
DISCIPLESHIP BY DESIGN

BY HARVEY HERMAN, JR.

A BIBLICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

I. Our Campus Ministry Philosophy of Ministry

A. Community

Our goal is to become a "community" of students on campus. We put a high priority on coming together as a group for biblically commanded activity. God has intended for us to come to a greater understanding of Him by vital interaction in the Body of Christ.

This means that we can experience fully what God has for us only when we are in the context of "community". Only in the Body can the gifts of the Holy Spirit find meaning. Only in the Body can multi-faceted ministry best occur. Only as they are recognized by the community can eldership and accountability be important components for each believer's life. Scattered Bible studies alone are not sufficient for a full and balanced growth in Christ. What is necessary is a fully operating Body with leadership, training, worship, fellowship and outreach.

B. Key Ingredients for Community

1. Affirmation

There is nothing you have done or will do that will make me stop loving you. I may not agree with your actions, but I will love you as a person and do all I can to hold you up in God's affirming love.

2. Availability

Anything I have — time, energy, insight, possessions — is at your disposal if you need it, to the limit of my resources.

3. Prayer

I commit to pray for you in some regular fashion, believing that our caring Father wishes His children to pray for one another and ask Him for the blessings they need.

4. Openness

I promise to strive to become a more open person, disclosing my feelings, my struggles, my joys, and my hurts to you as well as I am able. This is to affirm your worth to me as a person. In other words, I need you!



"Well, Mr. Curtis, it seems your inability to function stems from the fact that you are a disembodied head."

5. Honesty

I will try to mirror back to you what I am hearing you say and feel. If this means risking pain for either of us, I will trust our relationship enough to take that risk, realizing it is in "speaking the truth in love that we grow up in every way into Christ who is the head" (Eph. 4:15).

6. Sensitivity

Even as I desire to be known and understood by you, I commit to be sensitive to you and to your needs to the best of my ability. I will try to hear you, see you, and feel where you are and to draw you out of the pit of discouragement or withdrawal.

7. Confidentiality

I will promise to keep confidential whatever is shared in order to provide the atmosphere of trust necessary for openness.

8. Accountability

I am accountable to you to become what God has designed me to be in His loving creation.

C. Community Life Expressed

As you can see from the ingredients for community, a Christian's community life is defined first by the quality of relationships maintained between Christian friends and secondarily by where we live. Community life does not demand that we live together (and community is not insured even if we live under the same roof). But where proximity living is available, every opportunity should be pursued to assist the development of a Christian community life-style.

D. The Four-Fold Philosophy of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries

1. Biblical Foundation for the Four-Fold Philosophy

"They devoted themselves to the apostles *teaching*, and to *fellowship*, to the *breaking of bread* and to *prayer*...Every day they continued to *meet together* in the temple courts. They *broke bread* in their homes and *ate together* with glad and sincere hearts, *praising God* and enjoying favor of all the people. And the *Lord added* to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42,46,47 emphasis added).

2. Focus of the Four-Fold Philosophy: Full Christian Growth

Each aspect (worship, fellowship, discipleship, and witness) produces health and growth both for individual believers and for the Body of Christ. Each of us giving continual attention to these aspects throughout our life while we are in accountable Christian community, will keep us on the narrow path that leads to our Father's house.

3. Strategy for Implementing the Four-Fold Philosophy

"Our primary strategy is to work toward the building of a group or community of people who share the ideals of becoming a community of *worship*, a community of *fellowship*, a community of *discipleship*, and a community of *witness*. We believe the most fertile atmosphere for



"It's been brought to my attention that there's been too much idle talk going on. Let me just say right now - I won't have any gossiping old hens in *this* church."

people to come to faith and maturity in Christ is warm exposure to a group of people fervently committed to the God of the Bible, to one another, and to the task of evangelizing the campus. As a worshipping, loving, discipling, witnessing community, they demonstrate the Kingdom of God and most effectively enculturate others in it" (*Chi Alpha Philosophy*).

II. Our Particular Emphasis Here is Discipleship

A. Christ demands that we disciple the nations.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and *make disciples* of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching* them to *obey* everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very ends of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20).

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The scope of the demand:

- 1) *Purpose*: "make disciples of all nations"
- 2) *Program*: "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you"
- 3) *Provision*: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you"
- 4) *Promise*: "And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."

LET THERE BE NO ERROR AT THIS POINT

Discipling is a task that requires much more than simple programs or techniques. Discipleship at all times requires the power and presence of Jesus Christ through the indwelling Spirit!

B. Christ entrusted the Kingdom of God into the men He disciplined. He didn't write a holy book, He left no manual, no tablets full of commandments, only trained, changed and empowered men to continue His mission — to save the world.

C. Christ demonstrated that discipleship must be encased in a personal, relational model and not in a static educational mode.

This calls for the direct personal involvement of the discipler in the lives of those being disciplined. "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last... This is my command: Love each other" (John 15:16,17).

"It is our conviction that discipling is best accomplished in the relational context of the more matured believer helping to nurture younger members of the community" (*Chi Alpha Philosophy*).

III. A Summary Statement

The making of disciples is not something which just happens. It is a very deliberate and specific process which requires strategy, time, and prayer. It



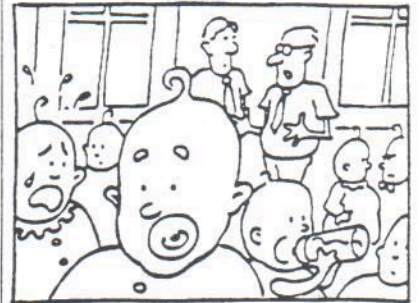
If only Brad's parents had seen the value in hands-on personal training.

is that process by which growing Christians impart their knowledge and experience in the Lord Jesus to newer Christians, in the context of personal relationships. By this process each member is thus given the basic knowledge and skills necessary to grow toward maturity in Christ and is equipped for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-16).

We desire to follow the instructions of Paul to Timothy. "...the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). In this way we perpetuate a continuous development of maturing leaders for the work of Christ here in our campus ministry, then across our state, our nation and, through our missions endeavors, around the world.

IV. The Purposes of Discipleship in the Campus Ministry Setting

- A. Provide all students involved with this ministry a spiritual/pastoral discipler for continued Christian growth and nurture.
- B. Provide every student a core of fellow students in which to share the love of God with each other.
- C. Provide a relational learning experience in the practices of the Christian faith.
- D. Provide an atmosphere for leadership development among students for God's kingdom work.
- E. Provide for the continual development of a trans-generational ministry to the university community.



"OK, so our congregation lacks a bit of maturity. But we're all perfectly healthy."



2 Timothy 2:2 It To The World!



THE MASTER'S METHOD I: METHOD, SELECTION & ASSOCIATION

I. The Importance of Method

"The days of His flesh were by the unfolding in time of the plan of God from the beginning. It was always before His mind. *He intended to save out of the world a people for Himself and to build a church of the Spirit which would come in glory and in power.* This world was His by creation, but He did not seek to make it His permanent abiding place. His mansions were in the sky. He was going to prepare a place for His people that had foundations eternal in the heavens.

No one was excluded from His gracious purpose. His love was universal. Make no mistake about it. He was the Saviour of the world (John 4:42). God wanted all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. To that end Jesus gave Himself to provide a salvation from all sin for all men. In that He died for one, He died for all. *Contrary to our superficial thinking, there never was a distinction in His mind between home and foreign missions. To Jesus it was all world evangelism.*

His life was ordered by His objective. *Everything He did and said was a part of the whole pattern.* It had significance because it contributed to the ultimate purpose of His life in redeeming the world for God. This was the motivating vision governing His behavior. His steps were ordered by it. Mark it well. Not for one moment did Jesus lose sight of His goal.

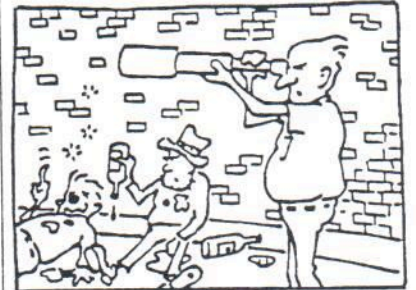
That is why it is so important to observe the way Jesus maneuvered to achieve His objective. *The Master disclosed God's strategy of world conquest. He had confidence in the future precisely because He lived according to that plan in the present.* There was nothing haphazard about His life - no wasted energy, not an idle word. He was on business for God (Luke 2:49). He lived, He died, and He rose again according to schedule. Like a general plotting His course of battle, the Son of God calculated to win. He could not afford to take a chance. Weighing every alternative and variable factor in human experience, *He conceived a plan that would not fail."*

Master Plan of Evangelism, Robert E. Coleman. pp. 17,18 (emphasis added)

II. Is Bigger Always Better?

We live in a time when the tendency in our culture is to associate successful enterprises as those endeavors that end up being large and wealthy. This tendency has also gripped portions of the Church of Jesus Christ. We too often associate numbers as somehow equalling success, or we associate a large a prosperous building as somehow showing that God's blessing is on a particular work.

It should be understood that living things do grow and that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with large churches. But these things do not in and of themselves show God's blessing or spiritual success. One need only look at the growth and wealth of groups such as the Mormons or the



Ted looks for opportunities to witness.

*If you do a good job
at home, it will go
around the world!*

Unification Church to see that we should be hard pressed if these were our only criterion.

Instead we must search out the *principles* that controlled Jesus' ministry and determine what *goals* He was working toward. Rather than meeting the world's criteria for success, *it is in the faithful fulfillment of God's commands and purposes that we are truly successful.*

It should be our conviction that we should not only be students of *Jesus' words* but also of *Jesus' methods*. The Scripture is not only our *message book* but also our *method book* when it comes to the life of Christ.

III. Is Discipling the Best Way to Reach the World?

Let's look at two possible ways to evangelize. First, let's look for a Super Evangelist (SE). We'll pray for Super Evangelist, provide for all Super Evangelist's material needs, and book services ahead from city to city. We'll do everything in order for Super Evangelist to concentrate exclusively on evangelism. If the fruit of the Super Evangelist's labor would be that 1,000 people are converted each and every day for 10 years, how many would be saved through this incredible process?

Now, let's take one equally committed person who would share the Lord throughout the normal course of day-to-day activities and would see 5 conversions a year. We'll call this person Faithful Discippler (FD). Not only will Faithful Discippler lead people to Christ, but he would train them to share their faith just as freely as he had with them. Faithful Discippler will spend a year discipling the 5 new converts and then in the next year those disciples would each reach and disciple 5 others. If this process were to occur over 10 years, how many would be saved after this manner?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SE					
FD					

	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
SE					
FD					

Beyond the numerical advantage, what other advantages would there be, practically, for the mission of the Church to the Faithful Discippler model?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

IV. SELECTION: People Were His Method

Coleman reminds us that before Jesus ever preached His first sermon He had already selected people to follow Him. *Jesus was not interested in developing programs that would reach the multitudes, but in developing individuals that the multitudes would follow.*

The men He selected would not impress us as being "key people". (Nor

did they impress the religious leaders of Jesus' day.) They were rowdy, insensitive, quarrelling, envious and bigoted. They came from common backgrounds, a few were social outcasts. Within these individuals He was to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

Just think what modern management consultants might say about Jesus' choice of associates...

HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALISTS

To: Jesus, Son of Joseph
Woodcrafter Carpenter Shop
Nazareth, 25922

From: Jordan Personnel Management Consultants
Jerusalem 26544

Dear Sir:

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have taken our battery of tests. We have not only run the results through our computer, but have also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our expert psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

The profiles of all tests are included, and you will want to study each of them carefully. As part of our service, and for your guidance, we make some general comments, much as an auditor will include some general statements. This is given as a result of staff consultations and comes without any additional fee.

It is our staff's opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the modern team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience, with managerial ability and a proven track record.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of violent temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine others' morale. We feel it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical tendencies and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive profile.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of broad ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely,
Human Resources Specialists



What we think the disciples were like.



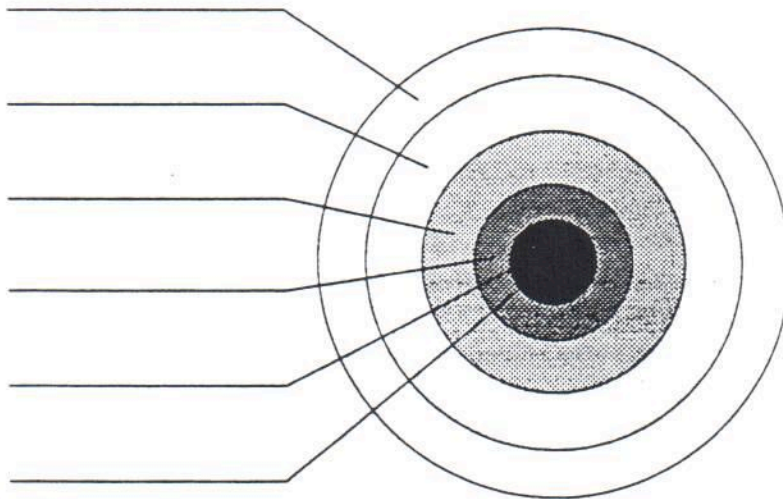
What the disciples were really like.

But the people Jesus chose did have some positive qualities. They were:

- *teachable* (they were honest, and willing to confess their need for understanding)
- *sincere* (they truly wanted to know and serve God)
- *hungry* (they were tired of the emptiness of their present religious life).

Jesus taught us by His methods that the world can be transformed, but only as individuals of the world are transformed. He also showed us that anyone is a candidate to be a discipler. It is not so much an issue of whether you are able to disciple, but whether you will choose to disciple.

Were there any distinctions in how Jesus related to people? Certainly not in compassion, but truly there were distinctions in the amount of time Jesus spent with different groups of people, the depth of teaching different groups received and the difference in levels of commitment. Noting that Jesus purposed to work through individuals, let's look at the specifics of exactly how he went about it. The concentric circles below highlight Jesus' differing levels of relationship.



Carl was determined not to be stereotyped as just another dumb ox.

We need relationships at all levels!

"One must decide where he wants his ministry to count—in the momentary applause of popular recognition or in the reproduction of his life in a few chosen individuals who will carry on his work after he has gone. Really it is a question of which generation we are serving." Master Plan, p. 37

V. ASSOCIATION: He Stayed With Them

Beyond selecting people, Coleman points out that Jesus needed followers who could bear witness to His life and ministry and carry on after He returned to the Father.

It is important to see that Jesus' disciples were not taught in a classroom and then asked to recite their lessons in Doctrine 101 and Practical Theology 212, but discipleship with Jesus meant that class was always in session. They didn't learn doctrine, they participated in doctrine.

And as time went on, rather than giving less time to the Twelve, He actually gave more. As the final days of Jesus' ministry approached, the intensity of Jesus' time with the disciples even magnified.

The probable application for us from this example of Jesus is that some strategy must be found whereby every convert is given a Christian friend to follow until such time as he can lead another.

How could the principles of *Selection* and *Association* be implemented in our campus ministry?

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- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
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- _____
- _____
- _____



THE MASTER'S METHOD II: CONSECRATION, IMPARTATION, DEMONSTRATION & DELEGATION

I. CONSECRATION: Carry Your Own Cross

Following are two letters which highlight the issue of Consecration. From these let us discuss their significance to us.

Letter #1: This letter was written by a young communist to a Christian and appeared in a Billy Graham newsletter. (Emphasis added.)

"The gospel of Jesus Christ is a much more powerful weapon for the renewal of society than is our Marxist doctrine. All the same, *it is we who will finally beat you.* We are only a handful and you Christians are numbered by the millions. But if you remember the story of Gideon and his 300 companions you will understand why I am right.

We Communists do not play with words. Of our salaries and wages we keep only what is strictly necessary and we give the rest for propaganda purposes. To this propaganda we also consecrate all our free time and part of our holidays.

You Christians, however, give only a little time and hardly any money for the spreading of the Gospel of Christ. *How can anyone believe in the supreme value of the gospel if you do not practice it? If you do not spread it? And if you sacrifice neither time nor money for it?*

Believe me, it is we who will win, for we believe in our Communist message and we are ready to sacrifice everything, even our lives. *But you, you Christians, are afraid to soil your hand."*

Letter #2: This is a letter from a revolutionary to his fiancée to explain why he was breaking their engagement. (Emphasis added.)

"We revolutionaries have a high casualty rate. We are the ones who get shot and hung and ridiculed and fired from our jobs and in every way made as uncomfortable as possible. A certain percentage of us get killed or imprisoned. We live in virtual poverty. We turn back to the party every penny we make above what is absolutely necessary to keep us alive. We revolutionaries do not have the time or the money for many movies, concerts, T-bone steaks or decent homes or new cars. We have been described as fanatics. *We are fanatics.* Our lives are dominated by one great overshadowing fact: the struggle for world dominion. *We revolutionaries have a philosophy of life which no amount of money can buy.* We have a cause to fight for, a definite purpose in life. We subordinate our petty personal selves into the great movement of humanity. And if our personal



lives seem hard, or our egos appear to suffer through subordination to the party, then we are adequately compensated by the thought that each of us, in his small way, is contributing something new and true for a better mankind. There is one thing which I am dead earnest about, and this is the cause. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife and my mistress, my breath and my meat. I work at it in the daytime and dream of it at night. Its hold on me grows, not lessens, as time goes on. Therefore, I cannot carry on a friendship or a love affair or even a conversation without relating to it—this force which drives and guides my life. *I evaluate people, books, ideas and actions according to how they affect the cause and by their attitude toward it.* I have already been in jail because of my ideals and, if necessary, I'm ready to go before the firing squad."

Jesus' disciples were not asked to make a statement of faith or to recite a creed. They were first asked to follow.

What kind of consecration are we looking for?

- set apart to: _____
- set apart from: _____

Personal Application

List three areas which have been real obedience/consecration issues for you in the last month.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

II. IMPARTATION: He Gave Himself Away

If from the last section we found that consecration/obedience is a motivation for living a discipling life-style, in this section we find that love is also a motivation in discipleship. Love was, and is always the standard by which discipleship is judged. But it's not the kind of love that is often portrayed in our media. It's calvary love — love that leads to service and laying down of life.

- Do you know what love is?
- Do you know how to love?
- Are you a loving person?

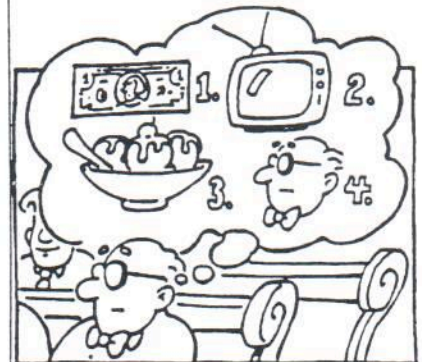
These three questions, though distinct, are all quite crucial and demand a response from every believer. Let us deal with each question in turn.

A. Do you know what love is?

This question seems more appropriately relegated to the realm of the poets to define for us. However, in a world where we can say in the same breath, "I love my fiancée," and "I love hamburgers", some defining of the concept of *love* is necessary.

We are called to love like God. Jesus came to display God's love for fallen humanity. Through his actions we can define love as always:

- active
- displayed
- selfless
- a decision rather than just an emotion
- holy



The four loves of Andy Kruprick.

B. Do you know how to love?

The love of God was just defined for us as His selfless, purposeful, and willful giving of Himself. For us to know how to love, it must involve us in the same expression of selfless giving of ourselves to God, other believers, and the non-believers around us. Jesus was the perfect model of loving, thus His methods of loving deserve our careful attention.

According to Jesus' first sermon (see Luke 4:18-19 and Isaiah 61:1-2) his own mission included the following:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Having a warm and tender heart or thinking lovely thoughts did not bring relief to the above-mentioned. Love was *demonstrated* to those in need.

Jesus knew that He was the one who was to be the "ransom for many". He knew who He was and what He was supposed to do. It's the same for us. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus; we have new identities. He has told us what to do:

"This is how we know what love is: Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers! If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can he claim that he has the love of God in his heart? Dear children! Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action." 1 John 3:16-18

Here are some suggestions on knowing how to love more effectively:

1. Make relationships a priority.

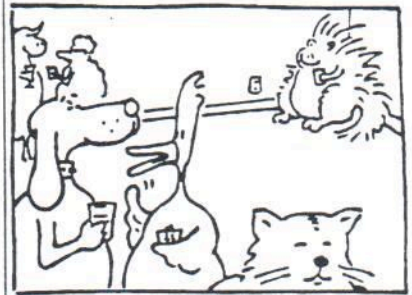
If you want friendships that make a difference, you must give them a high priority. You cannot assume that love will "just happen". You must be careful to schedule time with your friends. If friendship really is a high priority, it will become regularly visible on your weekly calendar.

2. Don't play it safe.

Transparency means: _____

Vulnerability means: _____

Without transparency and vulnerability, relationships remain at the surface level. If you are to love as Christ loved, you must live just as risky as He did. When you block yourself off from others, you will find yourself in emotional, spiritual and eventually even physical difficulties. God intended for us to be known—known by the Father and by His children.



"Boy, I'll tell ya. That Frank is a hard guy to get close to."

3. Create warmth in your friendships.

We are a society terribly out of touch with each other. Look people in the eyes when conversing, be free to touch them, practice smiling until it becomes comfortable. Share your feelings and not just your ideas. Actively listen in conversations.

4. Affirm your friends.

When we meet a person and see only a problem, we imprison that person in their problem. We need to see our friends, through faith, as Jesus sees them: unique, worthwhile, with infinite possibilities. In doing so we call forth a new being. Let's speak the truth in love to one another, especially the *good and affirming truth*.

5. Be Real

In Paul's letter to the Corinthians he addresses the way they were viewing their life together. They had been abusing their relationships with each other within the Christian community. Paul uses the body as an illustration and draws attention to two separate and opposite attitudes that can occur in a body of believers. Paul affirms neither of these attitudes.

He tells them that anyone who feels *inferior* to other members of the body fails to understand what God has done for them. The grace of God has made them new in Christ and co-heirs with all other saints. Paul also declares that there are some who have *superior* attitudes toward other members in the body. This too misses what God has done. These think too highly of themselves, higher than they ought to think. So high that they had come to disregard other members of the body for whom Christ had died.

A real person is someone who avoids both extremes. They have a real picture of who they are in relationship to Jesus; they are overjoyed at God's grace in their life; and they recognize that this same grace has set their brothers and sisters in Christ free, as well. A real person is described by Paul's words: "For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Romans 12:3).

C. Are you a loving person?

Are you a lover or a taker? That is a scary question we all must face many times in our lives. The issue goes beyond feeling good about God's love, or even knowing how Jesus loved. The bottom line question is, "*Are you actively loving as Jesus loved?*"

How do you get there? Again a quote from Coleman:

"How else could they ever fulfill the commission for their Lord with joy and inward peace? They needed an expression of Christ so real that their lives would be filled with His Presence. Evangelism had to be a burning compulsion within them purifying their desires and guiding their thoughts. Nothing less than a personal baptism of the Holy Spirit would suffice. The super-human work to which they were called demanded supernatural help—an endowment of power from on High." *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, p. 69.

As we discussed in the first lesson, Jesus not only laid out His purpose and program for discipleship to the Twelve, but He also promised His continual presence and the provision of the Spirit's filling. We are called to love as God does. To do so, we must be filled with Him.



"...and furthermore, I challenge this assembly to give even one example of something we've contributed to this world. When have we done anything but take, take, take?"

III. DEMONSTRATION: He Showed Them How to Live

We will devote an entire session to this crucial but basic aspect of Christ's life when we deal with the "Disciplines of Discipleship". Jesus taught not only by word but also by deed. What things can you think of which Jesus must have demonstrated to his disciples?

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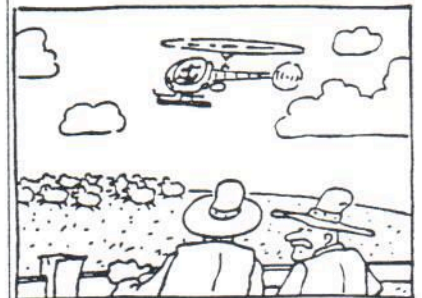
Even his teaching methods were purposeful. What qualities of Jesus' teaching can you recall which would make his instruction more memorable?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

IV. DELEGATION: He Gave Them Work

It was in the purpose of Christ to train His disciples. They were then to take over the mission of spreading the message and power of the gospel everywhere. And to learn how to do that they must learn how to do a few smaller things first. Would they understand, would they be faithful and responsible, and would they grow from their experiences? The best way to be sure that this is done is to give practical work assignments and expect them to be carried out.

Here is a simple guideline that helps us understand how this can occur:



"Of course your sheepdog can't do that. But when's the last time you spent any real quality time with him?"

Jesus sent them out in pairs. In this action Jesus demonstrated that the Kingdom work is to be experienced in *companionship*. It is the work of friends. Together with the presence of the Holy Spirit, we can face anything.

"His method was to get the disciples into a vital experience with God, and to show them how He worked, before telling them they had to do it."

The Master Plan of Evangelism, p. 82.

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THE MASTER'S METHOD III: SUPERVISION & REPRODUCTION

I. Introduction

We come now to the conclusion of our study of the components of Jesus' discipling methodology as outlined in Robert Coleman's book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. In this lesson we will focus on the final two aspects: Supervision and Reproduction.

II. SUPERVISION: He Held Them Accountable

To quickly summarize where we have been thus far:

- We have watched Jesus carefully select faithful individuals to be with Him.
- He has repeatedly emphasized the need for total commitment to bring in the Kingdom of God.
- He has demonstrated the conquering power of love.
- He gave them practical tasks and responsibilities so that they would develop Kingdom ministry skills.

Now it was necessary for Jesus to hold them accountable for what they had learned. Jesus expected the disciples to grow in their understanding of the nature of God, the sinfulness of man and a host of other issues through the tasks they were doing. He was not just trying to teach them a few tasks to do for Him after He left for the right hand of the throne. Jesus had one primary goal in mind—the salvation of the world. If this goal is to be reached His disciples must keep that focus ever in front of them and not only settle for minor victories.

Supervision is a process where a disciple is held accountable or responsible for those things entrusted to them. Accountability is a part of our daily lives. Banks expect us to be responsible for the amount of funds we have in our checking accounts. Professors demand we read the syllabus and complete assignments on time. Our friends assume that we will act friendly to them. The list of ways we are held accountable could go on and on.

A. Jesus' rationale for holding disciples accountable:

1. Jesus intended to teach the disciples practical applications to their personal lives from the tasks they were sent out to do.
"When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables... 'Consider carefully what you hear' ... 'Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.'" Mark 4:10,24,25
2. After the disciples were sent out to do the work of the Kingdom of God, they were expected by the Lord to return to share their experiences with the group.
*"When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done."
Luke 9:10*

3. During these sharing times with the disciples, Jesus would caution against pride in accomplishments.

"However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20

4. Jesus wanted to insure that the disciples received their needed rest in body and soul from all their labors.

"Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.'" Mark 6:31

B. In God's Family, Accountability is Mutual

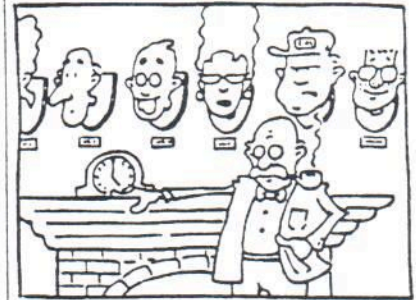
Accountability, within most people's minds, conjures up an image like a lion tamer, where we are like a caged animal and a man with a chair and a whip comes barking orders at us so that we will perform correctly. Accountability becomes something to be avoided because it sounds like punishment. We can also view accountability as if we were in a large corporation with ever descending levels of bosses. Does being accountable mean that we are to submit to somebody in the body of Christ who will be the vehicle of God's will over our lives? To answer this we must become aware of the Biblical concept of *mutual accountability*.

Mutual accountability is a distinctive concept made visible by Jesus Christ. Christianity, then, is very unique. When Jesus came into this world, He brought into being a new approach to functional relationships between people. In the "Gentile world", as Jesus called it, there was no such concept as mutual accountability. People operated primarily out of selfish motives having little or no interest in helping others reach their goals – except when it might benefit themselves (Mark 10:42-45).

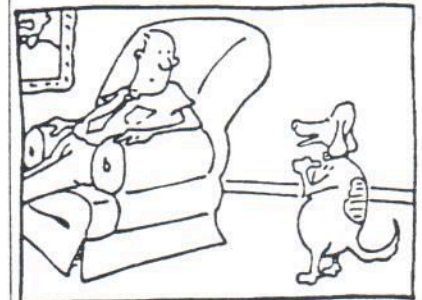
The Apostle Paul, as well, made it very clear that *accountability to other Christians is essential for personal Christian growth and for growth of the Kingdom of God*. The guidelines for mutual accountability are rooted in the authority of Jesus and His Word. Again, as we have mentioned before, to be a disciple means that we are "people of the Book". There are many examples of mutually responsible relationships in the Bible. Here is a list of a few with references:

- Elders to regular members in Christ's body —1 Peter 5:2,3
- Christians in general to elders —1 Tim. 5:17-20; Heb. 13:17
- Younger individuals to older individuals —1 Peter 5:5,6
- Husbands to wives —Eph. 5:25,28; Col. 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Cor. 7:3,4
- Wives to husbands —Eph. 5:22,24; Col 3:18; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-4
- Parents to children —Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21
- Children to parents —Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20
- Masters (employers) to slaves (employees) —Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1
- Slaves to masters —Eph. 6:5-8; 1 Peter 2:18,19
- Christians to governmental officials —Rom. 13:1,5,7; 1 Peter 2:13-17

As you can see, accountability in the relationships listed above seems to be two-way street. One party does not dominate over the other, even though the function or role may be distinctive. On the contrary, it seems that these relationships underscore that each party involved has a vested interest. It doesn't point out dominance as much as it points out each one being responsible. Neither independent nor dependent, but interdependent (mutuality).



Edwin proudly displays the people he singlehandedly led to Christ.



"I accept the fact that you feel I should stay off the couch. But I might also point out that you just left the toilet seat up."

C. Basic principles concerning authority and accountability:

1. Christian leaders are a gift to us from God (Eph. 4:11-13), and we need to nurture and enhance in every way possible our relationship with those responsible to us. We also need to make sure we are always in a position where there is someone who will be over us to hold us accountable for the faith within us.
2. Being accountable to a leader does not mean "blind obedience". A leader should never have control over your life. We all have only one Lord—Jesus Christ.



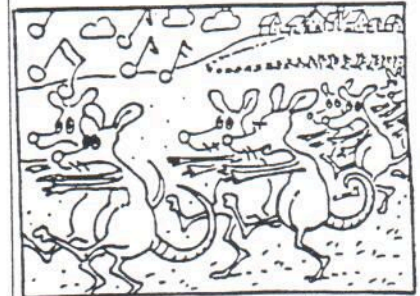
3. Being accountable to a leader does not mean that you give up your responsibility over your decisions. We will have no one but ourselves to appeal to or blame when we stand before the judgement seat of Christ.
4. A leader should never be followed if their counsel contradicts the Word of God or gives you permission to sin.
5. We must learn to be *responsible to* others rather than *responsible for* others. "Responsible for" means that we begin to assume the responsibility for another's actions which is never the case. Being "responsible to" means we serve another as much as we can and point in the right direction (we hope), but we can never assume blame or credit for their decisions or actions.

D. The following questions will serve as a self-test to help you to get in touch with your attitudes and feelings toward authority figures (especially in the body of Christ).

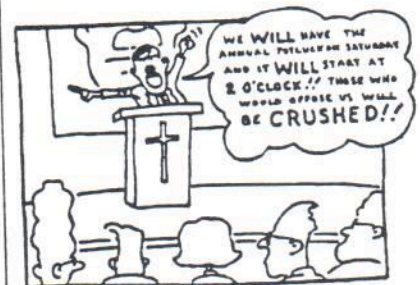
1. How do I view the people in my church who are in positions of leadership? Do I feel more or less important than they? Do I respect and honor them as fellow members of Christ's body, or do I hold negative feelings toward them?
2. Do I ever share my inner life and struggles with others, or do I keep my weaknesses to myself?
3. How do I react when a Christian friend disagrees with me? Am I threatened? Do I try to defend myself? Do I insist on doing things my own way?
4. Do I try to avoid situations where my actions or attitudes might be questioned by a Christian friend or leader?
5. How often have I admitted to others that I have been wrong? Do I always have to be right to feel comfortable?
6. Do I hold my Christian friends to their commitments to God, to me, to other Christian friends, and to non-believers?

E. Why accountability is necessary in disciplining relationships.

1. It assists the disciple in understanding the experience they have just encountered. By this evaluation, the disciple will be better prepared for the next experience.



"Hey, wait just a minute! Who's the guy with the pipe?"



If Hitler had become a pastor.

2. It will provide encouragement to the disciple that does not meet with immediate "success" or up to their self-imposed expectations.
3. We are called by God to live covenant-making lives, and covenants must be evaluated to determine if everyone involved is growing and maintaining their commitments.
4. To keep pride in accomplishments from clouding the essential picture—that of receiving God's grace and recognizing that we are but saved sinners.
5. We all need to continually review those things which are vitally important—to embed them firmly into our lives and to rekindle the vision they are attempting to achieve.
6. Christ is not satisfied only with the firstfruits of ministry (immediate enthusiasm, zeal, joy), but the disciple must be brought to maturity.
7. Accountability prevents us from becoming a slacker. "The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied" (Proverbs 13:4. Also see Proverbs 20:4, 26:16).
8. Accountability helps one trouble-shoot potential problems before they grow to dimensions too large to restore.

III. REPRODUCTION: The Evidence of a Trained Disciple

As Coleman points out from Jesus' illustration of the vine and the branches, the purpose of every disciple is to bear fruit. If we truly are grafted into the very life of Christ by His indwelling Spirit, then we should expect to see results. "A barren Christian is a contradiction. A tree is known by its fruit." *Master Plan*, p. 107.

The fruitfulness of our lives is not measured by our level of gifting or talents, but by the perpetuation of the life of Christ in and through us to a desperate world. Again, we must remember our focus. Not haphazard patches on a sick world—a frantic blur of activity for the sake of the kingdom. But a carefully considered life which takes the younger believer and imparts everything necessary for life and godliness.

"What really counts in the ultimate perpetuation of our work is the faithfulness with which our converts go out and make leaders out of their converts, not simply more followers...The test of any work of evangelism thus is not what is seen at the moment...but in the effectiveness with which the work continues in the next generation." *Master Plan*, p. 110

"There is no use to pray for the world. What good would it do? God already loves them and has given His Son to save them. No, there is no use to pray vaguely for the world. The world is lost and blind in sin. The only hope for the world is for individuals to go to them with the Gospel of Salvation, and having won them to the Savior, not to leave them, but to work with them faithfully, patiently, painstakingly, until they become fruitful Christians savoring the world about them with the Redeemer's love." *Master Plan*, p. 109

Thus, it is true that disciplers should have "spiritual grandchildren". We must become aware that we are always affecting the next generation beyond the disciple we are working with. Let us be very careful how we build. Make sure that all your *goals* and *methods* are all transgenerational. Before this class is over we shall learn transgenerational methods. Set in your heart today to establish transgenerational goals for your service for Jesus for the remainder of your life (till He comes!).



A SUMMARY OF THE DISCIPLING METHOD OF JESUS

The Model	The Principle	The Application
<p>Acts 1:1 "Began to do" — Jesus was a living model of what He desires His disciples to be.</p>	<p>Discipleship is being a _____.</p>	<p>A discipler must focus on the <i>development of godly character qualities</i> in the new disciple.</p>
<p>Acts 1:1 "Began to teach" — Beyond modeling, Jesus taught truth by instruction.</p>	<p>Discipleship entails _____ the revelation of Jesus.</p>	<p>A discipler must focus on the <i>skill of Bible study</i> with the new disciple.</p>
<p>Mrk 3:14 "That they should be with Him" — Jesus made himself available for close personal association.</p>	<p>Discipleship is _____, not a _____.</p>	<p>A discipler must work toward the <i>development of true fellowship</i> between the new disciple and the family of God.</p>
<p>Mrk 6:7 "He sent them out two-by-two" — Jesus began a process which is continuing today.</p>	<p>Discipleship is a _____ process involving _____ and _____ (Deut. 6.1,2).</p>	<p>The discipler must equip the new disciple in <i>evangelism and the ability to disciple</i> (2 Tim. 2:2).</p>
<p>Mrk 6:30 "The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught."</p>	<p>Discipleship entails _____ to the commands of Jesus and our ministry for Him.</p>	<p>The discipler must model <i>mutual sharing and support</i> while remaining <i>encouraging and confrontive</i> (Gal. 6:2; Eph. 5:21).</p>
<p>Mt 4:19 "Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of people."</p>	<p>Discipleship is _____.</p>	<p>The discipler must build in the new disciple the <i>necessary skills</i> (prayer, worship, teaching, etc.).</p>



DISCIPLESHIP DEMANDS LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION

I. Living wisely

"We seem not to live long enough to take our lives seriously."

George Bernard Shaw

No one can say of us that we are not busy people. We continually fill our lives with activity and flurry, so much so that phrases such as "no time today", "I'm really busy", "Boy, I'm tired", and "maybe later" seem ubiquitous to our vocabulary.

Now, being busy is no sin. But the tragedy which often snares so many is that we have such fuzzy, nebulous understandings of why we're going so hard (let alone knowing where all this hustle and bustle is taking us). It is truly a sad commentary that some people can live their entire lives, and can certainly point to many accomplishments, but still not have the slightest idea why they lived as they did. Was what they were living for worth it?

A fallout of our highly technological society is a lamentable loss in meaning to life and the dignity of the human person. We tend to feel of little value, and that we have little impact on our world. For, "Who am I against such large problems in such an immense world?"

What is even more tragic is seeing Christians who have the "upward call in Christ Jesus", who are urged "to live a life worthy of the calling you have received", that are living such shallow lives and totally caught up in the world's race to nowhere.

Paul admonishes us, "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15,16).

How, then, do Christians live wisely? We must learn to dream. We need to become visionaries! We need to establish for ourselves biblical purposes (what we are to be), and from these purpose statements build Godly goals (what we are to do), and then see that our actual priorities (our life-style as it is actually lived out) reflect these purposes and goals.

Having dreamed, we then must become steadfastly dedicated to these Christ-centered directions. It is only through dedication and commitment to the purposes and plans of Christ that our life will find real and lasting significance.

II. Distinctives of a Dedicated Life

A. Essential characteristics of the dedicated person include idealism, zeal, devotion, and the willingness to sacrifice to achieve ideals. Not only is it important to have dreams worth living for, but we also need a cause that is worth dying for.



Some of Martin Luther King's earlier ideas for speeches.

- B. Dedication is contagious. Associating with a dedicated person will breed dedication in you. Being dedicated is a norm setter. It determines the behavior of those associated with it.
- C. Being dedicated sets you apart from the rest of the world. One writer calls us to be 100 percenters in a world of 50 percenters.
- D. A dedicated person does not fear making mistakes as much as they fear making the same mistake again. They will learn from their mistakes.
- E. "...if you make mean little demands upon people, you will get a mean little response which is all you deserve, but, if you make big demands on them, you will get a heroic response...work on the assumption that if you call for big sacrifices people will respond to this and, moreover, the relatively smaller sacrifices will come quite naturally." Douglas Hyde, *Dedication and Leadership*, p. 18.
- F. The dedicated person will postpone immediate satisfaction or gratification for the achieving of more important longer-ranged goals. Self-discipline will continue to win over impulsiveness.

III. Distinguishing Marks of Discipling Leadership

A leader is primarily an agent for change. Often we think of leaders as aggressive activists, people who are bold in personality, articulate in speech and pleasant in appearance. We often assume leaders are born. While these characteristics can be very helpful for leadership, an essential ingredient for a leader is one who has the ability to see a need, develop a goal, and finally, put a plan into motion to move toward that goal. This describes a discipler: a person with Godly vision coupled with faith, who will take action. The following underscore the distinguishing marks of discipling leadership:

- A. The process of making a person into a leader is the development of an integrated person. These are "ones who understand what they believe, are deeply dedicated to it, and who try unceasingly to relate their beliefs to every facet of their own lives and to the society in which they live." *Dedication and Leadership*, p. 157.
- B. Leadership is learned not inbred.
- C. A discipling leader is a thermostat rather than a thermometer. They bring influence to their environment rather than just conforming to the climate of their environment.
- D. Discipling leaders are ones who strive for excellence in all that they do. They attempt, with all the resources within them, to become the best that they can become no matter what the situation. Whether that be the best engineer, bricklayer, musician, social worker, or pastor. "Best" needs to be redefined. First, it must be seen as the best that we can do *having realistically evaluated our resources*—time, money, energy, expertise, and gifting. Then we must determine what expenditure of resources we can give. And finally, we must do our best, *given that specific situation*.

Call disciples to
Christ-centered
sacrifices!



Why chameleons make lousy leaders.

IV. Natural and Spiritual Leadership

J. Oswald Sanders, in his book *Spiritual Leadership*, makes a distinction between God-given natural leadership and spiritual leadership. The spiritual leader influences others not by the power of their own personality, but by the personality penetrated and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Some common distinctions between natural and spiritual leadership would include:

Natural Leaders	Spiritual Leaders
Self-confident	Confident in God
Knows men	Also knows God
Makes own decisions	Seeks to find God's will
Ambitious	Self-effacing
Originates own methods	Finds and follows God's methods
Enjoys commanding others	Delights to obey God
Motivated by personal considerations	Motivated by love for God and people
Independent	God-dependent, body interdependent

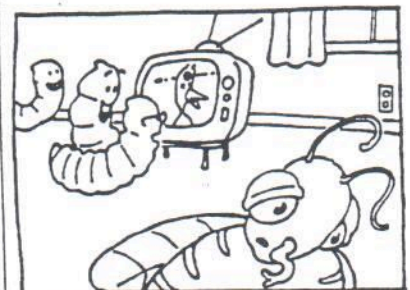
According to these criteria, anyone can become a spiritual leader after they commit themselves to God's will.

Spiritual leadership comes by way of the Holy Spirit and is something that we should earnestly seek and pray for. It is developed in us by God and is not just innate within us.

V. The Cost of Leadership

"No one need aspire to leadership in the work of God who is not prepared to pay a price greater than his contemporaries and colleagues are willing to pay. True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole man, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid." J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, p. 104.

- A. Self-sacrifice: A price which must be paid every day. Paul was a supreme example of self-sacrifice. 2 Cor. 4:8-11.
- B. Loneliness: A discipler is a believer committed to personal growth in the Lord. A growing person often feels shoved to the head of the pack. Though he may be the friendliest of people, there are times when he will tread a lonely path. 2 Timothy 1:15.



Ever since leaving the larvae stage, Phil felt isolated from the others.

- C. **Fatigue:** The ever increasing demands made on a discipler can drain the emotional energy and wear down the most robust physique. 2 Cor. 4:15,16.
- D. **Criticism:** No leader is exempt from criticism, and his humility will nowhere be seen more clearly than in the manner in which he accepts and reacts to it. 1 Cor. 4:3-5.
- E. **Time to think:** A price paid by disciplers is the time that must be taken for creative thinking and meditation. We do not often think of this as a price to pay, but it is. Most people are too busy to take time to really think. Mark 6:31.
- F. **Making hard decisions:** All disciplers must be willing to face difficulties. The fear of challenging or correcting those that we love is sometimes a wearisome burden, but nonetheless a necessity. Acts 15:36-41.

VI. Pitfalls in Discipling Leadership

- A. **Pride:** The temptation of self-congratulations is ever before the discipler (especially the truly effective one), and we must remember that nothing is more distasteful to the Lord than self-conceit. It is the first and most fundamental of the sins.
- B. **Jealousy:** A jealous person is apprehensive and suspicious of rivals. Some rivals can become our fellow disciplers. Jealousy destroys the bonds between friends.
- C. **Infallibility:** The spiritual man must always remember that he is still of the flesh and fallible. We will make mistakes. One who knows God will be called upon often to assist in hearing God. The discipler's judgement is then always on the line. We must admit it when we are wrong, and must humbly concede our inadequacies.
- D. **Elation and Depression:** In every work for God there are inevitably times of discouragement and frustration as well as days of uplift and achievement. The discipler is in peril of being unduly depressed by the one, and unduly elated by the other.

VIII. Conclusion

As we stated in the introduction, the effective discipler is one who thinks clearly along the lines of purposes, goals and priorities. The following article by Ted Engstrom will be quite helpful in determining how to establish "Goals that Mobilize" us.

GOALS THAT MOBILIZE

How to set goals and priorities that move God's people toward his purposes.
By Ted Engstrom.

Purposes or goals?

It is important for a discipler to distinguish between purposes and specific, achievable, measurable, and manageable goals. For instance, ask yourself if the following are *purposes* or *goals*:

- To glorify God through our campus ministry
- To be a mature Christian



- To teach an effective lesson in Small Group
- To be a good friend and helper
- To be a better discipler

It might surprise you to know that none of the above are *goals*. They are all purposes. A purpose, or aim, is something for which we ultimately hope. It is not necessarily measurable in itself, but is a clear direction toward which we wish to move.

Our purpose statements often fall in the category of things we want to be. To be mature, to be a better, to be a good - these are the ideals toward which we are striving. *But it is our goals which help us determine how much progress, if any, we are making toward our "to be" purposes.*

Below are examples of specific goals. I think you will readily see the difference between purposes and goals:

- To share Christ with a non-believer twice a week
- To spend 15 minutes in prayer each day
- To tithe a minimum of 10 percent of my income
- To eat with my discipleship group once a week
- To learn to fly an airplane by the end of the summer

Now of course no one can guarantee, for example, that eating with my discipleship group once a week will make me a better discipler. But it does give me a specific, tangible means of measuring this important purpose in my life. Therefore, all of the above are *measurable goals*.

Communicate and Mobilize

It seems that God has so made us that we almost naturally respond with enthusiasm to something worthwhile, specific, and measurable to tackle. *That's because good goals are related to faith.*

A goal is a statement about how we hope things are going to be at some time in the future. It is a statement of *faith*.

Any statement about tomorrow is a statement of faith. This is an important concept. Don't miss it. As the writer in Hebrews said, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1).

Goals have the power to lift our eyes from the mud below to the sky above. They are a statement about what could be, what should be, or what *can* be.

Notice that goals are not statements about what *will* be. That is in God's hands. But they are statements about what we believe God wants us to do or to be, in light of his word.

Well-written Goals

Many may be asking at this moment, how do I start writing down goal statements? I know what we want to be as a campus ministry, but how do we develop the goals that will help us measure our progress toward what we want to be? Below are some statements that might help you.

Well-written goals are:

- Stated in terms of end results
- Achievable in a time span
- Definite as to what is expected
- Practical and feasible
- Precisely stated in terms of quantities, where applicable
- Limited to one important goal statement

Poorly written goals tend to be:

- Stated in terms of process or activities
- Are never fully achievable; no specific target dates
- Ambiguous as to what is expected
- Theoretical or idealistic



Archery without a target gave Steve the satisfaction of knowing he would never miss. And yet the excitement soon waned.

Purpose = "to be"
Goals = "to do"

- Too brief and indefinite, or too long and complex
- Written with two or more goals per statement

Goals may cover different time periods. You may have *immediate* goals for this week, month and year. Then you may have *short-range* goals for the next two or three years. And finally you may have *long-range* goals for five years or more.

Another way of looking at the characteristics of good goals is to use the following items as a checklist of questions to ask for any goal statements you have developed:

- Is this goal *accomplishable*: do you believe you *can* do it (under God's leading)?
- Does this goal have a *date*: will you know *when* you want to do it?
- Is this goal *measurable*: will you know that it *has* in fact happened?
- Does this goal have *steps* (a plan): do you know *how* to reach it?
- Is this goal *claimed*: do you know *who* will be responsible for the following the plan?
- Is this goal *supported*: do we have the *resources* to accomplish it?

The ABC's of Prioritizing

Now after you have set your goals, you may still have confusion and misunderstanding in the group if you do not prioritize them. Especially with limited manpower, time, and financial resources, it is important for us to determine the top items requiring our best efforts.

Here is a little prioritizing system that may help you sort out the most important items. It is simply called the ABC technique.

Start by making a list of all the goals that you have considered....

There is no reason why we have to have *one* goal that is our top priority. We are more likely to have a number of goals, all of which we consider number one.

There is a simple and effective way of sorting out in terms of priorities. Instead of trying to assign each goal a ranking *number*, assign it a *value*, an A, B, or C.

- A — "Must do" or very high value
- B — "Should do" or medium value
- C — "Can do" or low value.

You can use the ABC technique in one of two ways. The first way is to go down your list and decide which of these goals you consider to be A goals. If it's a B or a C go right past it. Just mark the A's. Now go back to the list and decide which ones are C goals, low priority. The rest are automatically B's.

A second way is to pause at each goal and decide whether you think it is an A, B, or C.

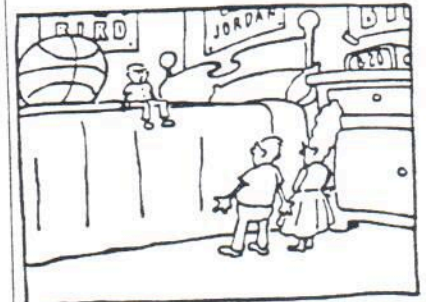
It does not matter which of these methods you use. Some people find one easier than the other.

Remember, goals for which you have no priorities are useless.

Goals and Leadership

It isn't always easy to put flesh and bones on the exalted purposes which God has called us to in his Word. But developing achievable goals for these purposes and prioritizing them can be one of the most practical and measurable means of mobilizing believers to truly seek his kingdom and his righteousness.

(Freedom was taken with this article to adapt it to a campus ministry setting. It first appeared in *Pastoral Renewal*, October 1980, Vol. 1, #4.)



"Before we tuck you in, son, there's something your mother and I would like to talk to you about. You know how you've always wanted to be the next Larry Bird?"

Goals for which we have no priorities are useless.

THE DISCIPLINES OF DISCIPLESHIP

I. Introduction

Discipline is training that corrects, molds, and perfects the mental abilities and moral character of a person. We often think of punishment first when we consider discipline, but even good punishment should serve to penalize a person due to their lack of self-control (trusting that the direct attention will aid in the development of self-control). Thus, to discipline simply means to impose order upon disorder within the mind, heart and spirit.

Spiritual disciplines are tools of training for the spiritually unruly which will cause growth in the knowledge of God, growth in putting on the image of Christ, and growth in living an effective Christian life-style. The disciplines enable the "fruit of the Spirit" to come to a bountiful harvest in our lives, bringing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

"Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people..."

Neither should we think of the spiritual disciplines as some dull drudgery aimed at exterminating laughter from the face of the earth. Joy is the keynote of all the disciplines. The purpose of the disciplines is liberation from the stifling slavery to self-interest and fear... Singing, dancing, even shouting characterize the disciplines of the spiritual life...

Our ordinary method of dealing with ingrained sin is to launch a frontal attack. We rely on our willpower and determination...we determine never to do it again; we pray against it, fight against it, set our will against it. But it is all in vain, and we find ourselves once again morally bankrupt or, worse yet, so proud of our external righteousness that "whitened sepulchers" is a mild description of our condition...

Willpower will never succeed in dealing with the deeply ingrained habits of sin... Willpower has no defense against the careless word, the unguarded moment. The will has the same deficiency as the Law—it can deal only with externals. It is not sufficient to bring about the necessary transformation of the inner spirit.

The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside.

Our world is hungry for genuinely changed people. Leo Tolstoy observed, 'Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing himself.' Let us be among those who believe that the inner transformation of our lives is a goal worthy of our best effort."

(From Richard J. Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*. Emphasis added.)



II. A Sampling of Solomon's Wisdom Concerning Discipline

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline" (Proverbs 1:7).

"My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in" (Proverbs 3:11,12).

"At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, 'How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly'" (Proverbs 5:11-14).

"He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray" (Proverbs 10:17).

"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates corrections is stupid" (Proverbs 12:1).

"He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding" (Proverbs 15:32).

Also see Proverbs 1:2,3; 5:21-23; 6:20-23; 9:13-18; 13:18,24; 15:5-10.

III. Obstacles to a Disciplined Life

A. The age of permissiveness we live in encourages an undisciplined approach to life.

The dominant world-view in America assumes that there is nothing which is universally right or wrong; nothing which is intrinsically good or bad. Good and evil are not built in, essential, unchangeable qualities of life; they are only descriptions of our perceptions in different situations. Everyone is really "free" to think, live and love as they feel best. Therefore, there is no standard to which we should aspire, other than the "standard" within each of us.

B. The over-spiritualization of spontaneity.

In some Christian circles those things which are planned or scheduled are often seen as less "Spirit-led". Strategy in ministry and missions is viewed with the suspicion that the "flesh" must be in control. Only those activities of the Spirit which occur on the spur of the moment or are received by special revelation carry ultimate spiritual weight. This is not to say that special revelation is in any way to be undercut, on the contrary, we are enormously blessed when the Holy Spirit works among us in this manner. But over-spiritualization occurs when we exclusively cling only to the special word. *This misses the dimension that faithful commitment produces much fruit.* Often "spiritual spontaneity" is only a mask for spiritual irresponsibility.

C. We develop a sacred/secular dichotomy.

We have a great tendency to divide our lives into those things which have spiritual value and the rest which is non-spiritual. This flies in the face of a true understanding of spirituality. *Our Christian faith must be integrated into the entire fabric of our normal lives.* Moreover, this is precisely an essential task of discipleship, to lead disciples into concrete understanding of how relationship with Jesus relates to every fiber of our lives.



New Age stop signs.

- D. The failure of the church and home to teach skills for the maturing of the spiritual life.

In many cases the normal Christian life has become as lackadaisical and as haphazard as modern secular society. *Discipline causes pain for gain*, and we live in a society which will do anything necessary to avoid suffering in any form at any cost. Often suffering is equated with evil itself. The local church and the nuclear Christian family must assume their responsibility for training believers in righteousness.

IV. Four Foundational Truths Concerning the Spiritual Disciplines

- A. Spiritual disciplines are not an end in themselves, but a means to a greater end.

The goal is not to be known as a great pray-er, but to know God better. The goal is not to see how rigid a life we can live, but to become as effective as possible for the Kingdom of God in our daily lives. "I can't see the forest for the trees." This is what happens often to disciples. They focus so much on the immediate issue of "I didn't pray today", to the exclusion of seeing the larger picture of a God who wants to be in relationship with me, and wants me to know Him.

- B. Discipline brings healing into our broken lives.

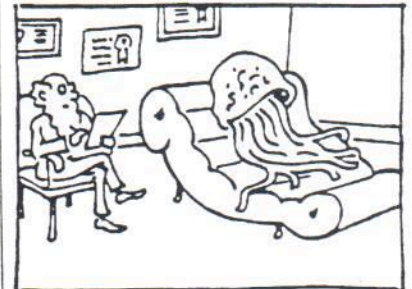
Just as the beauty of God's universe was an outgrowth of God making order out of the primeval chaos, so order coming into our disorderly lives will bring healing and beauty. Unchecked anger brings hurt, but anger brought under the Spirit's control will produce understanding, forgiveness, and healing.

- C. The flip-side of loving compassion is loving discipline.

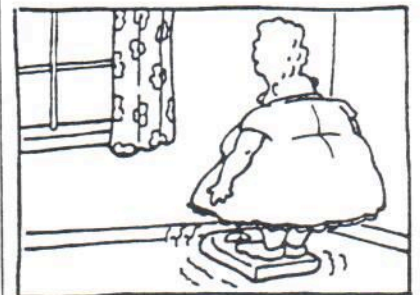
The writer of Hebrews 12:5-13 quotes Solomon, reminding us that God the Father disciplines every child that He loves. Maturity and proper self-understanding only come by way of this type of loving discipline. To not act with discipline toward someone straying way off the narrow path is most unloving on our part. Remember, when the Lord Jesus commands that we follow Him, His words bring blessing and curse at the same moment. Blessing for those who respond to His love, and destruction to those who reject His offer.

- D. Blessing comes to the disciplined.

"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11).



"I tried to do like you said, doc, but I just couldn't make myself. Sometimes I feel completely spineless."



Sue came to realize that the temple of her body had become a cathedral.

V. The Facets of Discipline

A. The Discipline of our Spiritual Resources

Inward Disciplines

- _____ – Ps. 1:1-3
- _____ – James 5:16
- _____ – Mt. 6:17,18
- _____ – John 8:32

Outward Disciplines

- _____ – Prov. 11:28
- _____ – Mt. 14:23,24
- _____ – Eph. 5:21
- _____ – Gal. 5:13

Corporate Disciplines

- _____ – James 5:16
- _____ – John 4:23
- _____ – Prov. 3:5,6
- _____ – John 15:11

A spiritual growth project:

The previous chart is based on the structure of Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*. This book has filled a void that has existed for several decades. Very little had been written on the spiritual disciplines during most of the century. We recommend one of two things for you:

- Get a copy of Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* and read it over Christmas Break, Spring Break, Summer Vacation, or even better...
- Make this book serve as a spiritual growth project for the next year. There are 12 disciplines mentioned. Study and try to implement, as fully as possible, one discipline per month for the next year. Every chapter has much practical instruction assisting you to incorporate the discipline into your life. The effects of this spiritual growth project would without a doubt produce blessing for a lifetime.



B. The Disciplines of our Material Resources

1. Finances

a. Tithes

It is an Old Testament principle that $\frac{1}{10}$ of all of our income belongs to the Lord and should be given at the storehouse (where we are experiencing daily Christian community, where we are fed the Word, where we worship, where we minister to other members of Christ's body, and where we are held accountable for the faith within us). The New Testament expands the principle that all belongs to the Lord. A beginning stage should start with at least $\frac{1}{10}$ and then increase as the Lord directs. (For a creative option, read about the Graduated Tithe in *Rich Christians In An Age Of Hunger: A Biblical Study*, Ronald J. Sider, Inter-Varsity Press, 1977).

b. Offerings

Offerings are financial giving that go beyond our regular tithes. Whereas tithes should go to your immediate spiritual community, offerings could go to Kingdom needs outside the local community, like missions or benevolent assistance.

2. Hospitality

Giving assistance and opening up our dwelling places to guests to provide fellowship is a very strong theme throughout the Old Testament and central to the life-style of Jesus.

3. Tangible Goods

Sharing and giving away of the material blessings we have received from God's grace (clothes, books, gifts, food, etc.) is demonstrating God's ownership of all things and our willingness to be a good steward of those blessings.

C. The Discipline of our Relational Resources

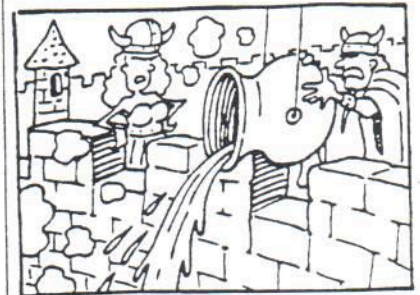
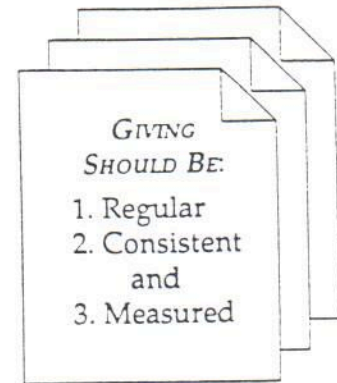
There are disciplines that must be learned in regard to how a disciple relates to his/her parents, teachers, employers, peers, opposite sex, and the community of Christ, as well as to one's self.

Time and time again we are called in the New Testament to demonstrate love and allegiance to one another. We are consistently called to minister to those around us. All of this calls for modeling, teaching, and the doing of Christ's will.

D. The Discipline of our Temporal Resources

Each year about 25% of most campus fellowships graduate. Among those graduating are approximately 30% of the fellowship's discipleship leaders. Each year 30% of the typical campus fellowship is composed of new recruits and converts. Without fail, a central issue in these student's lives is the issue of time and priorities.

It doesn't take you very long as a new university student to discover that you can't join everything; can't support every good cause; and you can't give of yourself to every needy person. We are all faced with the law of an effective disciplined life-style. Effectiveness demands choices, choices,



"How are we supposed to make new friends if every time I invite someone over you pour boiling oil on them?"

and more choices. *What you choose both now and throughout your life will determine to a significant degree, your impact in this world for Christ.* The priorities of your life are most clearly seen by your use of time. If being committed to Christ is the top priority of your life, but it is nowhere reflected in your weekly schedule, then this priority is only a dream or wish and not a part of actual reality.

As important as this whole area is, it is very distressing to see that very little, if any, training is given prior to coming to the university in the area of time management and prioritizing of commitments. Because of this, a great majority of students feel that they don't have time to participate in Bible classes, outreaches, small groups or prayer meetings.

It is safe to say that most of today's university students are wasting at least 8-10 hours a week or are involved in unimportant and time consuming commitments.

Christian students must become more disciplined in the use of their time. In order to do that, more thought will have to go into the setting of personal priorities. For significant results in ministry to occur, it becomes an absolute necessity. A typical small group discipling leader will spend about fifteen hours per week preparing, leading, training and following up on his/her small group. This includes the large group gatherings and leadership meetings.

If we are to seriously attempt to reach our world, we must help one another develop in our use of time. In the following pages you will find several tools that have been helpful.

- *A Life-Style of Biblical Priorities* highlights priorities in life as Jesus did for His disciples in John 15.
- Monthly and weekly schedule sheets help build faithfulness, planning with priorities in mind, and consistency.
- Time Analysis sheets help us evaluate on a periodic basis, where our time is actually going.

A LIFE-STYLE OF BIBLICAL PRIORITIES

Being a Steward Of My Resources

Priority One John 15:7-11	Priority Two John 15:12, 13, 15b	Priority Three John 15:18, 19, 21, 26, 27
A Progressive commitment to _____ This involves: _____ _____ and _____ This demands: _____ Beware of over-emphasis here and becoming a _____	A Progressive commitment to _____ _____ This involves: _____ and _____ _____ This demands: _____ and _____ _____ one another. Beware of over-emphasis here and becoming a _____	A Progressive commitment to _____ _____ This involves: _____ _____ and _____ _____ This demands: _____ as a _____ _____ Beware of over-emphasis here and becoming too _____

Adapted from Discipling Ministries Seminar, Barnabus, Inc. Used by permission, 1991.

DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH SMALL GROUPS I: PURPOSE & ATTITUDE

I. Introduction

As we have already seen through our study of the Master's Methods, it was the strategy of Jesus to gather a small core of individuals around Himself who He would later leave behind to continue His work. Jesus' discipling strategy was to be with them, to train them, and finally, to impart His mission to them. Jesus' discipling was focused neither in the context of the multitudes, nor only to individuals. For Jesus, the gathering and interacting of a small group of individuals was where discipleship occurred—that is where He passed on His life.

We must realize that experience is a key ingredient in the educational process. If people are to experience ministry, then we who are leaders must give ourselves to training them. Having trained them, we must then let them experience the ministry firsthand. Then we can fill the world with eager, trained, experienced leaders whom the multitudes will follow.

II. Rationales For Discipleship Through Small Groups

A. The Master's method and the New Testament pattern in response to Jesus' command

1. Jesus and his disciples
2. Paul's example of team ministry
3. Paul's directive that elders come from within
4. Paul's directive that elders train others

B. Recurring historical precedent

1. An Old Testament Example—Moses

We find an example of the same principle in Exodus 18.

Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." (Exodus 18:17, 18, 21, 22b, 23)

Here the wisdom of God comes through the father-in-law of Moses (Jethro), that it is impossible for Moses alone to care for the needs of the nation. So they broke down the nation into smaller groupings of people. In these passages we can again see the need for trained leaders who are morally upright. Moses could not shepherd all of Israel, and we cannot effectively disciple a large community of Christian students alone. We must be willing to see others take a greater part of the ministry of discipling of the Church of Christ under the direction of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd.

2. An Early Church Example—Acts 2:46; 5:42; 20:20

Here we find the same patterns. The Church gathered in the large group but also met in small groups.

3. A Church History Example—the Wesleyan Revival

George Whitefield, the great English evangelist, credited the lasting success of John Wesley, as opposed to the dying out of his own ministry, to these very principles we have discussed. We would be wise to follow our Lord's example and the example of brethren who have gone before us.

III. Small Group Discipleship or One-to-One Discipleship?

Let's look at some of the advantages of each:

Small Group Discipleship	One-to-One Discipleship
Closest to model used by Jesus and the New Testament Church	Not as difficult as leading a small group
Conservation of time	Enhances the opportunity to really get to know an individual
Encourages transparency among peers	Offers privacy and intimacy for very personal problems
Enables friendships and relationships to build	Enables very direct ministry to a person
Offers a broader base for mutual support	
Releases a group dynamic for problem solving and healing	
Helps a person see that he is not alone in his struggles	
Broader base for prayer and intercession with greater fervency	

We believe that the ideal model of discipleship is a combination of the two methods. We hope to take advantage of the strengths of both methods by fostering a discipleship that is built around small groups as well as One-to-One time spent by the leader with the group members outside of the group as needed.



"Well, here comes Sid, and he looks like he's got the weight of the world on his shoulders again."

*The Ideal
Discipling Model
is not either/or
but both
Small Group
and
One-to-One
Discipleship*

Some folks may take more personalized care than others. Newer Christians require more one-to-one time for additional help in some of the basics than older Christians. Also, those maturing Christians who are beginning to take on ministry responsibilities may require more one-to-one time.

Discipleship should not build an isolated dependency on one person, but it should integrate people into the life of a corporate community of believers by means of committed relationships and service. Any discipleship technique must reflect this goal.

Discipleship is also not a protracted counseling relationship, but rather an equipping, supportive relationship which involves and interacts with the surrounding community of believers in constructive ways.

IV. The Purposes of Small Groups (Why do we have small groups?)

There can be a myriad of purposes and expectations for small groups. Some ministries develop prayer, fellowship, study, recreation, or evangelism groups whose purpose is narrowly defined as the name implies.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, it is necessary that the leadership has clearly understood the small group's purpose and thus its nature. Often times we fail because we are structuring groups to do things they were never designed to do and the leaders were never trained to carry out.

Following are the four basic purposes of our discipleship small groups. You will notice that we have deliberately avoided overly specialized small groups. Our rationale for doing so is based upon a concern for balance and wholeness in the disciple's training and life experiences.

A. Leadership Development

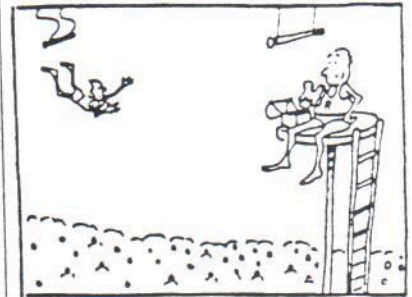
Our small groups exist to develop mature leadership-quality Christians. Often students know very well what they want, but little about what they need. The discipler will attempt to make the small group member aware of the campus around them and their commissioning by Christ to that campus. They need to be challenged to develop vision (personally and corporately), and they need to be challenged to have the character of Christ more firmly built within them. They will need to experience leadership opportunities and will need the skills necessary to be a leader and to grow continually in leadership. They must be taught how to study and think for themselves, to hear God's voice and obey Him.

B. Proper Pastoral Care/Spiritual Oversight

The small group experience is intended to provide the student a place where spiritual nurture will occur. In this context, a trained discipler seeks to assist the newer believer in the development of their relationship with and understanding of Jesus. Help should come in making godly choices with regard to morals, resources, relationships and vocation. Besides being a counselor, the discipler will demonstrate, in a safe environment, an experience of spiritual leadership and submission to a caring authority.

C. Loving Relationships

The small group should be a place where confession of sin and forgiveness should be expressed, where ministry to each other is facilitated by the work of the Holy Spirit through gifts of healing, faith, wisdom, etc. The small group is a place of mutual affirmation and vulnerability and, from this intimacy, a sense of mutual accountability will be fostered by this



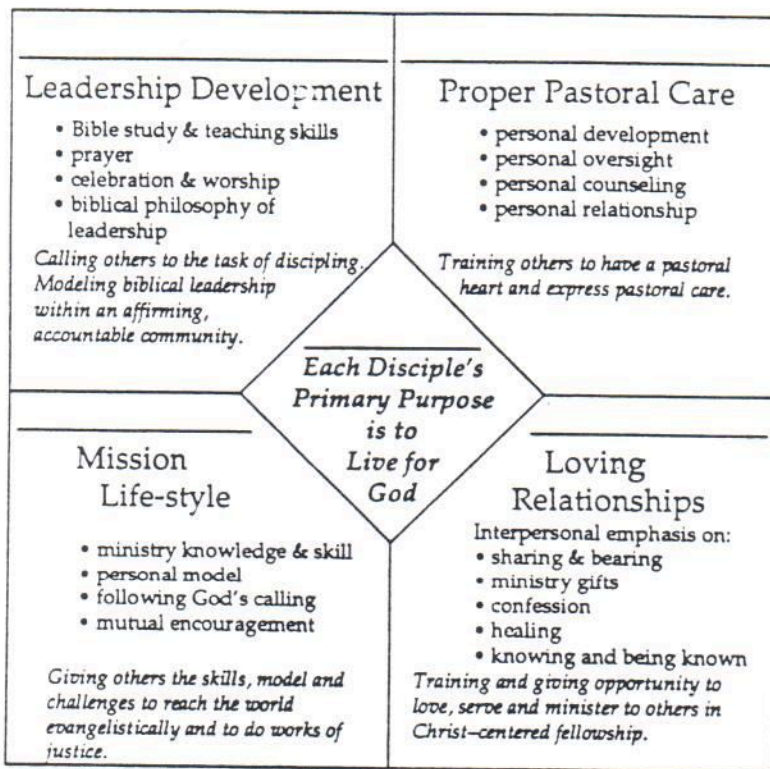
“We cannot simply work toward the goal of developing healthy followers, but we must go on to the point of equipping healthy leaders.”

Brady Bobbink

loving atmosphere. For many, the small group may become a special family away from home.

D. Mission Life-style

The purpose of a small group is to instill in each member that God declares they have a purpose in His world. The one who loves God will demonstrate it by keeping His commandments. The small group needs to demonstrate acts of caring and loving to Christians and non-Christians. They need to be challenged to put to death their deeply entrenched self-centeredness and be involved in reaching their campus and their world for Christ. Without this outward focus, the good inward focus will eventually begin to sour.



All of Section IV and the Purposes of Small Groups chart © Brady Bobbink

V. Essential Attitudes for Discipleship Small Groups

A. Loving the Unlovable

A leader must love each and every member of the group. Natural love will not suffice — we must be filled with the Spirit and express agape love. As a leader, you can do everything perfect in regard to structure, and reproduce ineffective disciples if you fail to love. On the other hand, a young leader could stumble and bumble along and yet still leave a lasting impact on his/her group's life because he/she loved them. Love does, in fact, cover a multitude of sins and ineptness.

B. Accepting the Unacceptable

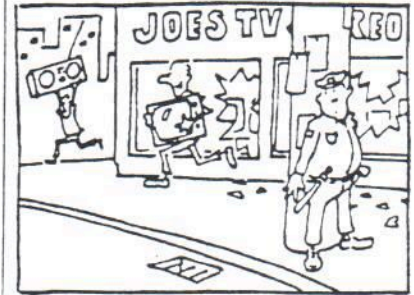
As leaders, we are called on to express Kingdom values as opposed to cultural values. If a group is to be effective, we must accept people where they are and gently, with love, move them forward from there.

C. Forgiving the Unforgivable

We all fail. We fail to meet our own expectations as well as those of others. Most, if not all of us, have our battles of living under the law. If a disciple is to truly grow, he will do so best in an atmosphere of forgiveness and encouragement. In all things, apply a healthy dose of grace. When sin occurs, lead the group through the biblical steps of confession, restitution, forgiveness, and reconciliation, ending with an affirmation of acceptance.

D. Confronting the Unconfronted

We must love with a love that is based on truth and the other person's ultimate well-being in Christ in mind. Effective leaders will not be produced where there is not enough love to "speak the truth in love". But remember, speak it in love.



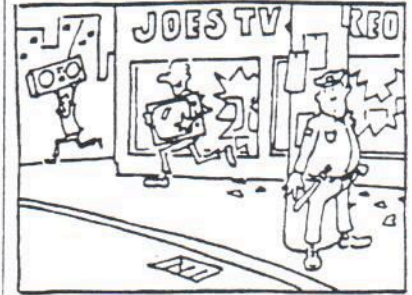
Sgt. O'Malley, implementing an experimental technique: Non-confrontive law enforcement.

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Sgt. O'Malley, implementing an experimental technique: Non-confrontive law enforcement.

DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH SMALL GROUPS II: LEADERSHIP STYLE & GROUP BUILDING

I. Discipleship and Fellowship

Dr. Nicholas Tavani, a Christian Sociologist, has said, "Fellowship only occurs in small groups." By that he means that fellowship (the purposeful and intimate sharing of our lives) cannot occur at a large group level (over 12 people). He claims that it is impossible for us to have *significant, concurrent relationships* with more than a dozen people. (Surely the number of close friends through a life-time would be much higher, but on any given day of our lives we can handle no more than a dozen.) Most of us never come close to having a dozen close, concurrent friends. Probably most of our relationships are benevolent acquaintances. Some people never find a true close friend for major portions of their lives. However, scripture calls us to, and Jesus models a life-style of personal openness and vulnerability which becomes determinative for the way we relate to each other as Christians. Therefore, fellowship is a major aspect of a Discipleship Small Group.

"What we have seen and heard we announce to you also, so that you will join us in the fellowship that we have with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. If we live in the light—just as he is in the light—then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin" (1 John 1:3,7).

II. What Style of Leadership is Needed for a Small Group?

"That guy acts like such a dictator!"

"Why is he such a passive leader?"

"I like our pastor because he is like a player/coach."

We have already looked at the distinctions between natural and spiritual leadership. Those distinctions point to what a leader is like. Here we will look at how a leader operates. Ted Engstrom cites a survey of 200 managers who overwhelmingly agreed that the most important single skill of an executive is his *ability to get along with people*. "In the survey, management rated this ability more vital than intelligence, decisiveness, knowledge, or job skills" (*The Making of a Christian Leader*, p. 67).

A leadership style is the way a leader goes about his or her responsibilities and how that leader is perceived by those he or she is attempting to lead. Much has been written concerning the style of leadership that should be exhibited given a variety of situations.

Students of small groups have discovered that there are various styles of group leadership, some of which are more helpful than others, and some which are more appropriate at various stages in the small group's development.



Fellowship on too large a scale.

The four most common leadership styles are:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

The issue here is not, "Which leadership style is better than any of the others?," but "Which leadership style is best for this particular group at this point in time?"

The most effective style of leadership is one which shifts from an early position of dominance to a later position of facilitation. In the first few weeks (2-4 weeks), the group will be somewhat uncomfortable with each other and unsure concerning what or how to share properly. A well prepared leader with a clear idea of where he or she wants to go, who is open to discussion and the active involvement of the group members, may give the inexperienced group members a sense of direction and security which is helpful in the early stages of group life. The leader should demonstrate a model of the kind of sharing he or she hopes will typify the entire year. This means the leader should be the first to share (personal histories, testimonies, responses to discussion questions, etc.) and thereby set a pattern for others to follow.

Following this first stage, the leader needs to move to a role of facilitator. The members should now begin to feel a sense of ownership of their group. They now are becoming aware of the appropriate manner in which they are to open up their lives to one another. The leader is then to assist their sharing, highlight truths expressed, ask appropriate questions, and make the necessary transitions in the meeting. Rather than being the first to share, he or she now calls for dialogue or response from the members. The leader still is modeling transparency and affirmation, but in a less controlling manner. Some have called this shift the move from Authoritative leadership to Democratic leadership style.

The best leadership styles seem to be those in which prepared leaders offer suggestions and guidance most strongly in the beginning (authoritative) and move as rapidly as possible to a truly shared ownership of the group by all its members (democratic). By the end of the school year, the group members should be exercising many of the functions in the group and sharing as equal partners in decision-making about future plans and procedures.

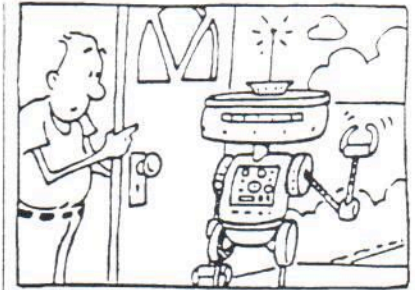
III. Stages in Group Life

In working to build individuals into a group, it is important for a small group leader to be aware of the stages of small group life. Small groups go through stages as they begin, continue, and end their life together. Just as an individual moves through stages in his lifecycle from infancy to old age, so groups move through stages as well.

There are at least four stages that a Discipleship Small Group will go through to achieve health.

A. _____

In healthy relationships, the prerequisite to loving is knowing. For a Discipleship Small Group to go from a collection of people to a community



"Good evening. I am your new facilitator unit. I have the ability to access every verse of Scripture in every known dialect in less than..."

of love, an atmosphere of love and acceptance needs to be facilitated. This is best accomplished by allowing people to share their backgrounds, their personal histories—what in their past has contributed to their present. Hopes and dreams need to be expressed as well as life goals, successes, and failures.

Start with sharing personal history that is the least threatening and even fun to disclose. If you group plans to stay together from 12 to 30 weeks, then spend the first 2 to 4 weeks with a focus on history-giving. Lay a good foundation of mutual understanding.

B. _____

It is an affirming experience to share from your personal life and have a core of people who are interested in you and care. But what is called for here is a planned session in which affirmation is the primary focus. This is an opportunity to go beyond the non-verbal expressions of acceptance and actually verbalize your growing love and concern for each other.

This is a time to express to each other the strengths you have observed and the Christian qualities you most appreciate. Now is the time to express your warmth and nail down verbally your acceptance of your new friends. So immediately after you've completed the history-giving focus, have one meeting to affirm one another. Periodically (once every 8-10 weeks) make it the total focus again. We are called not only to demonstrate our love by actions, but also in words.

HISTORY-GIVING AND AFFIRMATION

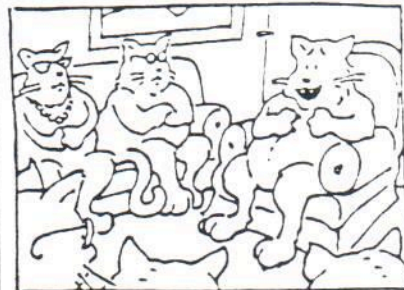
One of the most natural history-giving exercises is to have everyone take all the time they need to tell their testimony of receiving Christ. The leader should share first. It will also give you a good read-out as to where everyone truly is spiritually (and assist them in this same self-understanding).

A tremendous resource to use for these first two phases of group life are materials written by Lyman Coleman in his Serendipity Series. Most recently, he has put together the *Serendipity Bible for Groups* which combines an NIV Bible with questions to aid in group sharing and discussion of each passage of the Bible.

C. _____

Discipleship need not and should not be a static educational experience. It is best accomplished in a strong relational context. It is a shame to take the Words of Life and express them in lifeless forms. So into this atmosphere of mutual accountability, begin to live out the process of discipleship exemplified by Jesus.

This means that the *individual needs must be assessed* and then the *biblical goals must be highlighted*. There are *skills* which must be learned (Bible study, prayer, witnessing, etc.), there are *healings* necessary (physical, emotional, relational), there are *truths* which must be understood and integrated. All of these best occur when the goals are set by friends who accept us, and then will give us the support and practical help necessary for us to accomplish them. In a year of small group life, discipleship will be the dominant focus.



"You too? I thought I was the only one who tortured small rodents before eating them."

D. _____

This last phase is more a statement of intent than an actual phase of Small Group life. Communion reminds us that the Discipleship Small Groups are not an end in themselves—communion is the end. The ultimate purpose is to fulfill the greatest commandments as Jesus expressed them—to love God with our whole being and love our neighbor as ourself.

The Small Group is a structure which most helps communion to occur. However, communion is not guaranteed because one joins a Small Group. If people are to grow in love for God and others, they must obey the commands of Christ. Communion of souls and minds is hard to plan for. It is most often found spontaneously erupting when God's people gather in His name to fulfill His desires.

IV. A Potpourri of Questions Regarding Small Group Life

A. How large should a Small Group become?

Experience has demonstrated that 4 to 6 people is close to ideal size. Remember, the larger the group, the less the personal "air-time" and thus the slower the relational growth. Groups larger than 6 need co-leaders and significant contact with one another outside the Small Group meeting.

B. How long should a Small Group meeting last?

It seems that a minimum of 2 hours is necessary to accomplish the purposes and goals of a Small Group. It would be quite difficult to do so in less time.

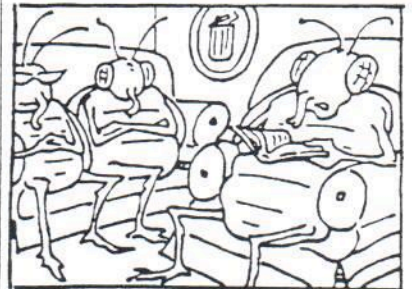
C. How often should the Small Group meetings occur and when?

The pace of the university scene is very fast and changing. Much happens from one day to the next. So to stay current with each other, it becomes necessary to have a meeting once every week. The best times are in the evenings, but also many successful groups have met in the late afternoon as well.

D. Should Discipleship Small Groups be Coed or Sexually Segregated?

While both have merit, the most successful groups are the sexually segregated (men's and women's) groups. Issues of self-concept, past problems, plus sexual and other more intimate issues are of great concern to the single college student. The coed groups have proven to be too inhibiting and require such great maturity that they have a higher possibility of disbanding. The segregated groups seem to enhance commitment and reduce game playing.

Just a note of observation for what it's worth: Campus pastors have noticed that the majority of students truly prefer segregated groups. Often the requests for coed groups come from men and the strongest supporters of segregated groups are the women. They have noticed that it is much more difficult for men to be open and committed to other men, but it is a necessary area of growth for college males.

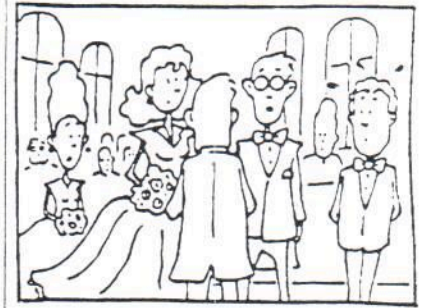


"It's been brought to my attention that we should consider meeting more often than once a week, since we only have a life span of 4 days."

V. The Essential Ingredient: Commitment

It has been said that a lack of commitment is like a slipping clutch on a car. The driver has years of experience, the car is well tuned and powerful, the road is smooth, but the clutch will not engage. It can be the same with a Small Group. The leader can be well-trained and the members can have good, warm Christian hearts, but without commitment, the Small Group will fail. Commitment is an absolutely essential ingredient to the development of a trust-filled core. Commitment must be taught, expected, and modeled.

Make the issue of commitment the very first item of discussion at the very first Small Group meeting. Use a covenant sheet as a tool for discussion. (See the sample in Appendix 5.) A group covenant will also define the expectations and limits of the commitment being asked for. Don't fudge on this issue. If someone cannot declare their willingness to comply with the minimum commitments, then suggest that they wait until their schedule or priorities shift so that they can subscribe to the group commitments.



"Maybe."

28

DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH SMALL GROUPS III: FORMAT, FORMATION & CONTENT

I. Introduction

In this lesson, we continue to examine the dynamics of developing a Discipleship Small Group. The previous two lessons have focused on the purposes and phases for these groups. In this lesson, the focus will move to the format, formation and content of these small groups.

But before we do, let's look briefly at an important issue concerning discipline and deliverance in discipleship.

II. Discipleship Involves Both Discipline and Deliverance

The ultimate purpose of a Christian is to know God the Father in a very personal and intimate way, to become like Jesus His Son, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to live like Jesus. However, we all have been born into sin and have gratified "...the cravings of our sinful nature and (followed) its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3). This means that we have all been thwarted in our ultimate purpose.

As was pointed out in previous lessons, we are in desperate need of an inner transformation. This Jesus offers to us full and free by faith in His triumph over the cross and the grave. We stand forgiven before the Father and fully adopted into His family.

Nonetheless, we discover that on-going growth in Christ is a necessity for us all. We discover that we still must put our past to death before Christ, and clothe ourselves with the newness that Jesus offers.

For Jesus to bring freedom into our lives, we need both deliverance and discipline. *Deliverance is an encounter with Christ by the Spirit.* It may deal with evil forces harassing our lives, freedom from habitual sin, or healing in our bodies, minds and soul. These are moments when Jesus comes strongly into our lives and breaks the power that has enslaved us in some way. From that moment, we experience freedom such as we have never known before. God has intervened and we will be different from that time on.

Discipline, on the other hand, is not instantaneous. It is by nature experienced over time. *Discipline is repentance lived out.* When we repent of our sin, we must turn from it for repentance to be real and complete. Spiritual disciplines in our lives are ways we continue to express repentance and turn our lives to the Lord. When we discard discipline for the guise of freedom, we are in essence turning and rationalizing away our repentance. Thus, it is the delivered and disciplined man that hears the Lord.

Discipleship in a Small Group context is the foremost biblical context for deliverance and discipline to be fostered. Deliverance is most often experienced in a body ministry context. Discipline is best fostered where mutually supportive relationships exist. Discipleship is the path to growth in Christ.



"Hey look, Martha! That guy we were evicted from last week still has a vacancy."

III. The Small Group Meeting Format

What should occur in a typical small group meeting? What are the basic aspects of a health producing meeting of sharing, learning and growing in Christ?

A. _____

In a Small Group, worship could be anything from conversational prayer and a song, to 45 minutes of total focus of adoration of God through song, scripture, and spiritual gifts. No doubt your worship experience will be determined by the style with which the individual members feel comfortable. Whatever expression it takes, worship is a time to transition from the concerns of the day to coming together with other believers to praise God from whom all wisdom and strength comes.

B. _____

From worship we now move to the study phase. This is the appropriate time to teach skills such as Bible study, prayer, and witnessing. Or the focus could go to an inductive Bible study through a New Testament book. The choices of subject matter are almost endless. Whatever material is covered, some principles in this interaction time are important to remember:

- The content phase should have a primary goal of calling each member to a personal application to carry out during the next few days or weeks.
- The teaching should be done in a discussion mode and not after the lecture style.

Learning should be accomplished by assisted self-discovery. The members should be encouraged to be mutually supportive of each other's applications. Everyone needs to be involved, learning, and sharing.

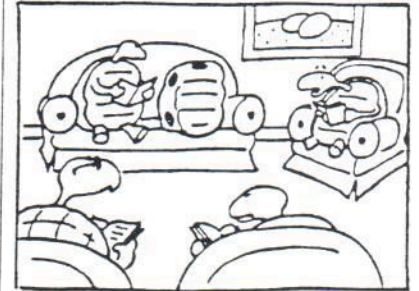
C. _____

The handicap of content-only-oriented-meetings is that it often misses the personal needs the members bring with them to the Small Group meeting. The Small Group needs to continually stay current with each other. To update one another of the joys and sorrows of the past week, to express praise the Lord for the answers to prayer, or to tell one another the needs to be faced during the next few weeks. Without this sharing time, the Small Group will grow relationally stale.

D. _____

Now that you have heard each member's application to the Bible study and/or their need expressed in the sharing time, you can pray very specifically for each other. Communion grows between people when they pray for each other. When the answers to prayer start to return to the group, all kinds of life will occur! Through prayer for each other, the members will then recognize that God truly does care for them and love them dearly.

This format intends to describe a typical meeting, not an ideal meeting.



"What did Isaiah mean by that?
How 'bout you, Doug?
We haven't heard much
from you tonight."

FORMAT INSIGHT

This format is to be used as a *tool* and not as a *club*. Going from one phase to the next should facilitate growth and encouragement to all the members. But don't hold to this format rigidly. If worship is flowing especially well one night, then let it happen. If someone comes into the meeting obviously distressed, minister immediately rather than waiting until the sharing phases to recognize your friend's need. And if one phase seems to stall one night, then suggest a move to the next phase. A Small Group leader will find this to be a very helpful framework from which to operate.

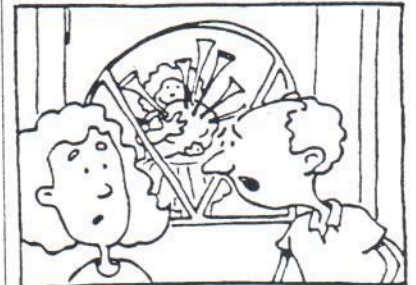
IV. Some tips on how to lead worship, discussion, sharing and prayer in a Small Group.

A. Worship

- Divide the group in half and have them read responsively a passage that you have chosen. The Psalms are great for this.
- Ask someone before the meeting to share a testimony of God's working in their life over the past week or so.
- Sing songs that are very familiar to everyone, ones that they know all the words to. If you are going to teach a new song, take a good period of time to do so and then sing it through 3 to 4 times.
- If you lack musical talent, then select a couple of songs from two different tapes, have them preset to play, and then encourage everyone to sing along with the tape.
- Encourage anyone with musical talent to bring their instruments (guitar, flute, etc.), and keep on encouraging them to grow in worship with you.
- Type out the words to songs and sing off songsheets.
- Have a talented member come prepared to share some special music to begin the night.
- Open a group time with a response to God in silence, giving them a verse or thought to meditate on.
- As you sing, have them change their posture (bowing, kneeling, standing, lifting hands, lying prostrate).
- Write out the order of the songs beforehand and put them in a logical order (fast songs with fast songs, slow with slow, same theme, etc.).
- Give them a theme (like God's faithfulness, God's love) and have them pray one sentence prayers on this theme.

B. Discussion during Content phase

- Remember, in the early stages of your group, you need to ask the questions and be the first one to share. You must model before them the manner in which you hope they will share.
- Ask questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no". For instance:
 - What do you see in this passage...
 - What is your response to...
 - How do you feel about...
 - If the Apostle Paul wrote this to you, what would you...
 - What in your life corresponds to verse...



"Here comes Sue. By the way, I don't suppose you asked her what *kind* of instrument she'd be bringing?"

- When someone asks you a question, bounce it back at the group. "That's a great question, Tom. Matt, how would you answer it?"
- Direct questions at normally quiet people to draw them out, and then affirm them immediately for responding.
- When the group gets off on an unproductive tangent, say so and encourage them to go back to the original issue by restating that issue.
- For help in preparing a Bible study, see Appendix 8, "Preparing to Teach the Word".

C. Sharing

- Focus on becoming current with each other, so ask questions that will get at that kind of information. For example:
 - What has God been saying to you during the past week?
 - What was the greatest thing that you experienced this past week?
 - What was the most difficult thing you faced lately?
- Ask them to share what happened concerning the things that you prayed about for them in the recent weeks.
- Share your feeling first if you sense they may be a little hesitant that night. What is the primary agenda going on in your life and how you feel about it?
- Tell them to listen very closely to what the person on their left shares, because you are going to ask that they pray for them later.
- At times you may need to be very direct by asking someone who is unusually quiet that night how things are going for them right now.
- Before, during, and after meetings, affirm your members, showing your appreciation for their openness. Obviously not every night, but enough so that they are sure that you mean it.
- Two appendices have been provided which you should find especially helpful in sharing: Appendix 9, "Facilitating Small Group Sharing" and Appendix 10, "A Guide to Resolving Small Group Problems".

D. Prayer

- Pray for one another's applications to the Bible study or the need they brought up during the sharing time.
- Put one member in the middle of the circle and have everyone gather around and pray for them. Then move to the next member and do the same.
- Encourage them to pray for the member on their right/left and pray so that all can say amen together.
- Suggest that they all close with short sentence prayers and pray as often as they would like.
- Pick a country or need on campus to pray for and make that the total focus.
- Get into a football huddle and pray or have everyone hold hands as they pray. This helps them to "get in touch" with each other.
- Spend an entire night in prayer. Maybe focus on the ACTS format and go through the format phase by phase.
- Instruct them to focus on only one aspect such as thanksgiving or God's love, as they pray.
- Have them take 10 minutes to write out a prayer and then read it to everyone as their prayer.



"Chuck, let's start with you. What would you say was the most significant thing that's happened to you lately?"



"...and please, God, let me find a large bloated mammal by the side of the road on my way home tonight..."
"Say, whose prayer request is this, anyway?"

V. How to form a Discipleship Small Group

Briefly, just remember now what you're hoping to create. A context where several students who have demonstrated a desire to be faithful to the Lord will gather together weekly for mutual love, training, and encouragement. They probably will not know each other, but they need to make strong commitments to each other if true spiritual growth is going to occur. Frankly, that this would ever develop is a real miracle! And that is exactly what you are trusting the Lord Jesus to do—use you to create a miracle! Well, how does this miracle come into being?

- A. *Pray* earnestly that God the Father will lead you to the faithful men or women that He would desire you to pour your life into. Also pray that the majority of students He leads you to are freshmen and sophomores, along with praying for the upperclassmen that the Lord has already placed in your life by friendship. (A strong trust-filled relationship most often is a necessary ingredient for touching the lives of upperclassmen for Christ.)
- B. *Make Contact* with as many new people as possible. Move into your dorm room early and then assist others as they are moving in. Man a booktable in your dorm lobby, or help with one outside the Student Center. Put a poster or an invitation to a Small Group Bible Study on your door. Wear a campus ministry T-shirt. Ask other Fellowship members if they know anyone you could contact. Check with the campus ministry staff to see if they have had any leads on new students. Introduce yourself to visitors at the main weekly meeting or visitors at your local church. Be creative! Just do whatever you can to meet as many people as possible in the first 4 weeks of each term. Remember, you must do so with a genuine attitude of concern for your new friends. Check your heart motivation often throughout this process. (If it is not right, don't stop meeting people, but pray until it becomes right.)
- C. *Explain* what a Discipleship Small Group is to the new friends you are making. Describe the impact that it has had on your life and why you feel that it is important. These opportunities may provide a chance to share your testimony and the good news of Jesus to someone who has never heard it clearly.
- D. *Invite* the person to come at a time and place that you have predetermined. Attempt to explain the level of commitment that is necessary for a good Small Group (maybe even leave with them a copy of a commitment sheet for them to look at and bring to the meeting). When they say that they would like to attend (and many will) you will need to remind them often of the time and place (probably you will need to go by and pick them up for the first Small Group meeting). If they are interested, but can't come at that time, you should introduce them to a Small Group Leader whose group meets at a time that will work. You should also stay in contact with them to make sure they made it into another small group. Also invite them and walk with them to a main weekly meeting.
- D. *Plan* carefully for the first 4 meetings. You need to make sure everyone understands the issues surrounding commitment, and then spend time in history-giving experiences plus prayer for each other. You need to be organized for these meetings especially, because you can be sure that they won't be! Have most of the details planned before the start of the semester

so that you can devote most of your time to personal contacts and follow-up with these new friends. This is a very important time for you to be with them building relationship.

- E. *Pray* some more. Trust God to perform a miracle before your eyes by providing contacts, interest, conviction, friendship and commitment. These things coming together are always a miracle of God's Spirit working hand-in-hand with our efforts.

NOTE: Most Small Group Leaders find that only about 40% of those who say that they are interested or who say they will come to Small Group actually get involved. If you wish to work with about five students, you will need positive responses from about 10 to 12.

VI. The Content of a Discipleship Small Group

Now that you have a group of students becoming friends with each other, what do you disciple them in? What do you attempt to teach them? Here is a list of potential subjects that may apply to your group. You would not be able to cover all of these in one school year by any means, but they may help you to identify where your group needs to go next.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Bible Study Skills | 11. Management of Time & Money |
| 2. Scripture Memory | 12. Spiritual Gifts |
| 3. Personal Prayer Life | 13. Leadership Qualities & Skills |
| 4. Worship | 14. Christian sexuality |
| 5. Personal Evangelism | 15. Self-esteem |
| 6. Relationship Building Skills | 16. God's Will & Guidance |
| 7. Lordship of Christ | 17. Assurance of Salvation |
| 8. Essential Doctrine | 18. Missions |
| 9. Spiritual Disciplines | 19. Life in the Spirit |
| 10. Faithfulness & Commitment | 20. Dealing with Temptation, Sin, Satan |

Beyond these, probably the best choice is to do a study of a book of the Bible. Every biblical book has a central theme (many books have more than one). Choose a book that addresses the overall needs of the group members. For example, you might choose:

- Psalms*to discover worship
- Amos*to learn about social justice
- The Gospel of Mark*to deal with servanthood
- The Gospel of Luke*to study the work of the Spirit in Jesus
- Galatians*to learn the difference between living under law and grace
- Ephesians*to learn about the body of Christ
- I Thessalonians*to teach on discipleship
- James*to focus on practical Christianity
- I Peter*to study suffering as a Christian



"OK, Dave, but I think we should check this one out. Where in the Bible does it say that no one over 5'8" can enter the kingdom of heaven?"

VII. How do you go about choosing the content for your Small Group?

A. Evaluate your group

Look at lists like the one above and then evaluate your group. What areas of weaknesses are generally in your group members?

B. Recognize need

Assist your members in understanding and recognizing this area of weakness. Help them to own the problem or growth area. Help them see the need for growth.

C. Address Need by Scripture

Go to the Word of God for solutions, directions, and instruction. Very early in the school year you need to teach them a simple Bible study method because you can then:

1. build upon this foundation all year long and
2. enable them to feed themselves from the Word when you are not there to assist them.

D. Establish goals

Highlight very carefully the goals that you are working toward. They need to know where you are trying to go with them.

E. Follow-up with pastoral care

Pray with each person as they try to implement the new skill or grow past the area of stumbling in their life.



Looking at his small group, Earl began to see a common point of weakness.

1-TO-1 DISCIPLESHIP FROM THE SMALL GROUP CONTEXT

I. Introduction

In Lesson 7, we stated that the ideal model for discipleship is accomplished in the small group context, from which we then undergird with 1-to-1 discipleship. Lessons 7, 8, and 9 focused upon the biblical example and practical skills of small group discipleship. Small group discipleship is primary. Secondary to it, but also essential, is time spent 1-to-1 between the discipling leader and the new disciple.

Many questions can be raised concerning 1-to-1 discipleship.

- What should occur during these times?
- What do they talk about?
- How can this time be spent in a quality manner?

Answering these questions and teaching skills of 1-to-1 discipleship are the goals of this lesson.

II. A Strategy for 1-to-1 Discipleship

A. Build a trust-filled relationship

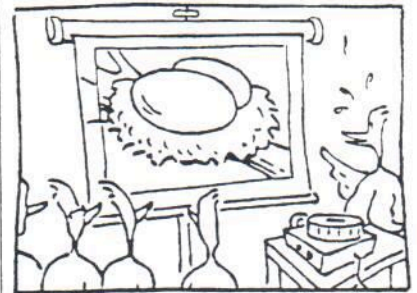
As stated many times already, discipleship flows from a relational context. No place is this more obvious than sitting in the student union face to face with the new disciple. What is needed in building relationship in the small group is absolutely necessary in 1-to-1. Therefore, *do more in-depth personal history sharing*. Learn as much as you can about the person, while at the same time letting him know you more fully. Since one of the strengths of 1-to-1 time is that it can be more intimate, then work to build this strength.

Spend time in the beginning stages just doing more history-giving. Loving is built on knowing. This demands openness on your part. In this way you are expressing trust in the person and showing that you care. Do all you can (from your side) to build a trust-filled relationship.

B. Teach them how to study the Bible

One of the most important skills you can pass on to a new believer is the ability to study the Word of God. Study goes beyond devotional reading. Do all you can to develop 2 Timothy 2:15 in the disciple, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and *who correctly handles the word of truth.*"

Obviously, an entire course on Biblical interpretation cannot be laid out here. You will find a guide to reference materials in the annotated bibliography for biblical interpretation. However, let us highlight some goals of Bible study and a simple skill that you can teach 1-to-1.



"Boy this is embarrassing. Here's the first photo of me. That's my sister Clara on the left."

1. Three Components Of Any Good Bible Study Method

The primary goal for the study of Scripture is to arrive at the meaning of the passage. This meaning needs to be discovered in three stages:

- a. _____
This always occurs first. One seeks to discover the facts and structure of the passage in order to lay a foundation for interpretation.
- b. _____
Here we intend to answer the question, "What did this passage mean to the first readers?" What was the purpose of writing for the author?
- c. _____
This is a process where the meaning of the passage to the first readers is then translated into our present day situation. It answers the question, "What does this passage mean to me?"

Our first aim in biblical interpretation is to determine the meaning which the author intended to communicate to his audience. Therefore, the meaning of a passage must be something the original readers could have understood. Stated differently, a biblical text cannot mean today what it could not have meant when it was written.

Only after we have a good idea of what the text meant can we go on to see what the text means for us today.

2. A Bible Study Tool

PROAPT is an acrostic that stands for:

- P _____
- R _____
- O _____
- A _____
- P _____
- T _____

The PROAPT model is adapted from Discipling Ministries Seminar, Barnabas, Inc. Used by permission, 1991.

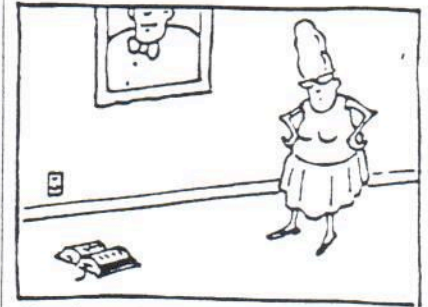
See the PROAPT sheet in the Appendix and follow these instructions: The first thing to do is to record the date. You will discover this to be an important spiritual journal after faithful use.

Pray

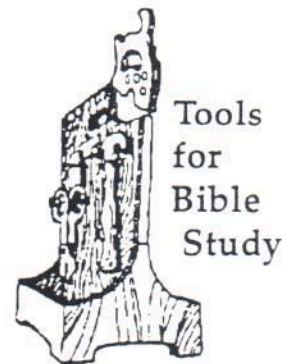
Quiet yourself before the Lord prior to going to his Word. This can be a short time of prayer or lengthy. Be sure to include this as a part of this prayer time: "Dear Lord, please speak to me from your Word and by your Spirit today."

Read

Read the passage aloud. If possible, read the passage in different translations. Make every effort to involve as many of the senses as possible. For some creative ideas see Roberta Hestenes' book, *Using the Bible in Groups*.



Carol never moved past the observation stage of Bible study.



Observe

Now is the time to write down all that you can observe from the text. In your observation, answer some of the following questions.

- Who are the people mentioned, where does this passage happen, when did it occur?
- What literary constructions are significant, i.e., repetitions, comparisons and contrasts, verb tenses, cause and effect?
- What kind of literature is this, i.e., history, teaching material, poetry, prophecy, parable?
- What do the words mean? Look up important words in a dictionary and substitute the definition for the word and reread the passage.
- Is there any progression or logical development of significance in this passage?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What did the first readers understand in their context?

It may help to outline the passage, or paraphrase the passage, trying to maintain the meaning but using your own words.

Apply

Here it is time to *bridge the gap between the "there and then" and the "here and now"*. Ask these kind of questions here:

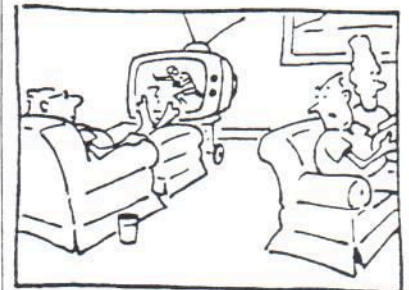
- What issues does this passage raise which are still issues today?
- What does this passage say about my relationship with God and with other people, about sin in my life and about my attitudes?
- How can I apply this within the next two days?
- What behavior does this passage call for that I am not now doing?

Application is the most difficult part of any Bible study method to master. We tend to make applications that are generalized wishes or hopes. We often come away from the biblical text with unmeasurable goals or goals too large to see daily growth. It takes real effort, but we must chop up the gigantic applications into bite-size chunks. In application, above all, be specific!

Take the following example: "Lord I want to be more disciplined in my Bible study." While admirable there are no objective criteria with which progress can be measured. Break it down like: "Lord, in an effort to become more disciplined in my personal Bible study, I am committing to spend from 7:30 to 8:00 AM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays doing my PROAPTs through Phillipians."

Pray

Again, at this point, commit to Jesus your application and praise Him for speaking to you. If you wish, follow the prayer format listed on the PROAPT sheet.



"Hey Bruce, help us out here. What possible relevance could idol worship have to the world today?"

Tell

Find a prayer partner, preferably someone in your small group. Let them know what Jesus is saying and doing in you. These can become some of the most quality times of your life.

One final recommendation. When PROAPTing, build consistency by staying in the same Biblical book or on the same Biblical topic. A lifetime of consistent study will reap a bounty of fruit.

In teaching this skill, follow this procedure:

- Demonstrating how to PROAPT in a 1-to-1 session.
- Assign them to do three PROAPTs per week for the next two weeks.
- Meet with them and go over their PROAPTs with them.
- Point out areas needing development.
- Make a further assignment until they come to some level of mastery of this Bible study tool.

C. Teach them how to pray

Alongside the ability to study the Bible, another essential skill is knowing how to pray. Since the Disciples asked Jesus how to pray, it is certainly appropriate for us to ask and learn! As can be seen from the Lord's Prayer, there are a variety of components to prayer. A good tool is the *ACTS Format of Prayer*. Again, ACTS is an acronym for:

- A _____
Praise to the Lord for who He is (focus upon His nature).
- C _____
Statement of Jesus as Lord of my life and asking for forgiveness of sin.
- T _____
Praise to the Lord for what He has done (focus on His deeds).
- S _____
Intercession for my needs and the needs of others.

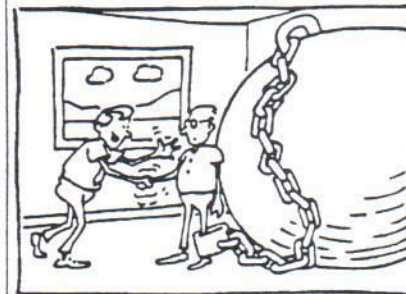
Learning how to pray after this manner would be a stretching experience for any disciple. Again, request in your 1-to-1 that they pray after this format three times per week for two weeks. Then after the sixth time, have them write out their reflections and thoughts after having prayed in this manner. It should lead to a good time of discussion on prayer. Don't presume that they will pray this way forever. But it is a great way to open them up to a greater prayer life. It could be an excellent idea to anchor in prayer by spending time together praying in your 1-to-1's. These instructions coupled with your modeling prayer will greatly help a disciple communicate with the Lord Jesus.

D. Carefully assess personal needs

The first stage in ministry is knowing the needs. Here we try to get in touch with the tensions in their life in order to assist you in knowing how to encourage them in spiritual growth. A helpful tool can be found in Appendix 13, *Needs, Concerns and Problems*. The sole purpose of this simple form is to gain an overview of the areas of concern in the disciple's life as they perceive them.

After you have taught them Bible study and prayer, take an hour or two with this sheet in hand and ask them to describe their life in the four areas requested on the sheet: Personal & Relational, Family, Academic and

Disciples must be taught how to feed themselves!



"Well Rick, I'm glad we could share this special time together. Now if there's anything specific you'd like me to pray about, don't hesitate to call."

Spiritual Needs. Sometimes just helping the person to gain an overview of the tensions in their life can be a great moment of self discovery. From this perspective, you can then move toward addressing some specific areas of needed growth in the disciple.

E. Help them to set personal spiritual growth goals

See the Appendix 14, *The ABC's of Ministry*. This highlights a five stage process in personal ministry. Let's examine each stage, one point at a time.

A

Assess the Need

After having gone over the *Needs, Concerns and Problems* sheet with them, you then select one area. Usually it is best the first time, to allow the disciple to pick the area that they want to grow in. If they select it, they will probably bring some motivation to the task, thus increasing the chances for growth. Even if you discern that another area is more needy, it is still probably better for them to choose the first area. They will be more willing to tackle harder issues after they have learned to work with you.

Write out as clearly as possible the issue of need in the space provided, just so everyone has a clear understanding on the issue.

B

Build a Biblical Foundation

What does God's Word have to say about this issue? Often this is quite direct and to the point, while there are times when finding the counsel of God's Word is more difficult. Here the leader is modeling the use of the Bible as our guide for all faith and practice. Careful work here helps the disciple see that we are to live under the authority of God's truth rather than by any standards imposed by contemporary morality. In this space, write a summary statement of the counsel from the Word with several Scripture references listed.

C

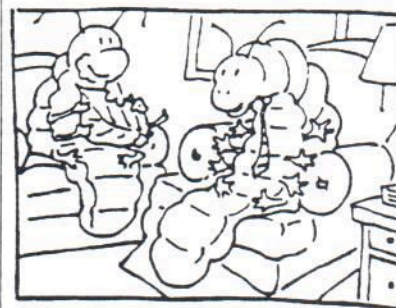
Create Measureable Goals

From what the Bible instructs, what should the disciple trust the Lord to do in his or her life? It is important that goals be specific and measureable. Vague goals are quite frustrating and you are never sure if you are making any progress. State goals in terms of how much, when, how often, with whom, etc. Make the goals tangible but faith filled. Remember what we learned about goals and purposes. "A goal is a statement about how we hope things are going to be at some time in the future. It is a statement of faith. Notice that goals are not statements about what will be. That is in God's hands. But they are statements about what we believe God wants us to do or to be, in light of his word."

D

Develop a Plan of Action

Now take your goals and put them into a statement of strategy. Break it down into stages or steps. What will the disciple do first, then next, and then after that? If the final goal will take three months to accomplish, what will the disciple do in the first month, the second and the third? Be specific and clear.



"I've had this vision of myself one day having these big beautiful wings...and then migrating for thousands of miles...what'ya think? Is that crazy?"

Establish Proper Support

We were never intended to walk out our faith in Jesus alone, but Christ has placed us carefully into His Body. Therefore, we must be there for each other. Establish times for evaluation and adjustment. Encouragement will be very necessary. Sometimes you will need to be a little tough and demand that the disciple stay on target. Sometimes he may need you to forgive him for failing and be able to experience compassion first-hand. So check up regularly and commit yourself to see this through with the disciple.

III. Ministry Skills Should Be Transgenerational

We have said before that discipleship is a transgenerational process whereby the message and methods of the Kingdom of God impact the world. The skills used in this process need to be transgenerational as well. *What is meant by transgenerational skills is that in teaching one disciple you need to use skills that they in turn can use to teach another later.*

This is why the forms used in this lesson are simple. There is nothing special in the forms. This is deliberate. The forms could be easily reproduced on a napkin at your favorite pancake house restaurant. There is nothing sacred about the forms, they merely describe process in ministry.

It is cruel to teach someone, but withhold from them source for learning. Don't just tell someone to go from A to Z, but show them how to go from A to Z. In doing so they will some day take someone else from A to Z. Keep the first skills that you use simple and transgenerational. No doubt later on you will become much more sophisticated, *but make sure they have something in their hand they can pass on to another.*

28

CONFRONTATION AND RESTORATION

I. Discipleship and Discipline

"My brothers, if one of you wanders away from the truth and another brings him back again, remember this: whoever turns a sinner back from his wrong way will save that sinner's soul and bring forgiveness of many sins" (James 5:19, 20 TEV).

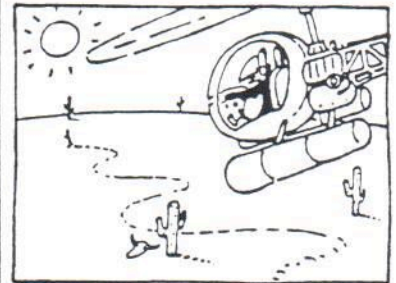
Sometimes disciples wander away from the truth. Reasons for this are numerous. Jesus warns that some will have truth snatched from them by Satan. Others never go beyond the initial joy of salvation. Still others fall away due to trouble, persecution, or through the deceitfulness of wealth and desires for other things in the world. For many, they really don't lose their faith, they just cease to use their faith. The neglect results in coldness in their relationship to Christ and they begin to renege on their commitment. Double-mindedness sets in. Again James reminds us, "...he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does" (James 1:6b-8).

Until recently, there has been very little written on bringing restoration to members within a local body of believers when they go astray or are caught in a sin. No doubt this issue makes many nervous due to gross mistakes made which have caused much harm to all involved. There is a tendency to avoid the issue or problem altogether. Pervasive individualism in our society has crept into our fellowship groups and churches, thereby causing many to consider intervention into someone's life an intrusion or an infringement upon one's personal privacy. We come to believe that it is inappropriate to ever bring any questions or demands upon someone else, fearing that we have overstepped our bounds.

But when one considers the instructions given to us in the Scriptures concerning the interdependency of believers toward each other, we should not be surprised to see injunctions such as Matthew 18:15-20 and Galatians 6:1-5.

"If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault. But do it privately, just between yourselves... If he listens to you, you have won your brother back. But if he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation may be upheld by the testimony of two or more witnesses,' as the scripture says. And if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. Finally, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as though he were a pagan or a tax collector."

Matthew 18. 15-17 TEV



Suddenly Carl is spotted. The relief his friends feel would be complete, if not for their guilt at letting him wander this far from home.

"My brothers, if someone is caught in any kind of wrongdoing, those of you who are spiritual should set him right; but you must do it in a gentle way. And keep an eye on yourselves, so that you will not be tempted, too. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should judge his own conduct. If it is good, then he can be proud of what he himself has done, without having to compare it with what someone else has done. For everyone has to carry his own load."

Galatians 6:1-5

These call for direct and explicit initiation toward someone in the body who is struggling in their Christian walk. This then is a vital issue for all who respond to the call to become disciplers. It is an essential responsibility in the process of discipleship.

II. Discipline For the Wayward Disciple

Let us recall some things mentioned in a previous lesson. "Discipline is training that corrects, molds, and perfects the mental abilities and moral character of a person. Many times we think first of punishment when we consider discipline, but even good punishment should serve to penalize a person due to their lack of self-control (trusting that the direct attention will aid in the development of self-control). Thus, to discipline simply means to impose order upon disorder within the mind, heart and spirit."

Every disciple submits to Godly discipline. The writer of Hebrews tells us that "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness."

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Hebrews 12:7-11

The discipline we are focusing on in this lesson is that which is necessary to be brought to a brother or sister who is wandering from the truth. Their eternal life is at stake.

In Lesson 8 we mentioned that "discipline is repentance lived out." To discipline a brother caught in sin, is to bring them back to the foundations of their salvation and their relationship with God. It means to speak the message of grace again to them and to call upon them to repent from their folly. How are we instructed to carry out this process of discipline?

III. The Occasion for Discipline: "If Your Brother Sins"

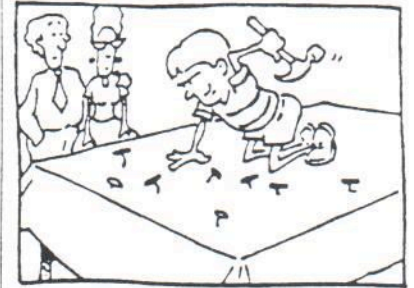
"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault..." Mt. 18:15a
Scholars debate the meaning of "against you" in this passage. Some feel that it refers only to direct sin which injures you. Others feel that "against

you" means that you are the witness of the problem. Probably both positions are correct. (In fact, many of the ancient manuscripts omitted the words "against you" in this passage. This would make the injunction even more simple. If you are aware that your brother is in sin, then you are to go to him).

Neglect is not excusable on any grounds. Too often we sound like Cain when he said to God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" This passage seems to underscore that since we are brothers and sisters in Christ, we have responsibility to one another. One of these responsibilities is to care enough for each other to intervene during times of spiritual waywardness.

We must remember that living a spiritual life is a reality in which sin and righteousness are mutually exclusive. Consequently, even if acts of sin are concealed, the symptoms of spiritual illness will eventually surface somewhere. When the revealing signs of sin make their appearance, the discipler is constrained to inquire into the life of the individual in question. This is not a matter of prying into the private life of people; it is an attempt to help them return to the way of faith. Thus, the fellowship does not go around looking for hidden sins. As in evangelism, so in discipline, we are looking for discipleship, which by its nature is open and visible.

What kinds of sins do we become concerned about? The deeds of the flesh that Paul gives in Galatians 5 immediately precede the list of fruits of the Spirit and the instructions on restoring a brother caught in trespass. The following list can give us some assistance as to what Paul intends for us to become concerned about.



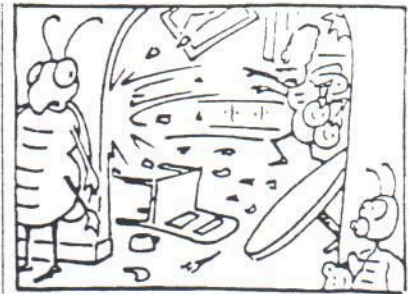
Edna and Wilbur felt sure that left to his own devices, little Pete would soon see the folly of his ways.

DEEDS OF THE FLESH

Galatians 5:19-21

Immorality	...primarily referring to sexual immorality of any kind. It was so common in Greco-Roman antiquity that it was not regarded as especially reprehensible. Our culture is not much different. "Sexual preference" or "sexual orientation" or even "safe sex" are really immorality redressed.
Impurity	...like an unclean wound or an unpruned tree. To be impure means that one can't approach the holy God.
Sensuality	...readiness for any pleasure with no restraint for any desire. Hedonism, as it is called today, is glorified in our culture by the quest for the "Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous".
Idolatry	...where material things have taken the place of God. Our culture doesn't promote the construction of statues to worship, but calls us to worship power, fame, wealth, security, etc. Idolatry is any substitute for the living and true God.
Sorcery	...literally "the use of drugs", primarily for use in witchcraft. Drug use and the rise of the occult are both issues that our culture struggles to deal with effectively.
Enmities	...hostile sentiments, intentions, or acts. The examples here are numerous (child abuse, wife abuse, rape, terrorism, international aggression) and each one is experienced in proportions never before seen in the history of mankind.
Strife	...rivalry which finds its outcome in quarrelings and wranglings. The opposite of strife is peace.
Jealousy	...desire to have what someone else has. Our compulsion to consume and possess which fuels and drives all of western capitalism.

DEEDS OF THE FLESH (cont.)	
Outbursts of Anger	...burst of temper, anger that strikes out physically, verbally, or emotionally.
Selfishness	...selfish ambition. Describes the man who wants office, not from any motives of service, but for what he can get out of it.
Dissensions	...where members of a group fly apart instead of coming together. Western individualism fostered, nurtured, protected, defended and promoted.
Factions	...cliques where people who hold different views finish up by disliking not each other's views, but each other.
Envyings	...begrudges the fact that someone has things at all. The grudging spirit that cannot bear to contemplate someone else's prosperity.
Drunkeness	...excessive indulgence in strong drink which weakens people's rational and moral control over words and action. Unilaterally hailed by administrators and students as the number one problem on campus today.
Carousings	...always in close association with drunkeness this is probably equivalent to what the university community calls "partying". It means unrestrained revelry, enjoyment that has degenerated into license.



"Let's give her a minute, son. That's one mad hornet in there."

A common thread among all of those listed above is that they all are a sin against relationship in some form or another. This list is not intended to be conclusive. But you can feel that you are confronting correctly if one of the above is involved.

IV. The Goal of Discipline: "If He Repents Then Forgive"

We must continually remind ourselves that the goal of discipline is not to correctly fulfill the specific instructions in restoration (although we must do that), but to win our brother back through repentance to God.

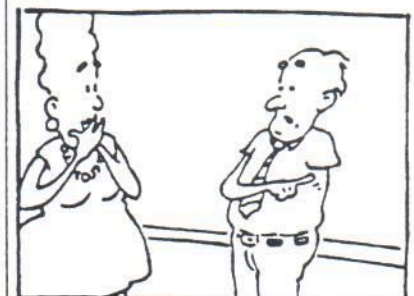
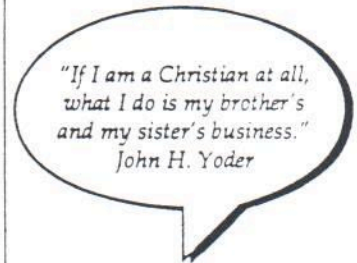
Let us draw a distinction between admonition and excommunication.

- admonition.....this is gentle, loving but firm reproof in counseling and a warning against a sin or fault.
- excommunication.....this is the process by which a member of the body is placed under an exclusion from the fellowship (shunned from the body).

Jesus very clearly teaches both of these actions in Matthew 18, but most clearly in a process of moving from admonition to excommunication. Since He teaches both, we must then take both very seriously.

A truly dangerous testimony of any fellowship's witness before God and in the world is their ability to see a brother or sister's sin and to do nothing about it. On the other hand, the fellowship is hurt by an excommunication that is too hasty, for then the Christian community comes to be regarded (with good reason) as a body concerned not with restoration of its members to God, but for its self-image.

The initial approach in the disciplining act, whether it is called admonition, exhortation, rebuke, reproof, correction or any other such term, must be seen as a presentation of the gospel. This is to be done with a sincere



"My left arm? Oh, I discovered a hangnail, so naturally I had it removed."

personal appeal. "If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness," writes the Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:1

"Admonition of a sinner in the church is analogous to evangelism outside the church. As in evangelism repentance issues in forgiveness and fellowship, so in discipline response to the word of admonition issues in forgiveness and continued fellowship. Likewise, as in evangelism an individual's rejection of the gospel is respected and he is not incorporated into the body of Christ, so in discipline an individual's rejection of the word of admonition is respected and he is excluded from the body of Christ. The only difference is that admonition begins with a sinner in the church, whereas evangelism begins with one outside the church."

Marlin Jeschke, *Discipling the Brother*, (Herald Press, 1972) p. 85.

This process is intended to accomplish a sincere confession of sin, this is the obvious goal of the Matthew 18 instruction. This confession of sin brings renewed fellowship between sinner and God the Father. Repentance of the sinful life needs to then follow, and repentance can be seen as the indicator for renewed fellowship in the body of Christ.

V. The Qualifications To Execute Discipline: "You Who Are Spiritual..."

A. Who are the "spiritual"?

Let's look into Galatians 5. In verses 18-25, Paul tells believers to "walk", "live" and "be led" by the Spirit. A focus we can notice is that Paul expects to see right actions which flow out of right thinking.

B. How does one become "spiritual"?

In verses 24 and 25, Paul adds, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." A spiritual person is one who kills the acts of sin in their life. They have come to hate sin and its effects in their life. Beyond this, the spiritual man is one characterized by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). This fruit is not to be seen merely as right attitudes or dispositions, but as manifestations flowing from us as from the Spirit.

Since you then are spiritual, you are the one, having seen the trespass, to go to your brother and gently, but firmly restore him to the Lord.

VI. The Healing in Discipline: "Restore Such A One"

"Restore" is used for executing a repair and for the work of a surgeon in removing some growth from a man's body or in setting a broken limb.

We are to restore someone who repents. True repentance is evidenced by Godly sorrow. It is more than just saying "I'm sorry". Godly sorrow produces much good in our lives. Paul describes this to the Corinthians, "For you became sorrowful as God intended....Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done" (2 Corinthians 7:9b-11a).

Therefore, we could propose the following guidelines:

- Restore someone who repents.
- Discipline someone who does not repent.

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently."

Galatians 6:1

VII. First Step of Discipline: "Watch yourself, or you also may be tempted."

"But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted" (Galatians 6:1b).

Start with yourself. Go with a spirit of gentleness. The story is told of the great Chicago preacher D. L. Moody, when once walking along the street, he saw a drunk lying in the gutter. He turned to his friend and said, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." We must start with careful self-examination and repentance before the Lord of our own temptations. We cannot gloat over the grace we have received. That completely misunderstands the work of grace in our life. With a renewed sense of our own position before Christ, a sinner saved by grace through faith, we are then to go to our brother.

One more issue is very important—forgive your brother from your heart before you go, and as you go. The greater context of Jesus' words in Matthew 18 are as follows. In verses 7-9, Jesus teaches us to rid ourselves of anything which would prevent us from entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Do radical surgery where necessary. Then in verses 10-14, He tells us that the Good Shepherd goes after the one out of the 100. He describes the joy of the Father when the one lost sheep is returned. Going on we come to our passage for today, "If your brother sins, go to him..." He then talks to us about prayer for the ones who wander off, and affirms that when two or three agree on such a thing, it shall be done for them by their Father in Heaven. However, Jesus saves the punch line for last. In verses 21-35, He tells a story of a servant who is forgiven an incredible debt, but who turns around and punishes someone who owes him a days wage. Jesus says this unmerciful servant will be punished very severely. Jesus last words speak volumes, "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart" (Matthew 18:35).

VIII. Putting It All Together: How to Confront and Restore

A. Personal introspection

Evaluate your own life, and make sure you are "walking in the Spirit", i.e.- keep on becoming "spiritual".

B. Distinguish between sins and differences

Make sure you are evaluating your wayward brother from a biblical perspective. Be sure that what you are confronting is sin and not a matter of conscience. Refer to the "Deeds of the Flesh" as a beginning guideline.

C. Pray

Confess your need of Christ's forgiveness; praise Him for His abundant grace in your life; pray that you will not be led into temptation; ask for guidance.

D. Forgive

Forgive your brother from your heart. Be merciful.

E. Confront personally

Go to the wayward brother and discuss the area of concern. If it is in fact true that he has fallen into sin, then ask for confession of this sin and ask to see a turning from the sin. Do so in a spirit of gentleness, while at the same time not backing down from the truth of God's word.

F. Maintain confidentiality

Keep the circle of awareness as small as possible. Don't tell everybody about your brother's sin or even about you going to him. The goal is to "win" your brother back, and then allow him to reestablish fellowship with the body of Christ. If the repentant wishes to testify about his return



"Whoa! No wonder he was having trouble seeing clearly."

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Matthew 7:3-5



When sheep go astray.

to the Lord, let that be for him to choose. (Unless, of course, the nature of the sin caused direct injury to the local body, or it was a spiritual leader who sinned. Elders are to be disciplined publicly, but still with mercy. 1 Timothy 5:19, 20)

G. Include witness(es)

If your brother does not repent, then go again with one or two others. Again ask for a turning from sin and a turning to the Lord.

H. Include leadership

If still no Godly response, then approach the Fellowship's leadership and have them confront the brother. If the brother persists in his sin, then decide with the leadership how best to present this issue before the body.

I. Keep restoration as the goal

Remember, the purpose of discipline is to win a brother and not primarily to maintain a pure community, at least not initially. The issue of corporate purity comes after the issue of personal purity has been pursued to the fullest.

J. Celebrate restoration

Jesus tells a parable where a shepherd leaves the flock of 99 sheep to go out after one lost sheep in order that the lost sheep might be restored to the fold. Immediately following that parable is the parable of a woman who looses one coin and searches until she finds it. When the lost is found she then calls all the neighbors and has a party! And finally Jesus tells one last story about lost things. The parable of the lost son. When the son returns home to his father the reconciliation is celebrated. (Luke 14.1-32)

You must not fear personal failure in confrontation and restoration. It only takes the focus off the injured person and puts it on you instead. Beyond that, our lives are to be lived in faith, and this will certainly cause your faith to grow. Most importantly, eternity is at stake for the transgressor.

"...we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found."

Luke 14:32 (TEV)

"Better a frank word of reproof than love that will not speak; faithful are the wounds of a friend."

Prov. 27:5-6 (Moffat)

28

THE QUALITIES NECESSARY TO BE AN EFFECTIVE DISCIPLER

I. Ready to Disciple?

So you're ready now to be a Small Group Discipler. Or are you? How does a person assess his or her own preparedness? By what gauge or guide can one evaluate whether to take a step of faith and assume discipling leadership? Anyone who takes seriously the Lord's injunction to "disciple the nations" will ask these kinds of questions.

In this lesson, we shall look at two gauges or measuring sticks by which we can measure ourselves, drawn from practical experience in campus ministry and from the Apostle Paul.

II. Essentials for a Small Group Discipler

A. Godly character

The most incredible news the world has ever heard is that God himself came to earth. Not only did this provide a wonderful salvation for us, but the Lord wanted to make sure we could come to know Him as He is. No more voices from a mountain or earthquakes or even still small voices, but God became a man. In doing so, He demonstrated firsthand what He purposes us to become. The most significant way that we can know how we are to live, act, think, and love, is to see a model, have an example. Jesus was the first model for all who would follow Him, and not only are we to follow Him, but we are to become like Him.

This means that our character needs to become conformed to His. Godly character qualities need to find a home in our lives such as the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12), Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-26), and the Rules for Holy Living (Colossians 3:12-17). These qualities are not taught, they are caught.

A Bible teacher may explain them, but each individual believer must respond individually to the Lord to implement them into his or her life. To become like our Lord, a person must spend time with Him. Sharp edges must be chipped and polished, wild branches must be pruned. This interaction with the Lord is often painful (at first), but to the one who submits to this process will find peace and fruitfulness flowing from his life.

There are two reasons why a person's growth in Godly character is a very important indicator as to whether he would become an effective discipler: for two reasons: First, those disciplined need a real-life example of who Christ is. We should be able to say as Paul did: "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Second, those who are growing in Godly character are obviously people in vital interaction with Him. They have learned how to listen to God's voice and obey. They have submitted themselves to God's discipline and are being



"What'ya mean God wants to sit here now? This is my seat."

developed by it. This process cannot be taught into a person, exhorted in, preached in or even encouraged in; it comes only from the Lord. The person who is in this kind of relationship with the Lord is just the kind of person that should be discipling others (for that person's experience with the Lord will strongly influence growth in the ones disciplined).

B. Pastoral heart

The word "pastor" comes from the same root that we get the word "shepherd". To care for people as a pastor is thus to care as a shepherd tends sheep. When the Apostle Peter described a shepherd's heart, he underscored the motivation for leadership. A discipler leads because he or she is not forced but willing, not greedy but eager, not lording over but serving as an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-4).

A discipler needs to have a heart that breaks at the point of another person's needs. Someone who truly cares, someone who hurts to see the damage done by sin and misfortune in a friend's life. Insensitivity in the hands of a spiritual leader is horribly destructive. A critical attitude will only compound wounds in a young believer's life. A discipler must exhibit the warmth of Christ.

C. Vision

Life without vision is a dead-end. Jesus' first words to his about-to-be disciples were "Come and follow me".

Vision is important in three areas:

1. _____

A person is much more eager to follow than to be pushed. A discipler must be a person who sees God's direction through prayer and serious study of Scripture. He has prayed for direction to live by, and Jesus has responded. A discipler is going somewhere, is filled with hope for the future, and is not alone; he or she is going somewhere with others who have prayed for vision.

2. _____

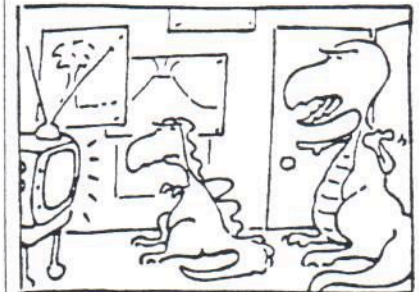
The discipler needs to prayerfully develop vision for where the younger believer can grow and develop in the Lord (as well as where the entire Small Group can grow if the Spirit is free to operate among them).

3. _____

The discipler needs to share the same vision of ministry that the corporate fellowship feels called to fulfill from the Lord. Vision is characteristically something that is shared between believers, and not just personalized. It is a corporate issue.

D. Kingdom-conscious

A discipler must be a Christian through and through. To be disciplers, we must be totally sold out for the Lord. We must be people who recognize that Jesus Christ is the only answer to people's lostness. It is a great temptation in today's society to be a humanistic Christian. It is not sufficient merely to help people to feel better about themselves, for we will only truly feel better about ourselves when we are completely assured from within that our sins are forgiven. It is not enough for people



"It's high time you gave some thought to your future son. There's an Ice Age coming, you know."

to have friends who are Christians and not feel so lonely. Loneliness is only dealt with when believers walk in the light together.

A Christian is not just a very moral person. A Christian is a transformed person, a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). A Christian no longer belongs to this world—citizenship is in heaven. A discipler must know the difference and live out this difference.

E. Ministry skills

To be effective, a discipler must know how to affect others for the Kingdom of God. A discipler must know the methods of discipleship as well as the message of discipleship.

A discipler must know how to:

- lead a person to Christ
- facilitate worship
- lead a discussion
- encourage people to share from their heart
- teach others how to pray
- assess another person's needs
- plan to minister to those needs

There is good news here though! Of these five essentials, the first four (character, heart, vision, kingdom-consciousness) occur in a person who is faithful in knowing God from his heart, and for that reason they are the most important. The ministry skills can be learned. Any person who is sold out for God can be taught how to be effective for the Lord. These skills come to us as a learned process.

III. The Apostle Paul Demonstrates Effective Discipleship

The following are nine essential ingredients taken from the life of the Apostle Paul in his interaction with the church at Thessalonica.

A. An effective discipler is earnest in prayer.

"We always thank God for you all and always mention you in our prayers. For we remember before our God and Father how you put your faith into practice, how your love made you work so hard, and how your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is firm... Day and night we ask him with all our heart to let us see you personally and supply what is needed in your faith."

1 Thess. 1:2-3; 3:10-11

The effective discipler places complete reliance on the power and presence beyond him or herself. Effective disciplers see themselves as being able to change the course of human events through prayer. They know that any human activity apart from prayer is doomed to failure. Therefore, they become intercessors for those being disciplined, ever offering them up to the Father who can "supply what is lacking in (their) faith."

B. An effective discipler is a proclaimer of the gospel.

"And there is another reason why we always give thanks to God. When we brought you God's message, you heard it and accepted it, not as man's message but as God's message, which indeed it is."

1 Thess. 2:13

Effective disciplers believe completely in the power of the gospel to change lives. They proclaim the good news of Jesus because they know that it will transform someone. Effective disciplers do not disciple from feelings of guilt. Central to the task of discipling is telling others about Jesus and His love and plans for them.

C. An effective discipler is pure in heart.

"Instead we always speak as God wants us to, because he has judged us worthy to be entrusted with the Good News. We do not try to please men, but to please God, who tests our motives. You know very well that we did not come to you with flattering talk, nor did we use words to cover up greed—God is our witness! We did not try to get praise from anyone, either from you or from others."

1 Thess. 2:4-6

The proper motivation for an effective discipler is to ever and always please the Lord and not merely be a man-pleaser. The discipler's heart must be free from self-interest and the need to manipulate others. Integrity between what a discipler says and what he does is essential.

D. An effective discipler is an example of Christ-likeness.

"For we brought the Good News to you, not with words only, but also with power and the Holy Spirit, and with complete conviction of its truth. You know how we lived when we were with you; it was for your own good. You imitated us and the Lord; and even though you suffered much, you received the message with the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit... You are our witnesses, and so is God, that our conduct toward you who believe was pure, right, and without fault."

1 Thess. 1:5,6; 2:10

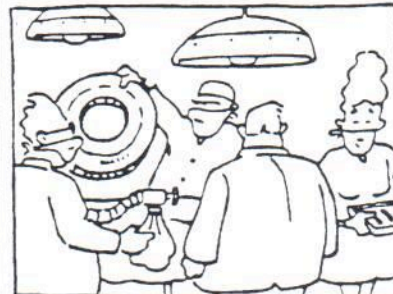
The lives of effective disciplers must be open for inspection. They must be people who are open and honest, letting the sincerity of their walk with Christ become observable. They must be individuals who can testify as Paul said elsewhere, "Follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). A discipler is a person who lives above reproach.

E. An effective discipler is a lover and nurturer of people.

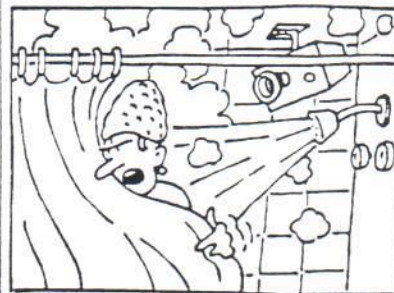
"As apostles of Christ we could have made demands on you. But we were gentle when we were with you, like a mother taking care of her children. Because of our love for you we were ready to share with you not only the Good News from God but even our own lives. You were so dear to us! Surely you remember, our brothers (and sisters), how we worked and toiled! We worked day and night so that we would not be any trouble to you as we preached to you the Good News... As for us, brothers (and sisters), when we were separated from you for a little while—not in our thoughts of course, but only in body—how we missed you and how hard we tried to see you again! We wanted to return to you. I myself tried to go back more than once, but Satan would not let us."

1 Thess. 2:7-9; 2:17, 18

There needs to be an intensity in a discipler's caring and concern that undergirds any ministry to others. Paul likened it to the tenderness with which a mother nurtures her child. Patient compassion is essential to



"Another old shoe, candy wrapper, rubber band...hey, didn't anyone bother to take an X-ray of this guy's heart?"



"Hey Darrell! Don't you think you're taking this idea of making our lives open for inspection a bit too far?"

building the love of God in someone. A discipler must allow the fruit of the Spirit to express itself toward those he or she serves.

F. An effective discipler is an admonisher.

"You know that we treated each one of you just as a father treats his own children. We encouraged you, we comforted you, and we kept urging you to live the kind of life that pleases God, who calls you to share in his own Kingdom and glory."

1 Thess. 2:11, 12

Love must always have the strength to confront a brother or sister in love. To admonish is the necessary counter-balance to the previous quality of being a lover/nurturer. To admonish is our reflection of God's love, expressed in Hebrews 12:5-12, where every son is loved and disciplined. If disciplers fail to admonish, they are bound to reproduce disciples who are self-centered and unable to endure the hardships of life.

G. An effective discipler is a teacher and encourager.

"Day and night we ask him with all our heart to let us see you personally and supply what is needed in your faith. May our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus prepare the way for us to come to you! May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow more and more and become as great as our love for you. In this way he will strengthen you, and you will be perfect and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all who belong to him."

1 Thess. 3:10-13

This demands a consistent discipline in the study of the Scriptures. If disciplers are to encourage growth in someone else, then they must be continually growing themselves. Disciplers must then work at becoming effective at communicating this knowledge to others. Simple faith is essential, but stupid faith on the part of a discipler is an affront to the person of God and His people. Truth shared in love builds up.

H. An effective discipler is persevering.

"You know how we had already been mistreated and insulted in Philippi before we came to you in Thessalonica. And even though there was much opposition, our God gave us courage to tell you the Good News that comes from him."

1 Thess. 2:2

The effective discipler must be willing to go against the grain of his culture, being willing to become a prophetic person. Discipling is emotionally taxing and time-consuming, thus demanding the ability to persevere. This quality is a direct result of prayerfulness and realistic biblical planning. If we are to help build lasting communities for Christ, then excellence in craftsmanship is required. This means that a discipler must dig in and stick to a task with perseverance.

I. An effective discipler is open to receive personal ministry.

"...while we sent Timothy, our brother who works with us for God in preaching the Good News about Christ. We sent him to strengthen you and help your faith...Now Timothy has come back, and he has brought us the welcome news about your faith

and love. He has told us that you always think well of us and that you want to see us just as much as we want to see you. So, in all our trouble and suffering we have been encouraged about you, brothers (and sisters). It was your faith that encouraged us, because now we really live if you stand firm in your life in union with the Lord. Now we can give thanks to our God for you. We thank him for the joy we have in his presence because of you...Pray also for us brothers (and sisters)."

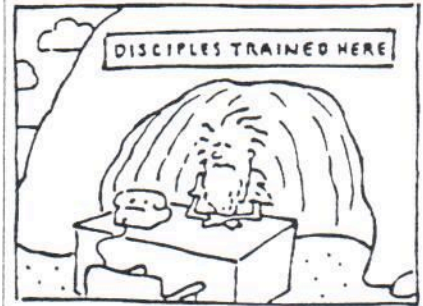
1 Thess. 3:2, 6-9; 5:25

Effective discipleship is not a one-way street. Leaders will not produce other healthy leaders if they do not let others minister to them. If you desire humble, honest, confessional disciples, then you must be one. Beware of isolation, it breeds hostility, haughtiness and heresy.

IV. Conclusion

Well, after looking at these two gauges, how did your self-evaluation turn out? If you're like most other folks on the planet, you will find several areas where growth is needed. Don't walk away defeated just because you realize God is not finished with you yet. Find your Small Group Leader and share your self-evaluation with them, and then agree to pursue the specific growth in Jesus that is needed.

Remember, it is God's will that we disciple the nations. It is His idea. And since it is His idea, He is the One who equips us to fulfill His will. He delights in doing so. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).



Horace wondered if his ineffectiveness was due to his poor communication skills, or simply because he was a hermit.