

DOUBLE THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP



A Discipleship Training Manual

B r o o k y R S t o c k t o n

Double Through Discipleship

A Discipleship Training Manual 1.0



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PREFACE

The Lord graciously saved me when I was 19 years old. I found myself surrounded by happy moral people in Campus Crusade for Christ, Navigators, and other college groups. All of these people wanted to lead others to their joy in Christ. Little did I know that I was part of the greatest harvest in modern history (1960-1985).

The only problem was that I was a shy young man who would rather drop out of college than have to speak in front of a college class. But, the Lord filled this faint heart with a desire to lead others to the Savior.

For ten years I lived, breathed, slept, and ate evangelism and discipleship. I knocked on doors, picked up hitchhikers, and talked to anyone who would listen. I went to every evangelism conference in the United States well, it seemed like it.

But, I was so timid and unskilled, I had to study the Bible and write down everything heard, read, and studied. The best part of this period of ministry was that it was pure, simple, and purely centered on the gospel and the Holy Scriptures. God blessed this poor little country boy with fruit. People came to know Christ, and churches and Christian schools emerged.

This unedited manual is the result of my thinking in those days. The only problem with this material is that it worked. I soon found myself with hundreds of young Christians and the fastest growing church in town. What do you do with so many immature believers and no elders? Suddenly, I had to shift from 100% emphasis on evangelism, to discipleship, pastoral leadership, and preaching (something I knew nothing about.)

Thus, this imperfect manual is for students of evangelism and discipleship. May the Lord use this to motivate and guide you.

Two things are important. Evangelism is a skill that must be learned through prayer, study, practice, and observation. Second, evangelism is not taught, it is caught. Forget evangelism classes. Just do it and take someone else with you.

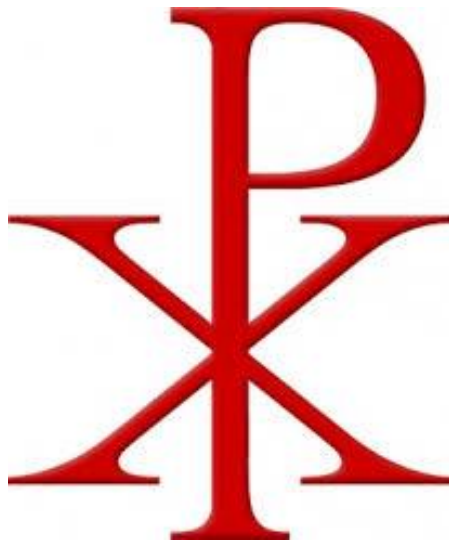


DEDICATION

I'm not sure if this manual is worthy of dedication to those spiritual men who invested in my life, but if any good comes out of it, may the credit go to my college friends and mentors who took me by the hand and showed me how to share the gospel with friends and strangers.

DOUBLE THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

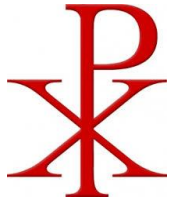


Avoid the error of Presumption: Don't assume people know anything.

Numbers 15:30 says, "But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people".

1. VISION AND DISCIPLESHIP

“We need a baptism of seeing” (A.W. Tozer)



Text: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Premise: Discipleship is a ministry of trust. God entrusted people with the responsibility of multiplying disciples.

Basic Issue: If you knew you would not fail, what would you like to accomplish for God in your life time?

Objective: Every Christian can develop a vision for discipleship by making the following discoveries:

Discover the Need for Vision:

When the U.S. grappled Kuwait away from Iraq, the military strategy was to shell the Iraqi radar, radio, and communications systems. One might think, the priority should have been to bomb an air base, but not so. The strategy was powerful and effective: blind Iraq. By destroying the communications system, Iraq could not detect U.S. aircraft. Likewise, Satan’s first strategy is to blind the Christian. Our Lord taught 20/20 spiritual vision was essential for spiritual success when He said: “If your eyes are bad, your whole body is full of darkness” (Mt. 6:22).

1. Vision is needed. A.W. Tozer said *we need a baptism of seeing*. Charles Arn, a church growth consultant stated about growing Sunday Schools: *Above all else, is to see clearly the supreme purpose to which we are called*.

2. Vision is necessary for achieving our life purpose. Our Lord had a spiritual focus: “He saw the crowds . . . harassed, helpless . . . ” (Mt. 9:36).

3. Vision is necessary for discipleship. When seeking to expand the vision of the disciples, Jesus commanded his men to “lift up your eyes . . . the fields are ripe unto harvest” (Jn. 4:35).

3. Vision is necessary to sustain our spiritual focus when going through the moonless nights of severe trials. Moses “endured as seeing Him who is invisible” (Heb.11:27).

Discover the Meaning of Discipleship

1. Note the four generations in this passage (2Tim. 2:2): **Paul, Timothy, faithful men, others.**

2. What discipleship is not: Discipleship is **not** the same as friendship, though many become friends in the process of discipleship. It is **not** a social interchange of current events or personal experiences. It is not congregational worship or business meeting. Discipleship is **not** just evangelism. Evangelism is a part of discipleship. Preaching is **not** discipleship, though discipleship may include preaching.

3. Definition: Discipleship is God entrusting mature men with the content of the Gospel who will pass it on to men of integrity who, in turn, will pass it on to other trustworthy men.

4. Analogy of a race: Discipleship can be compared to a relay race. The gospel is like a *baton* which athletes must pass to the next runner efficiently in order to win the race. The race is won or lost in the exchanging the baton. In the relay race, the possibility of winning is not achieved until the fourth man across the finish line with the same baton.

Likewise, the work of discipleship is not complete until the disciplemaker sees a *4th generation* Christian handing off the **gospel baton**.

5. Analogy of a family: God gave the command: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:22). Barring a premature death, one may see a photograph of great grandparents surrounded by four generations of sons and daughters: a great grandfather, a grandfather, a grandson, and a great grandson. Likewise, a healthy and mature church should have four-generation photographs.

Discover the Mandate of Discipleship

1. The Great Commission:

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt. 28:18-20).

- The basis: Jesus' authority in resurrection
- The key verb is "make disciples" (matheteusate --a present, active, imperative).
- The subject is the understood "you" (2nd person, plural). "Go" is a present, passive participle meaning "having gone" or "as you are going." "Baptizing them" and "teaching them" are participles modifying the main verb. "In the name of" refers to the great content of the gospel as well as the sacred symbol, water baptism.

- This has been called “The Great Commission”, not “The Great Suggestion.”
2. **Jesus’ original intent was to make his disciples “fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19).**

A great personal evangelist, M.J. Michaux said, “If a man isn’t fishing, he isn’t following.”

3. **God wants His house full:**

“And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled” (Lk. 14:23).

4. **Jesus came to “seek and to save the lost” (Lk. 19:10).**

Likewise, believers are also sent into the world to do the same.

5. **The charge is supreme (2Tim. 4:1-3).**

6. **The task is global and our resources are infinite (Acts 1:8).**

Discover the Method of Discipleship

7. **God’s method of discipleship is people**

--not programs, not organizations, not technology, not money, but people! He does not use angels, or talking rabbits--only men!

E.M. Bounds, the great student of prayer, said: “What is needed is not better methods, but better men.”

Martin Luther, the great Reformationist said: “Without Him we can not; without us, He will not.”

Dr. Charles Arn, in interviewing 10,000 people, asked this question:

“What was responsible for your coming to Christ?” Here was his answer: special need (2%), walk in (3%), pastor (6%), program (3%), evangelistic crusade (1/2 of 1%), friends or relatives (79%).

When Dr. Arn studied church dropouts, he found that 87% did not have an honest, interaction experience with another Christian about the gospel--that is, they lacked genuine contact and conversations with a genuine, knowledgeable, caring Christian friend. Arn also observed that the average new, active church member had 5.79 different Christian influences prior to their commitment (Leadership Magazine, Spring, 1984).

A parable: There is a story about the day Jesus ascended in heaven. When our Lord arrived, He was met by all the angels. One finally spoke and questioned

Jesus, "Master, that was a great thing you did for men on earth. You obeyed the Father even unto death and redeemed mankind from the penalty of sin. Your resurrection is proof of the blessing of their justification. How are men going to know about your wonderful love toward them?" Jesus answered, "I have trained 12 men to go into all the world and to make disciples." "But," replied the angel, "what if those 12 men fail, get discouraged, or become preoccupied with earthly cares?" Jesus responded, "I HAVE NO OTHER PLAN!"

Imagine: No other plan? What if we lose the vision, become tired, sidetracked, or derailed? **There is no other plan!**

8. God's method is beautiful people.

Note the *two seeds* in Matthew 13. In the first parable, the seed is the word of God; in the second parable the seed is "sons of the kingdom." God's method, therefore, is God chosen men (seeds) preaching God's word (the seed). The first strategy of evangelism then, is to be attractive, winsome, and whole. Others must be able to see the difference between the wheat (beautiful Christians) and the tares.

It was not just Jesus' message that was so powerful, it was the man. His life was a visual aid. Jesus' life was "the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). John also said,

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

The Greeks described beauty as *ethos*. That is, beautiful people possessed character and integrity. And, for the Christians, *ethos* is necessary to gain a hearing. Our message (*logos*) must be preached by a beautiful men (*ethos*) in a context of love (*pathos*). *Discipleship is not something we do, it is something we are.*

Dr. Joe Alderidge, evangelist, put it this way: believers must be committed to two parallel principles: (1) *radical holiness (ethos with a difference)*, and (2) *radical identification* (contact with pre-Christians).

Reflection: Do unbelievers find you attractive? People must hear the music of the gospel (*ethos, pathos*) before they learn the words of the gospel (*logos*).

9. God's method is not only a man (*ethos*) with a message (*logos*), but beautiful men (plural) working together to advance the gospel.

There is power in teamwork:

"And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight" (Lev. 26:8).

C.T. Studd (missionary to China) said of his work: *It was not our labor . . . but the coming together that ignited the work.*

Paul had this in mind when he exhorted the fractured Philippians:

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ . . . that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27).

Discover the Motivation of Discipleship

The mercies of God:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12:1).

Salvation was graciously given; therefore, our service should be graciously rendered. Grace, not law, fuels the flame of Gospel ministry.

The love of Christ:

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep (John 21:17).

- Christ did not ask Peter if he loved sheep, but did he love Him?
- Christ did not ask Peter if he loved sheep work, but did he love Him?

The discipler must not be motivated by the fear of sheep, but the fear of Christ; not by the demands of sheep, but the commands of Christ (2 Cor. 5:11).

The joy of Christ:

“ . . . for the joy set before Him . . . ” (Heb.12:2).

One must ask, “why should I give my time and energy and money for sheep? The time, the work, the heartache: is it worth it? Jesus looked forward to the joy of the conquest.

The reward of Christ:

His “well done” (Mt. 25:21) will make it all worthwhile. There is a reward for those who pour their lives into others (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

The need for Christ:

“Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few” (Mt. 9:37).

Jesus saw the needs in the harvest. The needs were many, and the human resources were few. Christians are many, but only about 15 % ever lead another person to Christ (Fuller Seminary: Church Growth statistic). Of those 15%, only a handful have the capacity to fully disciple another individual into Christian maturity. Need, therefore, may be a legitimate motivation.

Need should never be the sole basis of call. Needs will always abound (Jn. 12:8). However, it is comforting to know that our gifts might be used to meet legitimate needs.

Compassion for people:

“And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Mt. 14:14).

- Jesus saw the needs of the people: “This is a desert place” (Mt. 14:15).
- The disciples possessed a “send them away” attitude (Mt. 14:15; 15:23).
- Jesus burgeoned with compassion for people (Jn. 14:14).

The lesson: Discipleship is born out compassion for people. When a believer starts his spiritual journey with Christ he begins as a *consumer*, when he is mature, he becomes a *converter* of people.

Three needs in Discipleship:

- **Ethos:** Discipleship demands credibility (Integrity).
- **Pathos:** Discipleship demands a compassion (the context of love).
- **Logos:** Discipleship demands content (the gospel message).

Reflection: Compassion becomes all that more important as one reflects on the eternal realities of judgment, hell, and eternity (Rev. 21). What kind of person would you be if you had the cure for cancer, and kept the secret hidden away in your medicine cabinet? What kind of Christian are you if you know the realities of hell, and you don't share Christ with those you know and love?

Reflection: Are you growing in the compassion of Christ, or do you have a “send them away” attitude like the first disciples.

Negative motivations that hinder discipleship:

- Fear of men
“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2Tim. 1:7).
- Love of this world

“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia” (2Tim. 4:10).

- Bitterness

“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebr. 12:15, 28).

- Unbelief.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Hebr. 3:12).

Discover the Might of Discipleship

1. Mass evangelism or mini-evangelism? Discipleship is the conduit for passing on the truths of the gospel to faithful men and women for Christ. Jesus preached to the multitude, but he invested in the twelve. Likewise, we must do the same. Today, people in America are over sold. What is needed is a close, personal model of what a Christian should be. People need “to see” it before “they see” it.

2. Preaching or training? While some may see the need for more preaching to the multitude, the deeper need in the American church is for more discipleship. What young Christians need is not more preaching, but more individual and small group training.

3. Addition or multiplication? Would you rather make a thousand dollars a day for 30 days, or would you rather make a penny a day and double your salary every day for 30 days?

- dollars a day would equal: \$30,000
- A penny a day doubled everyday equals: \$5, 368, 709. 12

Theoretically, the same is true in discipleship: If a man could win 1,560,000 people a year for 25 years, he would win a total of 56,160,000; but if a person could win one that would win one that could win one every year, he would produce 34,359,738,368 disciples in the same amount of time (idealism, yes).

In space and time, however, neither the addition model or multiplication model achieve their desired ends. Both give hope; both have value; but the multiplication model appears to be the superior model.

Christians should therefore be interested in multiplication as well as addition. He has, after all, provided supernatural resources through His Spirit (Acts 1:8).

Discover the Means of Discipleship

1. Questions:

- What is the most important thing a baby needs to live? The answer: a family. If a child has a family, he will receive love, food, and care.
- What is the most important thing an arm needs? Answer: a body. If an arm has a body, it will receive blood, oxygen, and nutrients.
- What is the most important thing a soldier needs? The answer: an army. If a soldier has an army, he will have weapons, supplies, and support.
- What is the most important thing a new Christian needs? The answer: a church. If a new Christian has a church, he will find love, food for the soul, and support.

2. Discipleship needs to be in the context of the church. Jesus' strategy for worldwide conquest was the church (Mt. 16:16ff).

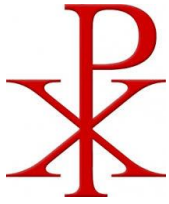
Nothing is more important than the local church. Nations are a "drop in the bucket" and as "dust of the scales" (Is. 40:15), but the church is the "pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:16). Raising children to maturity, therefore, is a family project.

3. Discipleship needs to be done by an obedient heart through the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18; Acts 1:8).

3. Conclusion: Discipleship begins with a vision.

A.W Tozer once said, "We need a baptism of seeing." Where there is no vision for discipleship, the people perish (Prov. 29:18). By making the above discoveries, the vision of discipleship will be planted, and a harvest is sure to come.

2. MODELS OF DISCIPLESHIP



The greatest reason for failure is that people lack a successful model.

Text: 2 Tim. 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to **faithful** men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Premise: People do what they see, what they know. It is of paramount importance that mentors provide a model of discipleship that is caught, not just taught.

Basic Issue: Will I leave behind in my ministry a model of discipleship that others can easily follow?

Objective: Every disciple can be a disciplemaker by understanding a biblical model of discipleship.

Understand the 4 Generation Discipleship Model (2Tim. 2:2)

1. Paul
2. Timothy
3. Faithful men
4. Others

Understand the Paul-Timothy Model

1. Paul, the teacher:

- Paul the convert: (Acts 9)
- Paul the disciple: (Acts 9:26; Gal. 1:10ff)
- Paul the disciplemaker: (Acts 11:25; Acts 13:1)
- Paul the servant leader (Acts 13: 1,2, 7 {note order} 9, 13,16, 42)

2. Timothy, the student

- Timothy the convert: (Acts 14:8ff; II Tim 3:15)
- Timothy the disciple: (Acts 16:1)
- Timothy the worker (Acts 19:22; Rom. 16:21; Phil. 1:1; I Thess. 3:2)
- Timothy the servant leader: (1Tim. 1:2, 1:18; 6:20; 2Tim. 1:1; 4:2-8)

Understand the Discipleship Development Model

1. **The Pre-Christian:** (Eph. 2:1-7) He is a pagan who needs Christ. Witness to him.

- Dead before God, but ready and willing to repent and believe
- Disconnected to the family of God, but ready and willing to be loved.
- Witness to him.

2. **The Convert:** (I Pet. 2:1-3) He is a new Christian who needs total care. Feed him.

- He needs a family who will feed him, accept him, cleanse him, and love him.
- He needs to subject himself to the love and care of the church.
- He needs truth. Feed him.

3. **The Disciple:** (Heb. 10:24,25) He is faithful and needs responsibility. Lead him.

- He accepts the responsibility for his own feeding and cleansing
- He accepts his responsibility to help the family to grow up into Christ.
- He needs character. Challenge him.

4. **The Disciplemaker:** (Col. 2:28,29) He is busy and needs encouragement. Help him.

- He accepts the responsibility for someone else's conversion, feeding, cleansing, and acceptance in the family of God.
- He studies to identify the truths of the gospel and the principles involved in the discipleship process.
- He is busy. Encourage him.

5. **The Servant Leader:** (Eph. 4:11,12) He is very focused. Support him.

- He accepts the total responsibility of training others in love.
- He has identified the principles in the total discipleship process.
- He is focused but probably under intense pressures, support him.

Understanding the Process at each Stage of Development

PRESENT STAGE	PROCESS	OBJECTIVE
Pre-Christian	Needs the gospel	Conversion
Convert	Needs personal attention	Grounding
Disciple	Needs accountability	Service
Disciplemaker	Needs ministry skills	Leadership
Servant Leader	Needs freedom to serve	Integrity

Understand A Biblical Model of Maturity . . . (Mt. 5:1-13):

From Pagan to Pastor, or from Lost to Leadership).

You will be a mature Christian when you pass through the various stages of God’s maturation process (Mt. 5:1-13).

- 1. Stage One:** Poor in Spirit (The pagan) is that sense of being lost, spiritually bankrupt, and full of guilt.
- 2. Stage Two:** Mourning is a stage of grief and anxiety over one’s spiritual impecunity and guilt. It is not a bad thing to grieve over an inadequate relationship to God.
- 3. Stage Three:** Meekness is the stage where one is honest with God about his true spiritual condition. Instead of justifying himself (Lk. 18:11-14), the meek person receives God’s accusations against him--that he is indeed, a sinner.
- 4. Stage Four:** Hunger for righteousness is the spiritual thirst to be right with God, to have a clean state in his sight, and to be declared righteous by Almighty God. This is the blessed state of justification (Rom. 4:5).

The first four stages really defines the spiritual stages or states through which a pre-Christian passes in order to be a true Christian--a righteous person in God’s sight.

The last four stages define the growth process from babyhood to bulwark Christian.

5. **Stage Five:** Mercy, not censoriousness, is the first fruit of justification. Having received mercy (forgiveness and justification), a new believer has *the desire* and the *capacity* to show acts of kindness.

6. **Stage Six:** Purification is the stage of growth whereby God purifies the heart and rids it of duplicity.

7. **Stage Seven:** Peacemaking is the stage of service whereby one is prepared by God to enter the difficult and demanding ministry of reconciliation; that is, this believer is a sheep dog sent by God into briar bushes of relational conflict to bring peace between head butting sheep. This can be a messy process that demands highly skilled task from spiritually deep individual.

8. **Stage Eight:** Persecution is a stage of being doubted, misunderstood, criticized, and rejected. Being persecuted is not what we would call a blessing. The blessing, I believe, is within the character of the individual. This individual, though serving under the fires of misunderstanding, is being trusted by God to serve an ungrateful flock. Because he does not run, flee, get depressed, or quit, he is blessed. This is the stage of mature love. This person passes the test of bitterness and loves the unlovely, the ungrateful, and the undesirable.

The road to blessing begins with a strong sense of spiritual poverty; it is consummated with richness of character. One begins his spiritual journey trusting God; one “matures” in his pilgrimage **when God can trust him** (selah). Can God trust you to serve graciously and faithfully even when you are misunderstood, criticized, and unthanked for the work you do? This is consummate maturity.

Understand the Thessalonian Model

This model is important because of the wonderful response of the Thessalonians to the gospel (Chapter one).

Paul did not invest a great deal of time in individuals. He worked with churches.

THE FRUIT (v. 3)	THE EVIDENCE (v. 9, 10)
Their work of faith	Turning from idols
Their labor of love	Serving one another
Their patience of hope	Waiting for His Son

Since Paul was only in the city about three weeks (Acts 17), one has to ask the question: “Why did the Thessalonians respond so wonderfully?” The response was so dramatic, they became a model to all in Macedonia and Achaia.

- Answer: **A powerful message** (the gospel: v. 5) delivered by a **powerful model** (Paul’s life) accompanied by a **powerful work** of the Holy Spirit (v. 5) produced a **powerful harvest** (The Thessalonian response).
- A Lesson: We cannot make people respond like the Thessalonians, nor can we manipulate the Spirit of God, but we can, however, major on knowing and articulating the gospel and modeling Paul’s example.

Understand the Model Disciplemaker (1 Thess. 2:1-12)

1. Paul acted like a *true soldier* (2:1-2). Ministering under tremendous opposition,

Paul exhibited the characteristics of a true soldier: toughness, ruggedness, stick-to-itiveness. The opposite of a soldier-like attitude is *resignation*.

2. Paul acted like a *trustee*. Paul was entrusted by God with the precious message of the gospel. He guarded and protected it.

3. Paul acted like a *nursing mother* toward the Thessalonians. He was tender, compassionate, willing to be spent on their behalf.

4. Paul acted like a *wise father*. He dispensed principles, trained the Thessalonians, wanted their best, and showed tough love.

Application

1. Be a soldier. We will never come to place in life when ministering the gospel will be comfortable. We will constantly face the temptation to resign your duties. Someone has said about ministry: "We need the hide of a rhinoceros." That is, we need toughness, staying power, a survivor mentality. We must endure the time crunch, overwork, misunderstanding, and constant criticism.

2. Be a steward. Stewards are being trusted with something valuable. We begin our Christian life trusting God; we mature in life when God can trust us. Can God trust us to serve Him and His people even while we are serving under pressure? Can God trust us with the gospel message to deliver it accurately to the next generation.

3. Be a nursing mother. We must learn to be tough and tender; to be people of steel and velvet. Showing gentleness, kindness, and patience is a mark of spirituality. The balance of truth and grace is a mark of spiritual maturity. Avoid being angry. Anger creates fear in the heart of people. Anger comes when we would rather be ministered unto, than to minister (Mk. 10:45).

4. Be a wise father: guiding, imparting truth, prodding, showing tough love. Wanting the best for sons, fathers exhort, comfort, and charge them. In other words, we must take responsibility for the spiritual development of others.

Understanding Imperfect Models

1. Of Babes:

- The healthy babe: (1Pet. 2:1-3)
- The stunted babe: (Heb. 5:11-14)
- The diseased babe: (I Cor. 3:1-3)

2. Of Disciples:

- Those that start well and end well- Paul (2Tim. 4:8)
- Those that start well and end bad- Demas (2Tim. 4:10)
- Those that start bad but end well- Mark (2 Tim. 4:11)
- Those that start bad and end bad- Phygellus (2Tim. 1:15)

3. Of a Judas: What if Jesus had just invested his life into this one man? One-on-one discipleship is good, except if you have a Judas. Beware of huge investments into just one person. Jesus invested in twelve, not one. Discipleship is like stocks. Diversification is a key to investment.

A basic rule: Work one-on-one with high quality people (FAT people): faithful, available, teachable)--people who show potential to be a disciple; diversify; that is, work with two or three people at the same time.

Understanding Why Some Christians do not Lead Others to Christ

1. **They are immature.** Children do not reproduce because their organs are not mature. There is nothing wrong with being a child in the faith. In the Christian life, it is O.K. to have a time of spiritual adolescence. One needs time to read, grow, be happy in the Lord, and to just to enjoy the family of God. However, to remain a child (a spiritual consumer) is tragic. One needs to grow and assume responsibility in the household of God.

2. **They are diseased.** People who are sick and impotent do not reproduce. Likewise, one may not lead others to Christ because they are weak and sickly in the faith. One needs to be healed (become Christ-like) in order to reproduce.

3. **They are not married.** Unmarried people do not have children. In order to have children (normally), one must be in a covenant relationship. Likewise, one may not reproduce in the Christian life because they are not married to Christ. Spiritual children are born by Christians who love the Lord and are devoted to Him.

Insights

1. One-on-one discipleship is important and absolutely necessary for a young believer. The more one matures, the more responsibility one can assume for their own development.

2. One-on-one discipleship is helpful for training others in ministry skills, particularly the skills of evangelism, exhortation, and encouragement. Disciples need to see a leader share the gospel before they can share the gospel. Evangelistic training must be done one-on-one.

3. **Beware**, however, of the *pitfalls* of one-one-one discipleship. To my knowledge, Jesus never exclusively worked one-on-one with people for long periods of time. He worked with a small group--the twelve. It is tragic when we spend long hours training a Judas or a Demas.

4. Beware of being possessive, of speaking of "my disciples". We are all co-disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. We train men to follow Him, not us. We help each other to grow. All have a contribution to our growth.

5. The laborers are few (Mt. 9:36,37). The harvest is plentiful, church members are plentiful, but the laborers are few.

Disciple laborers, then leaders.

Reflection: Where are you in the discipleship process? In order to begin, you need to decide where you are in the discipleship process.

Are you a new convert? Then, come to church and learn about being a follower of Christ. The objective is to feed yourself and to grow in faithfulness to God and His people.

Are you a disciple? Serve the brethren and learn how to win people to Christ and ground them in the faith?

Are you a disciplemaker? Then grow to be a person who thoroughly understands the discipleship process and duplicate it in your local church. You need to set aside time to study the Word of God and to grow in the skills of ministry.

Are you a servant leader? You need to possess a ministry and seek to help train others in the skills you possess.

For Further Study

Understand the Biblical Models of Discipleship

1. Abraham/Isaac (Gen 18:19)
2. Moses/Joshua: (Ex. 17:9, 10-14; 24:13; 32:17; 33:11; Num. 11:28; 13:16; 14:6, 30, 38; 27:18, 22; 34:17; Deut. 1:38; 3:28; 31:3,7; 31:14, 23; 34:9 Joshua 1:1)
3. David/Solomon (1Kgs. 2:1ff)
4. Solomon/son (Prov. 2:1ff)
5. Elijah/Elisha (1Kgs. 18:19; 2Kgs. 2:1ff)
6. Christ/Disciples (Mt. 4:19; Lk. 5:1ff; 6:12ff)
7. Paul/Timothy (2Tim. 1:1ff; 2:2)

Understand the Family Model

1. A Child: He or she is totally dependent on others for survival.
2. A Young Adult: Able to feed and clothe himself.
3. A Parent: Able to sustain a marital relationship and to nurture children.
4. Grandparent: Able to identify the principles and wisdom of parenting.

3. THE GOSPEL AND DISCIPLESHIP

"Men perform according to their theology, whether it is right or wrong" (A.W. Tozer).



Text: 2 Tim. 2:2 And **the things** that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Premise: Our task is to pass on the gospel to the next generation, unchanged, unmodified, just like it was delivered to the Apostle Paul.

Basic Issue: What are "the things" that we are to commit to faithful men"?

Objective: Every Christian can a great discipler of men by helping others answer the following questions accurately.

What are "**the things**" that Paul had in mind when he penned the command to Timothy?

Ans: The "Blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"The things" are called

- The good deposit" (1:14)
- "The pattern of sound words" (1:13)
- "The gospel" (1:8,10)

Confusion about the Gospel

There is no lack of confusion about the meaning of the Gospel. Below are some errant concepts floating around in Christian circles.

- The gospel is the Bible. (Correction: The Bible contains the gospel, but the Bible is not the gospel.)
- The gospel is a style of music. (Correction: The gospel deserves to be sung, but a style of music is not the gospel.)
- The gospel is how man must repent, and believe, and be baptized in the name of Christ. (Correction: the gospel is not what man must do for God, but what God has done for man.)
- There are two gospels: the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of grace. (Correction: there is only one gospel.)

- The gospel is about the death and resurrection of Christ. (Correction: This is partially true, but the gospel is more than an historical event-- it is an event that must be interpreted correctly.)

It behooves every generation to seek to understand and define the gospel correctly. Furthermore, we must distinguish between New Testament proclamation (*kerygma*) and church teaching (*didache*). The two are not the same.

What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the *good news* about a person (Jesus being the Christ), His certain and victorious history--His death (D), burial (B), resurrection (R), present risen life (PRL) and coming glory (CG), the meaning of His history (redemption), the blessed effects or benefits of His accomplishments (justification, Holy Spirit, eternal life, forgiveness), and how to please God through repentance and faith (the response).

1. **Fundamentals of the gospel:** It is good news that we know . . .

- **Jesus is the Christ** (Mk. 1:1): He is the promised Messiah of Old Testament prophecy.
- **Christ's glorious history:** His death, burial, resurrection, present exalted life, and coming glory (1 Cor. 15:3,4; Eph. 1:19-21; 2Thess. 2:1). Death is man's fundamental problem. In Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, Christ solved man's fundamental problem.
- **The wonderful effects of Christ's accomplishments** (Col. 1:26; Rom. 5:1-10): Christ's death and resurrection have meaning and His history affects the believer with spiritual riches: justification, forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and the possession of eternal life.
- **How to respond to God in this present evil age:** (I Tim. 1:8-11; Tit. 2:11ff). It is good news that we know what pleases God. Faith is the fundamental response God requires to inherit the blessings of salvation.

2. **The Five Pillars of the gospel:**

- The Person of Christ
- The History of Christ
- The Meaning of Christ's history
- The Effects of Christ's history on those who believe
- The Response God desires for those who hear and believe in His Son.

3. **Seven Titles of the Gospel:**

<u>Title</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
The Gospel of God (Rom. 1:1)	Origin of the gospel
The Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16)	Theme of the gospel
The Glorious Gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:3,4)	Worth of the gospel
The Gospel of the Grace of God (Acts 20:24)	Character of the gospel
The Gospel of Your Salvation (Eph. 1:13)	Benefits of the gospel
The Gospel of Peace (Eph. 6:15)	Fruit of the gospel

What is the Relationship of the Gospel to the Bible and the Truth it Contains?

The Bible is not the gospel, but it contains the gospel; the Bible is true, but not all truth is the gospel; all that is true is not gospel truth, but the gospel is the main truth God wants men to know and believe.

Key Words of the Gospel

There are three key words connected with the word "gospel" in the Greek language:

1. **Evangelion:** It is used 78x in the New Testament as a noun and it means "good news".
2. **Evangelizo:** It is used 55x as Greek verb and it means "to bring good news."
3. **Evangelistes:** It is used 33x as a noun it refers to a person, a "bringer of good news".

What is the Macroview of the Gospel (See Chart)

The "macroview gospel" is the message of the gospel in completeness as opposed to a truncated or dwarfed view of the good news.

The gospel is the good news about the person of Christ, His history, the meaning of His history, and its effects on those who respond to Him in faith. To add or delete from this truth is to pervert the gospel (Galatians 1:4-9).

- Present Risen Life (PRL)
- Not all the effects are listed: Can you list others?
- The line under the response column separates the response (repentance and faith) necessary for justification (a forensic term meaning "to declared just."), and the responses (obedience) necessary for sanctification (living justly).

OT	PERSON	HISTORY	MEANING	EFFECTS	RESPONSE
God	Christ	Birth	Incarnation	Salvation	Faith
Man	God/man	Life	Righteousness	Justification	Repentance
Sin	Son of God	Death	Redemption	Regeneration	-----
Bible	Messiah		Propitiation	Holy Spirit	Baptism
Israel		Burial	Veritable	Forgiveness	Obedience
Law		Resurrection	Triumph	Reconciliation	Holiness
Kingdom		PRL*	Exaltation	Eternal Life	Love
		Coming Glory	Consummation	Glorification	Giving
			Church		
			Redemption		
			Adoption		
			Sanctification		
			Identification		

What is the simple Gospel?

The gospel, though it is deep and rich, should be made simple and clear for those who have never heard it.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1. God: *For God so loved the world . . .* The personal, infinite, triune God of the Bible loves you. The proof of his love is that he sent his Son to solve your major problem (true guilt).
2. Christ: *That He gave His only begotton Son . . .* God gave his only Son for you because there was no other way for you to pay the debt you owe to God. Christ died for your sin as your substitute so you would not have to face the horrors of God's judgment.
3. Faith: *That whosoever believeth . . .* The "whosoever" is you. You must personally respond to God's gift in faith and trust.
4. Judgment: *Should not perish . . .* The penalty of sin is death. Without a Savior, the mallet of justice will fall on all sinners. Failure to respond will result in eternal death (hell). You can escape the darkness of God's judgment by accepting his solution for your sin--the death and resurrection of Christ.
5. Salvation: *Should have everlasting life . . .* When you receive Christ as your Savior, God grants to you the blessing of the Age to Come--eternal life. To believe is to be saved and to possess eternal life. To have eternal life is to know God (Jn. 17:1-3).

Are there other ways to systematize Biblical truth?

Yes. Doctrine is often studied by the following classifications:

- Theology Proper The doctrine of God and His work
- Bibliology The doctrine of the Bible
- Israelology The doctrine of Israel
- Anthropology The doctrine of man
- Harmatiology The doctrine of sin
- Christology The doctrine of Jesus Christ
- Pneumatology The doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- Soteriology The doctrine of salvation

- Ecclesiology The doctrine of the church
- Angelology The doctrine of angels
- Eschatology The doctrine of the last things
- Basileology The doctrine of the kingdom

How can one recognize errors surrounding the Gospel?

Two basic errors are often committed in regards to the gospel:

1. Error: by adding to the gospel.

- Example: The Thessalonians were taught that Christ had already come and were distressed (2 Thess. 2:3). This error added to His history.
- Example: Those that teach that "healing" is a *guaranteed* benefit in this present age add to the gospel; those that teach any work other than a response of faith as a pre-requisite to salvation add to the gospel.

2. One errors by denying the gospel. This comes in many forms: Critics can deny anything: the deity of Christ (liberals), His humanity (gnostics), eternal security (Armenians) to mention a few.

What Mistakes Are Made In Discipling Others In The Gospel?

1. To confuse the gospel with the Bible. The Bible is not the gospel. We proclaim the message of the gospel from the Bible. While it is fitting and proper to teach the Bible, the disciple must know the difference between the Gospel of God and the Book of God.

2. To major on the minors instead of majoring on the majors. Sometimes teachers become so wrapped up in the detail of Scripture that they fail to transfer the major truths of the gospel to people. It is much like the hiker who couldn't see the forest for the trees.

3. To stress application before one has presented revelation. Application is important, but we must learn not to stress commitment before a person has adequate time to digest the wonderful blessings of the gospel.

4. To neglect the development of a systematic understanding of the gospel. A.W. Tozer said, "Men perform according to their theology, whether it is right or wrong." Wrong beliefs are the roots of unbelief. If people are behaving incorrectly, it is quite possible they possess a midget-size, corrupted view of the gospel.

In What Other Areas Do People Need Discipleship Training (Content And Substance)?

1. Train people in the area of Gospel truth (See Eph. 3:1-3)

2. Train people in the area of Christ-like character (Eph. 4:1-5:20)
3. Train people in the area Godly relationships (Eph. 5:20-6:9)
4. Train people in the skills of ministry (Eph. 5:10-23)

Assignment

1. Study the major sermons in the Book of Acts and see if you can find the five pillars of the Gospel and properly list their subsidiaries truths.
2. Study the Book of Philippians. Discover the references to the five pillars of the gospel. Answer this question: How does Paul use particulars of the Gospel to resolve the Philippian problem?
3. Study the Book of Colossians. Discover the references to the five pillars of the gospel and their tributary truths. Define the problem. Answer this question: "How does Paul use particulars of the Gospel to resolve the Colossian problem?"

4. MASTERING THE FOUR QUADRANTS OF DISCIPLESHIP



Text: 1Tim. 4:7, 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

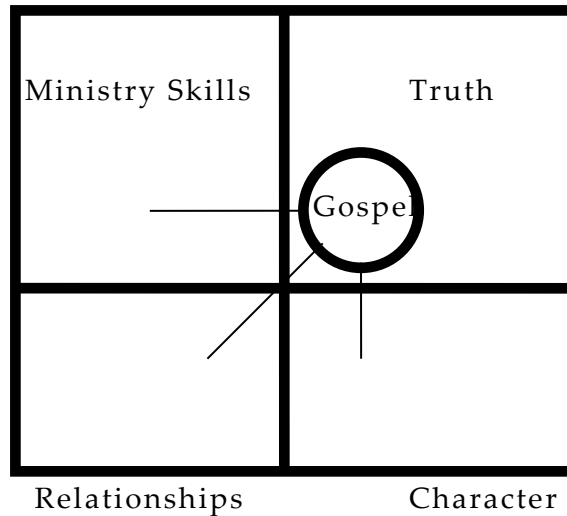
Premise: The gospel is more than a packet of knowledge. It is living truth. It not only justifies the believer, it sanctifies him. Therefore, the gospel must be applied to the whole man.

Basic Issue: Can God trust me to deliver the grand concepts of the gospel in such a way that it is not aborted between the head and the feet, between the mind and the heart?

Objective: Every mentor can help disciples grow into maturity by training them in four quadrants of discipleship.

The Four Quadrants of Discipleship

Truth	Character	Relationships	Ministry
(Eph. 1-3)	(Eph. 4:4-5:21)	(Eph. 5:21-6:9)	(Eph. 6:10-24)



What are the majors a Christian worker should emphasize in his discipleship? What keeps us from going off into tangents? The 4 Quadrants of discipleship represent what we are to emphasize in the process of discipleship.

1. Emphasize the gospel. The gospel is the major truth of the Bible. While we want to teach the whole Bible to people, the fact of the matter is that we do not have enough time to teach Isaiah, Nahum, and Malachi and all the books of the

Bible to people. We must first help new converts to gain a thorough understanding of the gospel.

2. Apply the gospel to character. Help people learn how to love and develop a life of integrity. We grow in character when they understand their position in Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the place of trials (See Ephesians 4 and 5).

3. Apply the gospel to relationships: to family, children, friends, church, employment (See Ephesians 5 and 6). People must learn to grow in trust and integrity if they are to possess sound relationships.

4. Apply the gospel to ministry skills: People must learn the skills of Bible study, evangelism, discipleship, counseling, teaching, leading Bible studies, and serving.

Master Bible Study Skills (Mt. 4:4)

1. Help people to develop a regular, devotional quiet time:

- Plan: Give them direction, materials, a schedule, an objective.
- Place: Help them find a consistent time and a place to be alone with God.
- Prayer: Teach them to pray over what they read in the Word.
- Person: Show them how to develop a devotional relationship with Christ.
- Paper: Show them how to journal and write down what they learn.
- Passage: Show them how to chew the Word in bite size portions.
- Profit: Teach them to obey the Word.
- Pen: Show them how to mark in their Bible. Consider the following simple plan as a place to start.

2. Help people to ask questions as they read the Bible; to make friends with six people:

- Mr. Who
- Mr. What
- Mr. Why
- Mr. When
- Mr. Where
- Mr. How

3. Help people to interpret the Bible correctly by learning the following skills:

- **Observation:** What does the passage say?
- **Interpretation:** What does the passage mean?
- **Correlation:** What other passages support the interpretation?
- **Application:** How does the passage apply to my life and relationships?

4. Help people to Feed On Christ. Disciples must learn to feed on His glorious attributes and to see Him as they read Scripture. If people don't learn to see Him, they will tend to see the Bible as a manual for living instead of a love letter about God's Son. (Col. 2:3; 3:16)

5. Help people to obey the Word, not just to hear sermons. Taking and saving notes may be a helpful practice to develop.

6. Help people in Bible study disciplines:

- To read the Word.
- To memorize the Word.
- To study the Word
- To meditate on the Word.
- To hear the Word.

7. Help people grow in exegesis, the ability to milk a text for all its worth. (You will need Bible Study Aids: lexicons, dictionaries, concordances, commentaries)

- Research lexical meanings of English words and original Greek or Hebrew words.
- Research grammatical and linguistic constructions.
- Research contextual issues
- Research geographical material
- Research cultural factors
- Research archaeological discoveries
- Research historical information
- Research theological issues

8. Help people grow in hermeneutical skills (skills of interpretation). The Bible should be interpreted literally, that is, as the normal course of the text dictates. Nouns are nouns. Verbs are verbs. Metaphors are metaphors. Symbols are symbols.

- Develop the art of observation.

- Develop the art of recognizing grammar: subject, predicate.
- Develop the art of observing the metaphor and symbolism.
- Develop the art of defining terms from context.
- Develop the art of micro and macro management of doctrinal issues.
- Develop the art of interpreting different genre of literature: historical, narrative, poetical, theological, practical, apocalyptic.
- Develop the art of discerning typology.
- Develop the art of application and distinguish it from interpretation.

9. Help people learn the difference between *exegesis* (extracting truth from the text) and *eisegesis* (reading our own ideas into the text).

Master Application and Development of Christian Character

1. Teach people the goal of Integrity. The Biblical word for *integrity* is *love* (1 Tim 1:5).

2. Teach disciples to model the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ grew in four areas:

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom (intellectually) and stature (physically), and in favor with God (spiritually) and man (relationally).

3. Teach disciples to apply the Word to the following areas of life:

- To the mind and thinking (Phil. 4:8)
- To the heart and emotions (1Pet. 1:22)
- To the conscience (1Tim. 1:19).
- To the will (Eph. 6:6; 1Pet. 4:2).
- To the body (2 Cor. 7:1).
- To the habits and lifestyle (1Pet. 1:15).

4. Teach converts the disciplines of the Christian life: (the Wheel)

- **The Word**-a spoke (1 Pet. 2:2; Josh. 1:8).
- **Prayer**- a spoke (Jn. 15:7; Phil. 4:6-8).
- **Fellowship**-a spoke (Heb. 10:24; Acts 2:42)
- **Witnessing**-a spoke (Mt. 4:19; 28:19,20; Rom. 1:16).
- **Obedience**- the rim (Jn. 14:21; Rom. 12:1).
- **Christ Centered Focus**- The hub (Gal. 2:20; Jn. 15:5).

5. Teach people to grow in godly virtues (2Pet 1:4-8).

Master Applying the Gospel to Relationships

1. Apply the gospel to relationship: Christianity is a relational religion. One can't separate his relationship to God from his relationship to people. One of the great benefits of Christ's accomplishments on Calvary was reconciliation. He has reconciled men to God. Likewise, He has given to us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). The truth of the gospel must be applied to human relationships:

- Husband/wife
- Parent/Child
- Brother/sister
- Employer/employee
- Believer/church
- Friends/friend

2. Apply two critical virtues of love: Two relational attributes are iterated again and again in Scripture that are necessary to make relationships successful.

- **Trust:** the Biblical word for trust is "submission." (Eph. 5:21).
- **Integrity:** the Biblical word for integrity is "faithfulness" (Prov. 20:6).

Apply these two virtues to relationships: Relationships are the only place that you can find love or learn to love.

If you want to be loved, you must trust somebody. Where trust is lost, love is lost. People have a need to be loved. A need to be loved is not a human weakness nor is it sin. Some Christians have errantly taught that it is wrong to seek love or be loved. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even Jesus allowed others to serve Him and minister to His human needs (Lk. 8:3).

If you want to love, you must be trustworthy. Without faithfulness you will hurt people (Prov. 25:19). People have a need to love. We become a complete person when we are loved and when we love. "God is love". He loves because of who He is, not because of who we are. Likewise, we must become a person of love, and love, not because of what others do, but because of who we are.

4. Apply truth to conflicts: When people are hurt, relationships need to be repaired. Therefore, disciples must learn the skills of reconciliation:

- **Confession:** confession acknowledges personal weaknesses and the activity of sin.

- Forgiveness: forgiveness agrees to share the pain, and to step into the future in trust.
- Application of grace: Grace can undo the effects of sin (Heb. 12:14-17).
- Absorbing petty wrongs (not crimes) by turning the other cheek.

5. Teach people how to manage wounds, hurts, and disappointments. Christians need staying power during relational storms.

6. Instill the importance of the church.

Biblical Reasoning

- The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (2 Tim. 3:16). Notice the church is *the* pillar of the truth, not *a* pillar of the truth. Your local university is not a pillar of truth. Truth is found in the Church of Jesus Christ.
- The nations are but a drop in the bucket and as dust upon the scales (Is. 40), but the church is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:23ff).

Reasoning

- What is the most important thing a baby needs to live? Ans: a family. If a child has a family he will receive love, food, and care.
- What is the most important thing an arm needs? Ans: a body. If an arm has a body it will receive blood, oxygen, and nutrients.
- What is the most important thing a soldier needs? Ans: an army. If a soldier has an army, he will have weapons, supplies, and support.
- What is the most important thing a new Christian needs? Ans: a church. If a new Christian has a church he will find love, food for the soul, and support.

Master Applying the Gospel to Ministry Skills

1. Instill the importance of exercising gifts. Every gift is essential to life of the body. If a Christian doesn't learn his gifts, he will be continually frustrated in his service to the Savior. No gift is insignificant. When a believer discovers his gifts, he finds his place in life and he also frees others to serve in the area of their gifts because needs are met. Help disciples discover their motivational gifts (Rom. 12).

- Help disciples grow in ministry skills related to their gift.
- Help believers to appreciate their gift and the gifts of others. Many feel that they are insignificant, and others sometimes help them feel that way. (I Cor. 12).

2. Instill servant attitudes.

- To be a servant of the Lord, not of men. The goal is to get the will of God done in the flock, not the will of the shee (Josh. 1:1, 2,7,13).
- To serve the Lord without rights (Lk. 17:7-10).
- To grow in servant attitudes: Christ came " . . . not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mk. 10:45).
- To serve with a spirit of joy, not with a spirit of obligation (2 Cor. 9:7).
- To serve with humility like the Savior (Phil. 2:5-11).

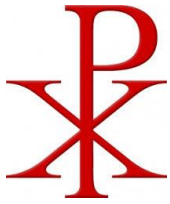
3. Instill the need to find not only one's gift, but a ministry, a place to serve in the body. Reduce the unemployment in the church.

4. Instill the challenge of growing in the ministry skills.

Evangelism	Discipleship
Leading discussions	Listening
Discerning	Believing God in a crisis
Comforting the sick	Reconciliation
Conflict management administration	Organization and
Preaching a sermon	Leading a devotion
Counseling one another	Praying
Singing	Confrontation
Serving needs	

Summary: discipleship is a process related to sanctification--becoming holy. One is never quite finished with it. The objective is to grow in the knowledge of the gospel, Christ-like character, relational satisfaction, and ministry skills. If you do this, you are on the right track.

5. STARTING A DISCIPLESHIP STUDY



Text: “So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us” (1Thess. 2:8).

Premise: Discipleship is a trust. The way you conduct the ministry is as important as the gospel itself.

Basic Issue: Are people better off being discipled by me than someone else?

Objective: Every mentor can be successful at discipling others in a small group by developing the following skills.

One of the most effective ways to disciple people is to start a small Bible study or accountability group. Something happens when Christians come together to grow in Christ. Start praying about starting a discipleship group or becoming involved in a small accountability time within your church community.

Mentoring Skills

1. Where are you in the discipleship process? Do you need to grow into Christian maturity, or have you been active in mentoring others for a long time.
2. If you are a young Christian who is happy and growing, it is best to join an accountability group for your personal growth.
3. If you are an older Christian and want to get involved in helping others to grow, you may want to consider starting a Bible study (discipleship or accountability group).

* The following information is for those who are ready to lead an accountability group.

Selection Skills

1. Grow in the skills of selecting disciples: Selecting those you will mentor or be mentored by is critical. Timothy had a Paul to mentor him. Paul also mentored Titus, Luke, and others.
2. Pray: Nothing is more important than selecting the people with whom you will spend time. *Jesus spent all night in prayer* before He chose His disciples (Luke 6). If you select willing followers, but they are like Judas, you will produce fakes and flakes. If you select willing followers, and they are like James, John, and Peter, they will change the world. Pray for God-given men. Six times in John 17 Jesus spoke of His God-given men.
3. Avoid investing in **S. L. I. M.** prospects.

S= Slippery men, men who are unstable, unavailable, uncommitted.

L= Lazy men, men who lack spiritual hungers, drives, and ambition.

I= Independent men, men who demonstrate an unteachable spirit.

M= Missing men, men who are unfaithful in church attendance and Bible study.

4. Invest in **F. A. T.** men: (2 Tim. 2:2 "faithful men")

- **F**aithful men, men who demonstrate a high level of integrity and dependability.
- **A**vailable men, men who will make adjustments in their schedule to meet with you.
- **T**eachable men, men who are submissive, ready to learn, and to grow.

5. Invest in people of your own sex. *Men train men. Women train women.* Occasionally, an older couple can mentor a younger couple. But, this takes a mature husband-wife team. *The general rule is men work with men, and women disciple other women.* The reasons for this are axiomatic.

6. Don't be idealistic: You want to select people that are worthy of your investment of time, but don't look for perfect men. Look for normal, genuine, spiritually-hungry people, and avoid people who are severely crippled or have a questionable commitment to Christ. You want people with potential, but you don't want people who disguise their flaws.

7. Seek a response: Test them. "Are you genuinely ready to pay the price for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ?"

7. Disciple others on your terms, not theirs. You are looking for teachable, submissive people to train. Don't waste time on people who you do not like or can not get along with.

Initiation Skills: Starting a Discipleship Group

1. *Grow in the skills of initiating discipleship sessions.* Discern the spiritual condition of prospects. Don't bite off more than you can chew, and don't put on a spiritual front or profess to be a spiritual giant. Just make yourself available to help another to grow in Christ.

2. Talk to the individuals over whom you have been praying:

- Ask them about their spiritual desires, needs, interests.
- Ask them if they would be willing to spend time together with you in a spiritual adventure for 6 weeks.

- Agree upon a time and set a date. (Meet at least once a week for a formal discipleship time). Informal times can be as frequent as you desire.
- Discover the need and set training objectives in the following areas:
 - Gospel truth:** Study the Bible and memorize verses.
 - Character:** Discuss areas of needed growth.
 - Relationships:** Develop your relationships with pre-Christian friends.
 - Service:** Find ways to serve and hold yourself accountable.

It is very important goals are shared and agreed upon. You will need *permission to lead* others and to hold others accountable. Leading is not a *power grab*. *It is a service one renders to the group.*

3. Conduct your formal discipleship sessions with precision and integrity. If you have a accountability sessions you will need a minimum of an hour. You will need at least 90 minutes if you have more than two people. Begin on time, end on time.

4. Make sure they understand that this is not just a Bible study, but that you are seeking to hold each other accountable to the objectives of 2 Tim. 2:2, 2 Cor. 7:1, 2, and 2 Tim. 4:1-8. Be firm. Keep all assignments. Emphasis the goal is to be Christ's disciple.

Organizational Skills

1. Your sessions should be pre-planned, a fulfillment of written objectives.

2. Suggested format:

- Begin with casual sharing 5-7 minutes.
- Check your memory work. Share quiet times, etc.
- Discuss assignments from the preceding week.
- Begin your study time. Combine study with discussion.
- Discuss personal applications
- Give assignments for the next week if this is applicable.
- Pray together.
- Dismiss. You as a leader need to stay afterward for informal fellowship and sharing.
- Spend extra relational time with the people you are discipling for fun, friendship, and recreation. Pour your life into the people you serve.

3. Evaluate yourself and your sessions. At the end of the first six weeks, you will need to evaluate your time. If things aren't clicking together, you can agree to terminate the time or make adjustments. If you agree that progress is being made, set another period of time to meet together (6 months to a year).

4. Keep good records of your sessions together so you can keep up with assignments, objectives, and accomplishments.

5. Grow in the skills of setting objectives for each discipleship session. Discipleship groups fail mainly because the mentor lacks a clear objective after a few sessions. Meetings without objectives, without planning, without goals are a waste of time. The greatest sin you can commit in discipling people is to come to a meeting unprepared.

Group Leadership Skills

1. Friendly, upbeat social skills: One needs to develop social acumen.

2. Leadership and organizational skills. Different personalities, experiences, and events of the week threaten to derail every group. This is not maliciously action. Groups tend to track the most exciting or emotional issue of group members. Group dynamics are like a merry-go-round. The centrifugal force *pushes major objectives* outside the circle of objectives. As a group leader, you will need to develop **the skill of managing negative group dynamics**.

3. Milking skills. One of the main problems of Bible study groups is that the members have a tendency *to jump out of the text*, share personal beliefs, and not properly investigate the text. You, as a leader, will need the ability to discipline the group **to milk the text**.

4. Agree as a group, to keep personal matters within the group. If an individual shares a marital challenge they are facing for prayer, keep it within the immediate party.

5. **Never, never** make a church leader an issue or topic of conversation. Do not have roast preacher for lunch. If you have an issue of concern, take it up with the individual personally. It is, however, appropriate to discuss the content of sermons--to agree and to disagree with the subject presented. But do so without using ad-hominem tactics (attacking a person's character).

Leading Discussion Skills

- See yourself as a **Manager of Questions**, not a dispenser of answers.
- Ask questions that cause members to investigate the text.
- Share your insights, but avoid talking or dominating the discussion.

Generally speaking, move through books verse by verse. Remember, you have four target areas of growth: the gospel/truth, character, relationships, ministry skills.

Service Skills

1. You are there to help people grow in Christ. Your spiritual service is leadership. Lead the people you serve into joys and blessings of spiritual growth. Minister to them. Don't come expecting to be "ministered unto."
2. Live the life. People will follow your example whether it is good or bad, but don't fake serving Christ. Be honest and genuine, but wash your dirty laundry at home. It is difficult to challenge others in areas in which you aren't getting the victory.
3. Love the people you serve. Spend extra time with them in social events. Take genuine interest in their affairs, business, and family.
4. Above all. Keep your word and be a person of integrity. *Faithfulness is critical for making disciples.* What you allow in moderation will become an excuse for others to do in excess.

Skills of Termination: Stopping Your Sessions

1. Learn how to terminate projects gracefully. Sometimes things just don't work out for one reason or another. There is nothing worse than being trapped in a relationship in which none are being encouraged. Never quit with out discussion. Be upfront. Be honest. Communicate! Bring your meetings to a close, but never reject the person or forsake a relationship.

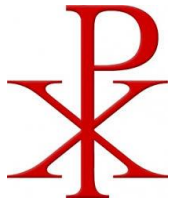
On the other hand, groups achieve their goals, and there is a time to move on to different pastures. Praise God, shake hands, and end the sessions so other personal objectives can be achieved.

2. Stop the sessions if a person doesn't respond to repeated exhortations to do assignments, or is continually negligent in pursuing genuine spiritual goals.

Stop session if people do not respond to you or to your style of leadership.

Stop the sessions if either of you is not happy with the relationship, but don't depart with unresolved relational conflicts.

6. MASTERING THE ART OF EVANGELISM



Text: 2Tim. 4:3 Do the work of an evangelist

Premise: The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

Basic Issue: Do I understand the gospel well enough to share an intelligent message in an interactive manner with a pre-Christian.

Objective: Every Christian can win others to Christ by learning the skills of evangelism that will lead others to salvation.

You Already Understand the Macroview of the Gospel

If you been through the first three lessons of this discipleship course, you already know and understand the macroview of the Gospel. You know the **Five Pillars of the Gospel**, and you are able to link and list theological concepts under those five pillars. You have studied the use of the gospel in Philippians and Colossians to determine how Paul approached a problem and used the gospel to resolve the issue. You also know each book of the New Testament was written to solve a problem and that authors used some aspect of the gospel to addressed the problem. Give yourself a hand. Most Christians do not know what you now know.

Grow in the Macromanagement of the Gospel.

Your next challenge is to move through the other books of the New Testament to discover the problems addressed and how the gospel was used to confront various problems. Yes, you can do this on your own.

Grow in Micromanagement of the Gospel.

Now that you have seen the forest, you need only to identify the trees in the forest. That is, now that you understand the big view of the gospel, you can now begin to study the particulars of the gospel. Seek to comprehend the issues of justification, sanctification, forgiveness, propitiation, faith, hope, love, etc. Do a study on every concept on your chart.

You already Understand Evangelism as a Process

Every disciple needs to learn how to share a simple presentation of the gospel with pre-Christians.

Do you remember the discipleship model?

Maturity Level

- Pre-Christian
- Convert

The Process Objective

- Evangelism Convert
- Grounding Disciple

- If you were to die tonight, do you have the assurance you would go to heaven?
- If God were to say, “Why should I let you in my heaven?” What would you say?
- May I share with you what the Bible has to say about how you can have eternal life?

Principle Two: Questions

When a person goes to the doctor, the physician listens and then asks questions like, “Where does it hurt?” “How often does the pain occur?” A good doctor doesn’t prescribe one medicine for every malady, does he? Likewise, questions are not only used to make a transition from a secular topic to a spiritual one, but to discern the spiritual condition of the soul. Questions about a person’s spiritual pilgrimage, church life, background, spiritual beliefs, and moral stature are tools the evangelist uses to discern what the soul needs.

Principle Three: Evaluation

When the evangelist asks questions, his mind is busy processing information. He is not a mind reader, nor is he the ultimate judge. He is a *professional sorter* and *discerner* of a people’s spiritual condition. The spiritual man makes judgments on all things (1 Cor. 2:16). So, what is a person seeking to discern as they ask questions? Basically, there are two fundamental issues which must be determined.

1. Does this person **know** the gospel and have genuine faith, or do they simply possess vague, religious ideas noted by their use of “God-words?” If they don’t understand the **Gospel**, share a simple presentation of Christ and challenge them to trust Christ as their Savior.

This person needs to know the gospel (person, history {D,B,R}, meaning, and potential effects) before they are challenged to respond with trust and faith.

2. Has this person **yielded** to the Lordship of Christ--his law, his Values, His ethics, or is the person still bent on going *their own independent way from God*. If not, share the truth of **Lordship** and challenge the person to repent (Lk. 6:46).

If an individual is living in sin (fornication, alcoholism, pornography, self-willed, rebellious) and is aloof from the church, they are probably not a Christian.

This person also needs to know the gospel, but especially their need to repent of their sinnerhood and their obligation to confess Christ as Lord.

“Each of us has turned his own way” (Is. 53:6).

“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).

While these are the bottom line issues which must be determined, it may be well to discern a person’s spiritual interests, willingness to hear and talk, doctrinal bents, and openness to the message of the gospel.

Principle Four: Memorization

Soul winners have one thing in common: they have committed many verses to memory and are able to draw upon them when they are sharing the gospel.

Learn key gospel verses (Start Up Verses):

1 Cor. 15:3, 4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Rom. 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Notice the Gospel concepts in these verses that need to be explained to people:

1 Cor. 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 1 Cor. 15:4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Rom. 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If you want to learn more verses. Try **The Roman Road**: Rom. 1:16 (Gospel), 3:23 (sin), 5:6-8 (God’s love through Christ), 6:23 (judgment), 10:9 (confession & faith).

Principle Five: Presentation

In order for people to be saved, they must believe the gospel--that is, they must have a clear presentation of the Gospel so they can make a commitment of faith.

1. Ask questions to transition to spiritual topics.
2. Ask any questions you need to ask in order to discern the person’s spiritual condition.
3. Ask, “May I share with you how you can know you can have eternal life?”

Look at 1 Cor. 15:3, 4. Discuss God’s judgment and the meaning of the word “sins” (going our own independent way from God--Is. 53:6).

Do you remember our **Gospel outline**? Share the following concepts:

- **Person:** Ask: What does the title “Christ” really mean? Explain who Christ really is.
- **History:** Ask, “Why is it good news that someone died?” Explain his death, burial, and resurrection in light of man’s ultimate problem which is death.
- **Meaning:** Ask, “What does the word ‘for’ mean?” Explain the meaning of the word “for” (He died “because of our sins “ as our substitute.
- **Effects:** Explain he died as a substitute and ask the following: “If Christ died for our sins, how many are left for you to pay for?” The answer is “none!” His death is sufficient for all, but it is only efficient for some (those who believe).
- **Response:** Turn to Rom. 10:9.

(1) Discuss the word “**believe.**” Show them the need for a genuine commitment of faith to the history and accomplishments of Christ.

(2) Discuss the words “**Lord**” and “**confess**”. Show them the need to turn from one’s own way (sin) and to accept the Lordship of Christ as the new governing principle in their life. Confessing Christ as Lord is the “**turning to**” of repentance; turning one’s back on one’s personal sins is the “**turning from**” of repentance.

Principle Six: Illustrations

Evangelists are very adroit at drawing lessons from every day life that apply to the sinner’s need for the gospel. In seeking to explain spiritual truth, you might stop and think of any lessons you can draw from history, law, science, marriage, family, or medicine that might reinforce a particular truth of the gospel. The gospel is like top sirloin. Illustrations are like the sizzle. Feed them the steak; lead them by helping them to smell the sizzle.

For example: Jesus illustrated the accomplishments of his death to the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness. What a wonderful illustration (Num. 21: John 3:14,15)!

The Jews were bitten by snakes; Men have been bitten by sin.

The venom kills: sin kills (Rom. 6:23).

God’s remedy was a brass serpent; Christ on a cross is the remedy for sin.

The Jews had to look to be healed; men must believe to be healed.

Principle Seven: Invitation

Learn to ask a person to become a Christian.

1. Test Understanding.

- Ask: Does this make sense to you?
- Discern any misunderstandings

2. Test Faith.

- Ask: Do you believe in your heart (sincerity) that Jesus lived, died for your sins, and rose again the 3rd day?
- Discern if they have genuine faith in the historical facts.

3. Test Repentance.

- Ask: Do you want to give up your way of doing things (repentance) and to live under the authority of Christ (Lordship)?
- Discern if the person is convicted about sin (going their own way), and is willing to confess Christ as their new Master (Lordship).

4. Test Willingness.

- Ask (If you sense genuineness): Will you tell Christ what you have just told me? Say, "If this is what you really desire, I can lead us in prayer and you can tell the living Christ what you just told me. Tell Him you now believe His gospel. Ask Him to save you and be your Lord and Savior. O.K.?"

Skill Two:

Do the Work Of An Evangelist

“. . . Do the work of an evangelist . . .” (Tim. 4:5)

Learn to have Radical Contact with non-Christians.

The average Christian prefers the company of Christians and therefore sometimes has a difficult time making contacts with non-Christians. What is needed today is Christians with a commitment to make radical contact with the non-Christian community.

Source: Dr. Joe Alderidge

Two Problems

- **The disease of *Koinonitis*:** The word for fellowship is *koinonia* in the Greek. *Koinonitis* is too much of a good thing. Research shows that the average Christian has no non-Christian friends after being a Christian for three years. When Christians only spend time with Christians, they develop *koinonitis*. It is like huddling on the football field and never breaking for the play. In other words, we must take holiness to the hedges.

- **The disease of *akathartis*:** This is the problem of compromise. When believers catch the disease instead of give the cure, they become defiled (*akathartis*). To make a difference, one must be different. The challenge here is *radical contact* without *radical* compromise.

When a believer compromises, he shames himself and his Lord. His witness is ineffective and subject to mockery.

Two Solutions

- Radical holiness: The soul winner is committed to radical holiness while he infiltrates the non-Christian community.
- Radical contact: The soul winner is committed to making friends with the unchurched so he can win them to Christ.

Suggestions for Radical contact

- Join a club: bowling club, golf club, sewing club, airplane club, dance club.
- Have neighbors over for coffee on Saturday mornings.
- Visit a neighbor or help them with a project.
- Project Party: Plan two parties a year to which you can invite your neighbors. Your first party should be to get acquainted and to have fun. Your second party should be to have also, but to also provide an opportunity to share Christ in a simple way. For example:

Party one: In September or October have a fall harvest or barbecue. Have lots of food and fun.

Party two: In December have a Christmas party with lots of games. Toward the end ask this question: What does Christmas mean to you? Be prepared to share a two or three minute message about the Savior. During the rest of the year, visit the homes of your friends and see if you can interest them in a Home Bible Study or coming to church.

- How about a Superbowl party (party one) and an Easter Party with an egg hunt (party two)?
- Invite a friend to a church function. There are plenty of special Sundays that should interest a friend. Christmas, Easter, Mother's day, Father's Day, summer cook outs.
- Keep a 10 Most Wanted List: Keep a list of 10 non-Christian you know. Seek intimacy with at least four. Seek to reach one. Plunge and divert.

Skill Three

Take Advantage of Your Church As An Evangelistic Tool

Invite People to Church.

Many non-Christians will enjoy the wonderful people at your church. You do, don't you? So will they! Remember the **ABC's** of inviting people to church.

- **A**lleviate Fears: People are afraid of the unknown and they can be afraid of groups. You can help alleviate their fear if you will tell them where you meet, what you do, and who will be there. If you are excited about your church, they will sense the enthusiasm. Joy and information relieves fear.
- **B**elieve in your friends. There are many interesting and wonderful people in your church that are worth knowing. Introduce your friend to your church friends outside of a formal service. If they know Sam or Betty or Karen casually, they will be more likely to come.
- **C**ultivate the relationship before you invite your friend. Have them over for coffee a couple of weeks before you ask them to come to church with you.

Invite People to your Sunday School

This is an excellent time to bring people. Sunday Schools provide intimate, informal discussions that can be very interesting. Try inviting people to your Sunday School.

Invite People to your Worship Service

People will enjoy the music and preaching at your church. You do, don't you? Share with people what you do at your church. They need assurance they will not be asked to stand up, say something, do something weird, or be pressured to come forward. Give them this assurance.

Utilize Special Services

People love specials. Your church probably has Christmas programs, Easter programs, Mother's day programs, cook outs and so on. Take advantage of these and invite people. If there is food, people will come. Invite them.

Skill Four:

Learn How To Treat Visitors At Church

If you work hard to bring a person to church, you need to know they will be treated correctly. How do you treat a visitor?

Rules for Receiving Visitors

1. *Avoid introducing visitors publicly.* I know we want to "appear" friendly, but allow new visitors anonymity. Attention can be an *act of hostility* to the

majority of people. Do not make them introduce themselves or speak in front of the group. The number one fear of coming to church for most people is that they have a dread having to speak in front of the church. They don't want to be embarrassed. So, don't point them out to the group or ask them to stand up and say something. Introduce them to your friends one-by-one and not to the whole group . . . this would create "hell" in church!

- Sunday school teachers should learn a lesson. Though you want to appear friendly, you will be very threatening if you embarrass the visitor by compelling them say something. Your best strategy is to allow anonymity.

DO NOT ASK VISITORS TO STAND.

DO NOT ASK VISITORS TO GIVE THEIR NAME.

DO NOT ASK VISITORS TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.

DO NOT ASK EVERYONE IN THE ROOM TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.

(Here is a way to introduce visitors in your class. Do it correctly: You stand--not them--and introduce the visitor by name. Politely, acknowledge the blessing of their presence. Do it in less than 20 seconds.)

2. Introduce visitors in between services to other people in the group. The challenge for a visitor is remembering everyone's name. Say people's names slowly and clearly. When you introduce another say something nice about them and the person you are introducing. This nice thought may be the glue that sticks the name in the mind.

Example: Jane, I would like you to meet Sharon, the Queen of Hospitality. Sharon, this is my friend, Jane, who makes me laugh more than any other person I know.

3. *Associate with visitors after the service.* When you see a person (a visitor), introduce yourself, and ask them a few non-threatening questions about themselves. Listen to them. Share some personal notes, and don't leave alone!! Introduce them to someone else with whom they might have something in common and then ask the church member to help them get acquainted.

In group settings, learn *to pass people into good care* (there doesn't seem to be a good way to say this, but for busy people, this is important). That is, if you have responsibilities in church and are rushing to get something done and you meet a visitor. Shake hands, introduce yourself, and wave another member over to where you are and say something like this: "Tom, I want to introduce you to Gus, who is here for the first time today. Could you help him get acquainted

here at _____ church? Once you have given Tom his assignment, move on to your next responsibility.

4. ***Avoid hell in church.*** Remember, hell is a lonely place. Unfortunately, many people experience loneliness and isolation at church. *Look for people standing alone and go over and start talking with them. Never, Never* let a visitor or member experience hell in church. **Never!!!**

- A note to church leaders. Train people how to treat visitors.

5. ***Follow up:*** Call the visitor within the next 48 hours and let them know how glad you were they came to church. Inform them what is happening next week and invite them to your Sunday school class. Studies show that visitors are 2 times more likely to return to your church after a telephone call.

Skill Five: Master the keys to decision making.

First, learn to close the door; that is, let people know upfront that you know they are not a Christian. Tell them the truth, “You are not a Christian, and you are not saved. After I share with you the gospel, don’t tell me you always believed this . . . because I gave you a chance to answer the question, “What is the gospel?” and you did not give me the right answer.

Second, a lack of knowledge of the gospel is one matter, willingness to surrender to the Lordship of Christ is another. Some people do not need more information, they need to be challenged with bowing the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk. 6:46).

Third, ask people for a decision . . . nay or yea. Hearing the gospel is an opportunity to enter the gates of heaven. Ask them to go in! If they do not, warn them about delay and a hard heart.

7. RELATIONSHIPS AND DISCIPLESHIP

"The key issue in the Christian life is learning to love, not learning how not to sin." (Bill Thrall, AZ)



Text: "Love one another."

Premise: The only place we can find love or express love is in human relationships. If you want to be a person of love, then you must learn relational principles.

Basic Issue: Do we have the integrity to manage the needs and weaknesses of people linked to us in a human relationship so that we can work together as a team.

Objective: Every believer can possess dynamic a dynamic ministry of love by applying the following relationship principles.

Introduction

The Lord Jesus Christ wants us to learn to love. The key to growth in our church is for us **to create an atmosphere of love and trust.** *Where trust is lost, love is lost.*

Love is a legitimate need. We need to be loved, and we need to learn to love. If we want to be like Christ in his love, then we must learn the principles of love.

Trust:

If we want to be loved, we must trust someone.

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Eph. 5:21

Happiness.

Because we are relational beings, relationships are the only place we can find love and happiness. If we want to be loved, then we must establish a relationship with someone. Humble and mature people do not wait for others to take the initiative in a relationship, rather they seek out happiness through relationships.

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).

Trust

God in His grace has established a relationship with us. *The degree to which we trust God will be the degree to which we allow Him to love us.* Our trust will never jeopardize the amount of love He has for us, but it will hinder our ability to enjoy His love.

This sacred principle is true in human relationships. In order to be loved, somebody must know our needs. If people don't know our needs, people lack the opportunity to love us. Sharing our needs involves trust. *The degree to which we trust someone will be the degree to which we allow another to love us.* Where trust is lost, opportunity to love is lost.

Submission

The Biblical word for *trust* is "submission" (Eph. 5:21). We will never understand submission until it is seen in the context of love. The degree to which we submit to someone is the degree to which we will allow them to love us. If we want to be loved, then we must learn what submission is all about.

Humility

Submission leads to humility and obedience, not because of weakness and fear, but because of love. *When pride is at work in us, we will not be very submissive.* When we are humble and obedient, then we will experience love and fruitfulness in the ministry.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:6,7).

Security

Being loved produces security and happiness. If we are not experiencing security and happiness, we are not experiencing love. If we are lonely and aloof, from people, then maybe we are not trusting, not submissive, not humble, and not secure.

Vulnerability

When we trust someone, we are vulnerable and there is a risk of being hurt. Therefore, we can only trust people who have a high degree of integrity. If we trust someone and are wrongfully hurt, the one we trusted may lack integrity. If we *misinterpret* our relational pain, then we may become bitter and sensual (Hebrews 12:15-16). Our emotional pain, then, must not be interpreted as a call to withdraw or divorce people, but as God's call for us to go deeper into love by instructing others on their need for integrity. If the ones we trust do not learn how to love, they will go through life hurting many more people.

It is important to not hear what is not being said! The above discussion is not a formula for self-love. We are not interested in psychological manipulation of people for personal gain. We are not seeking to establish patterns of trust and abuse. These **are basic principles** for dynamic human relationships that when violated, create tension between normal people.

Integrity

If we want to love, we must earn the right to be trusted.

"Great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations. 3:23).

Trustworthy.

The Bible exhorts us to trust God (Psalm 37:5). We can trust God because He is faithful and trustworthy (Psalm 36:5). Because He is a God of integrity, He can be trusted. When we trust Him, we experience His love (Psalm 36:7).

Faithful.

God puts a premium on faithfulness (Psalm 101:6) because we can only love if we have integrity. Persons who lacks faithfulness can't be trusted. We will violate trust and litter our lives with bruised and broken people. People with a history of hurting and wounded people in their lives are people whom God is seeking to teach integrity.

Character

God loves us because of who He is, not because of who we are! Our response to Him does not determine the amount He has for us. Likewise, *we must love, not because of who other people are or how they respond to us, but because of who we are--*a people of love. If we turn away from difficult and hurting people, then we may lack character. Character is a pre-requisite for following Christ in His love. If we want to grow in Christian love, then we must earn the right to be trusted. We earn the right to be trusted when we demonstrate faithfulness in carrying out difficult and detailed tasks. This is character.

Servanthood

Loving under difficulty is called service. Difficulty is an *opportunity* to demonstrate integrity and to earn the right to be trusted. A servant ministers to the difficult needs of others. The degree to which we are capable of recognizing needs in people and serving those needs is the degree to which we are responding to God's call to love.

Maturity

Mature love ministers to the spiritual and emotional needs of other people. The degree to which we perceive those needs and can manage those needs, is the degree to which we will be effective in the ministry of love.

If we lack an ability to manage other people's emotional needs, then we lack integrity and the ability to love. By avoiding hurting, angry, and frustrated people we demonstrate immaturity and unwillingness to follow Christ in the high calling of love.

The key to a ministry of love, therefore, is the ability to be trustworthy. The more people we serve and the more needs we meet, the more valuable we are to the Kingdom. Jesus said the "greatest among you shall be servant of all" (Mk. 10:45).

Responsibility

The level of our integrity will determine the amount of responsibility that God gives us .

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Responsibility can be painful. The more obligations we carry, the more difficulty we will experience. The more difficulty we experience, the more our integrity will be tested.

The person who endures difficulty (pain) for the sake of integrity is a person who is mature in love, and the person who endures pain with joy for the sake of healing others is a person who is perfected in love.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2).

The opposite of enduring difficulty is impatience and resignation. Resigning under pressure (quitting, divorcing, exploding) is a sure proof one is immature in love.

Relational Pain

Pain is God's message

to us that we need to exercise a deeper commitment to love.

Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint (Prov. 25:19).

Emotional Pain

If we lack integrity, then we will hurt people who trust us and bring them emotional pain. A string of hurting people in our lives may be God's sign to us that we need to grow in faithfulness and integrity.

If we are hurt, God places the onus (responsibility) on us to manage our pain so that it does not turn to bitterness or become an excuse to inflict pain on others (Rom 12:15ff).

When wrongfully hurt, we have a responsibility to share pain with those who hurt us so they can have the opportunity to grow in Christian character. Furthermore, we may have the opportunity to forgive those who wound us if

they show remorse (Lk. 17:2ff). Quitting, resigning, divorcing, dropping out of fellowship, changing churches, withdrawing, criticizing others, and complaining against the people who hurt us are improper responses to emotional wounds.

Fear

If we lack integrity, we will hurt other people, and they will be afraid to trust us again. Our lack of integrity will increase people's fears. *Where fear is present, love is frustrated.*

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love (1 John 4:18).

When we are hurt, pain makes us afraid. Fear can become a greater motivation than love. If fear is at work in us, then we must manage our fear so it does not derail us from the path of loving those who hurt us.

Anger

Anger, frustration, depression, defaulting, bitterness and resignation are fruits of a wounded spirit. Where fear or frustration is present, a violation of trust may have occurred. A wounded spirit can not trust, it can only be angry or afraid.

If we have been hurt, we must interpret our anger. Are we hurt because of rights that God has not legitimately given us or because of unreal expectations, or are we hurt because of a violation of a trust? If we have been hurt because personal rights have been infringed upon, God is leading us to yield those rights and to manage our anger with skill.

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth” (Colossians 3:8).

Remember, the flesh is easily offended. That is, when hurt, the unspiritual man resorts to sinful patterns motivated by pride rather than love. The spiritual man surrenders to the principle of love which build relationships rather than destroys them.

Col. 3:14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Col. 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

If we have been hurt because of our brother's lack of integrity, we must learn not to respond passionately. Rather, we must see God's call to go deeper into love. We must learn to instruct our brother on the nature of his error and the

pain he caused so he has an opportunity to correct the problem and grow in integrity.

Healing

I must grow in integrity by healing those whom I wound.

"See to it that no man falls short of the grace of God" Heb. 10:15

If we violate our brother's trust because of a lack of faithfulness to detail, then God must teach us the need for integrity through the pain of those we wound emotionally. *Repairing the damage done by unfaithfulness is an essential part of learning to love.*

Be Humble

If we wound our brother, God calls us to humble ourselves and to grow in character by listening to the pain we caused.

Listen

When we fail and we hurt someone, *the most difficult part of the healing process is listening to the hurt we caused.* Yet, this is what mature people do. They listen intently to ascertain the damage done in the relationship. Proud and immature people avoid listening to the pain of those they hurt.

Share Pain

If our brother is wounded by our lack of character, then God calls us to be instrument of healing to the one afflicted by our error and to share his pain so that he can be healed. In the Old Testament, God ordered the offender to pay for the damage done plus add 20% to the reparation (Leviticus 6:5). This was God's way of teaching integrity and healing damaged relationships in ancient Israel.

If our brother is wounded by what we do or say, then the issue is no longer "principle," but relational healing.

Add Grace

Grace is God's healing balm for wounds of the heart. It is His unconditional love demonstrated at Calvary at work in me. Grace can undo the effects of sin.

When we offend our brother, grace must work in us so that we can humble ourselves, listen to the hurt we caused, and admit our wrongs. Grace at work in us, seek to understand the pain we caused, and to relieve the emotional stress within the one we hurt. We need not fear, because we know our failure does not affect our relationship with God. We can, therefore, listen and learn from our mistakes.

When offended, grace must work in us so we can gently confront our friend with a view towards forgiving them. Grace not only forgives the wrong done, but the pain it caused! We understand forgiveness not to be automatic, but dependent on a proper response from of the offending party. When grace is at work, we can restore the relationship and trust again. If we do not apply the principles of grace to our woundedness, then we will make a choice to let bitterness rule our hearts. Our growth will stop. Like Esau, our spiritual life will degenerate into legalism, pretense, and contempt for spiritual values (Heb. 12:15-17). If we have been wounded, we have a responsibility to confront our brother with the details of his unfaithfulness. Confrontation can lead to repentance and forgiveness. Grace working in us can help mature our brother **in love, and grace can create a dynamic team active in a ministry of love.**

Healing

Healing is not erasing all the memories or the pain involved in a difficult relationship. *Healing is the ability to pursue Christ-likeness in spite of the hurts we carry.* We are in the process of being healed when we acknowledge the difficulties of the past and step into the future by imitating the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Maturity

We grow in maturity when we experience God's healing in our lives. *We may not be without blemish, but we can be without bitterness.* We do not perceive ourselves as **victims**, but **victors** growing in the love of Christ.

When we depend on the sufficiency of Christ (Colossians 2:3, 9, 10) as we pursue a life of love, we grow in maturity. We grow in maturity, when we resist being governed by fleshly passions and seek to be ruled by the spiritual principles (2 Peter 1:3). We derive benefits from relationships, but we do not make idolatrous demands upon those relationships. Because we are in Christ, we know we have all the resources we need to live out a life of love. Love may indeed fail, but we will never fail when we seek the way of love (1 Corinthians 13). Love is perfected in our lives, when we are no longer governed by fear, but by grace. *When we love because of who we are, not because of what other people do, we are maturing in love.*

Summary

Becoming a person of love like Christ is the ultimate quest of the Christian life. Relationships are the only place where love can be found. *If we want to be loved, then we must learn to trust; if we want to learn to love, then we must develop integrity.*

8. CHARACTER AND DISCIPLESHIP



Text: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christfor if ye do these things, ye shall never fall (2 Pet. 1:4-10).

Premise: Discipleship demands integrity. Men of God must be genuine, true, and trustworthy, without which, one will bring dishonor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Basic Issue: Am I and the people I lead learning to live a life of love?

Objective: You will bring honor to the Lord Jesus Christ, if you remember the following truths:

Character

The Bible places a premium on character. The word *character* comes from the Greek word *kharassein* which means *to carve or cut*. It refers to the distinctive marks or traits of individual that have been chiseled or carved into his personality. The deeper a good trait is grooved into the personality, the more dependable and lasting the character; that is, they have integrity.

The word *integrity* is derived from the root word *integer* which means *whole*. The word *disintegrate* means *to break up into pieces*; thus, the word integrity means *having it together*.

The Goal (1Tim. 1:5: 1 Cor. 13:1-3)

The biblical word for *integrity* is "love." A person of integrity is deeply chiseled and performs consistently under pressure. When a person continues to do good when under stress, we say they have character. Love, character, or integrity is the ultimate objective of our Christian growth.

- Without love "I am nothing"- I am worthless.
- Without love "I gain nothing"- I become penniless.
- With love "I will never fail"- I am always a success.

The Ability to Love Springs from Character

1. Without character, a deep chiseling of love into the heart, a man will be unfaithful in the duties of life and he will end up hurting people close to him. For example, an angry man explodes easily over trivial set backs; a person who has character continues to exhibit patience even though there is resistance towards his objectives.

2. Character is the power to fulfill one's duty under pressure so that good can benefit others. Character isn't manifested except under stress. Stress reveals character. Notice the associations in the following verse: Confidence, trouble, unfaithful man, pain.

Prov. 25:19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

3. In order to love one must develop character. *God loves because of who he is, not because of who we are* (1 Jn. 4:16). Likewise, we must learn to love because of who we are, not because of what other people do or don't do.

4. There are **seven indispensable character traits** that a disciple must develop if he is to become a person of love. (2 Pet 1:4-10).

Add to your faith . . .

Goodness: or virtue = "*arete* " = *moral goodness or excellence or praise*. Just as bad deeds spring from bad men, good deeds spring from good men. Love begins by being a good person. We love, not because of who other people are, but because of who we are and what we are becoming--a person of love.

Knowledge: "Ginosko = *understanding*. The word *knowledge* is used five times in this section. Knowledge empowers love. In the context, knowledge implies "the knowledge of Him" (2 Peter 1:3). What is needed is a Herculean view of Christ and his accomplishments for us. Our day-to-day conflicts seem like giants in our eye. The real problem is that our knowledge of God is dwarfed. We are not victims of our past. We are products of our understanding of Christ.

Self-control: "enkrateia" = from *knratos* meaning *strength*. Self-control is the *strength* to restrain improper responses. Without self-control we yield to the desires of the flesh when the difficulty of loving exacts a payment at our expense.

Perseverance: From the Greek word *hupomeno* literally means "to abide under." It is translated *perseverance* or *patience*. *Hupomeno* is the ability to remain under pressure and to do good to others. (Note: Perseverance implies *trials* or *testsing*).

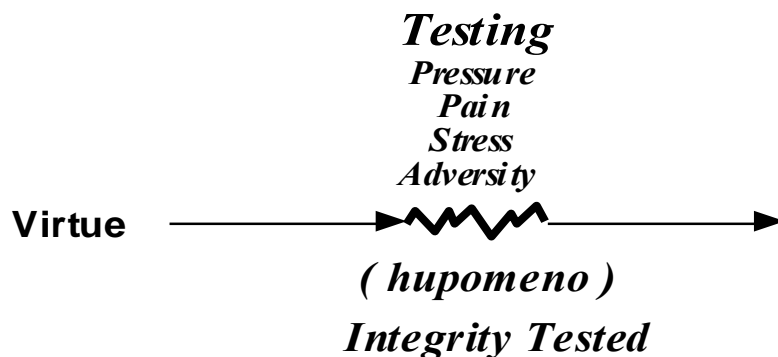
Godliness: "euxebeia" = "to be well devout." The word *piety* comes to mind. This is a Godward attitude. It reflects the motivation for all service- to please Him. Likewise, it reflects the nature of Christian character. It is God-like.

Brotherly kindness: "philadelphia" = "love of the brethren." This is directed toward those of the same kind, towards those who are worthy of love. We must first learn to love the worthy; then, we learn to love the *unworthy*. By *unworthy* we do not mean the wicked and rebellious; rather, we mean those in whom we detect flaws and weakness.

Love: "agape" = God's quality of love. This is God's intent to do good to his people even when they are weak and unworthy. While God's love falls upon the unworthy, it can never be enjoyed by the *unrepentant*. Man's failure does not frustrate God's love. God loves because of who He is, not because of who man is or what he does. Likewise, the Christian loves because of his character--what he is, not because of what other people are or do.

Love expresses itself in serving because our blessed Savior "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Becoming a person of love is not easy. It is not natural. It is supernatural.

A Diagram of the Process



False Remedies

Growth in character is necessary because sin has robbed our lives of virtue. Realizing things are not the way they should be, many believers feel great lacks in their spiritual life. In desperation to heal and to rid life of the pain they feel, many seek out psychological counselors to help with their problems. These counselors, who are untrained in biblical theology, usually practice some form of psychoanalysis or talk therapy. By taking their clients on archaeological journeys into their past, they try to expose dramatic events or blame points that have created their present dilemma. Eventually, counselees see themselves as *victims* of parents, relatives, or neighbors. This whole approach is totally contrary to the Scriptural pattern and to the Scriptural means of character development.

We do not need psychoanalysis, therapy, or psychological counselors to become what God intended us to be.

Why People Fail

It appears more and more Christians are seeking out psychological counselors today than ever before in history to help solve their problems. Few, if any, of these counselors have a Biblical foundation. Psychological counselors listen to people's problems and are focus people on their past failures. The focus of the counselee and the counselor is always on the individual's personal history rather than on the history of Christ.

Notice what Peter says about this: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Pet. 1:9).

People that feel lacks in their lives have **maximized** the influence of the past upon their present condition, and they have **minimized** the past work of Christ as the major influence upon their present condition. Peter calls it *forgetfulness*. The need is for Christians to see by faith the Herculean accomplishments of Christ and to view our past participation in sin as dwarfs upon our present condition.

The Sufficiency of God's Word

God's resource is "precious (timia) and great (megista) promises" (2 Peter 1:4). His promises are great (weighty) and precious (valuable and honorable). God gave these promises to strengthen the soul unto godliness. The Greek word for *given* is *dedoratai*. It is a perfect, passive, indicative in Greek which implies that God gave the promises in the past, but they continue to have power for present living. In other words, **God's promises are sufficient**. The believer does not need the philosophies of Freud or Adler or Maslow to resolve present problems! God's Word has all the answers one needs for successful living.

The Sufficiency of Christ

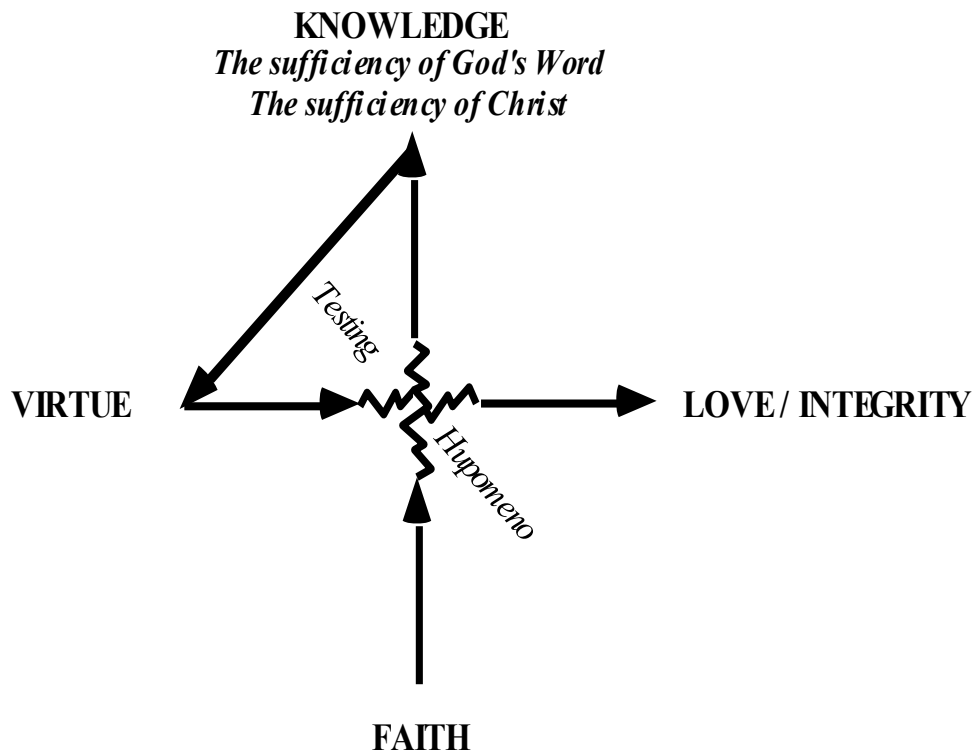
A second powerful resource for change and development is the "knowledge of him" (2 Peter 2:3). The word *knowledge* is used five times in verses 1-11. *It is through an expanded and fresh view of Christ that Christians partake of the divine nature*. Believers can fail terribly because they are ignorant of God's accomplishments in Christ toward them. Because they are focused on themselves, their miserable problems, and their past afflictions, people become hopeless. ***Problems arise when believers take too little comfort from their position in Christ***. Peter says they have *forgotten* about forgiveness--that is they have a midget view of Christ and a Cyclops view of their perceived needs (2 Peter 1:9).

Christians need to powerfully assimilate the truth that they "are complete in Him" (Colossians 3:9). The word *complete* means "to be full, overflowing to the brim." **All** that a believer needs to be complete, happy, and virtuous as a Christian has been supplied in Christ!

The Need for Faith

It is extremely difficult to describe the importance of faith. Faith enables a person to claim who he is in Christ and what Christ has accomplished for him. He appropriates these riches by faith and applies them to his thought life; his emotional life; and his conduct.

Maybe it is easier to discuss unbelief. Jesus continually chided his disciples by saying "O, ye of little faith" (Matthew 6:30; 8:26). It was not a lack of promise, but a lack of faith that hindered the disciples from growth. It was a lack of faith that hindered Israel from obtaining their goals: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews. 3:19). Faith is the ability to see a promise and to use it as a key to open doors to all of God's blessings in Christ.



The Means of Character Development

1. In order to become a person of love, the believer must go through integrity training. Integrity training is God's course in learning to love (Hebrews 12).

Testing is integrity training. Integrity training is not easy. It is hard (Hebrews 12:11). Several kinds of testing are mentioned in Hebrews 12:

- **Opposition** (Hebrews 12:3): The Greek word for *opposition* is *antigoian* (antlogian). Literally it means *speaking against* . . . Slander, acrimony, vilification, and defamation would be included in this concept of opposition.
- **Struggle** (Hebrews 12:4): The author illustrates the testing believers must endure as a *struggle*. The word struggle is *antagonizomai*. It means *to strive or fight against* something. In this case, the fight is against sin.
- **Chastening** (Hebrews 12:5): The word for *chastening* is the Greek word *paideia*. It refers to the whole *child training* process of teaching, rebuking, encouraging, and correcting process children go through to become responsible adults.
- **Rebuking** (Hebrews 12:5): The word rebuke is the Greek word *elegcho*. This word means *to convince* (to persuade by evidence) or *to convict* (to make one aware of wrong done).
- **Scourging** (Hebrews 12:6): In the Greek the word is *mastigoo*. We get our word *masticate* from this word. It refers to the **hard sayings** of a father.

Integrity training tests and strengthens our character so we can become people of love (Hebrews 12:11).

2. The key to success in this school is just to stay enrolled:

"Endure hardship . . ." The word *endure* comes from the Greek word *hupomeno*. It literally means *to stay under* the trial. Instead of fighting and resisting the discipline, the believer is exhorted to *stay under* the discipline and **submit** to its instruction. In this passage the believer is dissuaded from three negative responses towards discipline (Hebrews 12:5, 15):

- **Despising the discipline** (*oligoreo*): This word means to care little for, or to treat lightly.
- **Fainting under discipline** (*ekluo*): This word means to grow tired or weary. It contains the idea of collapsing emotionally under the difficulty of a trial. That is, giving up too easily by plunging into the sea of self-pity.
- **Bitterness** (*pikria*): This word refers to bile secreted by the liver. Bitterness is a settled resentment conditioned by disbelief.

3. Integrity training is not punishment for past wrongs

It is training necessary to correct our future behavior. Our Heavenly Father does not punish us, but He does discipline us. It is important to see that every difficulty has been sent to us by our Father and has been approved for our good. Nothing comes to us apart from His love. There is a difference between **discipline** and **punishment**.

PUNISHMENT	DISCIPLINE
Its concern: wrongs done	Its concern: character needed
Its focus: the past	Its focus: the future
Its motivation: payment for wrong	Its motivation: future correction
Its character: justice	Its character: love
Its felt effect: painful	Its felt effect: painful

Some might not like the idea that God does not punish his children. We need to remind ourselves that Jesus was punished in our place for all our sins. If He took all of God’s punishment for our sins, how much punishment remains for you and me. The answer is *none*. This being the case, we must conclude He does not punish his children. He does, however, discipline and instruct them for their good.

4. Integrity training is part of grace:

“See to it no one misses the grace of God” (Hebrews 12:15).

The believer is not under law. He need not perform to be accepted by God. Believers perform because they are accepted by God. The law commanded men to what was right, but it did not empower them to do what was right. Grace not only teaches a person what is right, it supplies the resources (the Spirit) to do what is right.

What is needed in the Christian life is an understanding of afflictions. We need to see all of them as *chastening* or child training. *God does not punish his children, he disciplines them*. To lay hold of grace is to lay hold of God’s perspective on discipline and to see it as his tool for to develop godliness. Bitterness is the opposite of grace. Bitter people do not feel loved nor do they appreciate discipline. Bitterness resents God’s process and rebels. Elihu warned Job:

“Beware of turning to evil, which you seem to prefer to affliction”
(Job 36:21).

Grace accepts difficulties as the lawful means to a beautiful end (love).

Examples of Managing Discipline

1. Note the bad example of **Esau**: If we do not receive his discipline with thankfulness and perceive it as coming from a heart of love, we tumble downward:

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears (Hebrews. 12:14-16).

Note Esau’s downward spiral: sensual, hurt, depressed, fornication, bitter, hopeless.

2. Note the good example of **Jesus**. He endured opposition (child training). Somehow, we need to see Him and the suffering he endured: “. . . fix your eyes on Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith . . . ” (Hebrews 12:2). Was Jesus the Son of God? Was he tutored by God’s chastening process?

3. Note the good example, **the great cloud of witnesses** in verse one. These witnesses could be the heroes of the faith in chapter 11. All of them managed their trials and disappointments through faith.

4. Note the marvelous example of **Joseph**: Those who pass his course in integrity training will be prepared vessels, instruments used for noble purposes (2 Tim 2:16-20). Joseph was a man who passed God's course in integrity training.

- He passed the test of truth (Genesis 37)
- He passed the test of obedience (Genesis 37)
- He passed the test of sensuality (Genesis 39)
- He passed the test of bitterness (Genesis 40)
- He passed the test of pride (Genesis 41)
- He passed the test of unforgiveness (Genesis 45)

God used Joseph to save his family, the Egyptians, and the entire world from famine (Gen.45:7) because Joseph perceived he was in God's school of integrity training (Gen. 50:20).

5. Note Paul's word: If we pass God's integrity training course, He will use us for noble purposes (2 Tim 2:16-20).

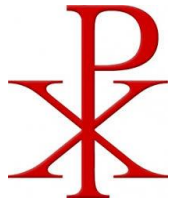
6. Note the lessons from James about testing (James 1):

- We know God tests us, not to solicit evil (1:13-18), but to produce good.
- We can count (let it rule over) it all joy when we face trials (1:3).
- We know trials have positive results: Perseverance produces maturity (1:3-4).
- We have wonderful resources: access through prayer (1:4-8) and the Word (1:21).
- We expect a blessing for persevering (1:12).
- We know God does not change when trials come (1:16).
- We know His Word can save us from sinning against Him (1:21).

Conclusion: God is interested in our spiritual development. His goal is for us to become like Christ in his moral attributes. Our past difficulties are not important nor do they determine our future; but, *our present response to present difficulties will map out our future.* What is needed is an expanded knowledge about our Lord Jesus Christ. Our concepts of God are too small; our thoughts about our past are too huge.

God's means of developing a character of love is discipline, testing, or child training. Discipline is His tool that chisels Christ-like character into our lives. Our response to discipline will determine the effectiveness of the discipline. The key is to stay enrolled; that is, endure the discipline. Avoid rebelling or fainting. Those who endure are treated as sons become like the Son and "that we might be partakers of his holiness" (12:10). We are, therefore, exhorted to develop holiness that we might "see" Him or fellowship with Him.

9. HOLINESS AND DISCIPLESHIP



Text:

1 Pet. 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Eph. 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Rom. 6:2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

2 Pet. 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Premise: Discipleship demands integrity. The people of God must be genuine, true, and trustworthy, without which, they will bring dishonor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Basic Issue: Am I and the people I lead escaping the corruption and pollution of the world and growing up into Christ as people of integrity?

Objective: You and can always bring honor to the Lord Jesus Christ if you learn to be holy.

Introduction

In Christian circles there are all kinds of people. There are saints who know and love the Lord. These people seem to rise to call of God no matter how difficult the journey. There are babies in the faith who hang on every word of their instructors. There are those who struggle with their past, are laden with weakness, and are bogged down with personal problems. In the company are those who are hurt and angry and on their way out. What makes the difference between healthy saints and weak, wounded, and struggling saints? No doubt there are many factors. This chapter is about some of those factors (keys) that enhance holiness in character.

Facts About Holiness

1. The first mention of the word *holy* comes from Exodus 3:14.
2. The word *holy* is mentioned 77 times in Leviticus.
3. The word *holy* is the only attribute of God pronounced three times (Isaiah 6:3).
4. The word *holy* is mentioned 51 times in Isaiah.
5. The word title *Holy One* is mentioned 29 times in Isaiah.

6. Only God has inherent holiness (Revelation 15:4).
7. Holiness is what makes God beautiful (2 Chron. 20:21; Ps. 27:4; 110:3).

The Fact of God's Holiness

Josh. 24:19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an **holy** God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

1 Sam. 2:2 There is none **holy** as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Ps. 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is **holy**.

Ps. 111:9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: **holy** and reverend is his name.

Isa. 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, **whose name is Holy**; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Hab. 1:13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

Rev. 15:4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art **holy**: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Lexical Meaning of the Word Holy

The Hebrew word, *Kadosh*, is derived from the root word, *quad*, which means "to separate." It implies *separation*, a *setting apart*. In reference to God, it isn't so much of a moral quality as it is a fact of regarding his *moral independence* from any other standard than His own character.

Theological Meaning of the Word Holy

1. Theison (1992):

God is absolutely separate from and exalted above all his creatures . . . separate from all moral evil . . . the perfection of God in all that he is . . . (p. 84).

2. Hodge (1992):

This is a general term for the moral excellence of God (I Samuel 2:2).

3. New Bible Dictionary (1987):

Holiness is not so much a relation of the creature to the Creator as of the Creator to the creature . . . it is the holiness of God that underlines that separation of life and distinctiveness of character that belongs to God's people . . . It is basically a term for the moral excellence of God and his freedom from all limitation in his moral perfection (p. 487).

4. Unger's Bible Dictionary (1980):

By the holiness of God, it is not implied that he is subject to some law or standard of moral excellence external to himself, but that all moral law and perfection have their external and unchangeable basis in his own nature (p. 494).

5. Mine:

When the Scripture says *God is holy*, it seeks to communicate at least three facts about God: (a) that God is independent and absolute, not being subject to any law or principle outside Himself; that is, He is the standard of all that is good; (b) that God is so transcendent in his position, so exalted in supremacy, so pure in His perfection, so luminous in His glory, so flawless in his character, that He is in a state of such pure perfection so that the best of men are not able to approach Him, are completely disqualified from doing so, and will insure their destruction for attempting to do so; (c) that God is gloriously pure and perfect: that is, He is unsoiled, unspotted, unblemished, unadulterated, untainted, and uncontaminated by evil.

Two Illustrations of God's Holiness

1. A high voltage wire: The holiness of God is like a high voltage wire. If a man (who is grounded) were to grasp the wire with his bare hands, he would be burned to a crisp. Men are so unable to seize or manage high voltage that it results in immediate death for any who attempt to do so.

2. Light: Light, according to Einstein's theory, is so constant in the universe, that any attempt to alter light would change the structure of every existing thing.

Holiness and Men

Men, things, and people can be made holy; that is, they can be *set apart* for a special use of God. What is given as an act of devotion must be *clean* and *noble*. For example: housewives often set apart beautiful plates for display on a living room wall. The plates are set apart from the common everyday eating utensil.

Thing dedicated to God, whether people or things, must separated from the common and the corrupt for a spiritual use.

The Standard of Holiness

God Himself is the standard of holiness (Lev. 11:44, 45):

Lev. 20:26 And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy.

Prohibitions Designed to Teach Holiness

1. With the Priests: No wine was allowed to be consumed so the Priest could discern holy things (Lev. 10:10).
2. With the Priests: There were not allowed to marry profane persons (Lev. 21:7).
3. With the Priests: Unhealthy or blemished priests were not allowed (Lev. 21:19-23).
4. With Nazarites: They were to withdraw from wine and dead things to discern the holy (Num. 6).

The Effect of Holiness

1. The giving of thanks (Psalm 30:4).
2. Worship by his saints (Ps. 99:5; Ex. 3:5).
3. The honoring of His name with fear (Ps. 2:11; Lev. 10:3).
4. The development of personal holiness (1 Peter 1:16).

Arthur Pink said (1975): "The more our hearts are awed by His ineffable holiness, the more acceptable will be our approach to Him" (Gleanings in the Godhead, p. 41).

Factors in Developing Holiness

Key One: Holiness Begins With Life

One can't grow until they know Christ, until they have salvation. Salvation is a general word that refers to deliverance from some calamity. In the New Testament, the Biblical writers were concerned about deliverance from the calamity of sin the tyranny of the Devil: Deliverance from sin comes in three forms: deliverance from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and the presence of sin (I Pet 1:5,9,10). In order to receive God's marvelous salvation a person must confess Christ as Lord, and believe in his heart the essentials of the gospel (Rom. 10:9,10). When one trusts Christ, they have new life.

1. Faith: There is a faith from God that can save a soul. It is called "saving faith" (Eph. 2:8-9). It is not a virtue, a human merit, or a character trait. It is a

look, a trust, a direction of hope (Jn. 6:40). It has an object, and that object is the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a sincere confidence that He can save a man's soul, and that what He did at Calvary secures his eternal redemption from the problem of sin.

2. Confession: to be saved, a person must want to be delivered from the tyranny and power of sin. Sin is that principle within man that pushes him to "go his own way" and to break God's laws. *Confession* is a form of repentance whereby a man turns from "my wayism" to accept the *rule and reign of Christ as his Lord and Master*. Though a person can insincerely "profess" Christ as Lord, he can't truly be saved unless he acknowledges this new principle of sovereignty in his life.

3. Salvation: When a person repents and believes, all the benefits of Christ life and death are bestowed upon the believer. Immediately, he is justified, regenerated, redeemed, and reconciled to God. If a person truly believes, he will have new life. Growth is inevitable (Phil 1:6).

Key Two: Discerning Life

1. You must discern if a person has life. Men are either **dead** or **alive** to God (Eph. 2:1-7; Jn. 3:36); they either know him or don't know Him; they are abiding in death or abiding in life; they are destined for heaven or they are destined for hell. The word "dead" does not refer to physical death, but to spiritual death--being *cut off* from God. Being dead to sin means to be *cut off* or disconnected from sin's mastery.

Alive means one is connected to God and is delivered from the power of sin (Rom 6:9).

The word *alive* means to be connected to God to have a relationship with Him. Life comes when a person repents and believes the gospel. This new life is called *regeneration*, or the *new birth*. It is a wonderful mystery (John 3:5-9).

The greatest disservice a disciple can perform towards his fellow man is to allow a person to continue in the deception they are headed for heaven when in fact they are headed for hell (Jn. 3:16-36; 10:27; Mt. 23:33).

- Men make false professions and live false lives (Mt. 7:22ff)
- Men are intoxicated by the wine of false teachers (2 Cor. 11)
- Men are besieged by false ideas (2 Cor. 10:2-4).

2. You must discern fruit to discern life: When men and women are born-again, they become members of God's family (Jn. 1:12-14). Life is at work within them, and they will begin to bear the family image, evidence that they are sons of God (Jn. 1:10-13). You can recognize a true child of God by the following fruit:

- **Light:** A member of God's family will desire to do what is right, and he will hate what is wrong. He will begin to live a life of holiness and righteousness (I Pet 1:15-16). He is not instantly perfect, but he is instantly uncomfortable with sin (1 Jn. 3:5-10). A person who continues in a life of sin doesn't know Him (1 Cor. 6:9-10).
- **Love:** A member of God's family will begin to grow in love, that is, he will move out of his self-centeredness, begin to associate with the family of God, and he will become involved in the lives of other people. A person who will not associate with God's people, and continues to live his life the way he wants, has neither seen Him or known Him (1 Jn. 3:14).
- **Truth:** A member of God's family will possess a correct knowledge of Christ. Though he will not have a complete understanding, he will believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the God/man of history (1 Jn. 4:1-5).

Without fruit there is no root. Do not be taken in by "liars" who say they know Christ and fail to exhibit true life: light, love, and truth. Note the *evidences* for true Christianity in 1 John:

- True believers walk in the light (1 John 1:5).
- True believers have fellowship with other believers (1 John 1:7).
- True believers confess the present battle with sin (1 John 1:8).
- True believers confess the past fact of sin (1 John 1:10).
- True believers obey his commands (1 John 2:3).
- True believers love their brethren (1 John 2:9, 10).
- True believers have an antagonistic relationship with the world (1John 2:15).
- True believers possess a correct doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 4:1ff).

How many more evidences of a true Christian can you find in 1John?

The little book of 1 John also marks the traits of an false brethren. False brethren are often difficult to spot because they may "say" they are in the light:

- False brethren disfellowshipped themselves from the company of Gods' people (1 John 2:19).
- False brethren may deny truth about Christ (1 John 2:27).
- False brethren *practice* habitual sins (1 John 3:6).

- False brethren carry grudges (1John 3:15).

How many more evidences of false brethren can you find in 1 John?

Key Three: Holiness Begins with Understanding Justification

When a person believes, all charges against the indicted are dismissed, and they are given a new standing before the High Court of Heaven (Col. 2:13-15). That new standing is called justification (Rom. 3:24ff). Justification is a wonderful, liberating truth, and if properly understood will free a person from a life of struggling for acceptance. Understanding justification has the same effect as a tourist visa. Once a person understands that he has a legal right to be in a country, he can relax and enjoy his visit. Justification is the believer's right, his eternal visa to enjoy heaven and its Crowned Prince.

1. Justification is a *legal* term. It is a word associated with a court of law. In the biblical context, it is associated with God's courtroom.
2. Justification is an *eschatological* term. It is a word associated with the final judgment, the judgment of God, at the end of history, or after death (Hebrews 9:27).
3. Justification is a *relational* term. It defines or declares the status in a relationship of one person to another. In the context of Rom., it defines one's status before the High Court of Heaven. One of two standings exist in the court: a person is either right with the Court (justified); or they have not measured up to the standards of the Court (condemned).
4. The theological meaning of justification: Justification is not man's effort to do what is right so he can be accepted by God. *Justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares a man righteous and treats him as such* because he places his faith in Christ (Rom 4:5; 5:1). Justification is **the ultimate verdict** delivered by **the High Court of Heaven** towards a repentant and believing sinner.

Justification qualifies a believer for the benefits of salvation. Justification is a positional standing before the God's Throne of Justice. God has everything to do with it, man has nothing to do with it.

5. Insufficient definitions of justification:

- Justification is not being treated "just as if I had never sinned." This would place a person on a level with Adam in state of innocence. Justification is much better than being treated as innocent, it is God "treating us as righteous" (Gen. 15:6,7; 20:1ff).
- Justification is not "just as if I had died." This is substitution.
- Justification is not a state of *probation*. That is, he is not put on probation till the end of his life so that his deeds can be weighed in the balance at the Judgment to determine his destiny.

- Justification is not being *made* righteous. Being made righteous is regeneration. Justification is being "declared righteous." This isn't the same as "imparted" righteousness", or "infused" righteousness. God doesn't change us and then pronounce us to be right with Him. He pronounces us righteous, and then proceeds to change us. This is extremely important because if understood, will deliver a person from looking within self as a basis of acceptance before God.
- Justification is not the same thing as sanctification. *Justification* declares a man holy in the sight of the Court. *Sanctification* is the life time process of being made holy after one has become justified. Do not confuse the two!

6. A man is justified in four ways:

Instrument	Character	Direction
By blood	Basis	God to God
By grace	Motive	God to Man
By faith	Reception	Man to God
By works	Fruit	Man to Man

7. Justification is framed on the obedience of Christ. In one sense, we can say we are saved by works--His works. Because Christ obeyed the law perfectly, He was justified in the sight of God (1Tim. 3:16). When a person believes, he is given the *righteousness of Christ* as a free gift (Rom. 3:21, 22, 24, 25). In this way, God's justice was not compromised, and we are in possession of works in conformity to law. Note we are justified by Christ's faithfulness:

Rom. 3:22 "This righteousness comes through (ek) the faithfulness of Chrst" (ablative).

Galatians 2:15 " . . . but by (ek) the faithfulness of Christ . . . " (ablative)

Galatians 3:22 " . . .the promise by (ek) the faithfulness of Christ . . . " (ablative)

8. Justification is important to growth. It is the foundation on which all growth is based. We seek to grow in the Lord, not to be accepted by Him, but because

we already are accepted by Him. No matter what one does, his position before the Court never changes. All peace, all security, all joy flows from this grand and glorious position (Rom. 5:1).

Application:

- **Emotionally:** The result of justification is peace (Rom. 5:1). When one lacks peace or is clobbered emotionally by guilt, past memories, or the feeling of being unclean in the sight of God, one is not appropriating the wonder of justification by faith. Rest occurs when one claims the promise, and disclaims one's feelings.
- **Practically:** There is something about man that pushes him toward the performance trap. The performance trap is the belief that I must perform to be accepted by God (and by men). When one understands justification, he is free to walk off the treadmill of performance because *He understands Christ has achieved all that God requests of him for him.*

Key Four: Holiness Develops When One Understands His Identification with Christ.

When a person trusts Christ they are "baptized" (Rom. 6:3) into Christ. The word *baptize* means to be "placed into" Christ. It is an aorist verb referring to an accomplished act. It is a once-for-all operation. This baptism *is not* water baptism. The *placing into* here is a **spiritual operation** accomplished by the Holy Spirit whereby He takes the sinner out of the *family of Adam* and places him into the *family of Christ*. He is removed from the *history of Adam* and placed into the *history of Christ* so he can inherit all the benefits of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. This new position is dynamic. If grasped by faith, it has the potential to change one's identity and destiny. To be in Adam is to be a doomed and defeated; to be in Christ is to share destiny and dominion.

1. Growth begins with knowledge: The word *knowledge* comes from a Greek word *ginoskontes* which is a present temporal participle which should be translated *while knowing*. Paul considered knowledge of the believer's present position in Christ as essential in the fight against sin. In Adam, the believer was unable not to sin (*non passe non piccarre*). In Christ, the believer is able not to sin (*passe non piccarre*) because of his identification with Christ's history.

Know the difference between position and condition:

- **Position:** The high and holy position that a believer occupies in Christ (Ephesians 2:1-8; Colossians 2:10ff; 3:1,2).
- **Condition:** The progress of holy development in the life and character of the believer.

Growth unfolds when one understands who he is "in Christ". "Who am I?" is the great question of life, and it is the great question of one's new life in Christ.

- A believer is a child of God (Jn. 1:12,13; Ijn 3:1).
- A believer is a new creation (1 Cor. 5:17).
- A believer is blessed with all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).
- A believer is predestined to the praise of His glory (Eph. 1:12).
- A believer is loved, alive in Christ, seated with Him in glory (Eph. 2:4-7).
- A believer is justified, regenerated, and at peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
- A believer is blessed with all "fullness" in Christ (Col. 2:10).
- A believer is separated from his old life and connected to God (Col. 2:12ff).
- A believer is united to Christ and now to share His resources (Rom. 6).

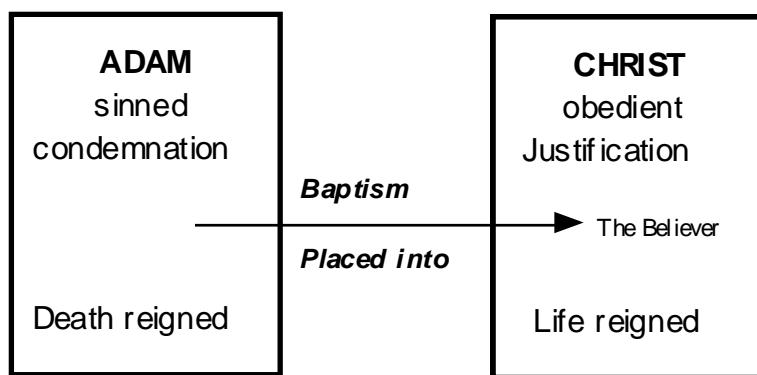
2. Growth blossoms when one realizes that his old life, his old standing, his old position in Adam *no longer exists* (Rom. 6:6). God sees the believer "in Christ," a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), separate from the old (Eph. 4:22), having God's seed in him (1 Jn. 3:1-9), and united with His Son (Rom. 6: 3-4).

A Christian may be saved and not feel saved. Feeling saved comes when one appropriates the wonderful truths of justification and applies them to his heart and life.

Likewise, a believer may not feel he is righteous and yet truly be a righteous person. Paul says the believer is "dead to sin." But he may not feel dead to sin.

3. Growth accelerates when one accepts his new position in Christ as truth and mentally "reckons himself to be dead unto sin and alive unto God" (Rom. 6:9-11). This is called *Identification*.

God has taken the believer out of Adam and *baptized him* into Christ (Rom. 6:3-5). The word *baptize* does not referring to water baptism. It refers to the operation of the Spirit whereby He takes a sinner out of the family of Adam and *place* him into the family of Christ. He is taken out of the history and destiny of Adam and identified with the history of Christ. What was true of Adam was true of the unbeliever; what is true of Christ is now is true of the believer. Christ's history, resources, and destiny become the believer's history, resources, and destiny. What a marvelous truth. It is called *spiritual baptism* because it marks our *identification* with Christ. To understand the power of this identification with the history of Christ, one needs to stop and think!



4. Growth accelerates when one obeys the first command in the Book of Rom.. This is why the *first command* in Rom. is addressed to the mind. Rom. 6:11 says: “Reckon yourself dead unto sin and alive unto God.” The word *reckon* is used frequently in Rom. and it means to *credit, account, charge, or attribute* towards. In verse 11, *reckon* means *start thinking this way!* We are no longer in Adam: guilty and condemned and doomed. We are in Christ: loved, accepted, and enriched with the spiritual power.

It is not *by Him, or through Him, but in Him* that we are delivered from sin’s sway. Stop thinking we are in Adam enslaved to sin and death. Start thinking truth: We are in Christ and share the benefits of His history toward us as believers. For this reason, Paul says it is impossible for a Christian to live in sin any longer because of this transition (Rom. 6:1).

These mental adjustments are much like the adjustments an abandoned child feels when he is adopted into a new family. His position has changed, but his attitudes have not. Likewise, when a child of God adjusts his attitudes to conform to his new position in Christ, growth accelerates.

6. Master the great truths of identification (Rom. 6:1-14)

- Living in sin is no longer possible for those in Christ.
- The believer is now united with Christ who triumphed over sin.
- The benefits of Christ's life and death belong to the believer.
- His identity in Adam no longer exists.
- His new nature is alive and responsive to God.
- The body is not regenerated and therefore struggle with sin is inevitable.
- Reckoning or counting is the critical command of Rom..
- Grace, not law, is the system that enables one to have power over sin.
- The Holy Spirit, not law, is the means of victory over sin.

- Identification with one's position in Christ is the quintessential requirement for developing Christ likeness (Rom 6:9,10).

Key Five: Understand Sanctification

God first "declares us to be right with Him" and then he proceeds to teach us how to live a righteous life. Salvation not only affects our position (justification), it affects our condition (regeneration).

When God saves a man, he delivers him from the penalty of sin immediately, and then He begins to deliver him from the power of sin constantly. The ongoing process of deliverance from sin is called *sanctification*.

Sanctification is the will of God for the believer and is related to holiness. Holiness is necessary not only to please God, but to be affective in our service to God. While justification happens in a moment of time, sanctification is a life-time operation of the Holy Spirit. Justification is based on the *substitutionary work of Christ, but there is nothing substitutionary about sanctification*.

While **justification** is dependent on man's faith without works; **sanctification** is dependent on man's faith that works. Justification comes to believing men because of the obedience of Christ; sanctification comes to men because of their obedience to Christ.

1. Begin to resist sin practically: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12). Because it is now possible for the believer to triumph over sin, God commands the believer to summon all his resources in an effort to confront the old habits of sin (Rom. 6:11-13).

2. Rely on the resources of grace: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

Under law, the Torah told a man what was right, but it did not empower him to do what was right.

Under grace, a man is not only told what is right, he is empowered by the gift of God's Spirit to do what is right (Rom. 8:4).

3. Cooperate with God through obedience: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). Becoming holy or virtuous (sanctification) comes as a result of our obedience to God. *While a man can do nothing to become righteous (justification), once saved he can do much to live righteously (sanctification)*. God eliminates man's obedience as necessary for justification, but he requires man's obedience in sanctification. In justification, Christ's work is substitutionary, but not so in sanctification. The

work of the Holy Spirit does not substitute his work for man's work. Man's obedience is required to be holy.

<u>Sanctification</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Text</u>
• Its Definition	Holiness: the renewing the whole man in the image of God.	1 Ths. 4:3-7
• Its Scope	Holiness: the renewing of man's spirit, soul, and body.	1 Ths. 5:23
• Its Affect	Holiness touches our habits and our relationships.	Jam. 1:19
• Its Duration	Holiness is only relevant to this life.	Phil. 1:6
• Its Value	Holiness can not save us, it can only beautify us.	2 Cor. 3:18
• Its Necessity	Holiness is a consequence, a part of our salvation.	Heb. 2:14
• Its Divine Factor	Holiness is a work of the Holy Spirit.	Jn.14:15,17
• Its Human Factor	Holiness is not substitutionary, man must cooperate.	1Ths. 1:3
• Its Means	Holiness is accomplished by interaction with the Word.	Jn. 17:17
• Its Fruits	Holiness produces good works in and through us.	2Tim. 3:17
• Its Standard	Holiness has one standard, one model, one paradigm	1Pet. 1:16
• Its Foundation	Holiness can only be built upon justification.	Rom. 3:24

4. Holiness is a human responsibility. *Man must participate in the responsibility to be holy.* It is incorrect to "let go, and let God." While it is important to trust God, holiness demands man's cooperation, man's will, man's effort. Justification requires the substitutionary work of Christ, but the work of the Spirit is not substitutionary. He does not do for us what we can do for ourselves. He does not live our life for us.

5. Holiness involves turning *from* the corrupting influence of this world and drawing near *to* the presense of God. It is no test to turn down *the worst* the world has to offer, but it is a test to turn down *the best* the world has to offer for the sake of Christ. Most Christians have learned to reject the vinegar of the world, but many have become intoxicated by the wine of this life.

Key Six: Draw Upon the Resources of Grace

1. Under grace, the believer is assured of victory over sin (Rom 6:14).

However, it is easier to think *legalistically* than it is *graciously*. When the truth of grace sinks in, its impact is profound (1 Cor. 15:10).

At this point it is important to understand **Rom. chapter seven**. Some theologians interpret Rom. seven where Paul says, “. . . what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do . . .” to normalized *failure* in the Christian life.

- **Interpretation one:** Some interpret the passage as Paul’s personal struggle with sin **after** he became a believer: After Paul was converted, he tried to do what was right, but he found himself a miserable slave to the brutality of his own sin nature. Over time, however, he realized he could gain victory through Christ. Therefore, the believer should not be surprised that he too struggles with sin. Struggling with sin and being defeated by sin *is a normal Christian experience*.

Who cannot identify in some way with the above interpretation? However, I believe it is a wrong interpretation that dangerously *normalizes* failure for the Christian.

Consider the following **second interpretation**:

- **This passage does not** represent Paul’s personal struggle with sin after he became a believer. It represents a struggle with sin before a Jew becomes a believer. Paul’s use of “ego” represents the experience **of a devout Jew standing** before the law without the power of the Spirit before he became a believer.
- Paul declared the believer’s freedom from law in Rom. 6:14. No doubt, this would have raised a red flag among the Jewish readers. Rom. 6:15 through Rom. 8:4 is a **parenthetical treatise**. Because he raised the issue of the law, Paul must now address the reason for his statement in Rom. 6:14 which would have raised a red flag in the mind of every Jew reading Paul’s letter.
- He addresses his questioning Jewish brethren in Rom. 7:1, “I am speaking to men who know the law . . .” He is not addressing Gentiles because they did not have a binding commitment to the Torah as Jewish Christians. Paul’s point is this: The Jew knew and respected the law. He could acknowledge the law was good, holy, and spiritual. *It told him what was right*, but the Torah *did not empower him to do what was right*. This was the problem with Torah. Consequently, Paul used **the literary we** when he used “I” or *ego* to represent the Jewish experience--the common defeat encountered by every Jew who

struggled to keep the law before Christ came and grace was inaugurated.

- Paul's premise: The law told a man what was right, but it did not empower him to do what was right (the standard of Torah). Under grace, however, a man is not only instructed about what is right, but he is empowered by the Spirit of God to do what is right (Rom. 8:4). *Living righteously is the normal Christian experience.* Obviously, this is true. Paul has been arguing for the monstrous impossibility for one "dead to sin" to be living "in it any longer" (Rom. 6:2). Hence: Paul contrasted **law** with **grace** (Rom. 6:14).

Objection: One may say to me: "I know this passage is addressing Christians because I know of my own spiritual struggle with sin." Answer: God's Word, not our experience, must be the basis interpreting this passage.

Importance: Freedom from sin and power to live correctly are basic rights under grace. If people find themselves enslaved to sin, it may be because they do not understand their identification with Christ or possess by faith the wonderful resources of grace.

2. The resource of God's Spirit.

In contrast to Torah which told men what was right, but did not empower men to do what was right, is the law of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4). Rom. seven is an indictment against *the powerlessness of the law* to create a righteous life in men. Paul bemoans his condition as a Jew facing the law of God without aid, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). But as a Christian, Paul experienced the resources of the eschatological Spirit and declared marvelous victory: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

In Galatians 3, Paul affirms the powerless of the law to impart life, "For if a law had been given that could impart life . . . " (3:21).

The word *spirit* is mentioned 14 times in Rom. 8, and the word *flesh* is mentioned 8 times in the chapter. The *flesh* is not the *sin nature*. Rather, the *flesh* is all that a person is apart from the Spirit of God. All believers are said to be in the Spirit (Rom. 8:9). That is, they are regenerated and inhabited by the Spirit. One can not be in the Spirit and in the flesh at the same time. With the coming of the eschatological Spirit into the present evil age, believers are graced with a powerful resource by which to live a holy life--a life that conforms to the Old Testament expressions of righteousness (Rom. 8:4).

What believers need to know about the Spirit:

- The Spirit (The Comforter--Jn. 14:16) empowers godly living.

- The Spirit is a person (Jn. 16:5-11) and the means by which Christ is in and near His people (Jn. 14:15-21).
- All believers have the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:9).
- All believers have been baptized by the Spirit into Christ (1Corinthians 12:13).
- Not all believers are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- Spirituality differs among believers (1 Cor. 12:4-13:10).
- Not being filled with the Spirit is as much a sin as being drunk with wine (Eph. 5:18). Unlike being drunk, a person filled with the Spirit has self-control; like being drunk, a person filled with the Spirit is uninhibited in his witness.
- A person filled with the Spirit will exhibit Christian character (Galatians 5:22), joy and happiness (Ephesians 5:19-20), boldness to witness (Acts 4:31).
- Some factors in being filled with the Spirit are the human will (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:20-24; 1 Cor. 14:1), heart thirst (Jn. 5:38,39), faith (Jn. 7:39), love and obedience (Jn 14:15), yieldedness (Rom. 6:12-14), prayer (Acts 4:31), and Divine sovereignty (1 Cor. 12:11)

2. **Discoveries under grace** (Rom. 3:24; 5:17; 6:14; I Cor. 15:10; Heb. 12:14-17):

Help believers to develop a **mindset of grace** and to relish its worth.

- Under grace, believers base their confidence on their position in Christ, not on their condition in this mortal body.
- Under grace, a person is delivered from his past. **It is far more important** to understand Christ's history and one's identification with that history than it is to understand all the intricacies of one's personal past. It is far more important to analyze the effects of Christ's history on a believer than it is to do psychoanalysis on troubled believers.
- Under grace one's *future* is more determined by one's faith in his union with Christ than by one's performance in *the past*.
- Holiness is the outworking of our life under grace. Under law man works *fearfully* for acceptance. Under grace man serves *thankfully* because he is accepted.
- Victory over sin is a result of three virtues: (a) *knowledge* of one's union with Christ, (b) *believing* the truth of his being in Christ and no

longer viewed in wretched Adam, and (C) of actively *yielding* the body to righteousness.

- To be depressed is to have trusted in self: To rejoice is to have trusted in Christ. Joy is based not on what we accomplish for Christ, but on what He accomplished for us.
- Under grace we were enriched when we were unworthy. All service, therefore, must be motivated by gratefulness. Because we are His workmanship, all service is an act of thankful worship.
- Grace allows for human weakness, but grace does not tolerate sin (Rom. 6:2); It calls for *excellence*, but it does not demand *perfection*. *Excellence we can handle. Perfection is God's job*. Under grace, the believer does not demand perfection from others because He knows God does not demand perfection from him. He tolerates the weaknesses of others because He knows God accepts Him in his weakness.

Key Seven: Renew the Mind

The world can stifle growth. Its tentacles are in every sea. The believer must actively make a decision to not allow himself to be commandeered by the subliminal values thrust upon him. The word for *transformed* in Rom. 12:2 is *metamorphosis*. The word for *renew* means *again renew*. It presents the idea of having one's character changed by mentally processing right information.

The mind, therefore, needs to be renewed, fed, and revived in the glories of grace. Without this feeding one will shrivel into a spiritual pigmy.

Rom. 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Observations:

- The "therefore" to service is based on Paul's treatise on grace in Rom. 3-11.
- Paul commands believers to *present* their bodies to God as an instrument of service and worship. Why bodies? Because the spirit is "dead to sin" and "alive to God." The body is still unregenerated and must be willfully yielded to God. This offering of the body to God is a holy act--a *setting apart* to God and His service.

- The word *offer* is an aorist infinitive. It conveys the idea of punctiliar action indicating Paul is calling for a one time act of yielding. The phrase *living sacrifice* refers to the result of this one time act-- continual daily service for the Savior.
- From the word *conformed* we get our word *schematic*. It presents the idea of following a prescribed course or set pattern. The world has a prescribed pattern for people, and it must be resisted.
- From the word *transformed* we get the word *metamorphosis*. Because the mind receives so much *input* from the world, it must be *changed* by *input* from God's Word.
- The word *renew* means to "again new" the mind. That is, the believer must continually expose his mind to his riches in Christ. The purpose of this renewal is so the believer can discern the will of God.

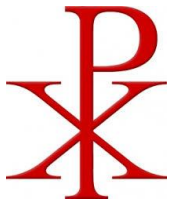
One should notice the phraseology used in Paul's epistles to urge the believers on towards holiness:

- In Romans, Paul says *present your bodies and renew your mind* (Rom. 12:1, 2).
- In Galatians, He says *walk in the Spirit* (Galatians 5:16-24).
- In Ephesians, He says *be filled with the Spirit* (Ephesians 5:18).
- In Colossians, He says to *let the Word of God dwell richly in you* (Colossians 3:16).
- In Philippians, He says *let this mind be in you* (Philippians 2:5).

Summary

The development of Christian character is vital to discipleship. Without character we would lose our testimony for Jesus. Christian character unfolds as one seeks holiness, and grows up in Christ-likeness. Therefore, it is paramount that one activates grace so that one can grow and become like Him.

10. SPIRITUAL GIFTS TEST



Instructions

There are 65 statements which may help you discover your spiritual gift or gifts. Please rate yourself with the following scale by writing the appropriate number in the corresponding space next to the statement.

This statement has been experienced in my life:

- Much 3
- Some 2
- Little 1
- Not at all 0

Test Questions: Place a number above by each question

1. Proclaiming the truth in a God-inspired and enthusiastic way.
2. Enjoying the fact that I am called upon to do special jobs.
3. Enabling a person to learn biblical truths in detail.
4. Applying truth effectively in my life.
5. Having the ability to discover truth for myself.
6. Encouraging verbally the wavering, troubled, etc.
7. Seeing the difference between truth and error.
8. Managing money well, in order to liberally give to the Lord.
9. Assisting key leaders to relieve them for their essential jobs.
10. Working joyfully with persons ignored by the majority.
11. Believing God will keep His promises in spite of circumstances.
12. Persuading others to move towards achieving biblical objectives.
13. As a key church leader, delegating responsibility to others.
14. Preaching or speaking convincingly of what it means to be a disciple.
15. Enjoying routine work at church that would bore others.
16. Explaining well the books of the New Testament to others.
17. Making what appears to be correct decisions for my life.
18. Having insights of truth which bring conviction to my mind and heart.

19. Being used to dislodge the complacent and redirect the wayward.
20. Judging well between poor and good, or good and evil.
21. Giving things or money liberally for the Lord.
22. Ushering or cleaning at a church-related facility.
23. Aiding the undeserving.
24. Conviction of the reality of God being active in local fellowship.
25. Knowing where I am going with Christian followers.
26. Able to organize ideas, people, things and time for effective ministry.
27. Sharing the story of how God has taught me a difficult lesson.
28. Feeling satisfaction in doing menial tasks for the glory of God.
29. Making difficult biblical truths understandable to others.
30. Choosing an option, which usually works, from various alternatives.
31. Acquiring and mastering facts and principles of biblical truth.
32. Verbally challenging the apathetic, while giving hope to those in despair.
33. Having insights to detect any error in doctrine when presented.
34. Cheerfully giving in order that God's work be extended and helped.
35. Typing, filing, or recording figures or minutes for the Lord.
36. Visiting hospitals or nursing homes, and being blessed.
37. Trusting in the presence and power of God for the impossible.
38. Influencing others while serving with them toward a biblical goal.
39. Able to plan action goals of ministry with others.
40. Speaking in such a manner that it brings people to a response to God.
41. A willingness to take orders instead of give them.
42. Feeding disciples by guiding them to selected portions of Scripture.
43. Being able to make wise selections of others for positions.
44. Easily learning biblical truths.
45. Able to counsel effectively the perplexed, guilty, or addicted.
46. Able to identify that which is not true to the Bible.
47. Able to earn much money for giving to the Lord's work.

48. Distributing church literature and using talents for the church.
49. Tangibly assisting in any way shut-ins or handicapped.
50. Letting God be God in answering prayer for other Christians.
51. Steering others through difficulties in a church-related task.
52. Able to lead a committee in making decisions together.
53. Warning someone of the consequences of certain actions.
54. Enjoying it when others express a need for my help.
55. Training Christians to be obedient disciples of Christ.
56. Fearing God in all personal decision making.
57. Able to recognize key and important facts of Scripture.
58. Comforting a Christian in his affliction or suffering.
59. Being able to see through a phony before his phoniness is clearly evident.
60. Giving things freely with delight and love.
61. Finding joy in reaching out to those who can use my talents and abilities.
62. Talking cheerfully with those in prison or lonely or depressed.
63. Trusting God to do above all that we can think or ask.
64. Having others follow me because of abilities and example.
65. Able to recruit and encourage other Christians to do the Lord's work.

Using this chart , write your totals for each statement in the corresponding box; then add the totals for each gift and determine your gift or gifts. Fill out the tear-off section, turn it in to the church for our gifts file. We seek to help you employ your gift to its fullest potential.

Test Chart

Total

- Prophecy_ 1_ 14_ 27 40_ 53_
- Serving_ 2 _15 _28_ 41_ 54_
- Teaching_ 3_ 16_ 29_ 42_ 55_
- Wisdom_ 4_ 17 30 _43 _56_
- Knowledge _5_ 18 _31 _44_ 57_
- Exhortation_ 6_ 19 _32 _45 _58_

- Discernment_ 7 _20_ 33 _46 _59_
- Giving_ 8 _21 _34 _47_ 60_
- Helps _9_ 22 _35 _48_ 61_
- Mercy_ 10_ 23 _36_ 49 _62_
- Faith_ 11 _24 _37_ 50_ 63_
- Leading_ 12 _25 _38 _51 _64_
- Administration_ 13 _26 _39_ 52 _65_

List spiritual gifts in order of dominance. List areas now serving or would like to serve

- | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|
| 1. | 4. | 1. | 3. |
| 2. | 5. | 2. | 4. |
| 3. | 6. | | |

Now What?

1. After you have determined your spiritual gift, have a few close friends and a spiritual leader in the church discuss your gifts. See if they agree with your analysis.
2. Look for tasks in the church that need to be filled by someone with your gift.
 - Serving
 - Counseling/discipleship
 - Leading groups
 - Evangelistic outreaches
 - Administrations ministries Teaching opportunities
3. Choose an area of service and submit to training. Your gifts need to be adorned with skills. Likewise, gain approval to serve.
4. Major on spirituality. That is, be filled with the Spirit.
5. Be faithful to your assigned tasks. The church needs your gifts and your faithful attendance to detail.

Spirituality vs. Maturity

Spirituality is determined by the degree of one's submission to the Spirit of God (Eph. 5:18); **Maturity** is determined by the degree one understands the Word of God (Col. 3:16). One can be spiritual and not mature, or mature and not spiritual. A Christian should strive to know the great truths of Scripture in order to be mature (Hebrews 5:14) and to be humble and pliable to the Spirit of God in order to be spiritual.

11. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND DISCIPLESHIP



Text: 1 Cor. 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Premise: Gifts need to be employed in order to build the church.

Basic Issue: Can God trust us to help each believer discover his gift and his place of service in the body of Christ.

Objective: Every disciple can build the church by helping others to discern the following facts regarding spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Gifts Are Different From Natural Talents

1. Definition: A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability given to the child of God to help build the church.
2. Natural gifts such as musical talents are not the same as spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are supplied, maintained, and empowered by the Spirit of God.

Spiritual Gifts Are Different Than Ministries (1 Cor 12:4).

1. The Trinity is involved in service: the Holy Spirit bestows different abilities; The Son administrates the different ministries; The Father produces different fruits through the employment of the gifts.
2. A ministry is a function, an organized place to serve. For example: teaching is a ministry in the church and the people who teach don't necessarily have the gift of teaching. Some may be exhorters in a teaching ministry. Others may be an evangelist in a teaching ministry. Still, some may be encouragers in a teaching ministry.

Spiritual Gifts Are Different Among Believers

1. Every Christian has at least one gift, and no man has all the gifts (1 Cor 12:4,7).
2. A list of these gifts can be found in Rom. 12, Ephesians 4, and I Corinthians 12.
3. Some teachers distinguish between "motivational" gifts, "manifestation" of gifts, and "ministries" for gifts.

The *motivational gifts* mentioned in Rom. 12:

- Prophecy: The ability to apply the right scripture at the right time to the right person.

- Serving: The ability to see needs and the willingness to service that need.
- Teaching: The ability to create a hunger in the lives of others for the Word of God by the way one handles the text.
- Encouraging: The ability to see God at work in discouraging circumstances.
- Giving: The ability to believe God will supply future resources in a present time of need.
- Leadership: The ability to blaze a trail, to establish ministries, to build bridges to unmet needs.
- Mercy: The ability to dispense grace to the weak, to the undeserving, to the unworthy.

Spiritual Gifts Demand Understanding

1. Individual gifts are like individual parts of a body. Each add to the whole (I Cor. 13:14).
2. No part is non-essential (1 Cor 12:15).
3. No part is self-sufficient (1 Cor 12:21).
4. While no gift is self-sufficient, some gifts are more important than others (I Cor. 12:27).
5. A misunderstanding of gifts can create problems. Two problems existed in Corinth.
 - An attitude of inferiority:
 - An attitude of superiority:

Spiritual Gifts Have A Purpose

1. Gifts are not given to inflate our pride or to enhance our reputation, or for personal edification.
2. Gifts are given for the following reason: for the "strengthening, encouragement, and comfort" of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:3).
3. Rules for gifts: There are nine: (1 Cor. 14:26ff) If believers would follow the rules, there would be less confusion about gifts. How many rules can you identify?

Spiritual Gifts Are Viewed Differently In Charismatic Circles

The word "charismatic" refers to people who are gifted by the Holy Spirit. In one sense all believers are Biblical charismatics, but not all believers are cultural Charismatics. Cultural Charismatics believe that all gifts are in operation today and see to practice, though self-deceptively, a style of gift expression. Non-charismatics believe that "sign gifts" were temporal, limited to the initial launching of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire. There are at least four reasons why many believe that the "sign gifts" are no longer operational:

- Great signs and miracles have only occurred in great quantities **during three periods of history: *the time of Moses, Elijah, and Christ.***
- Great signs during the time of our Lord and the apostolic era were present to authenticate the Messianic claims of Christ and to substantiate the authority of the apostles. That need no longer exists today.
- It appears that the sign gifts were for a temporary purpose. Even Paul's gifts seem to fade 30 years after the resurrection (2 Cor 12; I Tim 5). However, this doesn't mean that God does not do miracles today or that we live in a closed system where God's power is no longer manifested. God forbid! However, the purpose of the sign gifts died with the apostles.
- The appearance of the great sign gifts goes unmentioned throughout church history until the first part of the 20th Century. Though there has been a revival of supernaturalism, its authenticity is disputable.

2. The charismatic movement is a modern day phenomena, and it has world wide influence. It has reminded all of us to remember the Spirit and to honor his work among us, but its emphasis on "tongues" has been incorrect and divisive. The following needs to be understood about tongues:

- Biblical tongues were a temporary gift designed to expedite the gospel into all nations (Acts 2).
- Biblical tongues were a language, not a jibber-jabber. (Note the word "dialect" in (Acts 2).
- Biblical tongues could be understood by nationalities (Acts 2).

The modern tongues phenomena lacks integrity in that there is no substantiated case of a person having spoken a foreign language without having studied it. In the late 60's a study was contracted by the National Institute for Mental Health (*Glossolalia*: Kidahl). A linguist was employed and he taped two thousand of the nation's most renowned "tongues" speakers across many denominations. He concluded in his study that not one language could be identified, nor was there

one characteristic of a legitimate language discovered. All experiences would be considered "jibber-jabber", mono-syllabic, baby talk.

Spiritual Gifts Must Be Discovered

1. Unemployed gifts hurt the body. Every gift must be released if the body of Christ is to grow. Trying to function in a church without all the gifts employed is like trying to play basketball with one leg asleep.
2. Spiritual gifts are different than a person's temperament. Temperament defines one's natural response to life's challenges and conflicts. Temperament affects one's gifts more than we like to admit. Even our temperament must be in subjection to the Spirit.
3. Gifts are often unemployed because individuals may not know their gift or they feel that their gift is unimportant. This can only come by a development of vision. Fellow believers, therefore, need to affirm the value of people and their gifts.
4. Gifts are often unemployed because people are hurt and angry. The problem here is not ignorance of spiritual gifts, but bitterness of spirit. Wounded people need to be healed, and they need to respond to pain correctly.
5. To discover spiritual gifts, one needs to peruse the following:
 - Desire: What do you enjoy doing? In what ministries do you feel comfortable?
 - Influence: What benefits do people feel when you are active in a ministry?
 - Skill: What do you do best?
 - Motivation: What makes you tick?
6. Discovering your spiritual gift will not only free you to minister, it will free others in the body to minister in the area of their gifts.
7. Where gifts are unemployed, a body becomes a dysfunctional church.

Spiritual Gifts Must Be Controlled By The Spirit Of God

1. Understand the difference:
 - **Ministry** defines a benefit to the body of Christ.
 - **Maturity** defines one's relationship to the Word of God.
 - **Spirituality** defines one's relationship to the Spirit of God.
2. The Word of God must be the objective guide for the use of all gifts (Col. 2:16).

3. When the Bible talks about ministering, it emphasizes spirituality. Note the adverbs connected with service (Rom. 12:6-8):

- **Generously:** We should serve heartily.
- **Diligently:** We should serve hardily.
- **Cheerfully:** We should serve happily.

Spiritual Gifts Must Be Motivated By Love

1. Without love we are nothing, that is, we are insignificant in the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 13:1-3).

2. Without love, we gain nothing, that is, will lose the reward of our efforts.

3. Without love our service cannot succeed (v. 8), but with love we can't fail, that is, we will not fall from the standard of gracious service.

A Glossary Of Spiritual Gifts

As Specifically Stated in Scripture:

PROPHECY: Rom. 12:6 - In the early church, a prophet was one who channeled special revelation to the church. Today this gift is understood as the ability to preach and/or interpret the truth of what God in such a way truth convinces and convicts the hearer.

TEACHING: Rom. 12:7; I Cor. 12:28 - The ability to communicate the Scriptures in such a way as to bring willing learners to a careful understanding of the Bible, Christian truth, and the Christian life.

WISDOM: I Cor. 12:8 - the ability to make wise decisions or to use knowledge effectively for the good of the Church.

KNOWLEDGE: I Cor. 12:8 - The ability to discover, accumulate, analyze, and clarify information and to make relevant associations.

EXHORTATION: Rom. 12:8 - The ability to minister words of comfort, consolation, encouragement, and to counsel in such a way that people are helped and uplifted. It also implies the ability to correct or warn against a danger without undue offense.

DISCERNMENT: I Cor. 12:10 - The ability to distinguish between truth and error, or between good and evil.

GIVING: Rom. 12:8 - The ability to contribute material resources generously and wisely, with great joy and eagerness in order to meet needs in the Body.

HELPS: I Cor. 12:28 - The ability to utilize your vocation and talents in meeting others' needs so the Body may function to its maximum potential. It also implies assisting others in practical and serving ways.

MERCY: Rom. 12:8 - The ability to have genuine concern and compassion to aid the distressed, poor, ill, deprived, handicapped, retarded.

FAITH: I Cor. 12:9 - The ability to see with special confidence what God's will and purpose is for the present or future and to trust God to do the impossible without fear of defeat.

ADMINISTRATION: I Cor. 12:28 - The ability to organize ideas, people, and things; the ability to delegate responsibility, to plan goals, and actions; to recruit others to do the Lord's work.

SERVING: Rom. 12:7 - The ability to identify unmet needs involved in a task and to meet those needs with joy and diligence. A servant is one who is ready and willing to lend a hand to whatever tasks there may be.

LEADING: Rom. 12:8 - The ability to motivate others with wisdom, humility, and efficiency so that others grow and are able to work together toward a common goal.

Guidelines To Help You Determine Your Spiritual Gift (s)

The following steps are guidelines to help you discover your spiritual gifts:

Step One: Explore the possibilities: Read through the three key chapters in Scripture dealing with spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12, Rom. 12, Eph. 4). Reflect on the meanings of the gifts themselves and the meanings they have for you as an individual. Be aware of the options Scripture offers so you can have something concrete to look for as you move ahead.

Step Two: Experiment with several kinds of ministry so you can determine your level of interest, desire, and abilities.

Step Three: Examine feelings: When you experiment with a gift and enjoy using it, that is a good sign. However, you may not feel good about a certain gift and it still may be one of your spiritual gifts. Our feelings may be the result of our temperament rather than the correct gift. When others testify that they see one of our spiritual gifts, we must take them seriously even if we don't feel comfortable with that particular gift at first.

Step Four: Evaluate your effectiveness: Spiritual gifts are meant to be used for the benefit of others. Each one is designed by God to accomplish a specific objective. As you use your gift(s), you will see positive results taking place. If you are not seeing any results, you probably do not have that particular gift.

Step Five: Expect confirmation from the Body: Gifts are given to build up other members of the Body. Other Christians will recognize your gift and give you confirmation of it. Christians should be looking to discover gifts in the brethren, to confirm their gifts, or to make them aware of their gifts. The "Body" will be as strong as our utilization of all of the gifts. If you feel you

have a gift and no one else is agreeing with you, you should take a closer look at yourself and assess where you are attempting to go.

In every step, the key is prayer. The Lord will guide you into accurate discoveries of your gifts.

A Philosophy Of Spiritual Gifts

The above is a glossary of spiritual gifts as specifically designated in Scripture. Therefore, those areas that are considered in Scripture as offices are not included in the list of gifts.

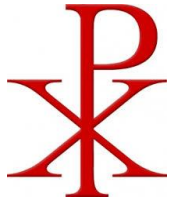
The **offices** are in Ephesians 4:11-12: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors. Those who fill these offices naturally will be placed in that position because of possessing one or more spiritual gifts. Not included on this list are those gifts that are variously understood and considered to be sign gifts. These are miracles, healing, tongues, and interpreting tongues. We do believe God works on behalf of his people today, but we do not endorse the modern tongues-speaking movement for the following reasons:

1. The modern tongues movement appears to be something totally different than the gift of tongues in the New Testament. The latter was a language, the former is a jibber-jabber. One is real, the other is false.
2. The tongues movement gives an undue prominence to a gift that had only limited value even in New Testament times (I Cor. 12-14).
3. The tongues movement often suggests that tongues-speaking is the necessary evidence of the special work of the Spirit, when in fact, the New Testament does not support this idea.
4. The tongues movement tends to place more emphasis on tongues-speaking as a manifestation of the Spirit than on the work of the Spirit within to produce character and behavior (Gal. 5:22-25).
5. The tongues movement claims "ecstatic utterance" is also tongues-speaking, when there seems to be good reason for believing the gift in the New Testament times was that of speaking in previously unlearned foreign languages. Acts 2 uses the word *dialect*.
6. People who practice tongues, according to the Kidahl report digress in mental, emotional, and spiritual maturity.
7. The tongues movement often fails to see God sovereignly gives His gifts, not on demand, but based on his will.

We do not deny that God sovereignly gives His gifts or that He can bestow a biblical gift of tongues; we deny most of the emphasis of the modern tongues-speaking movement is biblically sound. In stating our position on the modern

tongues-speaking movement, we do not mean to detract from the sincerity or Christian character of many within the movement.

12. SERVANTHOOD AND DISCIPLESHIP



Text: "Whoever wants to become great among you must be servant of all . . ." (Mk. 10:43)

Premise: Servanthood is not natural, it must be learned.

Basic Issue: In my training, am I becoming a servant of the Lord or am I a servant of men?

Objective: Every disciple can be great in the kingdom of God by taking on the virtues of servanthood.

A Servant Serves His Master

1. The man who wants to make an impact for God must first know who he is serving. He must be a servant of the Lord, not a servant of the sheep. **His objective is to achieve the will of God in the fold, not the will of the sheep in the flock.** He is to represent Christ and to minister to the sheep. It is a great privilege to be called "a servant of the Lord." Three times in Joshua, chapter one, Moses was called "the servant of the Lord."

2. A servant of the Lord works for the Lord not the sheep. The arena of his service is the flock, and the aim of his service is to make better sheep. Sheep will resist being made better, cleaner, and healthier, but that resistance must not deter the servant from doing the will of the Great Shepherd.

A Servant Serves

1. A servant serves. He isn't on earth to be served, to give commands, or "to enjoy the good life."

2. Jesus was the supreme servant. He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister . . ." Many of our spiritual struggles come because we don't know how to serve. *We experience conflicts because we are here to be served rather than serve. We have conflicts in the home and church because we are here to be served rather than serve.* We are easily miffed and irritated because we are here to be served rather than to serve. Serving isn't natural, it is spiritual. In fact, it is a gift. Do you agree?

3. Serving is draining and taxing. We must learn to serve even though it is hard, uncomfortable, and requires sacrifice: "Jesus became obedient even unto death" (Phil. 2:10,11).

A Servant Develops Servant Attitudes

1. Jesus: The Seven Downward Steps of Christ (Phil. 2:5).

- Uncompetitive: ". . . thought it not robbery to be equal with God".

- Divestiture: " . . . But emptied Himself . . . "
- Submissive: " . . . took the form of a servant . . . "
- Abasement: " . . . Being made in human likeness . . . "
- Humility: ". . . he humbled himself . . . "
- Obedience: " . . . He became obedient unto death . . . "
- Degradation: ". . . unto death even death of the cross."

2. Jesus' teaching on servant attitudes: (Lk. 17:6-10) **A Test of**

- Willingness to do the work of a servant. Mental maturity
- Willingness to have work heaped upon them Emotional maturity
- Willingness to put the master's interests' first Spiritual maturity
- Willingness to serve without thanks Motivational maturity
- Willingness to admit un-profitableness Character maturity

A Servant Makes Others Successful

1. The *opposite* of servanthood is **self-interest**. *A servant, however, seeks to make those in authority over him successful.* Imagine what would happen to a church who sought to make their leaders successful!
2. *Withholding one's love*, withholding one's gifts is not serving.
3. A test of a servant: When a person falls from (your) grace, how do you treat them?

A Servant Has A Motivation Of Love

1. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?"
2. Jesus didn't ask Peter if he loved sheep, or if he loved sheep work. He asked, "Do you love me?" Nasty, dirty, matted sheep tests motivation. Long, hot, sweaty, grueling hours of sheep work, tests motivation. Love for Jesus is the only motivation for service.
3. Only love for Jesus will enable a minister to love belligerent sheep.

A Servant Works To Build Up The Flock

1. Jesus went on to tell Peter, "Feed my sheep". He didn't ask Peter to pet the sheep, or to fleece the sheep, or "be fed by the sheep," but to "feed my sheep."
2. Ultimately, service must minister to the spiritual needs and hungers of God's people. All service should have as its aim building up of the body of Christ.

A Servant Yields Personal Rights

1. Paul called himself a *doulos* of the Lord. Two types of slaves existed in Israel: a hired servant which was much like our word *employee*, and secondly a *doulos*, a full-time slave without citizen rights. A *doulos* yielded his freedoms because he loved his master (Ex. 21:1ff). Likewise, those who desire to be a disciple, must give up all rights so they can glorify Christ. Some rights that must be yielded are the right to be understood, a right to be respected, a right for time to one's self, and a right to personal comfort.

2. A problem of division existed in the Philippine church. Self-interest warred against unity. When Christians possess rights, fractures and divisions dominate the agenda. Only the spirit of servanthood can prevent scars in relational conflicts (Phil. 2:5).

3. Yielding rights, however, does not mean a servant must tolerate moral mistreatment, disrespect, or violations of trust. In fact, it is a spiritual service to Christ to confront people who hurt and mistreat God's servants (II Cor. 7:8).

A Servant Employ's Grace (I Cor. 15:10)

1. God in grace has saved you and me. He did not withhold His love because we were unworthy, rather, in grace He showered us with the wealth of Christ (II Cor. 8:9). Grace doesn't serve because of merit or worth. It serves wholly apart from the condition of its recipients. Grace loves, not because who other people are, but because of what it is, grace!

2. All service, therefore, must spring from grace at work within our soul. Grace, not duty must be the mainspring of power. Grace is always voluntary, always willing, always active without regard to the worthiness of its object.

3. All spiritual gifts are given by grace (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:6-10) and are to be exercised graciously. *To withhold one's gifts from the body is a sin against grace.*

4. All serving and devotion must proceed from thankfulness. Where joyful service is lacking, grace has not been employed.

5. All spiritual blessings come, not from human cleverness, but from a work of grace. Failure in the Christian life results, not from a lack of devotion, *but from unbelief. God works on our behalf, not because we are worthy, but because we believe His Word.*

6. All service, then, must be regarded as a privilege, not agonizing duty. Even setting up chairs and sweeping floors is a privilege (2 Cor. 4:1-3).

7. Likewise, discipline designed to make us better servants should not be viewed as punishment, but pruning grace proceeding from a heart of Heavenly love (Heb. 12).

A Servant Looks Forward To His Reward

1. There is a special power that is available for those who suffer in service (2Tim. 1:8-10).
2. In Israel the priests were required to retire at age 50. To be a soldier a male needed to be 20 years old, but there was no retirement age (Num. 1). Though one has to be mature to serve the Lord, service has no retirement age. He may change areas of service, but he never has to retire.
3. The servant lives for six words: "Well done, good, and faithful servant" (Mt. 25:21).

13. LIFESTYLE AND DISCIPLESHIP



Text: 1 Cor. 9:22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Premise: To disciple others, one must change his lifestyle to accomplish the objective.

Basic Issue: Can God trust you to make adjustments in your lifestyle in order to do his business of winning the lost to Christ?

Objective: You can win disciples by making adjustments in your personal lifestyle.

It does little good to know the gospel and to love the gospel if a person doesn't change his lifestyle to perpetuate the gospel. Discipleship involves a willingness to make personal adjustments in order to win others to the Savior. A disciple must deny personal preferences so that Christ will have personal priority.

Adjust the Attitudes (I Cor 9)

1. A disciplemaker develops a compulsion to preach the good news (9:16).

"If a man is not fishing, he is not following" (M.J. Michaux).

2. A disciplemaker absorbs injustices (9:12). A disciplemaker is much like a mother. He is needed but unappreciated. At times you will be mistreated, misunderstood, and violated. It would be easy to be angry and upset. A disciplemaker denies his flesh opportunity to shame his Master and endures hardships in the ministry.

3. A disciplemaker abandons personal rights (9:4-15). Rights are those personal choices that the believer exercises that his Lord has not granted. They are not illegal or immoral. They are just contrary to life of discipleship. In the gospel, these rights become extra baggage, a reason for others to criticize the gospel.

For example: a preacher may have a legal a right to live in a mansion, wear 600 dollar suits, and drive a luxury car. Possessing all this cream can curdle the milk. Most of us don't have the above problem, but we may have to yield our love of TV, or love of golf, or hobby of stargazing in order to serve the gospel. A disciple must learn to "take up the cross" and follow Christ. There are no comfort zones on the cross. Even Christ was stripped of his robes in order to do the work of redemption. Likewise, to be a disciple, one must yield all his choices to the risen Lord.

4. A disciplemaker makes himself a slave to everyone (9:16). In order to win others, the disciplemaker must make personal adjustments. He will cater to the preferences of others in order to win men to Christ. For example, if the people he is trying to win to Christ loves to go country western dancing, buy a pair of boots; if they love to play tennis, dust off the old racket; if they like to go bowling, start practicing your left hook.

I know of a man who was trying to win a man to Christ whose hobby was to shoot rats at the city dump. What did my evangelist friend do? He went with him to the city dump.

5. A disciplemaker must run in such a way as to win (9:24). John McArthur said if you are not living in such a way as to be the greatest Christian that ever lived, you are already compromising your Christian life. Imagine an athlete who was training to run the mile, but he only practiced once a week. Most Christians believe men without Christ are going to hell. They believe that the gospel is the answer to man's dilemma. They want to win men to Christ, but they only show up for training once a week. If you are going to get serious about discipleship, you must make adjustments in your lifestyle.

Reflection: What needs to change in your lifestyle in order to win men and women to the Savior?

Adjusting your Values

1. Jesus on values

Mark 8:34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Luke 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

2. Paul on Values

Phil. 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung,

that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

2 Cor. 6:3 Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed:

But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

2 Cor. 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Adjust Your Schedule (Eph. 5:15-17)

1. Build into your schedule relational time, time to develop contacts and relationship with pre-Christian people.
2. Weed out of your life time wasters: Take an audit of your time, eliminate those things that soak of your time.
3. Make a a 10 Most Wanted List. Develop weekly contact with at least four unsaved people. Spend time with non-Christians in order to win some to Christ.

Adjust Your Convictions (Rom. 14)

Dr. Joe Aldridge made a good point in one of his books, "Meat eaters make better evangelists." The idea he was trying to make was this: in order to win more people, you must exercise your liberties. For example, if you are trying to win a friend to Christ who loves country western music and you don't like the style, but he invites you to go to a concert, what are you going to do? Well, if you are serious about being his friend, slip into your boots.

1. There are some convictions that are not adjustable. Where God's Word has said, "No", it is a "No!" Accept it. To compromise matters of faith not only shame the Lord, but renders one ineffective in winning others to Christ. *The critical issue is this: how to be holy without becoming an isolationist, and how to mix with the pagan world without compromising.* **Isolationist** may be holy, but they don't win others to Christ; mixers may be great at influencing people, but if they compromise, they fail to make a holy impact on others.

2. Some areas are what we call "**doubtful things**". These are areas of concern where God's Word has not spoken: For example: Going to movies, wearing makeup, the car you drive, the clothes you wear, and the food you eat are areas that God's Word does not address. These are matters of conscience to some people.

3. The Christian must learn how to take *holiness to the hedges* without compromising his faith. If not properly instructed, the conscience can interfere with evangelism. For example your beer drinking neighbor may invite you over for a barbecue, but if your conscience sounds an alarm, you may decline and miss an opportunity to develop a relationship.

4. The family of God has a great influence on the lifestyle that we adopt- for better or for worse. *Aggressive evangelists* are rarely understood, and the lifestyle they develop mystifies on-lookers. Often, they become the subjects of criticism based on "matters of conscience". It is imperative that we understand Rom. 14 correctly. In seeking to interpret Rom. 14 correctly, Dr. Aldridge has identified five types of brothers.

- **The professional weaker brother:** He is a brother whose convictions are set, and will never be stumbled by the choices of others. He lives a very restrictive lifestyle. Discontent to travel that road alone, he wins converts by criticizing those who exercise their liberties in Christ.
- **The genuine weaker brother:** He is a brother whose is still learning, whose convictions are unsettled in the Word of God, and who is easily persuaded by people with strong personalities. He is endanger of violating his conscience because of the flaunted liberties of his brethren.
- **The mature non-participating brother:** He is a brother who understands his liberties in Christ and chooses to limit his freedoms for the advance of the gospel. He accepts the freedom others exercise without censorship, and he crusades for the gospel, not his life choices.
- **The mature participating brother:** He is a brother who exercises his liberties in order to win converts to Christ. He doesn't parade his

liberties, but he is uninhibited by the fears and criticism of others when it comes to mixing with the lost in a social setting.

The immature participating brother: He is a brother who not only exercises his liberties; he is a salesman for freedom. Discontent with those who possess a weak conscience, he flaunts his liberty in such a way that he manipulates others to join his activities even at the expense of causing others to compromise their conscience.

Adjust Your Relationships In The Church

1. Winning others to Christ is important, and in one sense, you have to leave the comfort of the fold to go after the lost (Lk 15:1,2ff).
2. Don't miss major meeting of the church (Acts 2:42), but you will need to break from the constant demands of church life to associate with non-Christian people. Inform a few trusted, spiritual brothers and let them know what you are doing and why.
3. Accept the fact that many will not understand what you are attempting to do. If criticism comes then do the following:
 - Evaluate the criticism.
 - Don't submit to the weaknesses of others.
 - Seek to build others up. Don't criticize back (Rom. 15:1).
 - Endure criticism (Rom. 15:3).
 - Keep seeking to win others to Christ.

Seek to be a unifying influence (Rom. 15:6; Phil. 1:8ff).

Adjustments In Lifestyle In Pricilla Aquilla

Aquilla and Pricilla were a couple who made major adjustments in their lifestyle to further the gospel. Wherever they went, their lifestyle revolved around sharing the gospel, building the church and discipling others.

- ACTS 18:2 In Corinth, they boarded the Apostle Paul.
- ACTS 18:18 Sailed for Syria with Paul. Left in Ephesus.
- ACTS 18:26 Boarded Apollos and disciplined him.
- I COR. 16:19 Hosted a church in their home. Sent greetings.
- ROM. 16:3 At Rome, they hosted another church in their home.
- II TIM. 4:19 At Ephesus. Paul sends greetings through Timothy.

Adjusting Yourself to the Holy Spirit

1. Facts about the Spirit

- The Spirit testifies (Jn. 15:26)
- The Spirit guides (Jn. 16:13: Rom. 8:14)
- The Spirit seals (Eph. 5:13).
- The Spirit empowers (Acts 1:8).
- The Spirit fills (Eph. 5:18).
- The Spirit is loyal to the person and work of Christ (1 Jn. 4:6).

2. Facts about filling.

- “Being filled” with the Spirit is a command (Eph. 5:18).
- The word “filled” is contrasted with drunkenness implying “influence.”
- The word “filled” implies “to be controlled by.”
- “Being filled” is something believers must consciously do; that is, the believer seeks to be yielded to the Spirit of God. Prayer seems to be a factor in our filling (Acts 4:31).
- “Being filled” is something sovereign (Acts 4:31). We do not control the Spirit, but he controls us.
- “Being filled” is not the same as being baptized by the Spirit. Batism of the Spirit is an act of the Spirit whereby He places us into the body and history of Christ. There is only one baptism; but, there are many fillings of the Spirit.
- “Being filled” is tested under pressure. Affliction reveals the quality of our yieldedness to Christ.
- We are called “not to grieve” the Spirit (Eph. 4:30). We grieve the Spirit when we say “Yes” to sin.
- We are called “not to quench” the Spirit (2 Thess. 5:19). We quench the Spirit when we say “No” to the leading of the Spirit.

Summary: If discipleship is important, then one needs to adjust their lifestyle so they have time to be involved in the process.

14. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLESHIP

Lessons from the book of I Timothy



Text: "I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer . . ." (1Tim. 1:5).

Premise: Discipleship is a ministry of trust, and as a servant of the Lord, the servant will be called to resolve conflict.

Basic Issue: Are you capable of bringing peace where there is war?

Objective: Every Christian can be a peacemaker by learning the answer to the following Questions.

Timothy was left in Ephesus by the Apostle Paul to resolve regional church conflict. It was his job to root out false teachers, establish rules of conduct, ordain qualified elders, and solve financial burdens of the church. Would you like to have his job? The letter was written to Timothy to clarify the ethical basis for managing conflict in the church.

What is conflict management? It is the art of decision making. Conflict comes when people are undecided. They haven't figured out their goals, program, structure, or ministry philosophy. So the issue is, "What decisions need to be made?" Timothy had to make decisions about policies, ethical standards and personnel.

Why are there conflicts in the church? Conflicts are bound to come because people are so different and because we are all human.

- People have different values.
- People adopt different goals.
- People pursue different lifestyles.
- People hold to different theologies.
- People have different perceptions about issues.
- People have different expectations of church leaders and one another.
- People have different standards of performance and finished products.

Are conflicts bad? Conflicts are not bad as long as people recognize that life is filled with ambivalence, and people are committed to communicate and work through issues to a resolution. Conflicts are bad if communication breaks down and people develop goals other than solving current issues, ". . . fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience." (I Tim 1:18).

Do all churches have conflicts? All Christian churches experience resistance to their goals. But, it is how we view that resistance that determines the level of heart-felt conflict. Many churches recognize resistance and are determined to pull together and overcome it. Possessing hope, they simply view resistance as a challenge. However, when conflicts are underground and unidentified, or there are no apparent solutions to heart-felt resistance, they become problems. Problems have a way of degenerating into interpersonal conflicts.

What hinders decision making and solution finding? Attitudes! Here are a few that can squelch good decision making:

1. If something "feels bad" it is bad. "Feeling good" to some is the ultimate value. Therefore, that something or someone who generates negative feelings must be evil. Therefore, they must be dealt with as evil. This attitude, of course, will cripple any resolution.
2. "We're not supposed to have conflicts." While it is true we should not be contentious, it is not true that we should not have conflicts. The only way to avoid conflict is to be in a coffin. The book of Acts is filled with 1st Century conflicts (See Acts 6). Let's not idealize the New Testament. Most of the epistles were written to resolve conflict.
3. "We are always supposed to agree with leadership." There should be freedom to disagree in love without being disagreeable. To "always agree" is to tell half-truths and to suppress real feelings. One can disagree with a decision and still be supportive of a decision.
4. "Over-generalization" of problems such as, "He's stupid" instead of saying, "I disagree with his decision to change the order of worship," or saying things like, "We're not communicating," rather than saying, "I don't understand your last point."
5. "Self-protection" rather than clear understanding becomes the primary motivation. In conflict our insecurities cause us to retreat from truth. When protecting ourselves becomes more important than objective communication, then truth is filtered and discussion is foggy. People run, people criticize, people hide behind masks.
6. The goal of winning: The goal of the Christian life is to bring glory to God. When the goal to praise God is replaced by a desire to win . . . or be right. . . . or to be safe . . . or to get rid of people, then resolution becomes dark. *The question should be, "How can we bring praise to God out of our trouble?"*

What Principles Lead To Effective Conflict Management?

Principle #1 Overcome Fear:

"God has not given us a Spirit of fear . . . " (2 Tim 1:7). How can we not be afraid in this situation? We must learn to live with stress. Life is stress, and the only way to avoid stress is to avoid life. Christ asked, "Why are you afraid." Our fears distort reality. Fear is our response to false evidence. The one who deals with conflict must deal with fear: fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of negative emotions.

Principle #2 Build Trust:

How can we create a feeling of trust? People are afraid if they disagree, they will be rejected. We must communicate that "Nothing scares us to death" and discussion is possible. "Can I trust you?" "Will you hurt me?" are the critical questions which must be answered in people's minds. Trust in the negotiator's integrity is a prerequisite for problem solving: ". . . set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Tim 4:11).

Principle # 3 Communicate Worth:

The way to build trust, is to treat each person with dignity, respect, and worth even if they error. ". . . treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity" (I Tim 5:1).

Principle #4 Gather Data:

Timothy had to resolve conflict regarding the support of widows He had to gather data before rendering a decision: data about age, family, and circumstances. The only way to solve a problem and to make a decision is to gather information. What information do I need to make a decision?

- What are the objectives?
- What do they mean by the language used?
- Are they generalizing feelings or being specific?
- Is it hearsay or fact?

Data helps analyze the situation and to provide options. The Bible warns man about judgment without facts, "He who answers before listening- that is his folly and his shame" (Prov 18:13).

Principle # 5 Be ethical.

Know the Biblical principle upon which to base a decision. For example: In I Timothy 5 it was unethical to hear an acrimony against an elder that was not substantiated by at least two or three witnesses. This is an ethical standard. One has to know the principle, so that one can make decisions correctly.

Principle # 6 Show Fairness.

Did all who are concerned about the issue have an ample opportunity to be heard? Impartiality is important. *People will forgive an adverse decision, but they have difficulty in forgiving a dispassionate decision.* " . . . keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism" (I Tim 5:21).

Principle # 7 Keep Pure:

" . . . do not share in the sins of others, keep yourself pure." *Emotional maturity is a prerequisite for conflict management.* If people get emotional, it is easy to become emotional; if apathetic, to become apathetic. The one involved in conflict management must first manage himself. It is too easy to develop an emotional focus that makes one a problem producer instead of a problem solver. If a relational conflict develops in an altercation the issue is no longer the "disagreement" but the relationship. Repair the relationship, then work on the disagreement.

Principle # 9 Make a decision:

Timothy had to make a decision about false teachers, care of certain widows, and finances for elders. Making a decision for some people is as scary as sky diving. Even choosing the flavor of an ice cream cone is a monumental event. It is good to be cautious, but after a while a decision needs to be made. *Resolution means making the best decision.* Without decision, problems fester.

Principle # 10 Guard the means:

"Rebuke not an elder/older man harshly" (5:1). Paul didn't say, don't correct older men if they sin. He said, don't do it harshly. The way a person makes decisions and executes them is just as important as what decision was made. A wrong response to a wrong response is doubly wrong. *The means of conducting a disagreement is just as important as the disagreement itself.*

Principle # 11 Avoid idealism.

"The sins of some men are obvious reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them . . . in the same way good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden." (1 Tim. 5:24). No resolution is complete, thorough, and perfect. We are dealing with imperfect people. A mediator can only judge what he sees and hears. He will never know all of the facts, all the attitudes, all the issues. But he can render the best decision possible. And regardless of the criticism, one's conscience remains clear.

Principle # 12 Remember the Goal. " . . . to the praise of his glory".

Three times in the book of I Timothy, right in the middle of the pigpen of conflict, Paul bursts into accolades of praise (1:17, 3:16, 5:13-16). Our goal is to free men to praise God. *Praise is the key to freeing men.* It is the oil that greases

the skids and reduces the friction. It is the sweetness that turns lemons into lemonade. Praise Him before, during, and after the conflict and one will "glorify God" and he will be shown "the way of salvation/(resolution)" Ps 50:23

How does a conflict management team know if they are successful in dealing with interpersonal conflict? Here are seven questions that need to be asked to evaluate effectiveness:

- Did we agree on what decision had to be made?
- Did we agree on who needs to make the decision?
- Did we make a decision?
- Did we reduce interpersonal tension by the decision?
- Did we help people develop skills for resolving future conflicts?
- Did we spawn a harvest of praise to God regardless if all were satisfied with the decision?
- Do I have a clear conscience about my role in the decision making process?

Is it worth it?

Some problems are more draining than the middle-east negotiations. Is it worth all the trouble . . . and hassle . . . and energy to fight for the life and soul of a church? ". . . keep this commandment without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time . . ." (1 Tim. 6:14) and when He comes, He will not come without His rewards for His weary soldiers, His unifiers, His conflict managers.

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