

# The DMM Price Tag

## What Does It Cost to Start a Disciple Making Movement?

by C. Anderson

Visiting the U.S.A. after living many years abroad can be a shock to the system. Walking into a grocery store to buy a few things, I am assaulted by the prices. “What? It can’t possibly cost that much for this. I usually buy these items for a fraction of the cost! Are these apples worth that to me? Do I want to pay this price for them?”

Adjusting to my home culture’s prices is a challenge. It takes time, usually a few weeks. Purchasing groceries is necessary so I find ways to do what is needed. It’s good to check the price tag carefully before I make a purchase, though.

It’s also good to understand the cost of starting a Disciple Making Movement (DMM). Starting a DMM is an exciting venture, but it isn’t cheap. It’s definitely not a “freebie.” The investment we must make in tears, prayer, loss and personal pruning is great.

### What Does a DMM Cost?

We could consider an amount in dollars, thinking through the cost of training and evangelism materials. In many ways, however, that is relatively insignificant. What is more important to consider is what it costs the movement leader or trainer on a personal level. How do we determine what is the price that will be paid in tears? In emotional stress due to betrayal and persecution? Or the cost that comes with constant spiritual warfare?

I wish I could tell you that DMMs are free. Salvation is free. But there is a price we must pay to see that free salvation come to thousands of unreached peoples. DMMs have a large price tag on them. Is it worth it?

### Compel Them To Come In

In Luke 14, Jesus tells a story of a feast. It wasn’t well attended. Can you hear the passionate heart of God expressed for the lost to be saved? Jesus says, “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.’” (vs. 23)-NIV.

The Master longs for His house to be full. “Compel them!” He says. The emptiness of His table grieves God’s heart deeply.

After this stirring parable, Jesus immediately talks about the cost of discipleship. He refers to a man who began to build a tower but wasn’t able to finish. He tells of a king going to war who first carefully weighs the cost. We too must understand the payment needed when starting a Disciple Making Movement.

### The Price Is Real

Every time the ministry started to move forward I got sick. Seriously sick. God would bring a divine appointment with a potential national apostle. We would start to connect with them, begin mentoring and “Boom!” Something would happen. My back went out and suddenly I had two herniated discs. Another time I had a life-threatening hepatitis relapse.

Once, we were making serious inroads to a new community and my right-hand colleague was suddenly killed. While riding in an auto rickshaw she was hit by an army truck. She died shortly after being taken to the hospital. Grief hit me much like that army truck had hit her. How was I to continue?

Then there was the time when we were trying to produce a gospel film in the local language. We were using indigenous actors and presenting the message of Jesus in a contextual way. The film demonstrated simple church and told a story of someone coming to faith. It would be a major tool to help us with abundant gospel sowing.

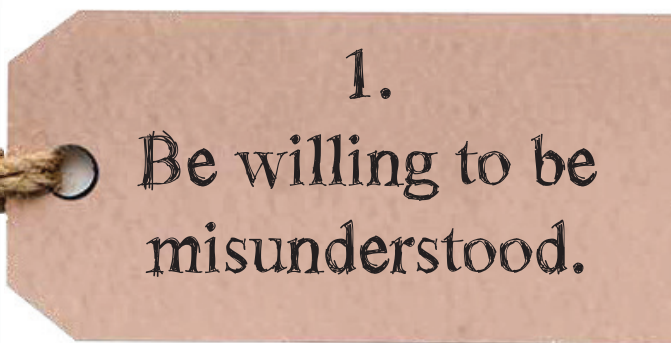
We expected some resistance from anti-Christians in the area especially when we would start to distribute it. What we didn’t expect was the persecution we faced from the Christian community. We were attacked, slandered, threatened and called names by those we thought were on the same side as us!

## Primary Costs You Will Face

It would not be fair to anyone wanting to pursue a DMM to tell them it will be easy. Though it is simple, it is not easy.

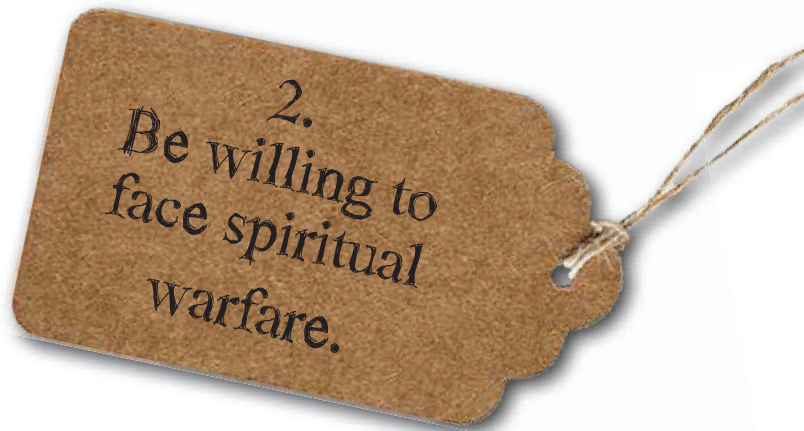
Starting a DMM requires a high level of commitment and tenacity. You must have a willingness to go through suffering to see the release of God's Kingdom in that place. The rewards are also great! Rather than seeing just a handful of people believe, you can see thousands of multiplying disciples.

What are the primary costs you must be ready to pay if you are pursuing a DMM?



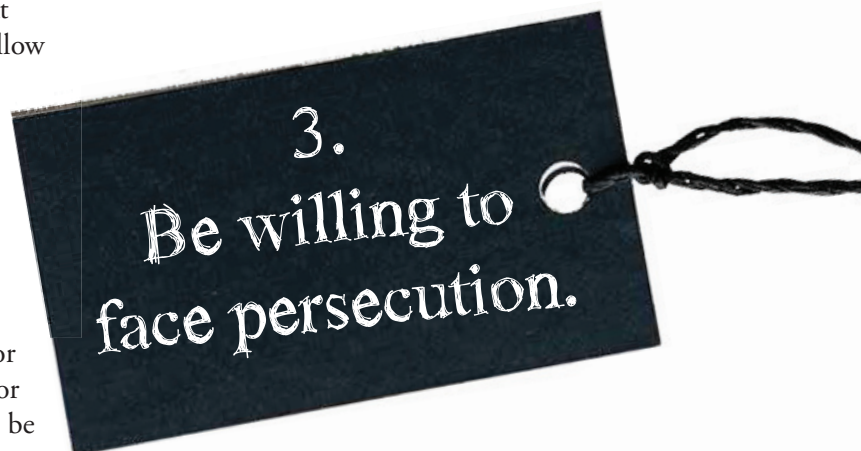
As you apply DMM principles, you will go against the flow of many traditional church views and practices. At times people will question your methods. When you allow non-ordained people to baptize, for example, it might raise eyebrows. When you decide against a church building or empower local believers to do ministry, some will think you are not "doing it right."

When you put into practice the things done in the book of Acts, it goes against the status quo. You may feel like you are "swimming upstream" in your organization. Don't be surprised by this. It is normal for people pursuing DMMs. It's part of the price we pay for the release of thousands into the kingdom. Be ready to be misunderstood and not take it personally.



Sickness, unusual marital stress, and unexpected conflicts in team relationships are quite common. The enemy does not want a movement to take off. You can be sure of that. He looks for your weak points and will try to stop you. I'm not saying everything bad that happens in life is spiritual warfare. But the reality of the enemy we face is clearly described by Paul in Ephesians 6:12.

It helps to know that whenever there is an attack, it is also an opportunity for God to do a miracle! God always wants to use spiritual warfare against us and turn it around for our good. The miracle may be a healing. It might be a reconciliation, or a breakthrough in our own character growth. Be ready to struggle, but also be ready to experience the power of God demonstrated in those times!



As you pursue a DMM, you will face opposition from within and without. The first persecution will likely come from the existing church (even if it is a small and ineffective church). Later, when the disciple-making groups start to multiply rapidly and thousands are coming to faith, it is difficult not to be noticed. That is when external persecution is likely. You may be targeted by authorities, called in for questioning, or deported. If you have done a good job of training local leaders in a simple way, they will continue the work without you. It will grow even more!

## 4. Be willing to suffer loss.

A DMM practitioner may experience loss of status in their church or organization. Even more serious, they may face losses like the death of a child or spouse. Many who have seen movements released have walked through deeply painful times of grief. As you walk through these on your DMM journey, be assured of God's comfort. He will draw near. He will be there to walk with you through the questions and doubts that losses provoke. The tears you cry will water the movement's growth. Those you disciple and mentor will learn from you. They will watch you as you walk through the pain. They will see your love and commitment to God, and also to them. This is part of the deep foundational stones of a kingdom movement being laid.

## 5. Be willing to change & grow—

in challenging new ways as a person.

An openness to change and grow is crucial for those wanting to start movements. This too is a costly thing. It is easier to stay the same than to change our beliefs and paradigms.

Great men and women of God are constantly growing. They are always learning. They allow each challenge to train them in godliness. They make adjustments when things aren't producing fruit. Allowing the Holy Spirit to convict them, they respond in repentance.

Change is costly, but so very rewarding too. The process of learning we go through in starting movements has great value! It shapes us into His image.

## Is It Worth It?

When we see the release of a massive movement of Jesus followers, we will rejoice with Jesus and the angels. Seeing thousands swept into God's kingdom and an unreached area transformed...nothing can compare! Lives, families, and communities radically changed by His love? It's unquestionably worth the hefty price tag.

## Are You Ready to Commit?

Counting the cost can be a bit shocking, much like my first trip to the grocery store when returning to the States. I hope this article hasn't talked you out of pursuing a DMM! My goal is to help you count the cost now, so when you hit the hard stuff, you won't give up. You've already decided it is worth it.

Take a moment right now to pray. Ask God to give you the courage to embrace the challenges ahead. Let Him know you are willing to pay any price to see His house full, to see the unreached come to taste of His goodness. Jesus paid the ultimate price already. Let's follow Him in demonstrating that same kind of love. 