosis allows realization of the full potential within the caterpillar to become a butterfly.

Our goal of investing in the lives of others through mentoring relationships is to lead them to experience a true transformation, becoming the person God has created them to be.

MULTIPLICATION

The result of the transformation we experience is the need to share our transformation with others. The Great Commission tells us clearly:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 28:18-20

Much like His departing words in Acts 1:8, Matthew records Jesus' command that, as we are going about our daily lives, we are to be about His business of disciple-making. He empowers and equips, but we become the hands, feet, and mouth of Jesus to invest in disciple-making. We are to teach others to obey His commands and baptize others into His Kingdom, until the very end of the age.

May you find Christ and His purpose for YOU as you walk this missional disciple-making journey.

Getting Started

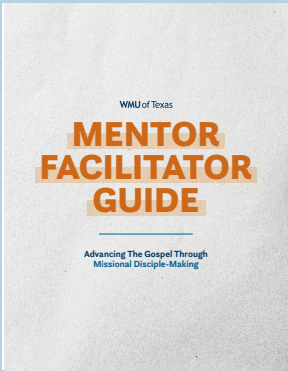
As you begin your journey, either solo, with another person, or in a small group, here are some next steps to help you get started.

You will find five missional disciple-making resources that will help you on your disciple-making journey at wmutx.org/mentoring. You may start with any of the five. There is no anticipated order to the studies. You will find that they all equip you in specific ways to be a missional disciple-maker.

As you embark on your study, consider that God may want you to invite someone else to join you. Feel free to study on your own, but allow space for God to show you others whom you could encourage through the study as well.



Scan to
download the
Mentoring Guide
for Leaders.



MISSIONAL DISCIPLE-MAKING BIBLE STUDIES

Here is an overview of the five spiritual practices you will experience in each Bible study to equip you as a missional disciple-maker.

Each Bible study includes a Bible passage, a short commentary, and a practical tool to help you practice what you have learned. Download at wmutx.org/mentoring

Bible Study	Goal	Application
SURRENDERED PRAYER <i>Matthew 6:9-13,</i> <i>Luke 11:1-4</i>	To deepen intimacy with God and submit every aspect of life to His will.	Learning to use God’s Word to pray.
READ THE BIBLE & APPLY IT <i>2 Timothy 3:16-17,</i> <i>James 1:22</i>	To renew one’s mind and gain wisdom for living in His truth.	To study God’s Word and put it into practice.
PRAYING FOR OTHERS <i>1 Timothy 2:1-4,</i> <i>Colossians 4:2-4</i>	To partner with God in intercession, asking for His work in the lives of others.	Identify people to pray for and include them in your daily prayer time.
SHARE YOUR FAITH <i>Matthew 28:19-20,</i> <i>Romans 10:14-15</i>	To boldly and lovingly proclaim the hope and salvation found in Jesus Christ.	Practice sharing your testimony and the Gospel with others.
GATHER IN COMMUNITY <i>Hebrews 10:24-25,</i> <i>Acts 2:42-47</i>	To grow as disciples within the Body of Christ and be equipped for missional living.	Gathering with other believers for worship, study, fellowship, and service.

How To Use This Study

As you step into each of these Bible studies, you will implement a method of study easily remembered by its acronym: SOAP.

SOAP OVERVIEW

Sometimes studying God's Word can be overwhelming and intimidating at best. However, Jesus tells us in [John 14:26](#) that the "Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

As a Christ-follower, you have the Holy Spirit teacher within you to help you understand and apply God's Word. Sometimes it just helps for us to have a structure within which to work.

There are a number of different study methods. The method we will use is the SOAP Method. It provides a framework to read the scripture, observe what the text says, apply the scripture personally, and pray for God to speak through His Word.



SCRIPTURE

Read the passage out loud or write it down. Read it slowly and thoroughly for context.



OBSERVE

What does the passage say?

Read the passage again, focusing on observation. You might ask the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions as you observe. Note key details like repeated words, people involved, locations, and major events. Journal your observations.



APPLY

What does the passage mean to me?

Read the passage again and consider how it applies to your life. This step answers, *"How does this passage apply to my life?"* As you journal, ask yourself if any of the things you see in the passage apply to a current situation or struggle in your life.



PRAY

Ask God to speak clearly through His Word and guide you as you seek to live out the truths you learned from the passage.

A Note on Bible Study Translations

The Bible, originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, has been translated into English many times. This study will primarily use the New Living Translation (NLT). But reading the same passage of Scripture from more than one translation can be a helpful study tool. You can find a variety of translations on a Bible app or websites such as biblegateway.com.

BIBLE STUDY

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach.

³And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away.

⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹He who has ears, let him hear.”

MATTHEW 13:1-9



SCRIPTURE

PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Changing Lives One Prayer at a Time

By: Jamye Richmond



READ MATTHEW 13:1-9

Scripture provides encouragement answering why we pray for others. The Bible often gives us a glimpse into the life-change that happens when believers pray on behalf of others.

Jesus Himself, in [John 17](#), spent time praying for others as He anticipated the cross. We cannot know the journey of another and how our interaction will make a difference for them. Only God knows, and He has the Divine appointment already in mind for us, but we are able to hear and respond only through prayer.

This Bible study will encourage you to pray intentionally and specifically for others in your life. The purpose of your prayer is to access the Sovereign Lord to hear and obey how He is working in and through the lives of those in your sphere of influence.



OBSERVE

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY?

Who was Jesus addressing as He taught?

Who is the main character in the parable?

What are the situations surrounding the seeds?

What are the results of each of the seeds the farmer sows?



APPLY

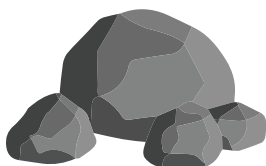
WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN TO ME?



Read Matthew 13:18-23

How can you apply the parable to your journey as you pray for others?

“Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.



As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.



As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.



As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

This parable of Jesus seems so simple, yet the disciples had to ask Jesus what it meant. He went on to carefully explain to them the meaning.

Jesus lays out the application of the parable. Even today, this parable has been taught from so many angles and emphases that it has become more complex than intended.

In its simplest form, Jesus details the variety of responses people have to the Gospel. So then, **what is a believer’s role in the sharing of the Gospel?**

The obvious initial answer is to share the Good News of Jesus everywhere and every time it is possible. Jesus tells us that in [Matthew 28:19-20](#) and [Acts 1:8](#).

Where does praying for others come into play?

Paul tells us in [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#) that we are to pray continually.

- *Pray with intention and listen to the Holy Spirit’s leading.*
- *Trust the Farmer to inform your prayers as you sow seed. He knows the soil upon which the seeds will fall.*
- *You can prepare the ground by praying as you go.*

Sharing The Gospel

We have the responsibility of sharing the Gospel of Jesus, but we also have the joy of being a part of God’s message of salvation to the world. In W. Oscar Thompson’s and Claude V. King’s book, “*Concentric Circles of Concern*”, we discover how unlimited the opportunities are.

Modern Christians tend to focus on specific areas of evangelism based on what is convenient or even a task that should be saved for a professional minister. Neither of those ideas matches delivering the Gospel to those who cross our paths daily, occasionally, or perhaps even once. Thompson and King help us discover the seven circles of contact with humanity with whom we can share the Gospel.

Use the attached worksheet and begin your own list of names for each circle. As your list develops, use it as a daily reminder in prayer for each of the names you have recorded.



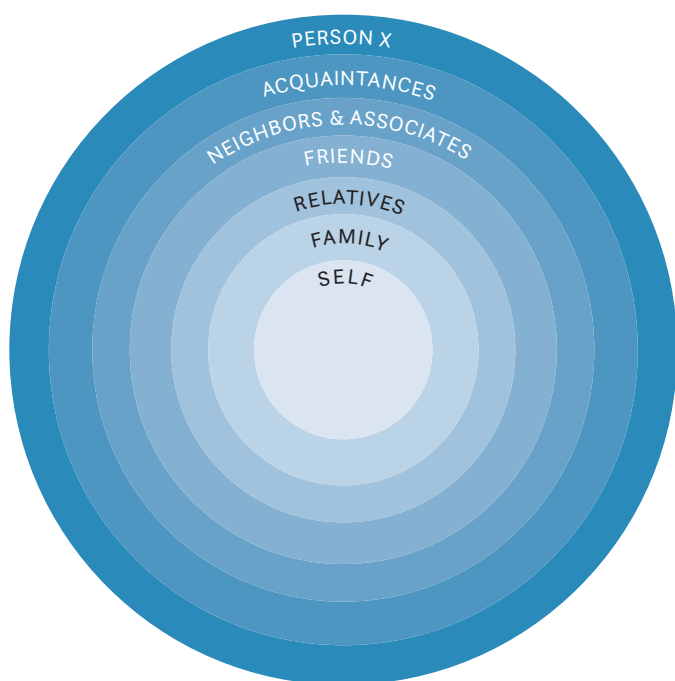
Read

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:19-20

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8



Concentric Circles of Concern

Too often, the only kind of evangelism encouraged is the preaching to strangers, anonymous crowds, and in foreign countries.

The circles represent the different relationships in our lives. First is the self circle. We move through the other relationships in our lives to reach circle 7, which is Person X. The Gospel moves through these contiguous lines, signifying the lines of relationships we experience.

This evangelism tool is an effective way to witness through a simple plan of meeting the needs of close family first, then friends, and then all others.

Resource:

See the appendix for the concentric circles of concern worksheet.

If you have no one to list for Person X, think of a time when you might have had an opportunity to share the Gospel if you had been on the alert. Jesus is the ultimate example of witnessing to Person X. Many of the Bible stories we love are about Jesus encountering someone outside of His usual contacts.

Examples:

- *The woman at the well*
- *The man born blind*
- *The man possessed by demons*

Jesus was always prepared in advance through His frequent time in prayer. Obviously, the closer circles give more opportunities and may be more stressful, but those less close or random meetings are no less important.

TESTIMONIAL

I experienced one of those random meetings a few years ago that I will never forget. I was in a hurry because I had a meeting at church with our minister of missions. I chanced a quick stop at Hobby Lobby for a specific item that had nothing to do with Christmas, but I ended up passing through the aisles of the early displays of holiday décor and crafts. The aisles were packed with women looking and planning how glorious their holiday home would be with the

endless supply of merchandise. As I paused for the crowd to move forward, a woman turned to me in her confusion and amazement at all the “stuff” and asked if I could help her.

She spoke with an unfamiliar accent, and I discovered she was from Bangladesh and had been in the United States for less than six months. She wanted her home to look like a typical American home at Christmas. I told

her I was glad her family was in the US and how wonderful it is that God has brought the world to this country at this time in history. I quickly realized that Christmas was not an event of faith for her but an American cultural phenomenon.

Glancing at the time, I realized I was going to be late for my meeting and broke away quickly. With a smile and a wave, I went on with my busy day. As I walked to my car, I began to sense that I was wrong in choosing to leave rather than spend time with her. I rationalized that I was busy and surely the Lord understands that. As I drove to church, I began to cry because the Holy Spirit made it very clear to me that I missed an opportunity to share the Gospel. The meeting could have

waited. The pastor would have been fine with my reason for missing it.

God can certainly bring someone else to her to tell her about Jesus, but I missed the blessing of sharing with her. Since that day, I have continued to pray that God will bring someone into her circle to tell her of a God who loves her enough to send Jesus to pay her debt of sin and restore her relationship with the Father.

I have even gone back to that Hobby Lobby store in the hope of God having our paths cross again, or perhaps trust to bring another seeker into my circle. That has not happened, but I will not stop praying for her and praying that I will be ready to share when given the chance with someone else.

Prayer's Role in Sharing The Gospel

But wait a minute. We are talking about prayer, and yet it is not mentioned in this passage. But the obvious need for prayer is overwhelming. That presumed second role in sharing the Gospel is prayer. We tend to see it as secondary in importance as well.

Quite often, you may have heard someone make a comment saying that if you can do nothing else, pray. Oswald Chambers says that *"Prayer does not fit us for the greater works; prayer is the greater work."*

In truth, prayer is our only weapon in helping the Gospel get the desired result of someone hearing how Jesus has paid the price for their sin so they may have an eternal relationship with God.

The question then becomes, **when do you interject the ministry of praying for the lost?**

The prayers must be **daily** and **continual**, not only when an anticipated opportunity is approaching.

The Bible tells us in **John 6:44** that no one comes to God except that the Lord God draws them even before the Gospel story is shared. Three of the scenarios of the parable describe failure, yet the power to change the outcome begins with praying for the sower to share a clear and complete story of Jesus and the work of the cross to salvation.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus gives us an understanding of those for whom we pray. Jesus lets us know that everyone can pray for how the Gospel will be received and for God's intervention in the circumstances.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

John 6:44



PRAY

- *Pray for tender hearts able to hear the message and understand their need for a Savior.*
- *Pray for God to bring a person of faith to surround hearers with encouragement and a willingness to answer their questions.*
- *Pray for access to a Bible so they can read the truth themselves.*
- *Pray for God to break old habits that will choke out the Truth.*
- *Pray for protection from the distractions and pressures of the world.*
- *Pray that pride will not prevent someone from responding to the Gospel.*
- *Pray for boldness in our witnessing.*
- *Most importantly, pray that you will see the opportunities that God brings into your circle to share the Gospel.*
- *Pray that you will not miss the opportunity to be the vessel God uses to change another's eternal destiny in heaven.*

We want the same charge that Jesus gave to Paul in [Acts 26:18](#):

"I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

NEXT STEPS

As you consider praying for others, let this study be a starting point to intentionally build a list of those in your circles whom God is asking you to pray for. Some on your list may not yet be believers. Others simply may need to be encouraged along their faith journey.

As you consider your own concentric circles, be intentional and specific as you pray. Be open and aware as God may be inviting you into a Divine appointment with another.

ADDITIONAL BIBLE STUDIES & RESOURCES



Ready to continue your disciple-making journey? Explore our other Bible studies and mentoring resources available at wmutx.org/mentoring. These resources provide valuable guidance and support for deepening your faith and helping others grow in theirs.

Bible Study	Goal	Application
SURRENDERED PRAYER <i>Matthew 6:9-13,</i> <i>Luke 11:1-4</i>	To deepen intimacy with God and submit every aspect of life to His will.	Learning to use God's Word to pray.
READ THE BIBLE & APPLY IT <i>2 Timothy 3:16-17,</i> <i>James 1:22</i>	To renew one's mind and gain wisdom for living in His truth.	To study God's Word and put it into practice.
PRAYING FOR OTHERS <i>1 Timothy 2:1-4,</i> <i>Colossians 4:2-4</i>	To partner with God in intercession, asking for His work in the lives of others.	Identify people to pray for and include them in your daily prayer time.
SHARE YOUR FAITH <i>Matthew 28:19-20,</i> <i>Romans 10:14-15</i>	To boldly and lovingly proclaim the hope and salvation found in Jesus Christ.	Practice sharing your testimony and the Gospel with others.
GATHER IN COMMUNITY <i>Hebrews 10:24-25,</i> <i>Acts 2:42-47</i>	To grow as disciples within the Body of Christ and be equipped for missional living.	Gathering with other believers for worship, study, fellowship, and service.

Sources:

Concentric Circles of Concern: Seven Stages for Making Disciples,
Carolyn T Ritzman W. Oscar Thompson, Claude V. King

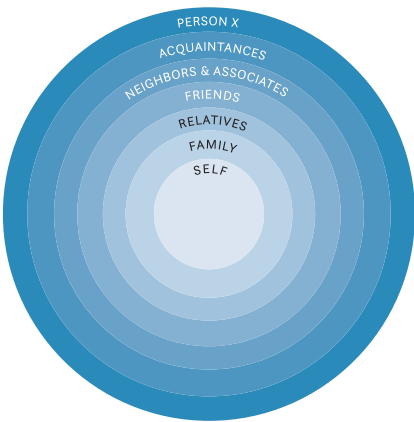
CONCENTRIC CIRCLE OF CONCERNS WORKSHEET

In the book “*Concentric Circles of Concern*” by W. Oscar Thompson Jr., Thompson emphasizes a relationship-based approach to sharing the Christian faith, contrasting with approaches that prioritize evangelism to strangers or large crowds.

Thompson's method encourages Christians to build and nurture personal relationships, starting with those closest to them (family and friends) and gradually expanding their reach to others in their spheres of influence.

There are seven concentric circles of relationships a person should focus on:

- Circle 1: Self:** Emphasizing the importance of a right relationship with God, self, and others.
- Circle 2: Family:** Beginning evangelism within the family unit.
- Circle 3: Relatives:** Extending the message to relatives.
- Circle 4: Friends:** Reaching out to close friends.
- Circle 5: Neighbors and Associates:** Including neighbors and colleagues.
- Circle 6: Acquaintances:** Sharing the Gospel with acquaintances.
- Circle 7: Person X:** Reaching out to those outside the immediate circles of concern, or strangers.



The book encourages a systematic approach that involves praying for the individuals within each circle, building relationship bridges, demonstrating God's love through meeting their needs, and ultimately, sharing the Gospel message and helping them grow as disciples. The emphasis is on long-term discipleship, not just on conversions.

Instructions: Create a list of names for each circle. As your list develops, use it as a daily reminder in prayer for each of the names you have recorded.

SELF	FAMILY	RELATIVES
FRIENDS	NEIGHBORS & ASSOCIATES	ACQUAINTANCES
	PERSON X	