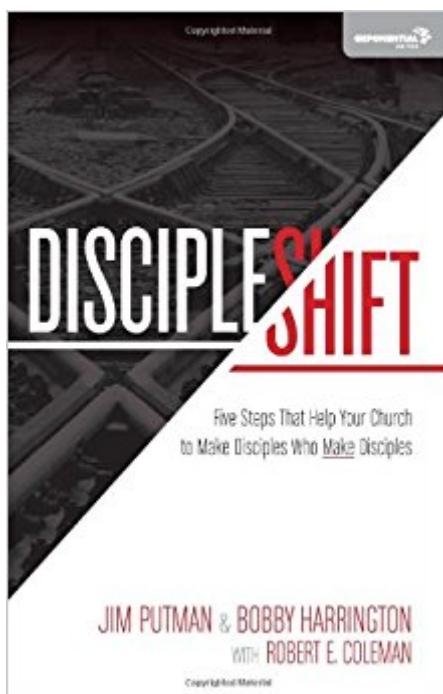


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# DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church To Make Disciples Who Make Disciples (Exponential Series)



## Synopsis

Over the last thirty years, many influential church leaders and church planters in America have adopted various models for reaching unchurched people. An “attributional” model will seek to attract people to a local church. Younger leaders may advocate a more “missional” approach, in which believers live and work among unchurched people and intentionally seek to serve like Christ. While each of these approaches have merit, something is still missing, something even more fundamental to the mission of the church: discipleship. Making disciples—helping people to trust and follow Jesus—is the church’s God-given mandate. Devoted disciples attract people outside the church because of the change others see in their Christ-like lives. And discipleship empowers Christians to be more like Christ as they intentionally develop relationship with non-believers. DiscipleShift walks you through five key “shifts” that churches must make to refocus on the biblical mission of discipleship. These intentional changes will attract the world and empower your church members to be salt and light in their communities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jim Putman is the founder and senior pastor of Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho. Real Life was launched with a commitment to discipleship and the model of discipleship Jesus practiced, which is called, “Relational Discipleship.” Outreach Magazine continually lists Real Life Ministries among the top one hundred most influential churches in America. Jim is also the

founding leader of the Relational Discipleship Network. Jim holds degrees from Boise State University and Boise Bible College. He is the author of three books: Church is a Team Sport, Real Life Discipleship, and Real Life Discipleship Workbook (with Avery Willis and others). Jim's passion is discipleship through small groups. He lives with his wife and three sons in scenic northern Idaho. Bobby Harrington is the co-founder of [discipleship.org](http://discipleship.org) and the founding and lead pastor of Harpeth Christian Church (19 years). He is the chairman of the board for the Relational Discipleship Network and the co-author of DiscipleShift, Dedicated: Training Your Children to Trust and Follow Jesus, and Discipleship that Fits. He has been married to Cindy for over 35 years and they have two adult children who are disciples of Jesus. Dr. Robert Coleman is the Distinguished Senior Professor of Discipleship and Evangelism at Gordon-Conwell seminary and a prolific author, having written hundreds of articles and twenty-one books, including The Master Plan of Evangelism, which has sold multiple million copies and is the book for which he is best known. He directed the School of World Mission and Evangelism at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School for eighteen years and currently serves on the Mission America Facilitation Committee and several international mission boards and is the president of Christian Outreach. From 1989-2001, he led the Institute of Evangelism in the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College and served as Dean of the Billy Graham International Schools of Evangelism. He is also a founding member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism and a past president of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education. His personal interests include spending time with his family, including his children and grandchildren, and keeping in touch with those he has discipled.

What does it mean to be a gathering of people following Jesus? What is the primary goal of the gathering? The Church (gathering) can easily lose focus of their mission and soon forget they ever had one. This book is written by some men who searched for that mission, found it, lived it and are now teaching it. The mission and the process are taught inside these pages. Read it. Prepare. Lead. Your gathering will thank you for guiding them to make disciples who make disciples!

Putnam does a great job pointing out the mission of making disciples in the church as a fulfillment of the Great Commission rather than just making converts. There is a lot in here to digest. One thing Putnam does that I really liked is that he pushes readers not to think we can photocopy what Putnam has done and blindly implement in our churches. There is a lot of work to think through each church's context and implement accordingly. So this is not a set of instructions so much as guidance on the things that we need to focus on. Additionally, be forewarned: I am already

encountering resistance from the professional church crowd; handle with care. Putnam warns about the time it takes to make changes in a church, and I am quickly finding that he wasn't kidding. Why 4 instead of 5? A couple of the chapters were longer than they needed to be, and he definitely plugs Real Life Ministries. If 4.5 were an option, I would have chosen that.

This book gives a very workable set of principles to help a congregation get back in alignment with Christianity's timeless mission: making disciples, nurturing them, and helping them make disciples. It's full of biblical directives and conversation, but not in a "Problem-Verse" way that plagues some books on discipleship. Ultimately, it is rooted in the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ. And nothing could be more important for our congregations in a time of high conflict with the mores of our culture.

The authors of this book do a fine job of reminding their readers about the basics of church discipleship. As I read the book I was reminded of The Lutheran Church in Madagascar that has been using many of the ideas represented in this book for years. Programs don't grow the church. True church growth only takes place as people speak to others the promise of the Gospel and bring them to the place where Jesus has promised to be for them in His Word and Sacraments. If you would like to learn more about the situation in The Lutheran Church of Madagascar see: [I Am Not Afraid: Demon Possession and Spiritual Warfare](#)

This book is the single best book on making disciples that I have ever read. It digs into the nuts and bolts of doing it and shows you the strategic reasons for why disciple making is what your church should be doing full time. The other great attribute of the book is that it draws so many of the best tools for evaluating disciples into one place and makes it easy to reference them. As a missionary working over seas I had put into practice much of what this book covers however Jim Putman goes deeper, articulates more clearly and shows more plainly many of the things I was trying to do. Reading the book made me a better missionary. Applying these principles to your church will make your church more Biblically sound as well as in more in line with what Holy Spirit and Christ what us to be doing. If you read this book after reading another book by Jim Putman, [Church is a Team Sport](#) your experience and understanding of the book will be enhanced. All my quibbles with the book when I first read it were answered, or at least covered, in [Church is a Team Sport](#). No matter what denomination you are in or where you are in your Christian life you will benefit from reading [DiscipleShift](#).

The author had the good fortune of starting a new church with a new approach, that is; training new believers to be disciple makers. I believe many old believers do not have the priority of making disciples. Also, many old believers have filled their lives with other meaningful or essential (work, school, family) activities. This does not leave much time for discipling others. Perhaps the retired generation (Finishers) should be challenged more by this approach to discipleship.

DiscipleShift can be summed as a call back to the basics of making disciples and is summed up in the he 11th chapter: "As healthy Christians are reproducing other healthy Christians, and as healthy churches are reproducing other healthy churches, we will be deploying more and more people into the world to both demonstrate and tell others of the reality of Christ's salvation and kingdom."

Over the past year, I've made it an intentional goal to read through every book on discipleship that I can get my hands on. DiscipleShift is the best - for several reasons. First, there is a clear simplicity that is not only easy to grasp, but easy to teach. Second, the bigger picture perspective is absolutely key -- the 'shifts' in thinking are both foundational and monumentally critical if a local church is going to actually make discipleship the focus of their ministry. Finally, this book is practical -- these are not lofty concepts that will remain pie-in-the-sky ideas. The map in this book is tangible. I feel like I've been waiting for this book to arrive -- and it finally has - so thank you to those who have not only written this book, but are living it out.

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