

DMMs—More Than a Fad or Amazing New Strategy

I'm a little concerned that DMMs are becoming a fad ... a popular idea lots of people get excited about without having any idea what is involved in launching and sustaining one. "I'm doing DMM!" they declare before understanding what that means.

It's not that I don't want more people to start DMMs. On the contrary! I would that every Christian understood DMM principles and began applying them in their lives, that every church worked to morph into a multiplying movement of disciples making disciples.

Starting a DMM is no cakewalk though. It's a lot more like running a marathon than a stroll in the park. Determining in your heart that you are going after multiplication growth requires deep commitment and no small portion of perseverance.

That is not to say we shouldn't go after them. We must. But we need to know what we are getting into. We need to be crystal clear on our motivations. It's got to be a lot more than because it sounds cool, or that we're dissatisfied with our current expression of church.

In a previous issue, I wrote an article entitled, "Zealous for the Things That Matter." I began addressing this issue there. Let's unpack it further from a different angle.

Failed Attempts and Painful Losses

Most people who have successfully launched DMMs have had numerous failed attempts. They've suffered painful losses. The compelling vision to start a movement of Jesus followers has transformed them into people who *live on their knees* in prayer.

They've been tempted to give up on this dream time and time again. Experiencing betrayal, persecution, and

opposition from within and without, they've wanted to quit. They cannot. They keep going, keep pursuing the dream of seeing thousands swept into the kingdom in a supernatural, organic way. Until, almost by surprise, it begins to happen.

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They turn thankful hearts upward in an offer of praise to God. Is this taking place? What we've dreamed, cried, and prayed for?

DMMs are a God thing. Only He can make them happen. We must understand, however, that they require a lot of those who decide to partner with God to see one released too.

What Is a DMM Anyhow?

Let's make sure we're talking about the same thing. What is a DMM anyhow?

Some people seem to think a DMM is a Bible study group. I'll be honest. This misunderstanding annoys me. A DMM is a lot more than a small group that meets weekly to study the Word. A DMM is a grass-roots movement. Thousands of indigenous disciples making disciples, passionately on fire for God, transformed and "in love" with Jesus, training others to know, love and follow Him too.

For a more technical definition of DMM see my website Dmmsfrontiermissions.com or various other resources.

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website: Dmmsfrontiermissions.com

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Before You Sign Up - Count the Cost

My husband and I are runners. We're not good runners. No hopes of being written up in any runners' magazines or offered any sponsorships. It's unlikely we will ever win awards or prize money. But we've finished many races. We've run with endurance the races set out before us.

That is enough for me. That's success. As a distance runner, you need to know your why. Otherwise, it's easy to quit. You start well. You buy fancy running shoes, download the running app on your phone and declare, "I'm going to run a marathon!" Months of pounding the pavement later, you wonder, "Why am I doing this again?"

Before my husband and I sign up for a race, we count the cost. How much are we traveling in the months before the race? Can we put in the training time needed to be successful? Starting your DMM race means counting the cost (Luke 14:28-29). We must ask ourselves, are we ready to do what it takes to partner with God in this incredible (though rewarding) task?

A Divine Partnership

DMMs are indeed a partnership between God and us. He invites us into His purpose and passion. The Lord places a vision in our hearts to see the multiplication and growth of His Kingdom among the unreached. He will do incredible miracles. We will have divine appointments with Persons of Peace. He will convict of sin and transform lives.

« As we do this, God breathes life into our feeble attempts to make disciples who will make disciples. »

We do the hard work of abundant gospel sowing, prayer and being willing to change our paradigms. Adjustment in our ways of working into something simple, reproducible, indigenous and organic will be needed. We love sacrificially, pouring our lives into people. Stepping out of our norms, we learn to do things differently. As we

do this, God breathes life into our feeble attempts to make disciples who will make disciples.

It's a partnership. God works a lot, but so do we.

Five Necessities as We Partner With God to Run this DMM Race

1. Our *motivation* must be clear.

As mentioned above, you absolutely must know why you are doing this. Be sure it is more than just a desire to be involved in something different from the norm. That will be there for sure, but it won't be enough. A passion for God's glory must pulse in your veins. A love for lost people, placed there by Him, will motivate you to press through the *messy middle* every movement effort has.

2. Our *conviction* must run deep.

Along with the clarity of motivation, as we partner with God to start movements, we need a strong biblical understanding of how the gospel spread in the New Testament. It is the Word of God that brings deep conviction in our hearts. If you are convinced that Scripture commands us to make disciples who obey all of Christ's commands, including the Great Commission, you will be able to stand. *All God's people reaching all peoples is a biblical imperative.* The priesthood of every believer must be more than an idea to you. It can't be a philosophy or theory. You must believe it and put it into action in how you disciple others.

3. Our *commitment* must be unwavering.

I often tell those I train that the most important quality in a church-planter or disciple-maker is perseverance. On the road to launching a Disciple Making Movement, your commitment will be regularly tested. How much are you ready to give up to see this happen? What sacrifice will you say is just too much?

When other pastors call you a heretic, will you quit? When persecution increases and your most promising emerging leader is martyred, will you throw in the towel? When you prayer walk for weeks, months, or even years without yet finding the Person of Peace, will you decide enough is enough?

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4. *Passion must burn until it drives you to take risks.*

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6). Without risk-taking, faith is rarely demonstrated. I once heard a speaker say faith is spelled R-I-S-K. I couldn't agree more. Our faith must be demonstrated by action.

Starting a movement will require you to step out of the familiar and into new territory. It will mean a willingness to step forward into new things and to experience God in new ways.

5. **God wants the glory. Humility is necessary.**


I am continually amazed at how God works through weak and broken people. He works in spite of us. Yet it is so easy, when success does come, to begin to think it's because of us. We did this right, or applied that principle better than the other guy. That's a sure-fire way to destroy a movement. God is zealous for His glory. He deserves the praise for every breakthrough. Every forward step you are able to make is because of His grace.

Are You Sold Out?

I coach people at various levels of DMM engagement. My online course *Getting Started in Disciple Making Movements: Even if You are Busy, Can't Speak the Language Well and Have No Money* lays out a step by step approach to beginning that first group. I train people in the basics needed to get started. Follow the steps and put them into practice and you will certainly move forward.

Some who have taken my course are just beginning their first groups. Some have yet to find that Person of Peace. Others I coach and train are seeing many generations of groups multiply. They face complex issues with emerging leaders: groups that start and fail, spiritual and physical opposition or persecution. Everyone I've trained has faced, or will face, moments of great challenge.

I'm not trying to discourage you from DMMs. I do want you to count the cost. They are more than a fad or nice idea. They aren't for the faint of heart. DMMs are for radical, sold out, deeply committed Jesus followers who are ready to lay down their lives for the sake of seeing thousands of lost people come into His arms of love.

Are you willing to do what it takes? To be transformed by this glorious effort to bring His kingdom to places where it isn't yet established? If your answer is "yes," by God's power express that to God right now. Join me and breathe a prayer saying, "Here I am Lord. I'm in! Use my life to release your purposes. I'm crying out to you. Launch a Disciple Making Movement through me." 

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