

WALK TO EMMAUS

FIFTH DAY RETREAT INTRODUCTION

Manual by

David O. Kueker
www.disciplewalk.com
david@disciplewalk.com

618-344-1208

PREPARING FOR A FIFTH DAY RETREAT

THE PURPOSE OF THE FIFTH DAY RETREAT

The Fifth Day Retreat is not another walk; it is a means to **remember** our original Walk to Emmaus, strengthen our faith as **disciples** and learn to serve as **disciple makers**.

Purpose 1: Remembrance

The goals of **remembrance** are listed as the “Seven ‘R’s” in the first handout used in the retreat. As we remain pilgrims on a spiritual journey our entire lives, persons on retreat are referred to as *pilgrims*.

Four talks given by lay persons are designed to strengthen our commitment to practice what we preach and to act as faithful disciples. These talks are loosely based on the themes of Priorities, Piety, Study and Christian Action. Each talk is followed by discussion focused by questions that encourage the setting of specific goals for action after the retreat. Pilgrims will be encouraged to write these goals after each talk. Commitment to these goals as well as repentance becomes a part of a Dying Moments service that concludes the Retreat. These talks reflect the goal of the second half of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:20: “*teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...*”

Purpose 2: Reunion Groups

One measure of the strength of an Emmaus community is the percentage of fourth day participating in Reunion Groups, which are small groups which provide an ongoing means of continuing the spiritual growth that we experienced in our original Walk.

“Generally speaking, communities report that one out of every three or four pilgrims is in a Group Reunion. In some communities the ratio is higher, in other communities lower.”¹ By contrast, 100% of pilgrims baptized on the day of Pentecost were active in small groups (Acts 2:46-47) and the rapid growth of that church is a result of the personal spiritual care provided in those groups as disciples matured into disciple makers. John Wesley, likewise, built a system of small groups for spiritual nurture where participation was normal and required.

In order to facilitate the formation of small groups following the Fifth Day Retreat, the Lay Director and Spiritual Director assign people to “tables” with the intent of encouraging new Reunion groups to form. Generally this table assignment will involve considering *geographical proximity* first, *participation in the same church* second, and the *age, career or personality* of the

¹Stephen D. Bryant and Richard A. Gilmore, *The Upper Room Handbook on Emmaus* (2nd ed. 2001), page 115.

pilgrim third.²

Information helpful to make that table assignment is collected in the registration form or process for the retreat. People don't just drop in at a Fifth Day Retreat; they make it a priority to plan to attend.

Purpose 3: Disciple Making & Sponsorship.

Another measure of the strength of an Emmaus community is the quality and quantity of sponsorship. Some communities are facing the reality that so few pilgrims are sponsored that Walks may sometimes have to be canceled. While sponsorship is understood to involve more than simply inviting people to attend a walk, stressing the responsibilities of sponsors does not seem to solve this problem. The Fifth Day Retreat sets a higher goal: to consider sponsorship as a Christian's ongoing responsibility to *make disciples as commanded in the Great Commission* (Matthew 28:18-20) and provides fourth day with tools to make disciples. Making disciples is the responsibility of each Christian.³

Two clergy talks present a simple system for making disciples. They are called "Witness Talks" because of the promise of Christ in Acts 1:8 that "*you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.*" The first witness talk describes stages in a Christian's growth toward maturity, first as a disciple and then as a disciple maker. The second witness talk provides specific tools to make disciples. These talks reflect the goal of the first half of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...*"

Purpose 4: Fourth Day Relocation

When Fourth Day move geographically from one area to the next, they frequently lose contact with their original community and do not link up with a new community. The Fifth Day Retreat offers and opportunity for Fourth Day who move to a new home to bond with a new Emmaus community.

²For an explanation of why geographical proximity to the key element to solving small group problems, see Randy Frazee, *Connecting Church*, Illinois Great Rivers Conference, United Media Resource Center (Item #103018; CCN Broadcast Date: October 25, 2005), <http://www.intraweb.igrc.org/umrc/>.

³For example, the 2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church states: ¶ 126. The Ministry of the Laity—The ministry of the laity flows from a commitment to Christ's outreaching love. Lay members of The United Methodist Church are, by history and calling, active advocates of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Every layperson is called to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20); every layperson is called to be missional. The witness of the laity, their Christ-like examples of everyday living as well as the sharing of their own faith experiences of the Gospel, is the primary evangelistic ministry through which all people will come to know Christ and The United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission.

What is the relationship between *fourth day* and *fifth day*?

The *fourth day* begins our life in Christ after our Walk to Emmaus. In the fourth day, we are followers of Christ; we will always be followers of Jesus Christ. The *fifth day* suggests that, after we are faithful in following, a day will come when we are ready to be sent as witnesses and disciple makers.

- Jesus sent out the disciples in pairs for ministry and later 70 of his followers.
- Jesus called us to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send more laborers into the harvest.
- Jesus told the disciples that they should “wait in the city...” One hundred twenty committed, dedicated followers of Jesus waited in the city for this promise to be fulfilled.

The Fifth Day is the day of Pentecost, when the fruit of the three years of Jesus’ preaching and ministry appeared in a single day. Three thousand people were baptized that day as the natural result of all that Jesus said and did prior to Pentecost. Their numbers soon swelled to an estimated 15,000 people. And the church that resulted is a model of what can happen everywhere: *And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved* (Acts 2:42, 46-47).

There is no reason why the *fourth day experience* of following Christ should not naturally and automatically flow into a *fifth day experience* of being sent into the world by Christ. But experience shows us, however, that human beings can often become stuck on their spiritual path. They maintain their position but do not move forward in faith. Others regress and lose ground, becoming more spiritually immature. The purpose of the fifth day is to provide an opportunity to allow a new beginning and to help disciples intentionally move into becoming disciple makers.

How did a group of 120 leaders take care of a church of 3000? Jesus called twelve people to follow him and be his disciples. Over the three years of Jesus’ ministry, they made their own disciples and built a church of 120 faithful disciples who gathered in the Upper Room to pray and await the day of Pentecost. They were highly committed and fully prepared to make disciples & care for them. Bill Beckham refers to this group as the *base congregation*, thoroughly prepared by Jesus to lead the burgeoning church of Acts.⁴ Three thousand new converts could have been divided into 250 groups of 12 disciples. The 120 leaders of the base congregation could each lead two groups of 12 and the need was met. Or two leaders would jointly lead five groups of twelve. Jesus used small groups to mature disciples; so did the early church.

Being in a small group to grow as disciples was so important that Jesus made it his first priority. How can we do anything less? But the lack of small group opportunities and the lack of

⁴ Bill Beckham, *The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century* (Houston: Touch Publications, 1995).

small group involvement is a clear alarm of problems ahead in the spiritual walk of a Christian and a Christian community. So one purpose of the Fifth Day Retreat is to help form small groups for accountable growth in discipleship. Discipleship moves from *God meeting my needs* toward *God meeting the needs of others through me*.

Christ's preparation of his followers to lead the church of Acts was perfect; we do our best to imitate him in our preparation of our disciples to become disciple makers. Even so, Jesus asked the disciples to pray for the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost and prepare themselves to enter a "fifth day" of witness. **The purpose of the Fifth Day Retreat for Emmaus is to likewise help Fourth Day develop the skills needed to be witnesses and disciple makers.**

THE BASIC NINE HOUR SCHEDULE FOR A FIFTH DAY RETREAT

Table Talk is the discussion at tables following a talk and includes a short break before the next talk begins.

8 am Registration

9 am - Introduction:

Seven "R"s 7 Purposes + Table Talk

Video (The Rabbi's Gift) + Table Talk

Scripture Litany of Grace + Table Talk

10 am - Priorities Talk (LD) + Table Talk

11 am - Witness Talk #1: Discipleship Systems (SD) + Table Talk

Noon - LUNCH - sing De Colores, lunch break, music, share testimonies

1 pm - Piety Talk (ALD) + Table Talk

2 pm - Study Talk (ALD) + Table Talk

3 pm - Christian Action Talk (ALD) + Table Talk

4 pm - Witness Talk #2: The Prayer Tool (SD) + Table Talk

5 pm - Dying Moments

Meditation and silent prayer over written goals

Service of repentance and commitment with Communion

6 pm Adjourn (Gathering with potluck to immediately follow.)

EIGHT HOUR SHORT SCHEDULE FOR A FIFTH DAY RETREAT

The schedule can be shortened if necessary by having less time for tables to interact with each other. With this shorter schedule, Tables will not share their insights with the entire group. The time allotted for getting to know each other in the Introduction is reduced to 30 minutes, each lay talk time is shortened by 5-10 minutes and Dying Moments is reduced from an hour to 35 minutes.

8 am Registration

9 am - Introduction: 7 "R" Purposes, Video (The Rabbi's Gift), Scripture Litany of Grace

9.30 am - Priorities Talk (LD)

10.25 am - Witness Talk #1: Discipleship Systems (SD) (60 minute talk)

11.35 am - Piety Talk (ALD)

12.20 - LUNCH sing Decolores, lunch break, music, testimonies

1.20 pm - Study Talk (ALD)

2.15 pm - Christian Action Talk (ALD)

3.15 pm - Witness Talk #2: The Prayer Tool (SD) (60 minute talk)

4.25 pm - Dying Moments

5 pm Adjourn

TIMELINE

AT LEAST FOUR MONTHS BEFORE: Secure approval from the Community Board of Directors to hold a Fifth Day retreat and the nomination of a Spiritual Director and Lay Director.

AT LEAST THREE MONTHS BEFORE: The Lay Director and Spiritual Director meet to plan for the retreat and consider answers to the following questions:

1. When and where?

The Fifth Day Retreat should be scheduled on the day of a regular community Gathering. It will normally take place from 9 am to 6 pm on a Saturday with the Gathering to follow that evening. Registration will open at 8 am.

The retreat is designed to happen in the fellowship hall of a church. It's good to schedule the formation to happen in the same room so the team can foresee and resolve potential problems.

2. Who serves on the team?

Team members are:

LAY DIRECTOR, who presents the Priorities Talk.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR, who presents the two Witness talks
and presides over Dying Moments.

THREE ASSISTANT LAY DIRECTORS who help keep the retreat running smoothly.
Each ALD presents one of the three talks: Piety, Study, or Christian Action.

In addition, the following can be added to the team if necessary:

KITCHEN COORDINATOR: Organizes food service if not done by the ALDs. (The goal in the retreat is to have all persons present participating in the retreat and not in the kitchen preparing meals. Lunch can be something very simple prepared on site or ordered out for delivery. Participants bring beverages and snacks.)

ASSISTANT SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR: This clergy person gains experience in order to serve as the spiritual director for the next retreat. They may be asked to give the 2nd Witness talk.

ADDITIONAL ALDs to help run the retreat and gain experience in order to serve as an ALD for the next retreat. They sit together as a Table at the retreat.

3. When should the FORMATION retreat take place?

The date, time and place of a short Formation Retreat to bring the team together is

decided.

4. What prayer shall be used as the theme for the Retreat and to begin each talk?

As with the Walk to Emmaus, Fifth Day Retreat Talks begin with the lighting of a candle and a unison prayer by all present. The Lay Director selects the prayer that he or she feels will best serve as a theme for the walk.

This can be the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* used in the Walk to Emmaus, another well known prayer, such as the *Wesleyan Covenant Prayer* or the *Prayer of St. Francis*, or the Centering Prayer from www.disciplewalk.com website: *Lord Jesus, today I am far less than the person I want to be or can be with your help. I ask today that you would be more and more the center of my life. Guide me to all that is good, cleanse me from all that is not. Teach me Your ways and form in me Your nature. Work through me to redeem my neighborhood. I am a sinner; please be my Shepherd, my Savior and my Lord. Amen.*

AT LEAST ONE MONTH BEFORE: A brief Formation Retreat brings the team together to plan the details of the Fifth Day retreat, present their talks and bond as a team.

1. Review the “R”s - discuss the level of need for each in your Emmaus community. Watch the video, *The Rabbi’s Gift* by M. Scott Peck, and discuss the insights for deepening community and how that effects growth in numbers.
2. Review the Litany - discuss the level of need for each scripture passage in your Emmaus community.
3. Remember - the Fifth Day retreat is an opportunity for us to remember our first walk to Emmaus and live out what began on that walk. It is not a Walk to Emmaus, but a retreat for those who have been on a Walk to Emmaus.

TABLE ASSIGNMENTS

Table assignments can be made at Formation, but normally this is done by the Lay Director and Spiritual Director after Formation as more registrations are likely to arrive in the time between Formation and the Fifth Day Retreat.

Pilgrims on a Fifth Day Retreat are settled into tables in groups of three or four. A smaller number of persons at a table than at a Walk to Emmaus allows more sharing to happen in less time.

A second purpose for a smaller number at each table is that the table, hopefully, will be the nucleus for a new reunion group rather than a completely full reunion group. Persons are assigned to tables by the Lay Director with the hope of creating the nucleus of a new reunion group. Sometimes this means separating an existing reunion group into two or three smaller groups for

the retreat. This needs to be done prayerfully so that each table has strong leaders to help those who are not as strong.

Normally, tables will be made up of people who are not a part of a functional reunion group. These tables will usually be organized for geographical convenience of people who work together and/or who live near each other. This helps the reunion group to bond as a group and continue after the retreat. It is an expression of the command that we are to love our neighbors, which is normally understood in a geographical sense.

Third, because the hope is for persons at a table to remember their Emmaus experience together, tables are usually made up either of men or women unless there is a significant reason to do otherwise. As men and women usually have different communication preferences, this also helps the table to share and bond as a group.