

PRAY  
FREELYRAISE  
PASTORSGO  
OUTLEARN  
ALWAYSCHURCH  
AS FAMILY

# The Direction of Discipleship (for a Group).

The purpose of this paper is teach your group to think like the apostle Paul did and care about others' spiritual state. Especially for those outside church, or even outside the kingdom altogether.

## GOD'S BIG PLAN FOR 'EVERYONE'

Life is, in one way at least, black and white. People belong in either one of two places:

'For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.' (Colossians 1:10-11)

Q: What are your first couple of reactions to the language of these verses?

At the same time as people either belong to the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of the Son, people are unfinished business, and even within those two kingdom spheres, people are very, very different from each other.

Yet Paul's plan for 'everyone' is the same. No matter who they are, it is the same:

'We proclaim him [Jesus], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom,

so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labour, struggling

with all his energy.' (Colossians 1:28-29)

Perfect, or 'finished', or 'mature' in Christ reflects God's purpose for everyone.<sup>1</sup>

Q: Is this true for all the people you know?

Q: Is it as true for non-Christians?

Q: Ask people to think of one family member, one friend and one colleague. Are there any reasons why this doesn't feel true for some of these people?

These two features brought together can be visually represent like this:

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<sup>1</sup> It is also God's plan not just for *everyone*, but *everything*. You might want to visit Colossians 1:15-20 or Ephesians 1:10 to see more.



Every single person is in some way moving in some direction on this spectrum, whether they are a total unbeliever or a mature Christian! We have a prayer they would move in a particular direction - towards Jesus!

#### 'EVERYONE'

It is hard for your group to think about 'everyone', and therefore easy to evade a call to be involved with God's person for everyone. So let's begin with 'some'. Ask your group to stop and reflect on the following:

- Think of up to 5 people you care for who don't go to church.
- Think of 2 you have particular care for or contact with.
- Consider individually where those 2 people might be on the 'direction of discipleship' arrow.
- Get the group to write their couple of people up on the arrow.



#### PUTTING YOUR REFLECTIONS TO USE

You could consider the following as a group:

- Use this as a weekly prayer guide for people who need to know more of Jesus.
- Use this as a planning tool for evangelism, perhaps on the basis of who your friends are and where they are at in relation to you, Jesus and church, your group ought to
  - Hold a bbq so they meet some of other Christians
  - hold a dialogue dinner and invite some, or run Christianity Explored
  - ask church to run a guest service for you to invite them too
  - Some other great outreach idea.
- Occasionally pull it out and ask how these people would react to the teaching you are working through...what question would they ask?
- Ask members to consider whether something you have looked at could be shared with them.

## GO...MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS

Jesus was very clear – he said ‘go’. ‘Go, make disciples of all nations’ (Matthew 28:16-20). Even the groups where we gather in comfortable spaces together ought hear this call and take it to heart.

## NEXT STEP

Why not follow up this paper by reading ‘Divide and Grow’