

LINE IN THE SAND

MEETING

1

DRAWING A LINE IN THE SAND

On February 23, 1836, 200 Texian volunteers found themselves in a situation they didn't want to be in. As these men were occupying an old Franciscan mission known as the Alamo a Mexican force of over 1,500 men, led by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, began a thirteen-day siege on the mission. The men held out in hopeful anticipation for reinforcements that would never arrive. By March 5th, only 50 men had come to their aid; furthermore, the Mexican army had been reinforced to over 3,000. The power of the Mexican artillery and rifles had taken its toll. Hope began to diminish.

Legend has it that in the face of overwhelming odds Col. William B. Travis, commander of the Texian forces, summoned his men and gave them a speech. "We must die," he began. "Our business is not to make a fruitless effort to save our lives, but to choose the manner of our death." Travis saw three possibilities, all of which assured death. The Texians could surrender, try to fight their way out, or "remain in this fort...resist every assault, and to sell our lives as dearly as possible." It was here that Travis drew a line in the sand with his sword saying, "I now want every man who is determined to stay here and die with me to come across this line." All but one man crossed the line. The next morning, every one of those men gave up their lives defending freedom and rejecting tyranny. Their sacrifice ultimately led to the demise of Santa Anna's army at the Battle of San Jacinto and the establishment of the Republic of Texas.¹

Fast forwarding to the present day, Christians too find themselves in a situation they don't want to be in. We have been tasked with taking the gospel to the ends of the earth by making disciples, but our culture grows increasingly hostile towards Christ. Our flesh seeks to shipwreck our faith and silence our calling, and Satan's forces come to steal, kill, and destroy. **It has become increasingly clear that a life on mission is not compatible with a life of comfort, ease, and security.** Thus, we are left with two options: make moves or make excuses. Other believers have retreated behind church walls, creating "Christian country clubs". These believers have seen their fear of the world as a justifiable excuse for abandoning the Great Commission. Yet, they have made a poor trade. This world is not our home. The cost of living on mission is far outweighed by the glory of Christ that is to be revealed on the final day. The greatest joy in this life is found in participating in the Great Commission. For this reason, John writes of his disciples, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." God has called each saint to leave a legacy by becoming fishers of men and women.

The cost of following Christ is high. It is uncomfortable. Jesus says in Luke 14:27-28, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?" Before anyone sets out to do anything, the cost must be counted. No one can build a tower without the right supplies or run a marathon without the proper training. William B. Travis asked his men to count the cost before stepping over that line. Today, you are being asked to count the cost of following Christ.

Before you can truly commit to the next 15 weeks in this GO Group, you must step over the line. If you do not, then you will never achieve the goal of this group: to make disciples who make disciples. Curriculum doesn't make disciples; people operating under the power of the Spirit make disciples. This workbook could contain the most well-written prose. It could unlock the deepest truths of God. It could explain the Scriptures in a manner second to none. Yet, even if all these things were true (which they most certainly are not), these pages would still be unable to transform any heart. When it comes to discipleship, **you will reap what you sow.** If you do not work for this process, it will not work for you. If you are unable to commit to being honest, being present, and being willing to obey, then this GO Group will be a royal waste of your time. Some may be thinking, "Alright, I am only a page in, and you are trying to make me quit?" The purpose of this exercise is not to discourage you or scare you away. This exercise serves as a line in the sand. It begs you to count the cost before stepping across the line. Yet what awaits you on the other side of the line?

The men of the Alamo were discontent with tyranny, so they were willing to risk their lives. God has called us at First Baptist Rowlett to much more than church attendance. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Paul speaks of a godly grief or discontentment that leads to Christ-likeness. The Spirit has put in all of us this deep yearning to look more like Christ. This godly discontentment isn't motivated by guilt. It is motivated by grace. The Spirit is perfecting all believers back into God's perfect design. Therefore, **if you are discontent in your relationship with GOD**, then a GO Group is for you. Imagine being so hungry for His Word that you cannot get through your day without feasting upon the Truth of the Scriptures. Imagine being so eager to grow in a love relationship with Christ that you seek to write His Word on your heart. You don't just stop with memorizing all of Ephesians, but you go on to memorize Philippians and both Timothies as well. Imagine yearning so deeply for the prompting of the Holy Spirit that you stay up all night fasting and praying to find it. Imagine your spiritual disciplines feeling like a delight rather than a duty!

If you are discontent in your relationship with OTHERS, then a GO Group is for you. Imagine being absolutely patient, gracious, and considerate with your spouse during a disagreement. Imagine serving your roommate so generously, sacrificially, and joyfully that their testimony is forever marked by your Christ-likeness. Imagine creating such a rich spiritual environment in your home that neighbors glorify God because of how differently you love one another. What if you served God in a manner that inspired your passions and utilized your giftings? Imagine looking back 50 years from now and celebrating how thousands of disciple-makers have been raised up because of your willingness to invest in a few every year. Imagine having the confidence and competence to boldly share the gospel a hundred times each year. Imagine being more afraid of remaining silent about the good news than of having all the right answers or being awkward. Imagine taking the gospel to your neighbors or to the marginalized and watching someone experience salvation. More than this, imagine having the ability to train this new believer up into maturity in Christ?!

All these things are overwhelmingly possible through Him who loved us. Things such as these await those who are willing to step over the line. You have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside you! Do not underestimate His power in your life. God has called us and empowered us to be disciple-makers. This is the calling of every saint, and GO Groups exist at FBCR to help every member grow into it. This isn't a plea for you to be in another group. It is an invitation for you to participate in the mission of God: taking the good news of Jesus Christ to the ends of the Earth by making disciples.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you relate to the godly discontentment mentioned on the previous page? What areas of your life do you want to see changed?
2. How would you rate (from 1 to 10) your relationship with God right now? with family?
3. How would you rate (from 1 to 10) your ministry to non-believers?
4. What do you need to commit to or sacrifice to make this group a successful experience for you?
5. What legacy do you want to leave in this life (again, don't underestimate the Spirit's power)?

INTRODUCTORY VIDEOS



Before we lay some ground rules, there is a video you need to watch (if you haven't already). To access these videos, go online to www.yourgogroup.org or to the FBCRowlett App (select GO Groups). Click on "**GO Meeting Material**". These videos are found in "**Meeting #1**".

THE GROUP COVENANT

We need each other to experience the gospel change God has for us. For a GO Group to work right, certain things must be true. The rules below will serve to best set your group up for spiritual growth. There are non-negotiable rules, recommended guidelines, and a space for your group to add (with unanimous consensus) anything extra. By writing your initials and signing your name, you will be stepping across the line and making a covenant with your GO Group. Breaking this covenant could result in your removal from this GO Group.

REQUIRED RULES

There are three categories that make a GO Group a GO Group: commitment to obedience, authenticity and accountability, and multiplication. These three non-negotiable categories compose the irreducible minimums of GO Groups. Each has required rules listed under them.

COMMITMENT TO OBEDIENCE

1. To the best of my ability, I will show up and be ready for each meeting. This time will be sacred on my calendar.
2. At the end of each meeting, I will pledge to take my next step of obedience (my GO).
3. To the best of my ability, I will complete my GO within the period of time between meetings.

COMMITMENT TO AUTHENTICITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

4. **Honesty** – As I evaluate myself in this GO Group, I will be gut-level honest with God, my group, and myself.
5. **Confidentiality** – As other members in this GO Group are honest and share personal information, I will not disclose it to anyone. It will remain confidential (as long as it is lawful) unless I first receive permission to disclose it.
6. **No Fixing** – I will not condemn or provide a quick fix as other members express their struggles. Instead, I will receive them with grace and walk alongside them.
7. **Accountability** – I will humbly invite and receive correction from this group. I will allow this group to push me, challenge me, and hold me accountable to live out the truth of God's Word. When I speak truth to or challenge a group member, I will do so in love.
8. **Conflict Resolution** - If there is conflict between me and another group member, I will seek to resolve it within 24 hours.

COMMITMENT TO MULTIPLICATION

9. When my group finishes this process, I will pair up with one or two other group members to co-lead a new GO Group and raise up more disciple-makers. I will seek to share the blessing I receive from this group with others.

RECOMMENDED RULES

These rules are strongly recommended! The GO Groups who applied these principles in the past were more effective and more aware of God's presence in their lives than the groups who didn't. All rules must be agreed upon by the entire group.

10. I will support/encourage my group outside of this meeting (prayer, reminders, encouragement, etc). Initial: _____
11. We will meet in a distraction-free environment (examples: phone set to Do Not Disturb, no loud/crazy pets, not in a restaurant with many TVs or loud music). Initial: _____

ADDITIONAL RULES ADDED BY GROUP

The space below allows for optional rules to be added on top of the two previous sections. These rules must be agreed upon by the entire group.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

CONGRATULATIONS!

You are now officially a GO Group! As you set out on this process, keep three things in mind to encourage you. First, the staff is praying for you, and we are here to support you however you need. Second, counting the cost of discipleship is a weighty and sometimes scary task, but a cord of three strands is not easily broken (Ecc 4:12). This group will become a strong support and encouragement for you to grow in this mission you have been called to. So, lean into one another! Finally, remember the example of our Savior. Christ went before you. In John 8:3-11, the scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman caught in adultery to Jesus. While drawing in the sand, he mercifully rescues this woman condemned to death. This is what Jesus does. He interrupts us on our path to destruction. He did this for you and for me. Though all of us stood condemned, he bore our punishment on the Cross. He was forsaken as a son, so we might become children of God. While we were enemies of God, Christ risked everything for us.

Your fuel to take GOs is not found in a set of rules, but it is rooted in the great love of Christ. Every GO you take is a response to the Ultimate GO he took for us. As a child of God, you don't have to earn his love. You have it freely. Since you have it, there is nothing that can stand in your way. Like the men at the Alamo, our business is not making a fruitless effort to save our lives. Rather, we get to interrupt Satan's plans by participating in the mission to bring many sons and daughters into the kingdom of God. This is the high calling of your life. Everything else you do falls under this calling. Don't lose sight of the grace of God. For God alone can strengthen and sustain you all in this process.

RAISING THE BAR

You have just drawn a line in the sand and taken one huge step on the journey to becoming a disciple-maker. Do not doubt God's ability to use you, but believe that each step you take has the capacity to make history. At FBCR, we firmly believe millions of people could feel the spiritual impact of the GO's you are about to take. For the rest of the meeting spend some time answering this question, "Who do you want to be in six months?" Answer this question for each of the three major relationships listed. Do not dream small. Set the bar high and trust God to take you there. Feel free to use the examples given on page 2.

By the end of this group, where do you want to be in your relationship with:

1) God?

2) Fellow Believers?

3) Non-believers?

NEXT MEETING OBJECTIVES

Complete pages 7-8 before next meeting to prepare your testimony.
Come ready to share next time.