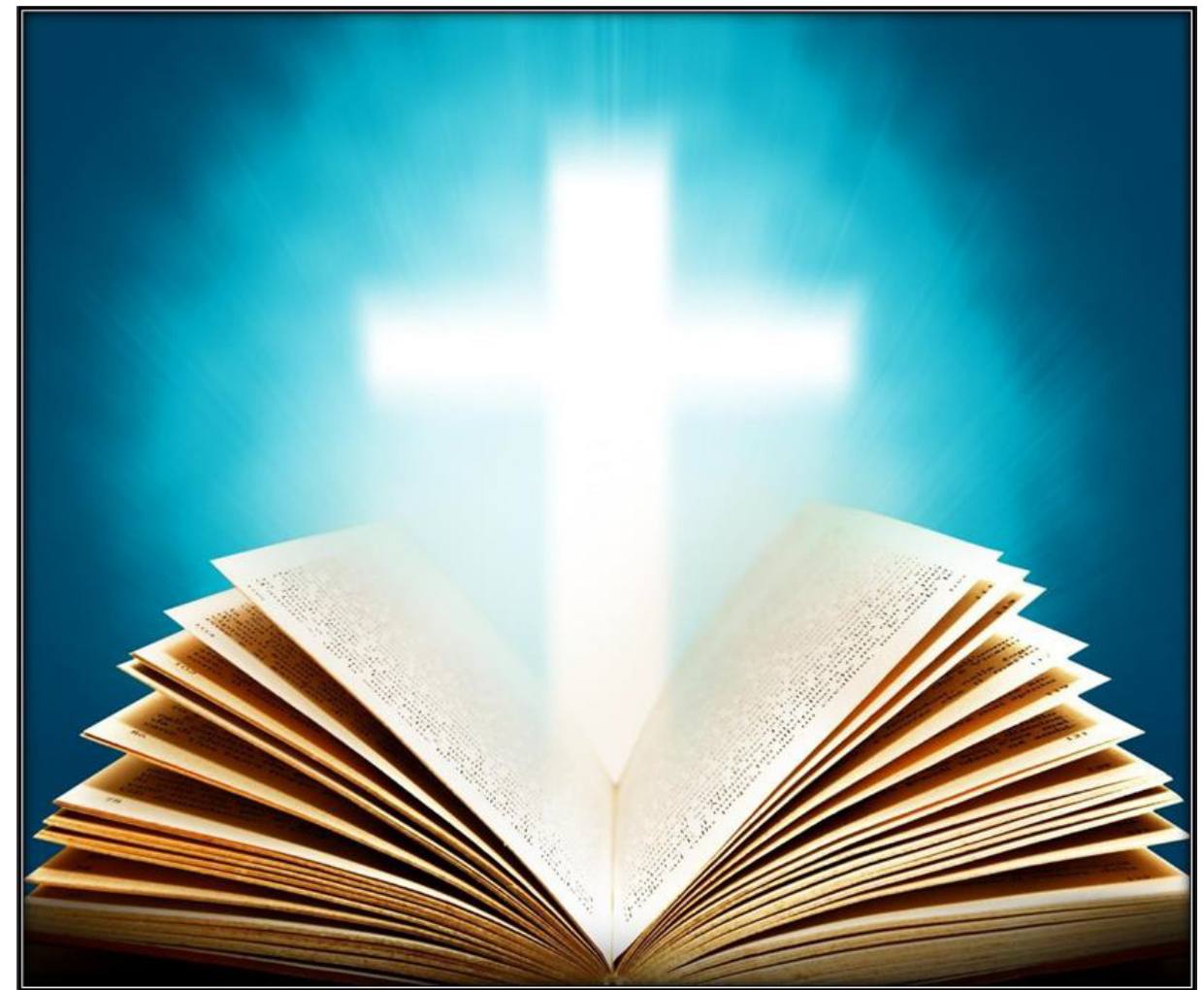


EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS



School of Global Missions

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

DISCIPLESHIP 201

Biblical Discipleship

School of Global Missions
Dr. Frederick Osborn, M.Div., D.Min.

The School of Global Mission course curriculum for EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING is divided into six parts. Classes will meet one evening each week for one hour. Each part will be 12 lessons. It will take two years to complete all six parts.

Students will be required to take home extra materials and class handouts to read and study on their own.

At the end of each year (36 Lessons) each student will be required to submit a written summary of what they have learned (submission must be no less than three typed pages, single space, Times New Roman 12 pt. font). However, if the student has no access to a computer, special arrangements can be made for a handwritten paper to be submitted.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frederick Osborn traveled the world teaching and preaching the Word of God from 2005 - 2017. His first trip to South Asia was in 2001, and since 2005 he has been fully involved in ministry. His books and study guides have been used in classrooms by hundreds of students around the world.

In 2013 he earned his M.Div. from Andhra Christian Theological College in Hyderabad, India and in that same year was officially ordained into the ministry in a holy convocation administered by Indian pastors representing AG, CSA, and other non-denominational ministries. In 2017 he completed his D.Min. from Covenant Bible College & Seminary, Florida, USA.

He and his wife, Deena now live near Atlanta, GA where he continues to write, teach, and publish his books and study guides.

Evangelism and Church Planting Movements

Discipleship 201
Biblical Discipleship

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Parts of the teaching materials of Discipleship 102 were previously published under the title, “Kingdom Discipleship” but they have been edited and reformatted by the author for the SGM course in Evangelism and Church Planting Movements.

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Course Materials for EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey, Second Edition, A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, © 2004, 2015, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues, Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, with Timothy C. Tennent, © 2010, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Developing A Strategy For Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Introduction, John Mark Terry, J. D. Payne, © 2013, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Encountering Missionary Life and Work: Preparing for intercultural Ministry, Tom Steffen, Lois McKinney Douglas, © 2008, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Reference Material Published by Dr. Frederick Osborn:

Church Planting Movements: India

Exploring the New Testament

Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming Like Jesus

Messiah: The Mission of Jesus of Nazareth

Reviving A Nation

The Apocalyptic Vision: Understanding the Apocalyptic Writings of the Bible

The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements

The Holy Spirit in You: Nourishing the Life of Holiness and power in You

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: John the Apostle's Heavenly Vision of Christ the King

The Way, the Truth, and the Life: the Teachings and Ministry of Jesus the Messiah

This Gospel of the Kingdom

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School of Global Missions

SGM BIBLICAL STUDIES: DISCIPLESHIP 201-203

COURSE SYLLABUS - PROFESSOR

Dr. Frederick Osborn, Academic Dean		Chancellor/President, SGM
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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course in EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS is designed to teach and train three groups: (1) those who are preparing to go to unreached people groups in foreign mission fields (2) those indigenous workers who need more teaching and training for the work they are doing, and (3) to provide materials for indigenous church planters to teach and train others for evangelism and church planting.

CREDIT VALUE:

SGM uses what is known as a *Trimester Calendar* for holding classes. In a trimester system, students have three terms of 12 weeks in each school year. The students will cover a full year's worth of teaching in a normal two-semester year. This course in EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS has a 30-credit hour value (Three Terms in Evangelism and Church Planting Movements Studies in the first year and Three Terms in Evangelism and Church Planting Studies in the second year).

COURSE TEXT:

The only required text for all School of Global Mission courses is THE HOLY BIBLE. We recommend that each student has a good Study Bible, if possible.

NOTE TO STUDENTS: SGM recommends the website, www.blueletterbible.org for Bible translations and reference materials for Bible study. The site is also available on Mobile apps for your phone or tablet.

NOTE TO PROFESSORS: Additional materials are included in the teaching materials that you may or may not wish to take advantage of. Anything that is identified as HANDOUT material is NOT seen by the students unless you copy and give it to them as supplemental material. It will be up to the individual teacher to review the teaching materials and decide what to emphasize in their class time. Whatever is not covered in the class, the students will be able read and study as homework assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STUDENTS:

1. Read the required texts.

NOTE TO PROFESSORS: Because the Bible is the only required text for all BIBLICAL STUDIES classes, the students should read the relevant chapters from the Scriptures. The chapters and verses covered in each class should be given at the beginning of each lesson.
2. Attend all classes in person or online, or review recording of an excused class (maximum two per term).
3. At the end of each term (12 weeks) write a term paper of at least three typewritten pages (12 point, Times New Roman font, single space.)

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS (SECOND YEAR LESSONS)

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 201 LESSONS

Making Disciples

1. Introduction to Kingdom Discipleship
2. Being Salt and Light to the World
3. Making Disciples Like Jesus
4. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “Be Like Me”
5. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “Follow Me”
6. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “Be Transformed”
7. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “Remember Me”
8. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “I Am the Way”
9. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “I Am the Truth”
10. Jesus the Teacher: Jesus Taught “I Am the Life”
11. Reviving a Nation
12. Preparing Students for Discipleship

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 202 LESSONS

1. Intro The Man God Uses
2. The Character of a Leader
3. The Calling of a Leader
4. The Commitment of a Leader
5. Ministerial Ethics
6. The Covering of a Leader: Spiritual Authority and Accountability
7. The Cooperation of a Leader: Maintaining Unity in the Body
8. The Conduct (Ethics) of a Leader
Encountering Missions as a Sent One and as a Sender
9. Introducing World Missions “Personal and Family Issues”
10. Introducing World Missions “Strategic and Ministry Issues”
11. Introducing World Missions “Relating to People of Other Cultures”
12. Introducing World Missions “Relating to Churches and Other Shareholders”

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 103 LESSONS

Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey

1. Encountering Mission in the Modern World
2. Encountering Mission in the Scriptures
3. Encountering Mission in the Old Testament

4. Encountering Mission in the Gospels
5. Encountering Mission in the New Testament Church
6. Encountering Mission Theology
7. Missions Encountering the Contemporary World
8. Communicating with People of Other Cultures
9. Missions Trends and Paradigm Shifts
10. Encountering the Religions of the World
11. Missions and the Future
12. The Task of Missions: Making Known the Kingdom of God

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201 – BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP

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NOTE: ALL HANDOUTS FOR THIS COURSE ARE IN A SEPARATE FILE. HANDOUTS ARE NOT INCLUDED WITH THE STUDENT NOTES. THE HANDOUTS MAY BE COPIED FOR THE STUDENTS AT THE TEACHER’S DISCRETION.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Some of the material for these lessons of the School of Global Mission’s DISCIPLESHIP 201 COURSE are taken from other materials written by Dr. Frederick Osborn. The source material has been edited and reformatted from the original to conform to the hour-long lessons. No part of these TEACHING NOTES may be copied and distributed to others without the written permission of the author or the School of Global Missions administration.

These special *Teaching Notes* are intended for the teachers only; they are in Times New Roman #14 for ease of reading while teaching. A separate set of notes for the students has been produced and are intended for the student to read and follow as you use the Teaching Notes.

Because this course uses the Inductive Method of Bible Study, you will notice a number of places where words, phrases, or sentences are in **bold print and underlined** these are intended for the students as fill-in-the-blank answers in their Student Notes as they follow your lesson.

In some lessons, there are more notes in the teaching materials than can be taught in the one-hour class time. So, it is best to review each lesson before you start teaching and refer to the student notes for reading and homework assignments. The additional materials in the *Teacher’s Notes* allow the teacher some flexibility in how they teach this course. The teacher may look through the HANDOUTS and select which of the additional materials they want to copy and distribute to their students.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-1 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017

INTRODUCTION

Making Kingdom Disciples

Lesson Outline for the Student

- I. Introduction
- II. In the Dust of the Rabbi
- III. A Radical Lifestyle



INTRODUCTION

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Amen. **Matthew 28:18-20**

Making disciples is **inseparable** from being a disciple; it is **inseparable** from the Great Commission; it is **inseparable** from the Lord’s commandment to love one another. Evangelists are often very good when preaching about salvation in Jesus – they may even do so with great signs and wonders that attract to Gospel Meetings multitudes seeking a touch from God. But when the lights go off, the stage and sound equipment are put away, and the people scatter back to their homes, and villages, what is next? What happens to them? Who will care for them and disciple them? A few are fortunate enough to have a good and faithful pastor in their village or hometown who will teach them about Jesus and what it truly means to live a Christian life. But how many of those pastors are truly disciples of Jesus Christ themselves? And how many of those who are disciples know how to teach new converts to become disciples where real transformation takes place? That was the

greatest challenge Jesus faced in His earthly ministry. He had a limited time on this earth to teach and train a core of followers how to become and live as His disciples.

“The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them ‘What do you seek?’ They said to Him, ‘Rabbi’ (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), ‘where are you staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’” (John 1:37-39a)

Lamb of God... Messiah... Son of God... Bread of Life... these are all names and titles we are most familiar with when describing our Lord Jesus Christ, but the one name that best described His earthly ministry for the three-and one-half years He walked among us was **“Teacher.”** Jesus came with a mission to fulfill, and central to that mission was the preservation and continuation of His mission to seek and save the lost. This would be possible only by making disciples who would in turn make disciples; thus the commandment to “...**make disciples** of all the nations... **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you...”

It is too often overlooked in evangelistic messages that Jesus was more than a miracle-worker or a sacrificial lamb; He was first and foremost a teacher. During His public ministry, Jesus spent more time **teaching and training His disciples** than any other activity by far. From the moment the first disciples were called to leave their old life and follow Him, to the moment He ascended to His Father in heaven after His resurrection, Jesus poured His life and teachings into His disciples. Jesus was perfect in every way; there was no spot or blemish in the Son of God. So when He taught, He taught like no other teacher who came before Him. Jesus respected the time-honored and tested methods of the Rabbis who developed their God-given gifts of passing God’s word along from generation to generation, but He took those methods and perfected them for making disciples as only He could.

Jesus knew that the future of His church depended upon how well His word and truth would be transferred from one generation to the next. If those who were entrusted with His message failed to properly teach His truths to the next generation, His work would be in jeopardy and countless people who needed salvation would never hear the Gospel clearly communicated to them. But a gospel that does not include the **terms of discipleship** and what it truly means to be a follower of Jesus Christ is an incomplete and inadequate gospel that will never bring about the transformation Jesus Christ intends for His disciples to experience.

Those of us who are pastors, teachers, preachers, evangelists, and missionaries are responsible to our Lord to preserve and pass on His teachings to the next generation of disciples. But more than that we are responsible to lead,

mentor, and disciple them in Christ. If we fail, what will become of the multitudes who have never heard the Gospel clearly taught, or seen it rightly lived? Sometimes called *Kingdom Discipleship*, it means to truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ as **He** defined it and to pass that understanding on to others.

One of the greatest challenges of the church from its very beginning has been how to turn **converts into disciples**. For the most part, the church has been content to make converts and bring them just inside the door of the church. This keeps them dependent upon the “professional” clergy to take care of all of their spiritual needs while the congregation supports the clergy with their tithes and offerings. But this co-dependency is far from the model Jesus gave His disciples. Jesus was never content with making converts. In fact He never once commanded anyone to go and make converts, but only commanded His disciples to go and make more disciples. Jesus’ followers were never called “converts” but were called only by the title “disciple.” *Kingdom Discipleship* presents the six terms of discipleship that Jesus said “all,” “anyone,” “whosoever,” “everyone” who would be His disciple **must** meet in order to be His disciple. None of the six terms of discipleship are optional and all must be fully embraced. (See HANDOUT “The Terms of Discipleship”)

Only disciples make disciples. The spiritual principle involved is **reproduction after kind**. Therefore, it was absolutely necessary to Jesus that whoever followed Him would be a disciple. Disciples are made. No one is born a disciple – which means that once we have learned what it means to **be** a disciple of Jesus Christ, the next step is to live it out. The final step is to become more effective at making disciples.

In this part of the curriculum we will set aside some time to learn how Jesus, the Master Teacher taught His disciples. If we understand how He taught His disciples, then once we are on the mission field, we can better understand how we must teach others. If we disciple others to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, then we will do more than teach them to be a pale imitation of their Master but will teach them to become like the Master in every way. The process of **Disciples making disciples** allows the Master to teach His disciples as they teach others. And so the process continues with each new generation of believers.

Jesus had to face the fact that not everyone who said they wanted to follow Him was ready, willing, or able to do so. Unfortunately, what was true with the Master back then is also true for us today. The initial phase of discovering who is ready, willing, and able to become a disciple involves taking them step-by-step through the process of first learning about **the Kingdom of God** as Jesus taught about it; and second is to not just to learn the terms of discipleship, but to **embrace them and apply them** into your life as a disciple. Then and only then is anyone

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really ready to go out and make disciples like Jesus. Again: you have to be like Jesus before you can go out and make disciples like Jesus.

“Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.” Philippians 3:17

This is our challenge: to be more and more like Him on a daily basis so that we can in turn lead others through the process of becoming more and more like Him on a daily basis. Disciple-makers are in truth, only “trailblazers.” We can only point the way; make spiritual markers on that way we are on and leave them behind us so that others can readily follow us as we follow Christ. It is only through the process of following that true disciples of the Master are made.

THE DUST OF THE RABBI

“If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and **where I am, there My servant will be also**. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.” John 12:26

The Amplified Bible gives us more insight into this passage: “If anyone serves Me, he must continue to follow Me [to cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying] and wherever I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.”

It is impossible to understand Jesus’ earthly ministry apart from (1) His teachings on **the Kingdom of God**, and (2) His work of **making disciples**. But Christians do not know that from most of what is being preached from the pulpits and in evangelistic meetings around the world. Most of what is being presented as central to Jesus’ earthly Incarnation as the Son of God are His miracles and His three-day work of death, burial, and resurrection. Certainly, His three-day work is important and without it, nothing else matters. However, if all Jesus came to this earth to do was to die upon the cross, then the very first time He stepped foot into the Temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers while declaring the Temple to be “My Father’s House” the Jewish authorities wanted to kill Him. But Jesus had something more to accomplish. If His mission was going to succeed, He needed to make disciples who would faithfully carry His message in word and deed from generation to generation to the ends of the earth.

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law...” Galatians 4:4

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Historians and theologians have examined from every angle what made the moment of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem the "fullness of time." Certainly, the unity of language and cultures by the Hellenists were a factor making the gospel easier to communicate across cultures; and the Roman peace and political unification of West played a huge part in making the rapid and widespread advancement of the gospel possible. The Jewish religious leaders were filled with anticipation as they watched and waited for the countdown of the final weeks of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:20-27). At the same time the Jews were more united than ever before by their strict adherence to the Law of Moses. Added to that were their hopes and dreams for a coming Messianic "Golden Age" that would sweep aside their Roman oppressors and restore the former glory of David's Kingdom. But what is often overlooked as a possible reason for that being the fullness of time, was the existence of small, but tightly-knit Jewish communities that dwelt on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee that were known for their passion to follow the *Tanakh* (what Christians call the Old Testament). Central to these communities was a radical form of discipleship led by an elite group of rabbis who were the living embodiments of the Torah.

So when Jesus arrived on the scene, He had a ready audience to hear Him teach. He also had a system in place that would provide the raw material He needed to construct His first disciples. "The way Jesus taught his first disciples was not unique but part of a wider tradition in Judaism that began a few centuries before his time. Jesus didn't hand his disciples a textbook or give them a course syllabus. He asked each one of them to follow him – literally to 'walk after' him. He invited them to trek the byways at his side, living life beside him to learn from him as they journeyed. His disciples would engage in life's activities along with him, observing his responses and imitating how he lived by God's Word." Lois Tverberg, *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, © 2012, p.28

One of the greatest blessings of the modern quests for the historical Jesus of Nazareth has been the revival of interest in understanding the world of 1st century Judaism that Jesus was very much a part of. For centuries the obvious facts were lost that Jesus was not only born and raised a Jew, but that all of His first disciples were Jews. The total "Jewishness" of the "who, what, when, why, and how" that Jesus taught was ignored and, in some cases, deliberately buried under layers of Western anti-Semitic religious ideas. The Western model of students sitting in a classroom memorizing and repeating back to the professor information they may or may not have wanted or needed in order to earn a degree is far removed from the method of the rabbinical schools of Jesus' time and place.

Although the exact method of selecting and training disciples that Jesus used was not widely practiced by the Jews, it was already built-in to the Jewish mentality long before Jesus came along, picked it up, and took it to new heights of perfecting those who followed Him. It was no accident that Jesus was raised near Capernaum and would make it His starting point for His earthly ministry. Modern historians and archeologists discovered that the Galileans of Jesus' day had invented and were using a unique discipleship model that Jesus learned growing up and that Jesus chose to use when he was ready to make His own disciples.

Jesus' hometown of Capernaum (pop. 2,000) was far from the center of Jewish religion in Jerusalem. However, for the art of making disciples, this small area on the north side of the Sea of Galilee served as the "Ivy League" for making disciples. So Jesus started His ministry by teaching among the best of the best; and the idea that Jesus was from some "backwater" town of unsophisticated fishermen and farmers has been blown away by modern discoveries of what was really going on in and around Capernaum during Jesus' lifetime. Many of the most important and renowned rabbis of the day taught and chose their disciples from Capernaum and the people had become known for their passion for studying the Scriptures.

From a very early age the boys from these communities were taught to love God, to obey the *Torah* (Mosaic Law), to expect the coming of the Messiah, to know their Scriptures by heart, and to worship God with all their heart, mind, and strength. As they grew in wisdom and understanding, only the best of the best would seek out and hope to be selected by one of the master rabbis. If the rabbi found them to be worthy, they would stay with that rabbi until the day their training was complete, and they became a Master of the *Tanakh*. Then they would be qualified to gather other disciples to them and teach them. Those who were not good enough to be chosen by one of the rabbis would be sent home to learn their father's trade. This is very significant because anyone who has read the Gospels will quickly note that when it came time to select His disciples, Jesus did not go to the cream of the crop in the rabbinic schools to find His disciples, but he went to the reject pile – those who were considered not rabbi material. This would be a main characteristic of Jesus' earthly ministry throughout – and even to this day: Jesus takes the world's rejects, publicans, sinners, and other undesirables and makes them into something totally new.

Another aspect of Jesus' disciple making process that differed from the other rabbis is that Jesus went out and sought after those HE chose, and He always chose those who were not necessarily looking for a rabbi to follow. In every known case, the disciple Jesus chose had already left behind any dream of becoming a Master of the *Tanakh* and had returned to the family business. So, not only did Jesus chose from the rejects, but He also sought out the rejects: "You did not choose Me, but I

chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” (John 15:16).

The select few of those students who were good enough to move on in their studies sought permission to study with a famous rabbi. (Note how Paul mentions in Acts 22:3 that he was a student of Gamaliel, one of the most honored rabbis of the first century. This was Paul’s way of showing his credentials to his Jewish audience; he was a well-educated man trained under a highly respected Jewish rabbi.) This next step often involved leaving home to live and travel with the rabbi for a lengthy period of time. These special students were called in Hebrew *talmidim* (singular, *talmid*), which is translated into English “disciple.” A *talmid* is much more than what we consider a student today.

In modern Western cultures, a student is someone who wants to know what the teacher knows to complete or “pass” the class for the degree. The student may or may not respect the teacher or even care about their personal life. All that matters to them is what happens within the four walls of the classroom. But a *talmid* wants to be like the teacher – to not only know what the teacher knows, but also to become what the teacher is. Every *talmid* was passionately devoted to their rabbi and noted everything he did and spoke. This required the rabbi-talmid relationship to be an **intense and personal relationship** and not just a system of education where head-knowledge was transmitted. As the rabbi was more than someone who knew the Scriptures - he lived as he taught. The rabbi was to be **the living embodiment** of the Scriptures; so to truly know and understand their Scriptures, the *talmidim* would have listened carefully to everything the rabbi said and would have watched intensely everything the rabbi did so as to become like him in every way in word and deed. Eventually their training would be complete, and they would become teachers like their master, passing on their lifestyle to their own *talmidim*.

“Out of this unusual teaching method arose a well-known saying: you should learn from a rabbi by ‘covering yourself in his dust.’ You should follow so closely behind him as he traveled from town-to-town teaching, the billows of sandy granules would cling to your clothes. As you walked after your rabbi, your heart would change... Your ‘walk’ in life refers to your overall lifestyle, how you conduct yourself morally. A rabbi’s interpretation of the Torah was called *halakhah*, how to ‘walk’ by God’s Word. When Jesus called his disciples to ‘walk after’ him, he meant the word in both ways. First, they would follow in his literal footsteps; later they would follow in his teachings, taking his message out to the world.” Lois Tverberg, *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, © 2012, p.28

The missing element from much of our Western style Christianity is this very unique and personal way of making disciples like Jesus. It is not missing because it is not there. In fact, it has always been there and there have always been those who have kept the flame of disciple making alive, but it is by its very nature never going to be a “movement” or “revival” in the church because once the process of making disciples becomes a marketing tool for church growth, it will cease to be what it is intended to be: a means for mature Christians to help others become strong, faithful followers of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

In his book, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, LeRoy Eims noted three goals that a pastor or ministry leader must have in mind if they are going to put others on the path to becoming disciples of Jesus Christ and not mere spectators on Sunday mornings:

1. **He must have clearly in mind what he wants them to know and understand of the things of God**; he must know what the basic ingredients in a life of discipleship are. Every believer should want to know and understand the foundational teachings that our Lord and Master Jesus wants them to know; and every leader should want teach them.
2. **He must have a clear picture of what he wants these disciples to become.** He must know what the bedrock elements of Christian character are, and that they must be theirs. Leaders should know what kind of people Christians should be.
3. “He must have a **vivid vision** of what he wants them to learn to do and a **workable plan** to help them accomplish it.” This is the plan you hold in your hands at this moment. This course on Evangelism and Church Planting Movements presents a workable plan to help leaders accomplish the end goal: disciples making disciples. Completing this course will help leaders to set a personal example and teach others to observe all that the Lord commanded us to do until He returns.

A RADICAL LIFESTYLE

Make no mistake about it. The call to follow Jesus Christ is nothing less than a call to a radical lifestyle that means the death of everything that is not compatible with the lifestyle of the Master. But once we truly see the divine truth that our real identity – who we were truly meant to be – is found in Christ then the cost involved in following Jesus Christ becomes worth it all. “Helping people encounter the truth of their identity is vital. As believers understand who they are in Christ, they are motivated to live the reality of their identity. Leaders who see discipleship through the lens of identity are burdened to show people the beautiful ramifications of the

identity God brings.” *Transformational Discipleship*, B&H Publishing Group and LifeWay Research, © 2012, p.99

There always have been, and no doubt will be until the Lord’s return, a number of people who sense God’s calling to a deeper walk with Him. John Ortberg also recognized this and wrote in his book *If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat*: “I believe there is something – Someone – inside us who tells us there is more to life than sitting in the boat. You were made for something more than merely avoiding failure. There is something inside you that wants to walk on the water – to leave the comfort of routine existence and abandon yourself to the high adventure of following God.” © 2001 by John Ortberg, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, p.17

Once a person has made that leap over the bow of the boat and crossed into the realm of radical discipleship where transformation begins to take place, there will be many trials, temptations and challenges to face along the way. Peter did not step out onto a quiet, placid, shallow lake where little risk was involved. He stepped out of the boat into a deep, dark, stormy, lake where fear and lack of faith would easily cause him to drown if it were not for the closeness of the Lord to lift him up when he started to sink. “When we risk our lives to run after Christ, we discover the safety that is found only in his sovereignty, the security that is found only in his life, and the satisfaction that is found only in his presence. This is the eternally great reward, and we would be foolish to settle for anything less... Radical obedience to Christ is not easy; it is dangerous. It is not smooth sailing aboard a luxury liner; it is sacrificial duty aboard a troop carrier. It’s not comfort, not health, not wealth, and not prosperity in this world. Radical obedience to Christ risks losing all these things. But in the end, such risk finds its reward in Christ. And he is more than enough for us.” David Platt, *Radical*, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, © 2010, p.181

Because of the radical nature of discipleship and the risks involved in forsaking all to answer the call to follow Jesus Christ with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength, making disciples will never succeed as a **church-wide program** designed to rope in an entire congregation. The person who is truly a disciple of Jesus Christ must begin as Jesus began, by prayerfully selecting those who have **heard the call and answered**. Then it is his or her responsibility as a mature disciple to help teach, train, encourage, mentor, etc. new disciples until they reach maturity and are then able to go out and make more disciples.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” **Matthew 28:18-20**

The ultimate goal of Jesus’ Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20 is to fill the church with **disciples making disciples**. Which means not filling churches with converts that never reproduce or mature into Christlikeness. “This is how the gospel penetrated the world during the first century: through self-denying, Spirit-empowered disciples of Jesus who were making disciples of Jesus. Followers of Jesus were fishing for men. Disciples were making disciples.” David Platt, *Follow Me*, Tyndale House Pub., Carol Stream, ILL., © 2013, p.179 And yet, in modern times it seems that almost all the time, effort, and money of the church is being spent to make new converts, while precious little of the church’s resources are spent making disciples. This needs to change if the church is ever going to fulfill its mission.

Bro. Bakht Sing the Founder of Indigenous Churches of India, Hebron was one of modern India’s most successful evangelists and church planters. In T.E. Koshy’s biography of Bro. Bakht Sing, he noted this model of disciples making disciples: “Bakht Sing did not believe in any formal Bible school or seminary training as a prerequisite to the work of the ministry of the Lord. For training, Bakht Singh decided to follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul by providing the necessary training both for those in full-time ministry and the other believers, through the activities of the Assembly. They were given on-the-job training. They also had periods of definite, specific and consecutive study of the Bible, to learn how to interpret and how to use the Word of God rightly. From these experiments, they came to the conclusion that the usual Bible school idea was not God’s way for them, but rather they should follow the methods of the Lord with His disciples.” *Brother Bakht Sing of India: An Account of 20th Century Apostolic Revival*, O.M. Books, Secunderabad, Telangana, India, © 2003, p.446

These lessons on disciples making disciples (combined with Jesus’ teachings on the kingdom of heaven and what it means to follow His footsteps as one of his disciples) will go far to help those disciples who study them to become more effective in making disciples. This is the key to **effective church planting**; as the numbers of disciples in the church grows, the church will grow naturally without the need for artificial programs or schemes. A healthy church filled with disciples making disciples will grow rapidly and exponentially, making the fulfillment of the Great Commission in our time more possible than ever before.

Questions for Lesson One

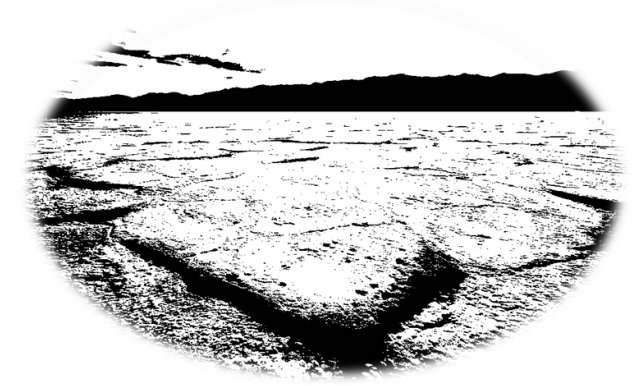
1. It is impossible to understand Jesus' earthly ministry apart from (1) His teachings on the Kingdom of God, and (2) His work of making disciples. How does Jesus' ministry compare with the way churches minister to believers today?
2. When it came time to select His disciples, Jesus did not go to the cream of the crop in the rabbinic schools to find His disciples, but he went to the reject pile – those who were not considered rabbi material. Where do most ministries today look for candidates for ministry?
3. The missing element from much of our Western style Christianity is this very unique and personal way of making disciples like Jesus. It is not missing because it is not there.
4. Review what LeRoy Eims noted were three goals that a pastor or ministry leader must have in mind if they are going to put others on the path to becoming disciples of Jesus Christ. How do these goals compare to Jesus' teaching and training of His disciples?
5. What is the ultimate goal of Jesus' Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20? How does that goal compare to the goal of most evangelistic efforts today?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-2 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017 And from *This Gospel of the Kingdom* © 2011, 2014, 2018

BEING SALT AND LIGHT TO THE WORLD**Lesson Outline for the Student**

- I. The Mission of Kingdom Discipleship
- II. What Jesus taught His Disciples About Being the Salt of the Earth
- III. What Jesus Taught His Disciples About Being the Light of the World
- IV. The Beatitudes and Kingdom Discipleship

**THE MISSION OF KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP**

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” **Matthew 5:13-16**

When we combine Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-18; and Luke 24:46-47 to make a single statement that includes everything Jesus commissioned His disciples to do until He returns it becomes very clear that making converts was not His plan or the ultimate goal of the Gospel Jesus preached.

Before ascending to His throne in heaven, Jesus told His disciples on more than one occasion to “go into all the world and preach the Good News (the message of salvation) to everyone, everywhere. Incorporated into that message was the mandate to “go and make disciples in all the nations,” baptizing them and then teaching these new disciples to obey all the commands Jesus gave them. Jesus was given all authority in heaven and earth and in turn gave this authority to His disciples to cast out demons, and speak new languages. Nothing will be able to harm them; and they will be able to place their hands on the sick and He will heal them. In Matthew Jesus concluded His commission by encouraging His disciples, reminding them that He will be with them always by His Holy Spirit.

The Great Commission ties into Jesus’ earlier pronouncement to His disciples that they are “salt” and “light” in this world. The earnestness of making disciples is understood when Jesus’ disciples recognize the fact that this world and everything in it is passing away. The picture of decay and of a deep darkness covering the earth is descriptive of a fallen people, living in a fallen world. The good news of the kingdom is that God has not abandoned this world in its fallen condition. Jesus uses the images of salt and light to communicate the **Mission of Kingdom Discipleship** to His followers. The deliberate choices of these images were rich with meaning to the people who lived in biblical times. In Mark 9:49-50 Jesus directly links having “salt” with the ability of His disciples to live in peace with each other. The Holy Spirit is the salt; it is the **presence of Christ’s agape** abiding within the life of the believer.

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT BEING THE SALT OF THE EARTH

(Note: portions of the following paragraphs on salt and light came from *This Gospel of the Kingdom*, © 2011, 2014, 2018)

Once again, in one of His parables Jesus is using a natural, ordinary substance to reveal a **greater mystery of His Kingdom** to His disciples. Salt (*sodium chloride*) was essential to preserve food from corruption. In a time and place where fresh food supplies were scarce and where refrigeration and other methods of food preservation were unavailable, salt was essential to maintain the life of a community. In biblical times salt was most commonly found in the form of the mineral *halite*, or rock salt – found in beds deposited by the dehydration of ancient bodies of salt water. Most commercial salt was produced by steam or direct-heat evaporation of rock-salt brine; once the salt was extracted the remaining minerals were worthless (saltless) and were thrown far away from productive areas of land.

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In a spiritual sense, the Holy Spirit within them is what preserves the life of a disciple and keeps them from corruption. The Holy Spirit within is essential to the life of the believer. The old self (Adam’s nature) is the sinful part of the disciple that must be separated and discarded from the pure, sinless *Agape* within. If a disciple does not have any *Agape* within them, they do not have the Holy Spirit. They will have nothing to give and will be worthless in the Kingdom for making disciples – or for anything else (1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:7-11).

Salt was once an important medium of exchange throughout the Mediterranean world; covenants between individuals or nations were often ratified with the exchange of salt. At one time, Roman soldiers received their pay in the form of salt cakes; the soldier's salt-money allowance, or *salarium*, is where we got our English term *salary*, for a worker's pay. Salt was also commonly used in the religious rites of the Greeks, Romans and Hebrews (Ezekiel 43:22-24). *Agape* is the medium of exchange in **the Kingdom of God**. The disciple’s worth or value to the kingdom of God is not measured by the numbers of souls won, by the size of their church, the amount of their offerings, or by any other human standard of measure. Our worth and value to God is measured by the presence of *Agape* within – either you have it or you do not.

“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

Colossians 4:6

Salt is necessary to **the life of the body** in the same way that the Holy Spirit is necessary to the body of Christ, the church. The sodium and chloride of salt, along with potassium, help the kidneys regulate the body's fluid levels and balance of acids and bases. Industrially, salt is the source of chlorine, chloroform, bleaching powders, and baking soda; it is used in the manufacture of unrelated products like soap and glass. However, by far, the greatest use of salt today is seasoning, adding flavor to many of our foods. It is not the gift itself, but the *Agape* within that makes it worthy (note 1 Corinthians 13).

Salt was required in every grain offering presented to the Lord (Leviticus 2:13). The altar was the table of the Lord; and therefore, salt being eternally present at His table, represents the preserving and cleansing aspects of God's saving *Agape* (Exodus 30:34-35 and Numbers 18:19). The presence of salt also speaks of God's **covenant with mankind**. Men confirmed their covenants with each other by sharing a covenant meal together, at which salt was always present (2 Chronicles 13:4-5). We love Him because He first loved us and sent His Son into this world to open the way of His salvation. Apart from *Agape* there is no real or lasting relationship with

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Christ. The discipleship relationship (disciples making disciples) is from first to last, a love relationship.

Jesus invites His disciples to open the door and let Him come in that they might dine in intimacy with Him at a table prepared especially for them – thus confirming His new covenant of *Agape* (Psalm 23:5; Revelation 3:20). Among the ancients, salt was also a **symbol of friendship**. This new, everlasting “covenant of salt”, written on our hearts in *Agape* by the Holy Spirit, also speaks of God's desire to be in intimate friendship with us; Jesus used this image of covenantal friendship in John 15:15 when describing His relationship with disciples who would in turn carry on by making disciples in the same covenantal friendship – first with the Lord and then with each other.

Salt has **a healing power** that can cleanse and purge out impurities from organic substances including the body. In 2 Kings 2:19-22, Elisha threw salt into a poisoned spring to “heal” the water. “He cast the salt into the spring of the waters,” Matthew Henry commented, “and so healed the streams and the ground they watered. Thus the way to reform men's lives is to renew their hearts; let those be seasoned with the salt of grace; for out of them are the issues of life.” The image of salt reminds us of the healing power of the blood of Christ that can “cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God” (Hebrews 9:14). It is the cleansing presence of Christ within the disciple that creates a thirst for God in those who are outside of His kingdom (Col. 1:25 – 29). There is nothing more useless in this world than “Christ-less” Christians; they are no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

Central to the disciple-making-disciple process is discovering the presence of Christ within and allowing that life to be poured out and used to preserve those that are perishing and add savor to those who are truly hungry and thirsty for God.

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT BEING THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

“You are the light of the world...” The picture of *light* communicates a different aspect of the influence Jesus’ disciples are to have in this world. The primary purpose of light is to **make reality or truth visible**, thereby giving direction and guidance to those who are searching for the kingdom of God. The presence of *Agape* within the life of the disciple serves the same purpose.

There are over 200 references to light in the Scriptures, making light an important theme throughout the Bible. Genesis 1:3 records the first words spoken by God, “Let there be light.” Exodus 13:21 describes how the children of Israel were led through the darkness of the wilderness by a pillar of light representing God’s presence with them. Leviticus 24:2 contains God's instructions to the priests to keep the light of the tabernacle burning continually. The final chapter of the Bible describes the kingdom of heaven in the new heavens and the new earth to come, and includes these words: “There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:5). “As the first apartment in the tabernacle was illuminated by the sevenfold light of the candlestick, and as the church composed of all genuine believers on earth in every age, is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so will the church triumphant in heaven, that great temple, not made with hands, be a place of glorious light; and the light will never go out, it will burn always...” *William Brown, The Tabernacle: Its Priests and Its Services*, Updated Version, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, © 1996, p.72

The Lord strategically positions His disciples so that they might shine His light into this world of darkness: “You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light” (Psalms 18:28). Jesus used the image of light to communicate to His followers how they are intended to be the **“light of the world.”** In the same way that a lamp carries light or in the same way that a city on a hill guides the weary sojourners out of the darkness and to a place where they might find rest, disciples should so shine the light of Christ into the darkness all around them and lead others to Christ.

Citizens of the kingdom of heaven stand out against the darkness when they follow Jesus, the true Light of the world (Psalm 27:1); they do not generate their own light, but the “Light of life” shines through them (John 8:12); for the Lord is “the fountain of life” and in His light we see the true light of God (Psalms 36:9). Without light, sight is impossible. God created the eye to be the “light of the body” (in this context, the word *body* is interpreted to mean the whole *person*) in the same way a candlestick or lamp – after being lit – illuminates a room. Upon being “born again” into the kingdom of heaven, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within the whole person, and floods the body, soul and spirit with God's light and life, which is *Agape*: “Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle.” (Psalms 43:3) see also Psalms 56:13.

The word of God is a “lamp” and a “light” that shines the light of the Holy Spirit within the soul; it **illuminates *The Way*** in this dark world of sin (Psalms 119:105); it brings understanding, judgment, and the power to **see *The Truth*** and expose falsehood (Psalms 119:105). Jesus said, “Your eye is the lamp of your body.

When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness” (Luke 11:34). Here, the Greek word *haplous*, "single" or "healthy" is used. He makes the point that whether or not a person sees the kingdom of God does not depend on the light's brightness, but on the **quality and presence of *The Life*** in the person receiving the light of Christ, which is *Agape*.

This gospel of the kingdom will come to those people whose hearts are open to receive the way, the truth, and the life of Christ within. Wherever the reign of God is established in the heart of a disciple, it will bring the light of truth and righteousness with it. Jesus is indeed “the light of the world” (John 8:12 & 9:5) and when he came, the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled: “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2). And, “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.” (Isaiah 42:6-7)

The key to disciples making disciples is for the disciple **not** to do the making. The disciple, who has the Life of Christ within, allows that Life to manifest itself as *Agape* – to act as the salt and light within the disciple to make thirsty and draw all those around them to Christ.

The mature disciple may guide and instruct others who are on The Way, but they understand that it must be **Christ alone** who does the making. When Christians believe it is up to them to make disciples, they tend to create programs and seminars designed to attract large numbers. Whenever large numbers are involved, the teaching will be diluted to appeal to as many people as possible. It is important for the pastor or ministry leader accept the fact that Kingdom Discipleship is not for everybody. Some are simply not willing; others are not ready. But for those who are ready, willing and able, the life of true Kingdom Discipleship is the only rewarding life for those who seek it with their whole heart.

THE BEATITUDES AND KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Matthew 5:3-12

Matthew chapter five, verses three through twelve are Jesus' introduction to the kingdom lifestyle of those who act as salt and light in this world. He characterizes citizens of His kingdom as "blessed." *Makarios*, the Greek term used here; it means more than a temporary feeling of happiness based upon circumstances; it means being approved by God and rewarded eternally with blessings that cannot be measured by worldly standards.

The kingdom blessings of those who fulfill their purpose of making those around them thirsty for God and who act as lights for those who are lost in the darkness of this world are intangible. The Beatitudes promise mercy, vision, and relationship with the Father, joy, and inclusion in the kingdom of heaven. These blessings are secured by Jesus Christ on behalf of those who put their faith and trust in Him. He makes it clear from the beginning that the blessings of the kingdom of heaven are assured for the person whose attitudes, values, and commitments are rooted in the eternal things of God.

Disciples, like the lights of a city on a hill, guide those who are in darkness towards the inward, spiritual blessings of the kingdom. The external and temporary benefits of this world (Matthew 6:25-34) fade into the background when compared with the blessings of the kingdom of heaven. This world may bring us many troubles and much sorrow, but those who value their citizenship in the kingdom of heaven will experience the true blessings of God through them all.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (5:3). The way into the kingdom of heaven is lost to those who strive to enter it without the light of the Holy Spirit. God will freely give the kingdom to those who recognize their own spiritual bankruptcy and cry out to Him for the light of salvation. Matthew 5:3 means that the kingdom belongs to those who utterly and completely depend upon the finished work of Christ upon the cross for salvation.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (5:4). Jesus confirmed the truth that God is close to the brokenhearted of this world. The religious leaders of the day believed that God had cast into darkness those who were suffering and broken by sin; they only got what they deserved and all that awaited them was

God's judgment. Instead, Jesus taught that those who are deeply affected by the sorrows visited upon this fallen world and turn to Him will find God's everlasting comfort, "a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" (Isaiah 61:2-3).

"Blessed are the meek..." and "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness..." (5:5, 6). Gentleness is not weakness; it takes an enormous strength of character to abandon one's own selfish self-interests and place them at the feet of God. Salt makes people thirst; the heart's cry of anyone who is a citizen in God's kingdom is a longing for God's presence. Those who genuinely and humbly submit to the reign of God will not only experience the blessings of God in their daily lives but will also cause others to want the blessing of God's presence. Those who love this world and the things of this world will never be satisfied. "For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of the eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father, but from the world" (1 John 2:16). Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness know that this world is wasting away, and the evil ungodly things of this world will sink into darkness with it, but those who belong to God's kingdom will live forever in the light and will be forever satisfied.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (5:7). Citizens of the kingdom understand they are objects of God's mercy. This awareness should drive us to show the same mercy towards others. We serve a King who is "rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us" (Eph. 2:4). Therefore, what we have received in abundance, we must give abundantly.

"Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down." **Psalms 145:13-14**

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (5:8). Purity of heart is not something manufactured by citizens of the kingdom; it is a gift of God's unmerited favor by the "new and living way" Jesus. The light of Christ in us leads us to a lifestyle of holiness and sanctification. The light of God's presence illuminates and purifies the heart of the disciple. The heart is the key to receiving the righteousness of Christ, which is our vindication before God when Satan, the accuser, points his finger of guilt and self-condemnation at us.

The teachers of other religions say that everyone must live by their standards of holiness to fulfill the righteous requirements of their God. But these religions almost always define holiness as external, religious ritual, and leave the heart untouched. "Then the Lord said to him, 'Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside

of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?" (Luke 11:39-40)

Jesus knew that it is only the pure in heart that are able to "see" God in this life on earth, and it is only the pure in heart who have the light of Christ to see the Father eternally, in the kingdom of heaven. He never said or did anything that was impure or unholy. Jesus forgave sin, but never excused it. Jesus was clear, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished" (Matthew 5:17-18).

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus dealt with the inward motivations of the heart that produce true righteousness. The heart is essential to the spiritual life of the believer, which is why we must keep it pure and holy. Jesus taught that we must live righteously not because we must fulfill the righteous requirements of the law, but that we live righteously because we have been made holy by the light of His Holy Spirit dwelling within the heart. John the Baptist saw it and said, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matthew 3:11).

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God (5:9). To the kingdoms of this world, "peace" simply means "an interlude between wars". But in the kingdom of heaven, "peace" has a greater significance in that it speaks of health and wholeness that emanates from the innermost being of a person who has been restored (as salt of the earth) to a proper relationship with God. The peace this world has to offer is primarily external, enforced militarily, or maintained politically. Because peace in this world is based upon our immediate circumstances, it is temporary at best.

The peace Jesus has to offer is spiritual – from the heart – and originates from within. Lasting peace between nations, between individuals, between man and nature, and between man and his Creator all flow from the hearts of individuals salted (preserved) by the presence of the supreme peacemaker, Jesus Christ: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

A disciple who is the "salt of the earth" will bring the peace of God with them wherever they go: "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you." (Luke 10:5-6).

Being called "sons of God" in the context of Matthew 5:9, means "a people who are like God in word and deed." Therefore, citizens of the kingdom are called to be peacemakers, and like Christ, sow seeds of peace wherever they go, producing the fruit of righteousness in the midst of this troubled world (James 3:18).

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Matthew 5:10 – 12

Persecution comes in many forms in this world; Jesus warned His disciples, "in the world you have tribulation" (John 16:33). The poor and needy will always be oppressed by the rich and powerful; persecution based upon race, culture, or gender often characterizes even the most "civilized" of nations. However, those who choose to live as citizens of God's kingdom will inevitably find themselves in conflict with the kingdoms of this world. God's special blessing is reserved for those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness (5:10) and because of Me (5:11).

A person who is truly salt and light in this world will be poor in spirit; they mourn because of sin and are meek; they will hunger and thirst for righteousness and truth; they will show mercy to those around them; they are pure in heart and a peacemaker. Christians who live as salt and light of the world will naturally expose the sinfulness of those who belong to this world. Those who reject the kingdom of heaven for themselves will scorn and persecute those who belong to the kingdom of heaven. Like the prophets of old they may suffer much for the sake of His kingdom, but Jesus encourages His people to rejoice and be glad (5:12) because great will be their reward in heaven.

Like the prophets of the Old Testament, Christians who live as salt and light in this world will endure persecution – some may even be put to death for their uncompromising lifestyle of living by the Word of God. A careful study of the Old Testament prophets will show that far from being lonely visionaries, sending proclamations down to the people, these men and women lived and ministered as salt and light in the midst of the people. Though some were set apart as fulltime prophets, most lived and worked in the normal vocations of their day – all but a few married, raised children and had ties to the community. The prophets were individuals chosen by God with a specific mission to their generation. Central to their mission and ours is:

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- To point the people to their destiny to be **"a holy people to the Lord."** By their lifestyle, disciples model how anyone chosen by Him are intended to live as "a people for His possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).
- And to point those who do not know the way of salvation to Jesus Christ so that they will have eternal life in Him, the one true and living God over all of creation. "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you, And I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations..." (Isaiah 42:6)

In the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3–12, Jesus established the character of the disciples of the kingdom. The beatitudes are the blessings for those who choose to live as salt and light to the world (as well as the expected opposition from those who remain at enmity with God's reign and rule over the earth). The blessings of the kingdom are unconditional and irrevocable because they do not depend upon us to faithfully follow a specific set of instructions to secure them. These heavenly blessings are secured by our position in Christ as "born again" believers by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. The blessings of the kingdom bring with them certain responsibilities that we must not ignore. Jesus defines the mission of His disciples as being "salt" and "light" to a world hungry and thirsting for God.

Questions for Lesson Two

1. Read Matthew 5:3-12 and compare it with Deuteronomy 28:1-14. What kinds of blessings are promised in Deuteronomy and what are they dependent upon?
2. What kinds of blessings are promised in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) and what are they dependent upon? Give at least three specific examples.
3. The Old Testament prophets were individuals chosen by God. What was their mission? How does the mission of the disciples of Jesus compare to the Old Testament prophets?
4. Consider the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20. How does it relate to Jesus' earlier pronouncement to His disciples that they are "salt" and "light" in this world?
5. How does the life of Christ in the disciple manifest itself as the salt and light to draw all those around them to Christ?

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SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-3 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

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MAKING DISCIPLES LIKE JESUS

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Jesus Taught His Disciples Everything They Needed to Know
- II. The Mission of the Parable in Jesus' Teaching Ministry



JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES EVERYTHING THEY NEEDED TO KNOW

Jesus had a limited time to prepare His disciples to carry on after His departure and fulfill their mission to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. In the end, they would not only need His authority and the Holy Spirit that He would send in His name, but they would also need His knowledge to effectively communicate the Gospel of the Kingdom. Even before they knew it, Jesus was preparing them to preach the gospel of the kingdom that He said must be preached to every nation, tribe and tongue in the earth before He returned (Matthew 24:14).

God had the power to simply send His divine revelation like lightning bolts into the minds of the disciples and make all things crystal clear to them, but the easy way is not often the best way. Jesus in His humanity understood the workings of the human mind and instinctively knew the best way to transmit lasting knowledge and understanding to His disciples. Still it would not be easy; there were many obstacles that the disciples would have to overcome in order to grasp what Jesus was teaching them. Most of the people Jesus encountered along the way were too entrenched in themselves to comprehend the reality of His Kingdom that He came to demonstrate; Jesus would have to unlock its mysteries as He taught them. But for those few

disciples who were ready, willing, and able to forsake all to follow Him anywhere, He used the most effective methods available to pour His teachings into them in such a way that they in turn could teach others the same truths without changing them or watering them down to make them less substantial to the half-hearted or uncommitted wayside followers.

Jesus did not have to reinvent new methods of teaching: parables, symbolism, metaphor, hyperbole, etc. were used long before Jesus used them in His teaching. However, what was new were the creative and innovative ways He used them to instill into His disciples' minds the principles He wanted them to understand. The modern-day disciples are not much different from the disciples Jesus chose to follow Him. In fact, they were chosen because they were ordinary. Jesus was not looking for supermen – heroic characters with extra-ordinary skills or attributes – He chose just the opposite: “Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.’” 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NIV)

This should be of great encouragement to anyone who wants to become a disciple of Jesus. Many of Jesus' disciples come from backgrounds of failure, brokenness, promiscuity, strife, or despair. Others come out from a “quiet desperation” that comes after obtaining everything this world has to offer – health, wealth, fame, etc. – but still experiencing a kind of *existential angst* (emptiness, dread, anxiety, and meaninglessness) that leaves them hanging onto life without really knowing why. In any case, Jesus' teachings are intended to edify, enlighten, and point His disciples along the journey to discover and access the wonders and mysterious workings of His Kingdom in this life. As Jesus said, “The Kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:7).

The processes of ***becoming, being, and making disciples*** are intricately woven together in the life of every follower of Jesus. You will know those who are farther along the way by their character – the presence of the Holy Spirit within them along with His fruits that come from abiding with Him – and not by their reputations, the size of their followings, their book sales, or by their power over others.

“Have you exchanged obediently following Jesus for a car that can really handle the corners? Have you exchanged following Jesus for a

job that pays really well? Have you exchanged following Jesus for a house that has all the upgrades? Have you exchanged following Jesus with following the stock index? Have you exchanged following Jesus for following your fantasy football league? That's just not a good trade. Understand it's not that any of those things are wrong or sinful in and of themselves, but for too many of us these good things become God things. They have become too important and they keep us from following Christ with our whole hearts. Augustine referred to these things as 'disordered loves.' They may very well be legitimate, but they are out of order in our lives." Kyle Idleman, *Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, © 2011, p.206

Jesus calls His disciples to a life that is over and above the trappings of this life but is never over and above others. But then that is the nature of *Agape*: it is **the nature of Christ** that the disciple abides in Christ to obtain. In *The Holy Spirit in You: Nourishing the Life of Holiness and Power in You*, the process of abiding in Christ and how it produces the fruit of the Spirit in the life of the believer is described. To step out on this road of the fruit-bearing life requires the grace of God for the disciple. To continue traveling this road requires the **constant grace of God** while we free ourselves from the flesh, which is the goal of discipleship. This freedom requires that we die to the life of self-gratification and self-preservation. The disciple must exchange their old life of conformity to Adam's sin nature for the new life of Christ within, which comes through abiding in the true spiritual Vine who is Christ Himself.

The life of discipleship requires **self-sacrifice**, which is why so few honestly and sincerely take up their cross and follow Jesus. But the temptation is to turn the process of making disciples into a blanket formula to follow step-by-step; to create a "Program of Making Disciples" that must be used as the right or only way to make disciples. The Laws or principles of making disciples presented here are merely guidelines – principles that are universal in effectiveness but are not intended to be universally applied in every instance. The Holy Spirit is much more fluid – living and active – in the life of each disciple to attempt to force everyone into the same mold or pattern. Each and every disciple must first submit themselves to the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit before taking these principles of making disciples and running with them to teach others. Remember, teaching is only a part of making disciples, *being* a disciple of Jesus is the most important part. Apart from *Being...* there is no teaching.

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In the lessons to follow we will examine how Jesus made disciples: the teaching methods He used and the guidelines and principles He taught and modeled for them. Never less than fully God, but never more than fully human, Jesus in His humanity modeled the life of a disciple by His submitting to His heavenly Father in everything.

Jesus the disciple-maker taught His disciples in a way that caused them to **learn quickly**. He motivated His disciples to learn by building **positive expectations** for them for the future. Jesus' encounters with His disciples along the way were intended to produce **transformation** in their life to Christlike character. His grace received them as He found them, but that same grace was not content to leave them in that same condition. As He taught them, they were being made like their Master in every way.

Because of His limited time with His disciples, Jesus taught them in such a way that enabled His disciples to **master the essentials**, teaching only that which was absolutely important for them to know to follow Him. Being a disciple of Jesus is not a part time or temporary calling; it is for a lifetime. Therefore, Jesus taught His disciples to prepare them for life and life abundantly. The abundant life of discipleship requires not only an ongoing commitment to follow Jesus for life, but it also requires an ongoing personal revival in the disciple's life. As we shall see, making disciples requires an **ongoing personal revival** in both the life of the disciple and the one being discipled. Ed Stetzer wrote about the purpose of being made disciples in his book *Subversive: Living as Agents of Gospel Transformation*,:

"You see, one of the great challenges today is that many people who have been made citizens of the kingdom look, well, like citizens of the world. Yet King Jesus is making a new people who live like his people. They are changed to be agents of the kingdom because they live differently – that's a mark of being a kingdom citizen. And it changes us. It changes the things in our lives. Jesus is unapologetic to connect who you are in Christ with how you live for Christ. Those things matter." B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, © 2012, p.101

Making disciples like Jesus requires us to be **a disciple**; it also requires that we use His methods. We use His methods not in a slavish obedience to a particular formula, but we use them because we recognize that they are the most effective way to teach Jesus' **kingdom principles** to others. Everyone is different and the Holy Spirit must lead us in the process. It requires some flexibility, but all the methods will be involved in the process.

The idea that it takes many years of seminary study before a person is qualified to teach others is a modern notion of Western education. We observe that Jesus gave

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His disciples “on-the-job” training so to speak (Note Luke chapters 9:1-6, 10; and 10:1-24 for examples). When we follow Jesus’ methods, we will make disciples in a way that causes them to learn quickly. That does not mean that two weeks after being “born again” we send them out the door and into the world to preach the gospel and make disciples. But it does mean that we do not hold them back either; we must understand that we are only **leading the way** for them to follow; we must remain mindful that the Lord Himself is truly the disciple-maker and the one who leads them where He will. In other words, disciples do not belong to other disciple-makers, but to the Lord who is the Master Teacher of us all.

Our work as disciple-makers is to encourage them in the Lord and use our **leadership skills and talents** to build **positive expectations** for them for the future. It is far too often the experience of those who feel called to ministry that when they approach the leaders of their church that not only are they not encouraged by the leadership of that church, but they are actually discouraged by being told they have no training, no qualifications, no experience, and no business to become a full-time minister or missionary. Thank God, that he puts others in their life that are able to disciple them, encourage them and confirm the Lord’s calling upon their life.

Jerry Rankin, a man who spent most of his adult life in missions, understands this and wrote: “When we respond to that call – a call to the lordship of Christ – it doesn’t really matter where we are. God’s call is not just a call to a place; it is a call to follow wherever He leads. God’s call is not just a country or location; it is not a call to an unchanging assignment. It is not a call just to be a missionary. It is a call to follow in obedience day by day. God knows the circumstances you will face, some which will appear to be obstacles to your understanding of God’s will. You will not always know how things are going to work out; your call is to trust God and follow Him in obedience.” *Great Commission Obedience* B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, © 2011, p.45

The Lord’s call upon the life of a believer to “Come, follow me and I will make you...” is by **grace and grace alone**. None of us are worthy of that call. It is only by grace that we are saved in the first place. We respond to His call to be His disciple by faith, knowing we possess nothing that makes us worthy to be given such a wonderful invitation. His grace receives us as He found us, and that same grace is what keeps us day by day as we walk in the dust of the Rabbi Jesus’ footsteps and try to keep up with Him. It is in the following by grace through faith that our transformation begins to take place. Grace receives us as He found us but God’s grace is not content to leave us in that same condition. The process of being made a disciple of Jesus Christ leads us to become more and more like our Master with every step of obedience we take.

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It is true that being a disciple is a **life-long commitment**, but we should never allow ourselves to be deceived into thinking we have all the time in the world to follow the Master. We all have a limited timeframe to be made and to make disciples – some have less time than they think they have. It is a common story missionaries hear every time they come home from the mission field and share their stories of life on mission with the Lord: someone will almost always come up to them and say, “Oh, how I wish I could do what you are doing and go out on the mission field to serve the Lord. But I have children to raise, college tuitions to pay for them. I have a mortgage to pay, car payments, and credit card payments. I just can’t just get up and leave. Maybe someday I will have everything paid off and I can go.” But we all know that “someday” will never come for those who live that way.

Disciples of Jesus Christ know and understand that they have a limited time here upon this earth. And so we must master the art of learning and teaching other disciples to **master the essentials**. Too often pastors, teachers, evangelists and other leaders in the church waste time talking about things that are unnecessary to being a disciple. The clergy in most churches and denominations have taken diversions from the way of following the Master. To be effective disciple-makers we must concentrate our efforts to make disciples by **mastering the essentials** and teaching only that which was absolutely important for them to know as a follower of Jesus Christ. Because being a disciple is for a lifetime it is the job of the disciple-maker to prepare those who have decided to follow Jesus without compromise, seeking His abundant life. The abundant life of discipleship requires not only an ongoing commitment to follow Jesus for life, but it also requires a personal, **daily revival** in the heart of the disciple.

Making disciples is a messy business and is often unrewarding in this world. It involves taking everything we are and everything we have to the cross and dying to the self. (NOTE: review the lessons in *Kingdom Discipleship* – 102). These so-called giants of the self-life do not disappear quietly into the night, but will fight for survival. So until they are fully and completely dealt with, discipleship will require an ongoing personal revival in both the life of the disciple and the one being disciplined until the process is complete. “It is one thing to make a decision for Christ in the warm emotion of a mass evangelistic rally. But it is quite another thing to deny one’s self and take up the cross daily, and follow Christ. Although it costs nothing to become a Christian, it costs plenty to be a consistent believer walking in a path of sacrifice, separation and suffering for Christ’s sake. It is one thing to begin the Christian race well, it is quite another thing to slug it out, day after day, through fair weather and foul, through prosperity and adversity, through joy and through grief.” William MacDonald, *True Discipleship*, Walterick Publishers, Kansas City, KS, © 1975, pp.68-69

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THE MISSION OF THE PARABLE IN JESUS' TEACHING MINISTRY

“O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old – what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.” **Psalm 78:1-4**

When we examine carefully the sermons of our Lord Jesus Christ, it becomes clear how His teachings on the kingdom of God had a significant role in His ministry. In public sermons, Jesus reinforced the ideas that the kingdom of God is eternal, universal, and that the manifestation of the kingdom in its fullness lies ahead of us. However, at the same time, Jesus revealed a deeper and fuller understanding of the present reality of the kingdom for all who live as salt and light in this world. It was His mission to demonstrate the mysteries of the kingdom for His disciples and to teach them how to unlock the power of the kingdom of heaven when they ministered to others.

In His sermons, Jesus introduced His disciples to a new and unexpected reality of God's kingdom here on Earth. In particular, His “Sermon on the Mount” described this bold new concept of how the citizens of His eternal and invisible kingdom should live. Jesus described not only the rights and privileges of the citizens of His kingdom, but also the duties and responsibilities of those citizens.

The people were amazed at Jesus' teachings because He not only spoke with an authority that no ordinary man ever had, but also because everywhere he went, He demonstrated the reality of His kingdom through the many miracles He performed. Above and beyond His personal power and authority, Jesus also gave His disciples the authority in His name to heal the sick and over all the power of Satan.

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.’” **Mark 16:15-18**

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” **John 14:12-14**

The Old and New Testaments contain two hundred and fifty parables, emblems or figures of speech employed by a variety of authors. In each case, the parables of the Bible – especially those used by the Lord Jesus Christ – were intended to communicate or reinforce divine truths. Jesus recognized that the parabolic method of presenting truth was well established in Jewish literature, and He incorporated the parable into His teachings, “and without a parable he did not speak to them.” However, Jesus elevated this method of teaching to its highest level and contributed His unique parables to reinforce the efficacy of this style of spiritual teaching.

“All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.’” **Matthew 13:34, 35**

A detailed study of Christ's parables indicates they are far more than simple pastoral stories designed to help humble and uneducated peasants understand His teachings. The parables of Jesus are powerful word-pictures intended to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to those who are open to hear from God, while simultaneously hiding these same truths from those whose hearts are too hard, rocky, or thorny to hear and receive the Word of God spoken plainly.

A parable has been described as “an outward symbol of an inward reality”. And Jesus was the master at drawing the power out of every parable He told. “For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20).

The parables of Jesus are effective because they express the perfect harmony that exists between the **natural and the spiritual world** in narrative form. His parables were always true to nature or to human relationships. The parables Jesus told imparted meaningful **spiritual truths** to the mind of His hearers by using material objects to express those truths. Parables reveal that nature is much more

than it seems. Through His parables, Jesus reveals the spiritual reality (hidden from the unspiritual materialists) that this temporal world is in fact a reflection of or template for His heavenly kingdom that we do not see. Both kingdoms operate according to a particular set of laws.

Jesus' parables are not just thought-provoking images used for window dressing for divine instruction. The parables are used for points of comparison between the spiritual kingdom of God and His creation – bearing testimony to essential spiritual truths that Jesus wants His disciples to understand.

Generally speaking, the root word used for “parable” means **“to set side by side,”** and indicates the idea of comparing two distinct objects. The parables Jesus taught concerning His kingdom literally place beside for comparison, earthly truths with heavenly truths as illustrations of one subject to another. Heaven and Earth are the work of the One God; and a study of the parables will help us discover that the parables Jesus taught may be earthly in form, but in they are heavenly in spirit.

Jesus used parables to teach His disciples the **essential truths** about the kingdom of heaven because they act like mirrors. Parables superimpose the reflected images of the visible, natural world God created over the invisible, supernatural kingdom of heaven. The parables of Jesus are intended for “those who have ears to hear” so they may discover a deeper spiritual meaning to their existence, increase in intimacy with the Father, and grow in faithful obedience to Jesus Christ who is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation” (Colossians 1:15).

“When our Lord appeared among men as a Teacher He took possession of the parable and honored it by making it His own, by using it as the vehicle for the highest truth of all.” Herbert Lockyer

Parables are a unique form of spiritual teaching in that they both attract and sift out those who hear them. Not everyone who came to listen to Jesus' sermons was receptive to His words. Only those who had “eyes to see and ears to hear” – those who were genuinely drawn to God – would dig diligently and seek out the deeper spiritual meaning of a parable. A parable is intended to arouse the hearer to seek out the Lord of the parable and have Him reveal the hidden meaning to them. Once the parable is fully understood, it is sure to be remembered long after the main body of the sermon is forgotten. The parables Jesus used were designed to hold the attention of those who listened to Him, to excite their consciences, and to inspire them to respond in obedience to what they had heard and understood. Parables are reservoirs of truth, containing powerful **word-pictures**. Using the language of symbols, Jesus, the Master Painter, composed these pictures, and created enduring

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images to communicate Divine truths that would be preserved and passed down from generation to generation.

Many Bible scholars have said that there are two extremes to be avoided when interpreting parables: one is to **make too much** of them – the other is to **make too little** of them. Although each parable contains valuable lessons of a spiritual nature, not every word of the parable is charged with hidden meaning. All of the parables may be for us, but not everything within a parable is about us. It is essential to understand the parable within the context of the sermon, as well as within the broader, universal context of the present reality of the eternal Kingdom of God that Jesus came to reveal. If we are transparent and sincere in our quest for truth about the kingdom of heaven, we can rely on the Holy Spirit to reveal to us Christ's intended meaning for each of His parables.

“In these parables we can discern the unconquerable democracy of Christ's Christianity as a manifestation of redeeming love in which the whole human race is included. By them the peoples of East and West are made aware of god's fatherly love, transcendent grace, everlasting mercy, and inerrant justice.” S.P. Cadman

To be effective at making disciples like Jesus, the discipler needs to teach like Jesus the Master Teacher taught. Jesus did not try to cram as many facts and as much information into the heads of His disciples that He could; He concentrated on the things His disciples needed to know about His kingdom.

Jesus did not have to reinvent new methods of teaching. What was new were the creative and innovative ways He used parables to instill into His disciples' minds the principles they needed to understand. The natural world around Him was Jesus' classroom and His parables were the most effective teaching tool He used to transmit the mysteries of the kingdom in a way that would be easily remembered.

From the teaching methods of Jesus we learn that the processes of *becoming, being, and making* disciples are intricately woven together in the life of every follower of Jesus. To be a true disciple of Jesus, the disciple must exchange their old life of conformity to Adam's sin nature for the new life of Christ within, which comes through being with and abiding in Jesus Christ.

Teaching is only a part of making disciples, *being* a disciple of Jesus is the most important part because apart from *Being* there is no teaching. Jesus the disciple-maker taught His disciples in a way that caused them to learn quickly. He motivated His disciples to learn by building positive expectations for them for the future. Our work as disciple-makers is to encourage them in the Lord and use our leadership skills and talents to build positive expectations for them for the future. To

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be effective disciple-makers we must concentrate our efforts to make disciples, master the essentials, and teach only that which was absolutely important for them to know as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Questions for Lesson Three

1. Why are the processes of becoming, being, and making disciples so important to the life of every follower of Jesus?
2. What are the requirements for being a disciple of Jesus?
3. What is the “Mission of the Parable” in Jesus’ teachings?
4. What must a parable contain to be successful?
5. How does Jesus’ method teaching differ from the standard methods of teaching in world today?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-4 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017

JESUS TAUGHT “BE LIKE ME”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Jesus the Master Discipler
 - a. Disciples Learn to be like the Master
- II. Jesus the Master Teacher
 - a. Jesus made His disciples Learn how to be like Him



JESUS THE MASTER DISCIPLER

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40

To be effective at making disciples like Jesus the disciple must not only learn what Jesus taught but must learn **to be like Him**. When we read verses like Matthew 7:28; 13:54; Mark 9:14-15; Luke 4:32; 6:5 and 14:1 we discover that Jesus teaching was:

- Never boring
- No one ever taught as He taught
- There was a sense of expectation as He taught

Teachers who have a worldly mindset think, “It’s not my fault or my problem if my students do not learn.” This attitude of heart is normal for those who do not enjoy a personal relationship with those they are teaching. The uniqueness of the master-disciple relationship is that it involves a unity in the Spirit born of *Agape*. It is this love that allows the teacher to make **a personal investment** in the disciple. That same *Agape* is essential in the student because without it the student will not

be personally invested in discovering what the teacher has to offer. This goes to the heart of Jesus pointing to His disciples and saying to the crowds, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother” (Matthew 12:49-50). The mindset of the teacher should be the same as Jesus’ mindset: **He was responsible and did whatever was necessary to make sure that His disciples were truly learning and applying what they were being taught.**

This is very different from what the preacher does. The preacher uses all of his skill to deliver a great sermon on Sunday morning. He believes his sermon is a success if the vast majority of his congregation stays awake and alert through his message. He tries to be entertaining, informative, witty, and concise; he will make his message appeal to the broadest possible audience and keep it as simple as possible. But the major deficiency of this method is that once the sermon is over and the people get in their cars and drive away, there is no expectation of the pastor or the individual members of the church that anything significant will be applied to their lives.

Luke 6:12-13; 14:33; Mark 8:34; John 12:26; Luke 10:1-3; and Acts 1:8 reveal to us the steps Jesus took to ensure that His disciples would learn and apply what He was teaching them.

- **Jesus chose His disciples carefully.** He realized that not everyone who came to Him was ready or willing to commit to Him as a disciple. In his book, *Not a Fan*, Kyle Idleman described Jesus’ way of choosing like this: “...Jesus was never interested in having fans. When he defines what kind of relationship he wants, ‘Enthusiastic Admirer’ isn’t an option. My concern is that many of our churches in America have gone from being sanctuaries to becoming stadiums. And every week all the fans come to the stadium where they cheer for Jesus but have no interest in truly following him. The biggest threat to the church today is fans who call themselves Christians but aren’t actually interested in following Christ. They want to be close enough to Jesus to get all the benefits, but not so close that it requires anything from them.” (p.25)
- **He asked them to leave everything to follow Him.** True Discipleship (what some call “Kingdom Discipleship”) requires from the disciple a 100% commitment to Jesus Christ – not a 100% commitment to the discipler! A sure sign of a cult is when those who join are asked to commit to the leader or to the group; they may even be told that if they do not obey the leader, they are rebelling against God. John the Baptist got it right when he said to his followers, “He must increase, but I *must* decrease” (John 3:30). The teacher

who is like Jesus will be the one who is the servant of all, and not the lord of all.

- **He knew far better than they did what it would cost them to follow Him.** For the disciple, the cost of following Jesus is nothing less than “all.” Everything must be placed upon the altar and offered to God (1 Corinthians 3:10-15). The teacher is first a disciple of Jesus Christ and therefore must model for the student this kind of sacrificial living. It is true that there is a high cost for following Jesus, but the rewards are great and the joy overflowing. When the student sees that in the teacher, it encourages them to follow that example.
- **He knew that after He returned to the Father the preservation and propagation of the Gospel would be in their hands.** Always remember it is not about *you* or your ministry. It is all about *Him* and what He is doing in the world. The teacher and the student are entering into God’s calling. There may be a distinction between proclaiming the mysterious workings of the Kingdom of heaven and preaching the gospel of Salvation, but they must never be separated from each other or preached as two separate gospels (Galatians 1:6-10). Each new generation of disciples must in turn become teachers who pass on the teachings of their Master to the next generation so when the Son of Man returns, He will find a grand harvest of faith in heaven and on the earth (Luke 18:8).

“Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.’ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘*It is* because we have taken no bread.’ But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, ‘O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? – but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” (Matthew 16:5-12)

Bruce Wilkerson in his book, *The Seven Laws of the Learner*, expressed many of these same ideas and principles of teaching. When you study Matthew 16:5-12 (cf. Luke 12:1-3), you will discover that Jesus made sure His disciples understood His teachings. Those who were curious onlookers, who came for miracles, or to stand apart from Jesus and question His every move were often left in the dark about the lessons Jesus taught (Note Matthew 13:10-18). Every disciple-maker should share the mindset of Jesus: **“It is my responsibility to teach in such a way that the disciple learns.”** This takes an extraordinary effort on the part of the teacher who must take certain steps – the same steps the Rabbi Jesus took – to ensure maximum success.

With Jesus (as with all rabbinical teachers) there is a connection between **teaching and learning** that flows out of the intimate bond formed by the **master/teacher relationship**. This is unlike the worldly teacher who thinks it is their job to present the facts and necessary information to the class, but when it comes to learning, it is the students’ own responsibility. For Jesus, true teaching did not take place unless the disciple learned: if they had not learned, He had not taught. Unlike our modern educational systems, this understanding of teaching and learning being unquestionably linked was not something new to the Jews. In the Hebrew language the words “teach” and “learn” have the same root, and the meaning of the word “teach” is: “cause to learn or do” or “to urge” or take on “an eager pursuit of an action.”

Jesus knew that teaching is what the teacher does **in the student**, not what the teacher does in front of the student. How will you know if you are discipling others to be like Jesus? You will know from what your students learn to apply to their lives.

Think about the modern classroom setting. What does the modern-day teacher do? He or she walks into the classroom with their books and papers, maps, charts, graphs, lesson plans and outlines in hand. The teacher walks to the front of the class and starts to unload as much information on their class as possible until their time is up, and class is dismissed. What does the modern-day preacher do? He steps into his pulpit with his Bible in hand. He may have his sermon outlined and planned out; or he may use the extemporaneous method, preaching away until his time is up; but either way, once the preacher’s time is up, Church is dismissed.

What did Jesus the disciple-maker do? He walked into His classroom not with books, lesson plans, outlines, papers, maps, charts and graphs, but with Himself. It was just Jesus and His disciples. He did not come before them to unload as much information upon them as He could in the short time He had with them; He did not come to preach whatever profound or clever sermons He could devise, but Jesus

came with a simple mandate: *Teach His disciples* in such a way that they will *Learn*. Why? So that they might have His mind – think like Him – and be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Romans 12:2). This is the purpose of the teacher/disciple relationship Jesus modeled and we should follow. And as we study the gospels we will see that Jesus taught with more than mere words – He taught them by allowing them to be (abide) with Him.

The discipleship model of Jesus was simple: the teacher must focus his attention **on the disciple**, and not on his presentation of the subject matter. This why Jesus’ teaching method was so effective; by focusing upon His disciples Jesus caused them to learn by example and not by memorization.

Jesus said to His disciples “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God...” Jesus would often take His disciples aside from the crowds to teach them things that were only for those committed disciples who had “eyes to see and ears to hear.” Jesus was responsible to teach His disciples in such a way that they could not help but know the truth of what they were being taught. The disciples were responsible to listen and obey – they must learn their lessons well. *Agape* was the foundation upon which this teacher/disciple relationship was built. Jesus was committed to each of them in a very personal way to cause each of them to learn what He came to teach.

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.”
John 17:4-8

Jesus, was never less than Son of God but was never more than Son of Man; He did not come to do His own will, but He humbled Himself as a servant and obeyed His Father’s will... all the way to the cross. It is one of the great mysteries of God that Jesus, although He was never less than God accepted His accountability to His Father while He was on this earth. Are we any less accountable than He was? Can we echo the words of Jesus when we stand before the Father? “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world...”?

The Bible teaches us that there will be a day in the future that will be a day of accountability to God. On that Day not only will the Father hold us accountable for the purity of our doctrine, but for our motives, words, actions, and faithfulness to Him in *Word* and *Spirit*. He also announced that He will hold some of us additionally accountable: those of us who held leadership positions in the church. “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” (James 3:1)

James chapter one affirms that Bible teachers, preachers, evangelists, and missionaries will be judged more strictly because theirs is the greater responsibility. But do not think that the students will not be held accountable as well; they have a responsibility **to search out the truth** no matter how good or poor the teacher is. Teaching God’s Word is not always easy; sometimes there is great opposition. And there are many obstacles within the hearts of the teacher and students to overcome before the truth can be heard and obeyed. So teachers must test their own heart along with the hearts of those they are discipling and set expectations clearly (2 Corinthians 13:5). Follow the Holy Spirit’s instructions in James chapter one:

- Teach **as a servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Teach when you experience **joy**
- Teach when your life is full of **difficulties and temptations**
- Teach with **patience**
- Teach always looking to God, asking Him for **wisdom**
- Teach **confidently and do not doubt** because He is always ready to supply the needed wisdom and reveal His truth to all who ask him
- Teach even in **hardship** and when you experience grief in this world remembering that in the end you will receive your reward – the crown of life that God has promised those who love him.
- Teach whatever is **good and perfect**, which comes to us from God, the Creator of all
- Students... learn like those who have been **given new lives** through the truth of His Word, and who became children in our Lord and Savior’s family.
- Students... do not ever forget that it is best to **listen much, speak little, and not become angry** if you are challenged by the Holy Spirit to make radical changes.
- Students (and teachers) ... get rid of **all that is wrong in your life**, both inside and outside. Humbly submit to one another in *Agape* and be glad for the wonderful message we have received from above, for it is able to save your souls as it takes hold of your hearts.

- Students: remember that God’s Word is a **Living Message** to obey, not just to listen to. So do not deceive yourselves.
- Students: remember that **doing the word reinforces the being** of the Word in the disciple. When the student puts into practice what they have heard, they will not easily forget.
- Teachers: remember to **control your tongue** and do not let any toxic words come from you. Teach to edify – to lift up and build Christ in the lives of your students.
- The teacher who is **pure and without fault** is the one who takes care of others (like orphans and widows), and who remains true to the Lord—not soiled and dirtied by his contacts with the world. And is the one who teaches others to do so.

A discipler teaches the way Jesus the Master disciple-maker showed us to teach. They make disciples because God has divinely called and commissioned them (Matthew 24:19-20). They make disciples not for their own glory, but for the Father’s glory. “Paul understood that responsible missions work would not allow his desire to move quickly to new areas to jettison his duty to train trainers, educate educators, and disciple disciplers. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:2, ‘And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.’ Paul understood that he would not live on earth forever and that the churches needed sound teachers of the truth. Therefore, he knew that it was not enough to train the pastors; he also needed to train trainers and instill in them an awareness of the need to train still more.” M. David Sills, *Reaching and Teaching*, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL, © 2010, p.100

When we carefully examine Jesus’ parables on the kingdom of heaven, it will show that parables were just one of many ways Jesus helped His disciples to remember what He taught them. Other methods Jesus used include:

- **Object lessons from the natural world around them**
- **His miracles**
- **The people He encountered along the way**

The whole World was Jesus’ classroom; and Jesus used it all to permanently impress upon His disciples what they needed to know. Jesus carefully selected the set and setting for many of His greatest teachings. He would use the appropriate subject or style and spoke with authority often using the Hebrew Scriptures. Disciple-makers should think about what they are about to teach and prayerfully ask God to show them creative and innovative ways to present the subject that will cause their disciples to absorb what is being taught.

A teacher in a classroom is able to judge success easily enough since they have examinations and test scores that will guide them and reveal what their students have learned. But what if you are a Pastor, or ministry leader? How do you know if your disciples are learning? How do you know if your messages are getting through to them? You can have the greatest credentials and the highest degrees from the most prestigious Seminary in the world, but if you cannot pass along the simplest Biblical truths and make them *Spirit and Life* to those God has given you the responsibility to disciple, then all of that knowledge is useless.

As a pastor or ministry leader the only way you can measure your success as a teacher is by how well your disciples stand the trials and testing of their faith that must come for all of us. Jesus said **“You will know them by their fruits”** meaning that disciples of Jesus are not known by where they are found for a couple of hours on Sunday mornings, but they are known by the fruit of a Christlike character that is being produced 24-7 in their life. This fruit of the Spirit comes with the way of **discipleship**, which often includes feeling the sharp double-edged blade of the Father’s pruning knife (John 15:1-8). “Making disciples is not an easy process. It is trying. It is messy. It is slow, tedious, and even painful at times. It is all these things because it is relational. Jesus has not given us an effortless step-by-step formula for impacting nations for his glory. He has given us people, and he has said, ‘Live for them. Love them, serve them, and lead them. Lead them to follow me, and lead them to lead others to follow me. In the process you will multiply the gospel to the ends of the earth.’” David Platt, *Radical*, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, © 2010, p.93

“Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, ‘You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in our presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him.’” Luke 23:13-16

At the end of His life, as hard as they tried to find something to accuse Jesus of, there was nothing. In the end, it was Jesus’ spotless character and His unwavering commitment to do the Father’s will to the end that gave His shattered disciples the courage and strength to carry on no matter what the cost. 1 Peter 4:14-17 says, “If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your

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part, He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”

Colossians 1:21-23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Romans 15:3; 2 Corinthians 12:10; Hebrews 10:32-36 all affirm what Peter taught. There are only two different causes for the Christian to be reproached. One is when we fall short of God’s character; and the second is for the cause of advancing the kingdom of God. As teachers, preachers, evangelists, missionaries, and church leaders, our lives must face **a greater examination and closer investigation** than anyone else. How we live our lives – how closely we model the character of Christ in us – will speak far more to others than anything we might say or teach in front of the class or behind the pulpit. True, all have sinned and fallen short of God’s highest standards, and it would be impossible to find anyone who has lived as perfect and spotless a life as the Son of God. So in one sense, there is not one person whose life is so flawless and without sin that they have never needed to be reproached (admonished: rebuked mildly but earnestly). However, if the teacher lives honestly and humbly, they will find grace when needed. No disciple should ever be in a position where they deserve to be accused or charged with wrongdoing in a criminal case. Once a sinful lifestyle is exposed, or once a pattern of un-Christlike behavior is revealed, it can take a long time to rebuild the confidence, trust and respect that was there before our fall.

“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” **John 1:5-10**

Jesus was effective as a teacher not only because of the words He spoke, but because He had the character and authority of the Son of God. It is not our clever speech or Seminary training that makes us effective teachers; it is ***Christ in us*** and the power of the Holy Spirit. It is this power and authority released in the man or

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woman of God that lives a life of **holiness and obedience** before the Father that gives authority to our words and motivates others to follow us as we follow Him.

On the other hand, Christians should be reproached by those who do not want to hear the message of salvation in Christ. All too often Christians are afraid to be called insensitive, intolerant, fanatics, or some other derogatory term when they are zealous for the Lord and unashamed to talk about Him. Paul wrote in Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” If anyone is reproached, rebuked, or worse for publicly professing the gospel that saved them and whosoever would believe in the cross of Christ with them, it is a cause for rejoicing.

Now consider the role of the teacher in the classroom or the pastor of a church. Who is serving whom? Jesus’ own lifestyle reminds the teacher that they must never forget that in kingdom discipleship, it is the **teacher who serves the students** (John 13:2-5). And the students who see this way of service modeled by the teacher will follow by example. Our modern system of “doing church” has this all turned around and it is the congregation that serves the pastor and other leaders. **But greatness in the kingdom is not measured by how many people serve you, but greatness is measured by how many people you serve.**

God has called and gifted His disciples to be apostles (church planters), prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers “...for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God” (Eph. 4:11, 12). Therefore teachers must never forget that Jesus came to meet the needs of His disciples; so all those who would follow Him, must do the same and not seek to be served and exalted by others, but to serve them. And if teachers and students are to be like Him, they must share that same attitude in their hearts. When disciples focus on serving others, then the Lord is free to use them. Teachers must first love the Lord with all their hearts, minds, souls and strength and then love their students – those whom God has given them to disciple.

In God’s kingdom, disciple-makers are not just born that way. They must be made by the Holy Spirit with the help, guidance, and direction of other disciples. They are not made by Seminary Schools (Seminary training should never be a substitute for becoming a disciple). Seminary training may be important, but the majority of people who become master disciple-makers like Jesus, do so with persistent effort over a long period of time.

In the kingdom of God success is never a matter of raw talent – for God often gives His children tasks that are over and above their natural abilities to accomplish.

He does so because He wants us to turn to Him and rely upon Him. The disciple will quickly learn that apart from Him they cannot do anything that is of eternal value. **God is not looking for perfect people without any flaws or blemishes; He is looking for people with passion who will dare to do great things for Him.** God is not looking for performers who are only concerned with how good they look in front of class or behind a pulpit; performers are too self-absorbed and afraid of failure to step out in faith and take risks for their Lord (Note Matthew 25:24-26; and Luke 19:20-26). Those who have a passion to use their God-given talents to the best of their ability to serve the Lord and their brothers and sisters in Christ will be used by God because they are risk-takers - disciples who will not bury their talent in the ground out of fear of being punished by their Master if they fail.

Those who learn the lessons of Jesus the Teacher will not fail but will do great things for God. But disciples must never measure greatness in the kingdom of God the way the world measures greatness (1 Sam. 16:7; Luke 21:1, 2). To make disciples requires a heart given totally to the Lord and He alone will judge the success of His disciples.

Questions for Lesson Four

1. The uniqueness of the master-disciple relationship is *Agape*. How does this love work in the teacher-disciple relationship?
2. What were the steps Jesus took to ensure His disciples would learn and apply what He was teaching them?
3. How did Jesus’ teaching methods differ from the typical classroom model of teaching?
4. Jesus was effective as a teacher and discipler. How do pastors, teachers, and other ministry leaders become effective disciple-makers?
5. In God’s kingdom, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in making disciples?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-5 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017

JESUS TAUGHT “FOLLOW ME”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Jesus chose carefully and prayerfully His disciples
 - a. Jesus adjusted up or down the expectations of those who followed Him
- II. Jesus used *agape* love to build positive expectations in His disciples
 - a. Worldly people judge by physical, outward impressions (Projections)
 - b. Jesus disciples are made by personal *relationships*



JESUS CHOSE HIS DISCIPLES CAREFULLY

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. **Matthew 4:18-22**

Jesus knew that He could not possibly spend quality time with the many seekers in the crowds that followed Him. Therefore, He carefully and prayerfully considered those He would choose to personally disciple. "Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer

to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13). It is clear from the Scriptures that there were more than just the twelve named followers or disciples that Jesus chose (Note Luke 10:1; 7:11; 19:39; and Matthew 27:57). And once these twelve disciples were chosen, Jesus would have to question and reevaluate them based upon how they **received what He was teaching**. The situation was always changing as the crowds who followed Jesus would rise and fall and as the opposition increased. Jesus increased the volume and intensity of His teaching as the day of His arrest and crucifixion drew near. However, no matter what the circumstances around them, *Jesus always expected more from His disciples than they themselves believed they were capable of.*

Jesus set a high learning curve for His disciples not to shame them if they failed, but because He always expected the best from those who followed Him. He knew their strengths and weaknesses better than they knew themselves, but Jesus also knew that with the help of the Holy Spirit, they would be capable of achieving far, far more for the kingdom of heaven than they could imagine.

Jesus Adjusted the Expectations of His Followers

Disciple-makers must be mindful of the fact that whether conscious or unconscious, for good or bad, edifying or destructive, all people carry with them certain expectations for just about everything. When someone enters into marriage, or enrolls in a particular college or university, or when someone enters into ministry, they bring with them certain expectations about what their future will be like. When you started this course, you had certain expectations about the author and the subject matter. In the same way, disciplers often have certain expectations for those they are about to teach.

How disappointed or satisfied a person is depends in large part upon how well **their reality** lives up to **their expectations**. People in ministry often experience discouragement and disappointment because they often enter into ministry with very high expectations only to find out that Christian organizations and churches are filled with normal people who don't always behave like saints. Sheep can bite. Teachers ought to spend time carefully adjusting those expectations and bring them down to reality. At the same time, teachers must give their very best to their students and not "dumb down" their lessons for those they consider spiritually beneath them (Jesus corrected any self-superior thinking of His disciples by teaching them that to be great means to be humble like "little children" and to be "the servant of all.")

The story in Luke 7:18-35 demonstrates how Jesus adjusted up or down the expectations of John the Baptist, John's disciples, the multitudes, His own disciples,

and the Pharisees and lawyers. John was in prison awaiting his execution. He had been the very first to recognize Jesus as the coming Messiah. In our study of *This Gospel of the Kingdom* we examined the Jewish expectations of their Messiah and how those expectations affected how people responded to Jesus. This passage from Luke is a perfect example of Jesus adjusting the expectations of others around Him:

- John the Baptist – sends a delegation to Jesus “Are you the Coming One, or shall we look for another...” John was expecting a warrior king Messiah who would deliver the Jews from their oppressors. Jesus encouraged John, but lowered John’s expectations about Him coming to rescue people from their earthly oppressors.
- John’s disciples – “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard...” John’s disciples were confused about Jesus’ identity. Jesus raised their expectations by showing them signs of His divinity that the prophets of old had said would accompany the coming of the Messiah who would save them from spiritual oppression.
- The multitudes – “What did you go out into the wilderness to see?” Jesus raised the expectations of the crowd concerning John the Baptist. The crowds believed that John’s misfortune may have been the result of God’s disfavor. Jesus affirmed John’s greatness and favor of God upon him even though he was arrested and in prison.
- His disciples – “among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist, but he *who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he...*” Jesus turned to His disciples and raised their expectations as disciples of His kingdom.
- The Pharisees and lawyers – rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by John: “To what shall I liken this generation, and what are they like?” Because of their hard hearts and spiritual pride, Jesus had to rebuke them and lower their expectations of their perceived status with God. They refused John’s baptism because they believed they did not need it. Now they were rejecting Jesus as the Messiah because they did not believe they needed Him.

It is unrealistic high expectations that often come from the self-righteous, and the low expectations that come from those who have suffered the defeats from living in this sin stained and fallen world that cause many people to:

- Give up on ministry or leave a church
- Give up on a marriage

- Drop out of school
- And sometimes give up on life itself

If the disciple has not died to the self, the downward spiral of unfulfilled expectations will lead to:

- **Disappointment** (expectation does not meet reality)
- **Discouragement** (neither expectation nor reality changes)
- **Disillusionment** (see the reality, but don’t like it)
- **Despair** (no hope that reality will ever meet your expectations)

If teachers realize that expectations exist in everyone all the time, and if they know the sources of unrealistic and self-centered expectations, then they will be far ahead of the average person. This realization that the expectations everyone has all the time will require disciplers to think through how realistic their student’s expectations are. But they may also have to adjust how realistic their own expectations are for themselves and for their disciples and then adjust those expectations up or down.

Jesus understood that His expectations had a powerful influence in the lives of His disciples. In the hours before His arrest, Jesus spent the time He had left preparing His disciples for what was coming. He spent considerable time filling them with the positive expectations He had for their future. Read John chapters 14 – 17 and note all the verses where Jesus encouraged and lifted up His disciples giving them hope for the future beyond his death. Here are just a few examples:

- “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that will do, that the Father may glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:12-14
- “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me bears much fruit...” John 15:5
- “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full...” John 15:11
- “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.” John 15:16:17

JESUS USED AGAPE TO BUILD POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS

It is true in almost every endeavor in life that positive expectations built into the lives of others produce positive results, and negative expectations produce negative results. It is part of our human nature: people who have been encouraged by parents and teachers to excel; those who have been told “Yes, you can do it!” are more successful in life and accomplish more. On the other hand, those who have had negative expectations built into their lives – who have been told “you’ll never amount to anything” or who are told, “no, you can’t” are less successful and struggle more and accomplish less.

The nature of human expectations means we should use our influence as teachers and preachers to positively impact the lives of others to follow Christ. “The first main element in the transformed social dimension is for individuals to come to see themselves *whole*, as God himself sees them. Such a vision sets them beyond the wounds and limitations they have received in their past relationships to others. It is this vision of oneself from God’s point of view that makes it possible to regard oneself as blessed, no matter what has happened. ‘We are dead,’ Paul tells us, and ‘our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then we will appear with him, glorious’ (Colossians 3:3-4, PAR). We have stepped into a new life where the primary relationship is with Christ and we are assured of a glorious existence forever.” Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, © 2002, p.194

In Mark 7:1-23 Jesus teaches about the effects of the traditions of men (expectations rooted in the past, influencing the present, and impacting the future that can blind us to seeing the best in others):

Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes, came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, **they found fault...** Then the Pharisees and scribes, asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?”

He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men.

Traditions give form or shape to our expectations; not all are negative, but each should be examined for how they impact the growth of the disciple. Where do

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our expectations come from? There are three wrong places and one right place where our expectations come from:

1. **Physical appearance** – some right, some wrong. Physical appearance (race, clothing, general appearance, kind of work, where they live, how much they make, education, etc.) is rarely a good way to determine a person’s character or what they may be capable of achieving under the right circumstances. Jesus was judged by Nathanael because He came from Nazareth. When first informed that Jesus might be the promised Messiah, he responded “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46)
2. **Reputation** – some true, some false. What others say about a person may not always be correct; being concerned about what others think or say about someone is important, but can be prejudiced. A person may have a good reputation in the business community, but that does not always transfer to what makes a good disciple. Judas Iscariot had a good reputation as one of the chosen twelve disciples; it turned out in the end to be false. He also developed a reputation for being dishonest with money, which turned out to be true.
3. **Past performance** – true then, but not necessarily true today. Looking at how a student (or disciple) has done in the past does not mean they will make the same mistakes. People learn from mistakes, and sometimes a person’s record may be influenced by a bad reputation. Note the relationship between Paul and John Mark (Acts 12:25; 13:5, 13; 15:36-41; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). At first Paul allows Mark’s failure to complete the first missionary journey as cause not to take him on the second journey. But as some of Paul’s letters show, eventually Mark showed his worth to Paul and the other Apostles and was embraced by Paul. Mark becomes a close companion of Peter and tradition holds that Peter was the primary source for Mark’s Gospel. Peter even calls Mark “my son” (1 Peter 5:13).

All of these expectations are based upon the **physical, outward impressions** (*Projections*) that people use to judge themselves and others – right or wrong, true or false – these impressions affect how we treat others in the present and will have an effect on the future of that person who we are in a discipleship relationship with. Bob Mumford said it this way: “Projection is using a multitude of actions and religious behavior, seeking to create the impression that we are much more spiritual, advanced, and mature than we really are. We give the impression that we are just waiting to be called on to explain deep biblical complexities and solve perplexing spiritual problems. The difficulty is that once we have created an image based in spiritual unreality, we are forced to create another one to maintain that impression.” *Agape Road*, Destiny Image Pub., Shippensburg, PA, © 2006, p.132

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When the flesh is in control, traditions of men will inevitably lead to a religious spirit of self-righteous *Eros* (self-referential love). Turning to Bob Mumford again; he pointed out that *Eros* left unchecked will become a prison. “Once we give ourselves to the *Eros* process, it closes in on us and the walls become thicker and stronger. An *Eros* prison gets us so turned in upon ourselves that we are in an indefensible position. Unless help comes from the outside, we are unable to set ourselves free because we are trapped within the forces that are turning us in upon ourselves.” (*Agape Road*, p.65). Expectations that come from the wrong places often create barriers or walls between disciples and obstruct the *Life* and *Agape* of the Father flowing into to them and between them.

Jesus Christ taught us that there is a right way to form our expectations for others: **Relationship**. Above all that relationship is a **love relationship**. Anyone who does a study on the word “love” in the Gospels will know how central it is to Jesus’ teachings for His disciples. The Hebrew word for love is *hesed* (heh`- sed); it is equivalent to the Greek *agape*, which is an enduring, unconditional, and persistent love that covers every sin and transgression. *Hesed* is the foundation of the **disciple-to-disciple** relationship; without it, discipleship is at best a superficial relationship that will never lead to lasting transformation in the disciple’s life. “I wonder if *hesed* is becoming harder for people to grasp nowadays. To us, love is dating and romance – a candle-lit restaurant and a sunset walk along the beach. We focus on love in the short term. Our movies tell us that a housewife who dumped her balding, boring husband for a shadowy stranger with a passionate kiss has discovered true love. Is this because lifelong loyalty is becoming so rare? As more and more of us grow up in broken families, are we losing our ability to imagine love that never ends? More and more, Christians even talk about our relationship with God as a romance. We reminisce about the day we accepted Christ, fondly remembering the night we first met. Does that mean that we’re only dating and not married? On my crabby, grumpy days, God’s *hesed* is what I hang on to. For better or worse, he’s stuck with me – no matter what.” Lois Tverberg, *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus: How the Jewish Words of Jesus Can Change Your Life*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, © 2012, pp.50-51

Jesus ignored the external, superficial ways people form their expectations of others; He relied upon His Father to shape His own expectations and His expectations for His disciples. Jesus built His expectations based upon His day in and day out **experiences** with His disciples as He got to know them personally in *Agape* (Note 1 Corinthians 13:4-7). As Jesus got to know His disciples, He came to expect certain behaviors based upon their personality traits. At the same time, He

was able to **expect the best** from them knowing what would happen to them after Pentecost.

Motivated by pure *Agape* for His disciples, Jesus exhorted His disciples **“to love and good works”** where they were strong and rebuked them “in love to obey God’s commandments” where they were weak. But Jesus *never* allowed wrong expectations to determine how He treated people in the present. Maintaining **realistic expectations** causes us to avoid wrong expectations (expectations that are too high or too low) that would adversely affect the futures of those we are discipling. If we are like Jesus, we will do the same as He did and not judge our students based upon the wrong expectations.

Apart from *Agape*, teachers often have **lowered expectations** of their disciples. Possessing lowered expectations of their disciples, disciple-makers will naturally cause their students not to follow by providing them with fewer opportunities to put into practice what they are taught. By teaching them less material and less skillfully, the discipler is holding back the disciple instead of encouraging them to stretch out beyond what they ever thought possible. As noted before, Luke chapter 10: 1-24 is an excellent example of how positive expectations can work.

We can note from Luke 10:1-24 how Jesus avoided the mistakes that teachers with low expectations often make. The following is a list of behaviors of teachers should **avoid** when discipling others.

- **Failing to give specific or positive feedback** concerning the disciple’s public response. Immediately after returning from their mission, Jesus gathered His disciples, heard their responses and praised them for their successes.
- **Paying less attention** to and interacting less frequently with the student. Jesus was with His disciples always. In the disciple-making process, it is important to spend as much time as possible with those you are discipling to develop the positive relationship.
- Interacting with the student more **privately than publicly**. Except in rare instances when it was appropriate to talk to a disciple privately, Jesus taught His disciples openly and together.
- **Engaging in friendly interaction less often**. Jesus treated His disciples as close friends – even family members. There were times when He corrected them, but in the end His interaction with his disciples was as a close, personal friend.
- Smiling less and **limiting physical touch of encouragement**. Jesus maintained a joyful intimacy with His disciples including physical contact with Him.

- **Avoiding eye contact.** Of course we have few specific instances where the Scriptures say Jesus looked someone in the eye, but the few instances that say Jesus did look at someone, it shows that Jesus had no difficulty making eye contact with anyone.
- **Limiting positive nonverbal communication.** The Gospels record numerous incidents where Jesus reflected attentiveness and responsiveness to His disciples. Nonverbal communication includes leaning forward, positive head nodding, and general supportive body language.

After comparing all of the negative behaviors that are the result of low expectations with Jesus' positive behaviors with His disciples and you will find that Jesus interacted with His disciples on the basis of having high expectations for them. Remember that the process at work is *disciples making disciples*. When the disciple dies to the self and allows the life of Christ to flow into them and through them into those they have been called to disciple, the behaviors of low expectations will disappear, and *Agape* will characterize the interactions between the teacher and the students.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” **Romans 5:1-5**

When we read Scriptures like Psalm 62:5-8; 130:5-8; Philippians 4:6-7 and Romans 5:1-5 we see the positive influence faith and hope can have upon the future for disciples. Even if we keep our expectations to ourselves and do not voice them, they can still impact others. Expectations influence **our hopes for the future**. If we expect the best things from God then we have hope; and if we have hope, hope will give us a positive outlook on life and positive expectations for those we teach. Imagine the teacher or pastor who truly believes Phil. 4:13, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” not only for himself but also for the others whom God has given him the responsibility to disciple and mentor. They will instinctively want to teach the finest material they have for the best disciples, expecting superb results.

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Agape is released in the life of a disciple who lives by faith and hope for the future. When the teacher's expectations for their students are rooted in Christ, they cannot help but have a positive effect that will motivate followers of Jesus to a higher level of performance and service by the power of the Holy Spirit. “True, Bible-based expectancy is a vital part of our journey toward intimacy. We are instructed to continue in childlike anticipation (see Matt. 18:3), looking for all God has intended for those who love Him. As a result of knowing His goodness, we can look forward to all the Father is wanting to reveal... We must not permit expectancy to be lost (see Heb. 9:28), even when that which was expected has been injured by human failure or disappointing circumstances.” Bob Mumford (*Agape Road*, p.136)

Peter was one disciple that Jesus had to work hard with in the area of expectations. It seemed as though Peter's expectations were either too high or too low most of the time. But Jesus the Master Teacher knew how to impart knowledge in such a way as to not impair Peter's or any of His other disciples' progress. By not allowing those expectations to remain too high or too low for long, Jesus brought out the best in His disciples.

The most dramatic shift of expectations in Peter came near the very end of Jesus' earthly ministry (Mark 14:27-31 describes the scene.) Jesus said, “One of you will betray Me.” Then He says, that according to the Scripture, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me...” But Peter refuses to accept this and says, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.” Jesus patiently lowers Peter's expectations and says to him that before the night is over “you will deny Me three times.” Peter, full of pride, says even more determined than before, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”

Blinded by an inflated belief in his ability to stand in the most severe test of faith, Peter cannot see that at that very moment He was denying Jesus and arguing against His will and the Word of His Father planned from eternity. Before the night is over, Peter denies Jesus three times, just as Jesus said he would. Later after the resurrection, Peter's expectations are now too low; his self-confidence has been shattered. John 21:15-19 tells the story of how Jesus restores Peter and reveals to him that when the time comes, Peter will be able die for Jesus; but in the meantime, He must fulfill His commission and feed Jesus' lambs.

If we are to be master teachers like Jesus, it is important that we do not set our expectations for others – or ourselves – **too high or too low for too long**. If we do, it will only impair our students' progress. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth who reveals to us who we truly are in Christ. *Agape* enables us to make an honest assessment of where we are on our Spiritual journey. The Lord's desire is for His disciples to progress in a slow, steady, and upward movement towards intimacy with Him – an intimacy that was lost in The Fall but finds its restoration in Christ.

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Ultimately, the power Jesus had to make men His disciples was His love for them. “And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one; I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me... And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:22, 23... 26).

If we are to teach others as Jesus taught, and empower others to be His disciples, then love must be our *only* motivation to blossom them. Teachers must unselfishly instill all the knowledge necessary to help everyone grow into everything God wants them to become. The teachers and leaders in the church who are most effective are those who truly believe in you and who will encourage you in a meaningful and life-changing way. Look back on your life; probably those teachers who had the greatest influence in your life were those who helped you stand taller in Christ and run the race of faith with endurance. They are the ones who believed in you and helped you to believe in yourself. The teachers who teach the best are those who teach that with Christ in you, you can reach full maturity in Christ. They are the teachers who loved you when perhaps you did not love yourself and shared their expectations for you in Christ because, as 1 Corinthians 13 teaches, love “hopes all things...”

Questions for Lesson Five

1. Why did Jesus set a high learning curve for His disciples?
2. Why is it important for disciplers to constantly adjust the expectations of their disciples?
3. What are the sources of unrealistic expectations?
4. How do Christlike disciple-makers keep their expectations of their students from being too low?
5. What is the negative effect on disciples when we set our expectations of them too high or too low?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-6

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017

JESUS TAUGHT “BE TRANSFORMED”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Transformation in the character and conduct of the disciple
- II. Teaching for Information and Application



TRANSFORMATION IN THE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF THE DISCIPLE

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” **Luke 6:40**

The Apostle Paul had the correct mindset for making disciples. Like Jesus, Paul taught that his instructions for his disciples were not just for their information, but it was intended to be for their transformation into **being like Christ**. He wrote to his disciple, Timothy that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Word of God is the resource for disciples to make disciples; it is given by God and inspired by the Holy Spirit; it is the standard by which we measure all life and learning. Biblical truth is the primary source of the content that we use to make disciples. Biblical truth is the basis for all *life-change* that the Holy Spirit brings.

There is a method of applying the Bible in such a way that it will achieve the goal of *life-change* in the character and conduct of the disciple. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

indicates that the transformation in character and conduct of the disciple comes in two regards: ***belief*** and ***behavior***.

- ***In Doctrine*** – What a Christian ought to ***believe*** is expressed in the form of doctrines that are derived from the ***Word of God***. The Word of God corrects false teaching. It keeps the disciple's faith in God on the straight and narrow way by setting things in order spiritually and bringing correction wherever there is error.
- ***In Instruction*** – How a Christian ought to ***behave*** is also expressed in the Word of God. Following the instructions in the Word of God brings transformation in regard to behavior. The Word of God is for instruction in ***righteousness*** and guides believers in the ways of God. Biblical teaching includes cultivation of the mind through education, morals, Christian ethics, and encouragement. God's Word is also essential to bring reproof (rebuke) to convince a disciple of the error of his way and setting him back on the right path.

The Word of God is used to ***equip the disciple*** for more effective service for the Lord. Grounding in God's Word is primary for ministry because neither social works or the ministries of signs and miracles are no guarantee of the necessary transformation in ***the character*** (who I am in Christ) and ***conduct*** (what I do in Christ) of the disciple.

It cannot be over emphasized: the purpose of discipleship is *life-change*. Teaching the Word of God is not an end in itself but is *means to an end* – the end being transformation not just the transfer of information. The end result of everything the disciple does is to become a mature man or woman of God, which is expressed as being Christlike. It is too easy to lose sight of this truth and end up turning disciple-making into another church program or Sunday school teaching that stresses behavior modification over genuine life-change. When Bible study, preaching, and teaching become ends in themselves that is when Christians start to become restless and disillusioned with church. Some just drift away; others are in church in body, but their hearts are elsewhere; and still others end up seeking supernatural experiences – even at the expense of being led into the deception by false prophets, teachers, and wonder-workers. The application of these principles of making disciples like Jesus will help to keep the teacher and the students on the right track, which will lead to greater intimacy and abiding in Christ.

In the end, both the discipler and the one being disciplined will see that it is the Holy Spirit who does the *making*; the teacher is at best only a Trailblazer – someone who has gone on ahead of the others and is showing the way.

TEACHING FOR INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

Matthew 25:14-30 records Jesus' parable of the talents. We should all know it by heart. What happens when a disciple fails to invest what the Lord has given? Why was the Master so upset? Imagine what it would be like if someone bought a brand-new automobile with cash money that was given to them, but they never drove it out of the showroom. As the car sat in the showroom day after day and week after week with a "Sold" sign on it, everyone who saw the vehicle sitting there would wonder when is the owner ever going to come and drive it away? Eventually, the owner of the automobile dealership is going to get upset because the sold vehicle is taking up valuable space in his showroom that he could use to sell more cars to other customers. Passersby who saw the sold vehicle and who could not afford to buy a new car, might wonder, "If the person who bought that car does not want to drive it, maybe they will let me have it because I could use a nice new car to drive."

Do you see the point? Our Master is like that man traveling to a far country. We are His disciples – his servants – who have been given "goods" to invest to advance His kingdom. When we do not apply what has been given to produce transformation in ourselves and in others then we are like the servant who buried his master's talent in the ground (clay) which represents the flesh. The whole purpose of the Talents was not to spend on themselves but to invest and increase the wealth of the owner. The purpose of the automobile is not to sit in a showroom and look good, but for the owner to use it to transport them from place to place. The real value of the automobile is in the ***application*** of its engine and all of its moving parts, not just to have an automobile for the sake of having an automobile.

One of the biggest problems with teachers and preachers today is that we often get so focused on our content that we forget the purpose of content is *life-change*. That is a big reason why so many people walk out of the church after hearing a nice sermon on Sunday morning the same way they walked into church. When a teacher or preacher just loves to show off their content – their "5 Keys," their "3 Point Sermons," or their "7 Guidelines" or "7 Laws" all neatly wrapped up before their audience starts to get bored and lose interest, transformation will not happen. Failing to teach or preach for *transformation* will leave those who attend church unable to grasp the connection between *content* and *application*. Sermons that become ends in themselves will never help the listeners reach maturity in Christ and produce fruit for the kingdom of God.

Seminary schools may turn out preachers who know how to impress large congregations with sermons using:

- Interesting poetic outlines (alliterated or acrostic)
- Clever illustrations
- Profound points and sub-points to impress others with their knowledge of the Bible

But it's all useless if there is no connection between what they teach and preach and the way those they teach and preach actually live. A good preacher is able to emotionally move members of the congregation on Sunday mornings; they may even get a good response to their altar calls, but as the days and weeks pass, if there is no real lasting change in the character and lifestyles of the people filling the pews on Sunday mornings than it is all a wasted exercise.

When we look within the Sunday schools and in front of the pulpits in churches across America for example, we see the same problems affecting the church that affect the unchurched all around them: drug and alcohol abuse, sexual immorality, divorce, rebellious children, eating disorders, misplaced priorities, family problems, unforgiveness, gossip, adultery etc. Statistics show that there is not much difference between the average church congregation and the general population. Why?

What we are preaching and teaching may sound good; and we may know how to get a congregation revved up every Sunday morning, but the truth is none of it seems to be getting us anywhere. Sunday morning church becomes more "show time" than solid teaching for *life-change*. Imagine what would happen if one Sunday morning the whole congregation actually went out and ministered to the poor, homeless, shut-ins, and laid hands on and prayed for the sick in hospitals around them instead of just hearing a sermon on how Jesus and His disciples did those things and then going to eat lunch at a nice restaurant or running home to catch the big sporting event on TV forgetting all about those Jesus cares for?

So then, what's the answer? The answer is to have the correct mindset about the *purpose* of our teaching and preaching. The answer is to have the same mindset that Jesus the Master Teacher had when He taught His disciples. Jesus made His mindset perfectly clear when He closed His Sermon on the Mount with the Parable of the Two Houses (Matthew 7:24-27):

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, **and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and **does not do them**, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

The correct mindset for the preacher and teacher is to teach not merely the content but teach for the *application of that content*. "In order to teach someone else how to pray, we need to know how to pray. In order to help someone else learn how to study the Bible, we need to be active in studying the Bible. But this is the beauty of making disciples. When we take responsibility for helping others grow in Christ, it automatically takes our own relationship with Christ to a new level." (David Platt, *Radical*, pp. 100-101) Applying this concept to the "Parable of the Talents": the *talents are content* – the material; it is the information and knowledge we impart to others. The *application is how they invest* those talents – how the content is supposed to be used to produce faith and good works in the lives of those we teach (The book of James is all about this). Content is the "What" and application is the "What for". Ultimately, the "What for" is "transformation into Christlikeness" through *Agape*.

As a teacher, Jesus was not only concerned about the content, but He was equally concerned about the *application* of that content to lives of those who heard His sermons. Jesus knew the future of the church depended upon His disciples going and making other disciples by teaching to "observe" (to carry out or comply with) everything He taught them. Teaching to observe (obey) means teaching for *life-change*; and those who were taught by His disciples must go out and teach the same way.

Although it is true that Jesus loves us no matter what, and that our salvation is by faith through grace and not by works, anyone who has read Jesus' parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46) must come to the inescapable conclusion that there is more to our salvation than a cruise ship to glory. In the end, our life will be judged upon what we *did* with the salvation that was so graciously given to us. As James succinctly put it "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." (James 2:18_b)

When you and I stand before the Lord to give an accounting for our lives, do you believe the Lord is going to give a Bible quiz to see how much we know? Will He test our knowledge of theology? Ask us to explain the doctrine of the Trinity? Will He ask us how much water was used when we were baptized or the exact words used? Or will He ask us who we ministered to in *Agape* in His name?

Immediately after the Parable of the Talents, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. And the judgment came on the basis of what they did or did not do; not what they did or did not know.

Why is it that we spend so much of our time in the church teaching and preaching about salvation *from* sins to those that are *already* saved from sins? Why is so much content focused on our religious doctrines – the “dos and do nots” of Christian religion – and preaching “feel good” messages intended to build believers’ self-esteem but not Christlike behavior? Why are so few of the resources of the church spent on making disciples like Jesus? In the end, most of what Christians preach will not matter; what will matter is how Christians lived.

“Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.’” **Luke 14:25-27**

To teach only to inform is to teach in direct opposition of the way Jesus taught. Jesus did not simply teach the facts, but He taught others how to change their lives based upon those facts. “Pursuing Jesus is your choice and Jesus wants to make it clear what you’re agreeing to if you respond to his invitation. He will settle for nothing less than to be the great love and pursuit of your life. That’s what he wants. At church, we sometimes talk about how ‘God wants your time,’ or ‘God wants your money,’ or God wants your worship.’ But do you understand why we talk about those things... The reason we talk about those things is not because God needs or wants those things; it’s because he wants you. He wants your love. He longs for you to passionately pursue him, and those things are *come after* indicators. They are outer signs that point to an inner reality that you love Jesus more than anything else.” Kyle Idleman, *Not A Fan*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, © 2011, p.136

The **content teacher** thinks his responsibility is to cover and explain the facts. The **application teacher** thinks his responsibility is to teach in such a way that the content will be applied for lasting *life-change* in his students. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus includes as part of the Great Commission “... teaching them to observe [do, or obey] all things I have commanded you.” Our Master was clear: if we are to be the disciple-makers He commanded us to be, then we must teach our disciples to “observe, do, and obey” – in other words, *apply* everything He said. Paul understood this, and wrote, “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:28). Teachers in the first century and teachers in this century who follow in the footsteps of their Master Teacher teach their disciples for *transformation* into the character and conduct of Christ.

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There is no set formula which tells you how much of what you are teaching should be content and how much should be application. Certainly a Bible college professor will lean towards content, but a pulpit preacher should lean towards application. But no matter whom we are teaching, if we teach for *life-change* it must have a **balance of application and information**.

Jesus was the Master when it came to *application*. His Sermon on the Mount was two thirds application; and His final discourse with His disciples in the Upper Room (John 13-17) was overwhelmingly application. Paul’s letters flowed back and forth between content and application, and like Jesus’ sermons, his content always provides the basis for application. The heart of Jesus the teacher was always to lead His disciples to apply everything they were taught. “Two thousand years later, I wonder how far we have wandered from this path. Somewhere along the way, amid varying cultural tides and popular church trends, it seems that we have minimized Jesus’ summons to total abandonment. Churches are filled with supposed Christians who seem content to have casual association with Christ while giving nominal adherence to Christianity. Scores of men, women, and children have been told that becoming a follower of Jesus simply involves acknowledging certain facts or saying certain words. But this is not true. Disciples like Peter, Andrew, James, John... show us that the call to follow Jesus is not simply an invitation to pray a prayer; it’s a summons to lose our lives.” David Platt, *Follow Me*, pp.3-4

God gave the Bible for **obedience**. When we actually obey what the Scriptures teach it leads to *transformation*. Again, disciplers are responsible to teach the Bible in such a way that it produces *Christlike character* in the lives of those they teach.

Deuteronomy 11:18-25 is the Master’s stroke of the pen on how to teach for transformation. The Children of Israel were at a critical junction in their history; they were on the threshold of the Promised Land. Still many trials and temptations were ahead of them. How would the nation survive surrounded by so many idols and false religions?

When God first called the children of Israel together to be His people and to follow Him to the land He promised would be theirs, He gave them certain things that would unite them and hold them together as a unique people on the earth.

- Separation (ethnic and within families)
- Circumcision
- Sufferings in Egypt
- Promise of Land
- Promise that they would become a Great Nation
- The Mosaic Law
- Memorial Feasts
- The Tabernacle and its Priestly Services

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All of these things were more than symbols to represent their hopes and dreams for the future; they were given by the Lord as living lessons. God gave His people constant reminders of who they were called to be. But God knew it would all be for nothing if the signs of His covenant with His people and the life lessons they learned were not handed down from generation to generation. It is for this reason that the Lord made *application for life-change* an integral part the religious instruction for His people:

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.” **Deuteronomy 11:18-21**

This passage from Deuteronomy illustrates for the people of God (which includes His church) how religious instruction was and is meant to be much more than sharing information. Alex Jones, the creator of Hallow, the biggest Christian prayer app of all time said in a recent interview that “Growing up, everybody I knew went to church, but nobody believed.”

It is God’s design for His word to be taught in such a way that it relates His Word to everyday life. If parents and teachers are not the living example of the word of God in action in the home, their children will grow up believing that it is normal to have a disconnect between what the word of God says and how Christians live their lives. God forbid, this should ever be, but it happens all too often that children who are raised in the church never see the reality of what they have been taught, lived out on a daily basis in the home.

Children of Christian parents do not need to be told that their parents are not perfect (neither are those who are called to make disciples). The Christian life is not about living a life of perfect sainthood; it is about living a lifestyle of redemption, reconciliation and most of all, forgiveness, as we are all on this journey of *Agape* together. It is a journey of finding God’s forgiveness for us and expressing that forgiveness to others in such a way that they will be drawn into the way of kingdom discipleship with us. It’s about learning how to live out God’s commandment to love Him above all others, and others above our selves so that He will *make* us who we

were created to be. As Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commands.” (John 14:15-24).

Jesus invited “all... anyone... whosoever” that would meet His unconditional terms of discipleship to follow Him. Disciples of Jesus come from all different walks of life; they are every age group, race and culture. To be effective, teachers must address the specific needs for the age group and the type of group they are teaching. Children, youth, and married adults with families all have different issues in life. Applications that best influence eternal *life-change* are the ones that are focused most precisely on the greatest point of need in the student’s life and how developing Christlike character answers that need.

When Jesus finished His sermon on the Mount people were amazed at His teaching, for “He taught as one having authority” (Matt. 7:29). Certainly, as Son of God, Jesus had the authority within Himself as the “living Word” to say whatever He wanted. But as Son of Man, He came as a servant and subjected Himself to the Father’s authority: “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner... I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” (John 5:19 & 30).

One of the greatest challenges the teacher faces today is the lack of biblical knowledge in the church. This lack of knowledge is primarily driven by a lack of interest fed by unrelenting attacks upon the authority, accuracy, and relevance of the Scriptures for modern Christians. Whole movements have sprung up in the church today that appeal to a younger generation taught to value personal experience over the written Word of God. Western culture is now driven by rapidly changing visual images of a mass entertainment media that has debased the written Word of God to meaningless words that can be interpreted however the viewer sees them. What an individual thinks or feels about the Scriptures is filtered through a postmodern paradigm that rhetorically asks, “Who says... Who knows... and who cares?” In churches designed to appeal to the postmodern generations, the Word of God is used as mere “window dressing” on sermons that are more about being part of a great experiential, participatory, dynamic community of worshipers than it is about making disciples who rooted and grounded in the biblical teachings of Jesus Christ.

What gave power and authority to Jesus’ teachings was that He operated within the power granted to Him from His Father as the *Word* made flesh (“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14).

In order for our applications to have maximum impact, they must have the authority of the Bible – the Word of God behind them. It is the Spirit of God (the living Word) who breathes life into the written word, the Bible. The teacher who

possesses *Agape* possesses the *logos* (Gr. **λόγος** or "the expression of thought," embodying a conception, idea, saying, or statement by God). "For the word [*logos*] of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12). And the teacher who possesses *agape* also has *rhēma* of God (Gr. **ῥῆμα** – that which is spoken, or what is stated in speech or writing; a statement, command, or instruction.) "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11:3).

A well-trained and experienced speaker can move an audience with his words; he can use the greatest illustrations; tell the best jokes that will make his people laugh, or he can move them to tears. But unless that teacher or preacher leads his audience to an encounter with the *living* Word of God, then they have spoken their own message, but not God's. Unless those we teach or preach to on Sunday mornings are filled with the Holy Spirit, they cannot make a direct connection with the "**living Word**" contained in the biblical verses themselves. Those who teach or preach must not only know what the Bible commands, but must also communicate what the Bible clearly commands His followers to do or else *transformation* into Christlike character will not take place.

The principle of Kingdom Discipleship discovered in this maxim of teaching for *life-change* is that only ***disciples make disciples***. Another way of expressing this principle found in nature and in the kingdom is called ***reproduction after kind***. Jesus the Master teacher was the intermediary of the message He delivered. He stands between the Lord and the people in eternity as the living link between the Word of God and the people of God. Applications are most effective not only when the student hears from the Lord, but also when he hears through a teacher who has already been impacted by the truth he is teaching.

A teacher who is like Jesus is the ***intermediary of the message***. He stands between the Lord and his students. He is the delivery mechanism for His word that the Lord gave to the church. The teacher of God is the living link between the Word of God and the people of God. A Christian who is in sin and disobedience to the Lord cannot hear clearly from the Lord. And if the one teaching cannot hear clearly from the Lord, they cannot clearly communicate His word to the people. Therefore, the more Christlike our Character and conduct, the clearer His message spoken through His chosen vessel will become.

Because Christ taught to change lives it means that our teaching must appeal to more than just the mind, or emotions, but must appeal to the whole person. Christ sent the Holy Spirit in His name not only to empower us to do all things through

Christ, but also to become like Him. As we follow in His footsteps, He slowly transforms us into His image and likeness, touching us that we might touch the lives of our students, inspiring them to press on with us towards the goal of becoming like Him. This is a very high calling and a demanding road to follow, which is why so few choose it. Teaching disciples is unlike teaching anything else in the world because it requires the highest quality of character, conduct, communication, and personal transformation from both the teacher and the student.

Do you practice what you preach, or do you just like to preach? Unchristian character in the teacher can dull the impact of the application if the class doesn't sense the integrity of the teacher. Do you only lecture *about* the truth, or do you *live* the truth and then lecture about the truth? If the personal conduct of the communicator is sinful and carnal it can block the truth of the Bible coming from that teacher. A teacher's character and conduct can be excellent, but poor communication skills of the teacher or preacher can detract from the message. In disciple-making, the degree of change in the communicator due to his obedience to the word either limits or liberates the truth in the hearts of the hearers. Anyone who sets out to make disciples should share Paul's mindset when he said, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed." (Romans 15:18).

The teacher who follows Jesus the Master Teacher must realize that although *what* and *how* of the lesson are important, the ***character of the person*** presenting the lesson is of ultimate importance if that message is going to have any real impact. Making disciples by teaching them to observe the commands of our Lord and Savior is the highest and by far the most difficult calling any Christian can undertake. Before teaching anything, the teacher must ask the Lord to apply to their own life the specific truth they are going to teach. Invariably, the Lord will test what has been taught before, during, or after it is presented. Before teaching anything, it is best to ask God to make it real to you.

One effective way to make it real is to ***prayerfully prepare*** your lessons during the whole week before you teach. God does not make truth miraculously real during our sleep Saturday night. I know there are numerous preachers who preach extemporaneously, but even so, they must give the Lord ample time to work in them and to work through them to make what they preach a part of them before they preach it. Before teaching a formal lesson or Bible study, a good question to ask is, "Lord, what are you going to teach me this week that I can share with your people next Sunday?" As the teacher studies and labors over a topic, passage, or book of the Bible, they must ask the Holy Spirit to teach me and make notes, which turn into paragraphs, which turn into chapters and then into books.

Discipling others requires that we communicate the applications the Lord has taught from the Bible with our entire mind, will and emotions. The content comes from the Scripture, but the communication comes through your life of experience walking with the Lord. Disciple-makers need to make sure that they communicate with passion and fervency what they have learned from the Scriptures through the living process of abiding with the Lord in, by, and through His Holy Spirit.

Jesus faced a similar challenge with the religious leaders of His day. “You search the Scriptures because in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life” (John 5:39, 40).

The Jews failed to realize that the Scriptures were intended to lead them into a relationship with the living God. This was not new to Jesus’ generation. Isaiah prophesied centuries before Christ and rebuked Israel, saying, “Therefore the LORD said: ‘Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men...’” (Isaiah 29:13). Christians make the same mistake when they fail to realize that Christianity is a relationship with the living God through the living Person, Jesus Christ. This does not absolve the Christian from living a holy and righteous life, but what it means is that living a holy and righteous life is not the way *to* God... it is the *proof* of the presence of God in the heart of the believer. Without *Agape*, “holiness” is motivated by *Eros*, the self-referential love that turns inward. Righteousness turns into self-righteousness, and obedience becomes a burden for some and a source of pride for others.

The task of the teacher is to direct the student to become like Jesus. To do this, the teacher must first lead the students away from studying *about* God to *knowing* God; second, and complimentary to knowing God, the teacher must change the focus of the student from the Bible as dead word (text to be studied, learned, and memorized as history and literature) to the Bible as *living word* (inspired Word of God that speaks to mankind in general and to the disciple personally).

Whether it is in the Sunday service or the classroom, the goal of the teacher is to lead the student to meet the Lord in new and fresh ways through the written and living Word (Jeremiah 31:33-34).

Making disciples, teaching the Word of God, and preaching the Gospel are the highest callings in the world. We need to pray and ask God that we might be men and women who will not settle for anything less than the fullest blessing of the Lord in our lives and on our ministries of making disciples.

Questions for Lesson Six

1. Why is the Word of God the most important resource for disciples to make disciples?
2. The purpose of discipleship is *life-change* (to be like Jesus). How does teaching for application of content help produce life-change in the disciple?
3. What is the effect of the lack of biblical knowledge in the church?
4. Why can only disciples make disciples?
5. How does the *character of the person* presenting the lesson affect the impact of that lesson on the students?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-7 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn, 2017

JESUS TAUGHT “REMEMBER ME”

Lesson Outline for the Students



I. Jesus Taught Only the Essentials

II. Jesus Taught That it is The Teacher’s Responsibility to Make His Disciples Learn

III. Jesus Taught His Disciples to Equip Them for Making Disciples

JESUS TAUGHT ONLY THE ESSENTIALS

“But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.” **John 16:4**

John closed his Gospel with these words: “And there are also many other things that Jesus did which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” Jesus had a limited time upon this earth to teach His disciples everything they needed to know to preserve and propagate His teachings. He had only three years to disciple them. That means He would have to teach His disciples to master what was **absolutely necessary** and **remember the essentials** of what He taught before He departed for His heavenly throne. If Jesus had tried to teach His disciples everything that He knew, or had tried to make them retain everything He did and said, then the essential core of what He came to teach them would have been lost in the volumes that would have to be written to record it all.

Jesus was the Master Teacher who knew the art and science of how to teach His disciples the most information in the shortest time with the least effort for His disciples, and for the greatest impact. If we follow His example, we will be:

- **Effective** – teaching the Word of God
- **Efficient** – teaching the Word of God in the right manner

All great spiritual teachers have two foundations:

1. **Loving God** (Knowing Him personally)
2. **And knowing the Word of God** (What He Said)

You cannot be a great preacher or a great Bible teacher and neglect either one. Therefore, before you set out to disciple others, **Love God** and **Know the Word**.

Transferring the Word of God that is in your heart into your students’ hearts is the next step, and that is where the skill of the teacher comes into focus. Jesus used every means necessary to teach His disciples in such a way that they would remember the essentials. The world was His classroom, and He used:

- **Examples** from nature
- **The people** around Him
- **Parables, sermons and stories**
- **Miracles**
- **The religious signs**, and rituals of the Jews

He used everything at His disposal to cause His disciples to learn quickly and remember all they had learned; when Jesus was asked “Teacher, which is the greatest Commandment of the Law?” He answered them, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” (Matthew 22:37). Jesus was actually quoting from Deuteronomy 6:4-9. This had special significance for the Jews for in those verses God outlined for them how to retain the essential elements of their calling as God’s chosen people. “*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*”

- “**Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One**” immediately engages them and involves them: “Listen up, people! This is important!” What is

important is that the God they serve is unlike any other god or goddess in the world; the God of Israel is the One, eternal, *Yahweh*.

- **“You shall love the Lord... with all your heart, soul, strength... And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart”** made it clear that receiving God’s instruction and obeying it is only possible when we are in a love relationship with the Father. As Jesus said, “If you love me you will keep my word...” (John 14:21) and “If you keep my commandments you will abide in My love [*Agape*] ...” (John 15:9). And this should be the pattern and motivation for our instruction for our students: to teach them first to love the Lord with all their heart, soul and strength so that they might be able to keep His commandments and thereby abide in His love. Abiding in His love is the only way disciples might become all they are called to be.
- **“You shall teach them diligently to your children... and talk to them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and rise up...”** Instruction in the Word is not intended to be a Sunday morning event. Parents and teachers must be engaged and involved in teaching their children and students to see God in every aspect of life, and not just those events that are church related. This is the same pattern for how Jesus taught His disciples to remember. As he moved from town to town, in the country, in the fields, in the mountains, and across rivers and lakes everything became a teaching opportunity for Jesus.

Parents, teachers, pastors – all disciplers – ought to be aware of these teaching moments – even in the simple act of giving thanks for the food we eat, or thanking God for a beautiful sunset, or the melody of a bird’s song. Anything can be used as a teaching moment when we are tuned into God’s Spirit. Even the difficult struggles in life and our failures or the disappointments that come our way can be used to teach others of God’s faithfulness, even when we are not. This is what it means to make our teaching life-oriented and not just information oriented. It is the difference between effective teaching that will stand the tests and trials of life and those teachings that will collapse in the face of trouble, disappointments and opposition. Teaching to remember is what produces genuine *transformation* because no matter what the circumstances, the essential words of Jesus will come to mind. Jesus made sure of that by promising the Holy Spirit would come and help them (John 16:1-15).

- **“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.”** To this day the Jews still do this by their practice of wearing a Phylactery or Frontlet. Jesus criticized the Pharisees for making a

public spectacle out of wearing their phylacteries. And that criticism should extend to anyone who makes a public show of their faith in order to be seen and praised by men.



The Phylactery or Frontlet – were strips of parchment on which were written four passages of Scripture: Ex. 13:2-10, 11-17; Deut. 6:4-9; 13-23. They were rolled up in a case of black calfskin, which was attached to a stiffer piece of leather, having a thong one finger broad and one and a half cubits long. One was placed at the bend of the left arm and another one was worn on the forehead. Most of the Jewish males wore them during prayer, but the Pharisees made an exception and wore them all the time.

Children can spot insincerity and religious hypocrisy when it is in the home. Wearing God’s word on the forehead and on the arm was intended to be a visual reminder to the people that their very thoughts and the way they conduct their life should be influenced by God’s word. It was a constant reminder of the fact that our very thoughts and actions should be without hypocrisy – sincerely guided by the word of God. This is what Paul meant when He said “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:1, 2

- **“You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”** The responsibility for teaching your children to love God and to follow His commandments begins and ends at the home. Note that Jesus called His disciples “family” and He was often staying in one of their homes. If the



disciples fail to follow in the footsteps of God, it is not the church or the Christian schools, or society that are to blame. Eternal truths are most effectively learned in the loving environment of a God-fearing home or in those intimate times of fellowship between the teachers and their disciples. Even to this day many Jewish homes have a small *Mezuzah* scroll mounted on the doorpost, designating the home as Jewish and reminding them of their connection to God and their Jewish heritage. Its presence reminds Jews to infuse their daily doings with holiness and good deeds. Christians often hang Scriptures on their walls in their homes as a similar gesture.

Here then is the starting point for all we teach or desire to learn as Kingdom Disciples: *Love God* (Who He Is) and *Have His Words in Our Heart* (What He Said). Our role as preachers and teachers of God's word is to effectively transfer our love for the Lord and our knowledge of His word to our students in a way they will remember them. Teaching the Word of God efficiently instills the right motivation to know Him and obey His word.

When Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is applied to the principle of teaching the essentials and mastering them, we see how it is done in a modern setting:

1. **Teach.** *“Teach them diligently to your children...”*
Formal teaching of God's word is a part of discipling; it is done in any kind of formal setting: school, church, home Bible study, etc.
2. **Talk.** *“...of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up...”* Talking is less formal, more fluid, and conversational. This is what takes place between the classes or worship services in times of fellowship over “coffee and conversation” or meeting for an informal lunch or dinner.
3. **Personal Reminder.** *“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes...”* This is represented by any *nonverbal* method of teaching. Something we wear or do, or an object on our desk or a picture hanging on the wall can function as a sign to others. (For examples: Jesus gave all disciples everywhere the greatest signs of His salvation by the sign of the cross and through the Communion bread and wine. And we use the rite of water baptism as an outward sign of our new life in Christ).
4. **Public Recognition.** *“You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”* Writing God's word involves taking an active stance to make sure the content is legible, understandable, and visible. Writing the message redirects the message to others; it is not only for you but it transfers the content from your heart to their hearts. When content is publicly displayed, it continues as a reviewing factor for all who see or hear its message. These teaching inscriptions are to be specifically placed on your “house and on your gates” which are the two most used locations of life, but they can be placed anywhere – even on a business card – or on your automobile.

The *progression* is from the interior (private) of one's life to the exterior (public); or from the formal to less formal. The essence of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is that the heart of our beliefs and values, as contained in the Scriptures, must be passed on (taught) to the next generation of disciples. Jesus the Master Teacher demonstrated

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that this transference is to be accomplished through everything we say, do, and represent. All these things flow out of our character and shape us inwardly and outwardly to stand for Christ in the world around us.

JESUS TAUGHT THAT IT IS THE TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE HIS DISCIPLES LEARN

There are a number of principles master teachers use to help their students learn the essentials of the subject they are teaching. These principles are easily adapted and used in the process of teaching disciples what is *necessary* for *life-change* in a way that is easily remembered. But before going into detail on what those principles are, it is important for the discipler to understand that it is the **teacher's responsibility** to teach in such a way that their disciples understand it and remember. Teachers in colleges and universities often pour out facts and figures, hurrying to get through the class syllabus (lesson plan). Students frantically write page after page of notes just to keep up with the content the teacher is dumping onto them without regard to whether or not they are actually learning anything. Later that night the student begins to study their notes and try to sort out what part of the lesson they think they will be tested on. That is not teaching; if the student learns anything at all, they will have to learn it on their own. **That is NOT the way Jesus the Master Teacher taught His disciples!**

Jesus understood that the measure of his success was in the success of His disciples' *becoming* like Him. He skillfully put what they must learn into their minds in such a way that it would be locked in place. As His disciples went out into the world, they would retain the lessons He taught. As they went out, the Holy Spirit would empower them and continue to reveal wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to them. Part of our responsibility as teachers is to cause our students to learn their part in taking the responsibility to learn. Regardless of the quality of the teaching they may have received or whether or not they were properly disciplined or mentored by others, none of it will be of any use if the disciple is not willing or not wanting to receive. Even if the quality of the teaching was poor or if they were not mentored, if they are wanting and willing to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, they still have the Holy Spirit to teach them all things and bring to remembrance everything Jesus wants them to know. Discipleship in the kingdom is a two-way street: the teacher takes responsibility to disciple and controls the flow of knowledge, but the students must take the responsibility as a disciple of Jesus Christ to learn all that is necessary to bring them to full maturity.

It is a simple fact that the ***retention of truths is effective only after they are understood.*** Teachers of secular subjects are rarely amazed by how many times they

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meet students studying for their class that have no idea what they are learning or why. All they want to know is what is required to pass the next test. And once the test is behind them almost all they studied will quickly be forgotten. Jesus the Master Teacher realized that **retention** of information was much more effective when His disciples fully understood what He was teaching them and immediately put it to use. This is why Jesus would often turn to His disciples and say, “Do you understand?” And if He perceived they did not, He would take the time to explain it to them thoroughly. In modern public schools where mass teaching takes place, the way of learning by memorization is often used in place of learning from the heart. Therefore, even in “Christian discipleship classes” new Christians are taught about the Bible and church doctrines by memorization, which is often mistaken for understanding what their salvation is all about. Jesus never had to encourage His disciples to memorize His words because He knew that **understanding must always precede memorization**. Memorization can be an *aid* or *tool* to retain that which has been understood, but it should never be accepted in place of true learning from the heart.

Master teachers like Jesus know that *Retention increases as the disciple recognizes the content's relevance*. Jesus knew His disciples would learn faster and deeper according to the degree they felt His teachings were important and relevant to them in the present and the future (John 5:24; Mark 13:31; John 6:63)

Where your students' treasure is, there is where their hearts will be also. Learning will plummet if the student cannot see how the information being presented to them has any practical value to their lives. It plummets even farther if the teacher can't see it either! If you as the preacher cannot point out the relevance of what you are teaching your congregation then you can be almost certain you will develop an apathetic church. Make the material live not just in your mind, but in the hearts and minds of those you are presenting it to.

- **CONTENT** awakens the student's attention, but only to the degree they are interested in the subject.
- **RELEVANCE** develops motivation and concentration; once the importance of the subject is understood, the students' interest in the subject increases dramatically.
- **DELIVERY** captures and holds the attention of interested students.

Master teachers communicate the **relevance** of their subject by building the need and relating the subject to real life situations the students are likely to face. Teachers who are most successful can keep the interest and concentration of their disciples through varied and creative deliveries. Once again, remember that the focus is not on the teacher or the style of delivery, but is upon the Word of God being

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taught from the heart. Teaching and learning from the heart require the discipler and the one being disciplined to focus on the essentials.

When we read verses like Acts 1:7; John 16:12; 21:25 we quickly see that Jesus did not want to tell His disciples everything they wanted to know, but only what was essential for them to know. This prevented them from being so overwhelmed with content that the essential content was lost in the information overload. Think about the four Gospels. Did the authors of these books attempt to write down all the information about Jesus they possibly could? Of course not! Because the authors of the Gospels wanted to communicate only the essential facts about who Jesus was, what He did and taught, and how those facts proved that Jesus Christ was who they said He was.

Jesus was the “sifter of information” for His disciples: “It's not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority... I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now...” When you study the Bible, it is clear that in some places God skipped whole centuries of history and then inspired His revelators to write about mere minutes, days, or hours in Israel's history. Why? As the Divine Teacher, God was sifting the content for His people. If the Bible attempted to tell us every detail about every important person and place and everything that happened to every important person from the beginning, it would be a vast library of books that would fill a building many stories high.

The Holy Spirit led the Gospel writers to sift through the information for us. John wrote: “And there were many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written” (John 21:25). Master teachers know what to cut out or what needs to be put off until later. **Maximum attention must be given to the most important items**. Not all facts are equal; therefore, the more important facts should receive greater attention. Teachers must allow the Holy Spirit to lead them to evaluate their content and if necessary, change their priorities for their students based upon the principle of the **Irreducible Minimum**, which is the smallest unit of information necessary for a given group of students to gain satisfactory understanding of a given subject.

Luke 9:1-6 is an example of Jesus using this principle of the absolute minimum. Jesus taught His disciples no more or no less than what they needed at that particular moment before sending them out. He then made sure it was mastered by everyone by getting their feedback when they returned from their mission. Jesus sent out the Twelve Disciples (Luke 9:1-6), and then the Seventy (Luke 10:1-24) using this same principle.

A good teacher knows they have not taught a subject adequately unless every disciple has mastered what is absolutely essential. Therefore, before going before

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the students, the master teacher will prayerfully consider what the Lord wants them to teach by:

1. Identifying what is **foundational**.
2. Structuring their time to **maximize** what is most important, and then teaching it to everyone.

An important method of teaching the essentials is to arrange the facts in a way that makes them easy to memorize. Since it is the responsibility of the discipler to cause them to learn, what they are teaching must be presented in such a way that it will be relatively easy for the students to learn. Preachers use simple outlines and easy to remember sermon points. Teachers can use graphs, charts, pictures, etc. to reinforce the lessons. Preachers can incorporate the Worship leaders to use music, song, and dance to involve the congregation in the learning process. Jesus used the Parables as a way to make spiritual truths more memorable. Teachers should be creative and “Go the extra mile” to do whatever is necessary to help their students learn and grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. The most important thing to remember is that at the end of the process, the students are growing deeper in their understanding and in their relationship with the Lord.

God created man with short-term and long-term memory. Jesus respected the God-given design of the human mind; He cooperated with it and never tried to force His disciples to learn beyond their normal way of operating. Therefore, Jesus taught the essentials through **regular review**, which strengthened His disciples’ long-term memory.

Long-term memory is designed to retain information for later use as it is needed. Teachers will never cause their students to really *know* the subject unless they put the right information in their long-term memory. Review is the only way to store information in the long-term memory and the only way to keep it in there. Therefore, the master teacher will identify the absolute minimum the students will need to master the subject and then plant it firmly in their long-term memory by repeating it as often as necessary. The goal should be for 100% of the students to master the essential information and to have it lodged deeply in their long-term memory so it will be available to them anytime they need it in the future. It is true that the Holy Spirit will bring revelation to those who are born again. However, it is an abuse of the Lord’s grace to neglect the spiritual discipline of studying His word and putting it into the long-term memory.

The purpose of memorizing Scripture is not for VBS merit badges or to proudly show people how many Bible passages we can recite. The purpose is to have the Word of God written on the heart and ready to use anytime it is needed in the

life of the disciple or for others who need to hear a Word from God. **By teaching the essentials, the master teacher minimizes time needed for study and memorization to maximize time for application.**

JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES TO EQUIP THEM FOR MAKING DISCIPLES

Jesus the Master Teacher recognized that the real point of His teaching was the **use of the material**. So He focused His efforts on equipping His disciples for a lifetime of making disciples. His teaching was designed to lead His disciples from being receivers of content, information, and knowledge to disciple-makers who **practice, and apply** their God given wisdom for others. The latter does not negate the former, but they complement each other. He taught His disciples in a way that made it easy for them to remember, but He did not wait until they mastered everything He intended to teach them before sending them out. He immediately showed them how valuable and relevant His teachings were by having them put them into practice as soon as He was confident they understood each point. This made them more open and receptive to the next level of teaching. It took more than three years of teaching and application of that teaching before the disciples were ready to receive the Holy Spirit and be propelled into ever higher levels of receiving and applying Jesus’ teachings.

The goal for the discipler should be to achieve a healthy balance between content and application in their teaching. Perfectly balanced teaching (50% content from the Scriptures and 50% application) is very difficult to obtain. Many pastors/teachers tend to stress content over application; a few will stress application over content by encouraging the experience of the spiritual gifts. But **application should always be based upon content from the Scriptures** – what they are for and why they have been given. Some teachers need to be more effective in teaching content while others need to be more effective in application for *life-change*. Either way, the goal is to achieve the right balance so that the students will enjoy the maximum mastery of what Jesus taught in a way that produces real transformation into Christlikeness for a lifetime.

Master teachers like Jesus will know how to strike the balance between application and biblical content. They know how to gather biblical content from which they will select the facts they want to teach with an emphasis upon application. This involves:

- **Researching the subject**
- **Organizing the subject**
- **Outlining the subject**

The selection process involves identifying the appropriate subject matter and the gathering right material from all the information available and bringing it down to the absolute minimum. Since the teacher controls the content, he or she should choose the most important material based upon:

- **The audience** – the level of spiritual maturity and willingness to learn
- **The time available** – If the time available is limited to a twenty-minute sermon not much can be done in the way of true discipleship. However, when more time is available and multiple sessions can be arranged, more material and a much greater level of teaching can take place.
- Another important factor to consider is **the purpose of the class**. If the purpose of the class is to study the book of Revelation, then teaching the terms of discipleship is not appropriate material. If discipleship is the purpose for the class, then the general topic of Church History is not an appropriate subject. Again, it is important to remember that the teacher controls the content, not the students.

Not only does the teacher control the subject, they are also responsible for its presentation. At this stage the teacher must arrange and package the material in such a way that will maximize the students' mastery of the subject. After the selection process, the material must be refashioned to make it easy to understand and easy to remember. How the material is memorized and what is memorized has a lot to do with the material itself. If you are teaching Greek, constant repetition to memorize each letter, how they form words, and how the words form sentences is necessary. However, if you are teaching the impact of Greek philosophy upon the New Testament, broader topics must be remembered. When you are teaching disciples the terms of discipleship memorization is best done on a much more intimate and personal level.

In every case the key to student memorization is still review. Solidify the material in your students' minds through practice. Review is the primary method by which everyone memorizes everything. There are certain Keys that master teachers have discovered that make review effective without being boring; these keys are not always appropriate in every situation, but they can be modified to fit the subject and level of teaching from formal to less formal methods:

- Review is effective only when the student adequately understands the material.
- Review should be practiced in the same order and with the same words until it is fully memorized.

- Review should be most frequent and intense when the facts are first taught.
- Review should be regularly practiced but spaced less and less frequently as time passes.
- Review should continue until all the students demonstrate complete mastery of the subject.
- Review should be done using a variety of methods.

Students who master the material will possess **independent proficiency**, which is essential if the disciple is to become a discipler. Not only must they retain what they have been taught, but they must handle the subject skillfully. In formal classroom settings mastery of the subject includes Lasting Memorization, In-depth Comprehension, Complete Integration, and Independent Utilization;

Therefore, when it comes to discipleship, mastery of the teachings of Jesus Christ goes beyond memorizing what He taught. Mastering the content must include **understanding** what He taught and **integrating** what He taught into our everyday lifestyle. The disciple has mastered Jesus' teaching when they naturally apply what He taught without being specifically instructed to do so. All of these things are important, but they are merely means to an end – the end being **transformation into Christlikeness**.

Jesus' favorite methods of teaching seemed to be representing the facts in a picture or story, which was done most often in Parables. He also liked to associate facts with objects and actions (Note the washing of His disciples' feet, and the last Passover meal with His disciples. It is also true of many of His miracles.) The Old Testament Scriptures used those methods as well as other methods that are often incorporated in the sermons and lectures of great preachers and teachers up to this day:

1. Transferring the facts by the alphabet.
 - All the same first letter.
 - All the same last letters which rhyme.
 - All the first letters follow in some meaningful order.
 - All the first letters form a word, which is called an "acrostic"
2. Impressing the facts with drama, music, and dance.
3. Summarizing the facts with graphs and charts.

The entire purpose of all of these teaching methods is to lead the disciple in such a way that they learn, understand, and remember the teachings of Jesus in such a way that they become a natural part of who they are. A true disciple of Jesus does not have to be talked into, manipulated, or stimulated by dynamic pulpit preaching to go and preach the Gospel, and make disciples – it is a natural outflowing of who they are becoming. Not every teaching method is appropriate in every situation, but

they are to be used wisely with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Teaching to Remember makes the subject a part of the thought process of the disciple. It is what Paul was teaching when he wrote to the disciples in Rome: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” **Romans 12:1-2**

Questions for Lesson Seven

1. Describe how Jesus taught His disciples the most information in the shortest time with the least effort, and for the greatest impact.
2. What is the starting point for all we teach or want to learn as Kingdom Disciples?
3. How does Deuteronomy 6:4-9 teach us to apply the principle of teaching the essentials and mastering them?
4. What methods does the teacher use to teach their disciples understand and remember the essentials of what Jesus taught?
5. What is the goal for teaching content and application of the Scriptures?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-8 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

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JESUS TAUGHT “I AM THE WAY”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Jesus Can Show the Way Because He Is the Way
- II. Jesus Was the Master at Meeting the Needs of People
- III. A Master Teacher Ignites the Students’ Interest



JESUS CAN SHOW THE WAY BECAUSE HE IS THE WAY

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Matthew 7:13-14

When His disciple said to Jesus, “Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?” Jesus replied, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6).

John 14:6 and Matthew 7:13-14 reveal the answer to one of the most basic and essential questions people have: “How can I find my way to God?” Jesus’ own disciples had the same question. So, it is no surprise that one of the essential teachings for those who choose to follow Him as a disciple is how to answer that question.

How can anyone find the way to God? We know that only Jesus can show the way because He is the way. A disciple is someone who has **united their life** with Jesus the Master disciple-maker. Because they have become one with Father through His Son (John 17:20-23), they go where He goes, eat what He eats, sleep where He

sleeps. Along the way, He unites His disciples' lives with His, by **pouring teachings into them, transforming them, and making them like Him.**

When we carefully study Luke 5:1-11 we realize that this was the second call of the early disciples. After their first encounters with Jesus (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20), Peter, Andrew, James, and John had gone back to fishing. However, they continued to watch Jesus as he established himself as an important Rabbi in the small communities around Galilee. Jesus demonstrated His authority as a teacher of the Torah in the synagogue. He demonstrated His divine authority by healing the sick, and driving out demons, and curing disease with a touch of His hand and a simple command. Those who were not considered promising candidates to be Torah scholars or rabbis returned to their family vocations after their schooling was complete.

The fact that these disciples were fishing when Jesus called them is significant. Here He also established his authority in their lives—he met them on their level and helped them in their work. But more than that, He demonstrated to them and to the world that God does not choose His disciples as man would choose them, “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

From this point forward, these men left their old way of life behind and remained with Jesus. For the disciple, following Jesus means more than just a prayer with every eye closed and every head bowed, asking Jesus to forgive their sins. For the disciple acknowledging him as Savior is just the beginning of a lifelong spiritual journey of transformation. The disciple must leave their past behind and commit their future **to being (abiding) with the Master.**

A person does not have to be a fisherman to know that fish are not naturally attracted to the net or the fishhook. In the same way, potential disciples are not naturally drawn to a radical lifestyle that the demands of discipleship require. In the miraculous catch of fish, Jesus showed His disciples that the fish they will be catching with Him must be drawn into the net **supernaturally.** Jesus supernaturally attracts disciples and draws them into the net, but we must work the net and close them in for the catch (Note Matthew 13:47-50 “the Parable of the Dragnet). As the teacher, you are responsible to help your students to be “drawn into” *the way, truth, and life* by your content the same way fish are drawn into the net of the fisherman. It is called MOTIVATION not manipulation. Manipulation involves controlling or influencing somebody or something in a forceful or deceptive way to do the bidding

of the manipulator. Motivation is the act of giving somebody a **reason or incentive** to do something. That incentive comes from within the disciple; it may be a feeling of enthusiasm, or some other interest, or commitment that makes them want to be a follower of Jesus. Because motivation comes from within, for the disciple, the only motivation that will last over a lifetime of denying one's self and dying daily on the cross is the unconditional divine love of God and for God. *Agape* is what binds the disciple to the Master Rabbi Jesus.

However, Jesus understood that *agape* does not come naturally to Adam's race and His disciples would need to be drawn into the “net” where His love would capture their hearts. This principle of teaching is used by master teachers **to build the need** of their students for what Christ offers. Those who respond to the call to be lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ must be drawn into the net from within them; anything other than that is manipulation and, in the end, will be doomed to failure. That means the disciple-maker can and should build the need for **life-change** from what they are teaching. As you follow the stories in the Gospels of Jesus the Master Teacher, you cannot miss the fact that Jesus regularly addressed the needs of his hearers, but not everyone was willing to be drawn into His net to become a disciple. Here are just three examples from Matthew of how Jesus built the need:

- **Matthew 9:1-7** – A paralytic comes to Jesus to be healed. Jesus says to him, “your sins are forgiven.” Jesus saw something that this man did not. Even more than physical restoration, this man needed spiritual revival. Spiritual health comes from Jesus' healing touch. Jesus had every intention of healing the man's paralysis, but He used that man's physical condition to show his greater need to heal his soul of the spiritual paralysis of sin.
- **Matthew 12:9-14** – Jesus used this Sabbath controversy to expose the religious leaders' distorted understanding of their laws. The Pharisees mistakenly placed their laws above human need. They were so concerned about anyone transgressing one of their rules that they lost human compassion. Jesus' love and compassion for the man with a deformed hand exposed the Pharisees' need to care for the sinner more than for their traditions. The Pharisees had the Law of Moses but they did not have *Agape*. Paul, who was himself “a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee” (Acts 23:6), wrote, “Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:8). Love is the greatest – and really the only – motivator to draw people into the net. When Jesus told His disciples that He would make them “fishers of men” He knew that before they could be effective, they would need *Agape*. The Pharisees were not motivated to follow Jesus because they had no love for Him or compassion for those who needed salvation.

- **Matthew 14:22-33** – In this event of walking on the water, Jesus was teaching His disciples about the kind of faith they needed. Eleven of the twelve disciples had faith only in the boat and missed the opportunity to experience the supernatural power of God. Peter had enough faith in himself to get out of the boat, but that faith was inadequate because he began to sink. What the disciples needed was **faith in Jesus**. “Matthew wants his readers to understand a crucial aspect about water-walking: Peter is not in charge of water-walking – Jesus is. This is not some power at Peter’s disposal to use anytime he chooses, for whatever purpose he pleases. Before he gets out of the boat, Peter had better make sure that this is what he is called to do and that Jesus is the one doing the calling. Jesus is looking for something more than mere impulsiveness. Sometimes people make reckless decisions – about relationships, finances, or work – and then rationalize it with a veneer of spiritual language.” John Ortberg, *If You Want to Walk on Water, You’ve Got to Get Out of the Boat*, p.54

JESUS WAS THE MASTER AT MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE

When the person’s needs were obvious, Jesus would **meet them, then and there**. Of all teachers who have ever taught, Jesus was the Master at meeting the needs of His students. When a person was out of touch with their needs, Jesus sought to surface their needs and to make them aware of their true need and then meet it. In every case the starting point for Jesus was the need of those who came to Him, then came the content of His message. Jesus knew how to seize the attention of His intended audience with a **thought-provoking question**, or with a **miraculous sign**. These were often done to stir the curiosity of those around Him and draw their attention to the need of the moment – be it a healing touch or a revelation of greater truth. In some cases the need was simple and, on the surface, but other times those around them were unaware of their true need. But in every case, Jesus knew how to satisfy the need. However, as was often the case with religious leaders of the Jews, they were angered when their need for true righteousness and repentance was revealed.

Almost every teacher and preacher has been faced with a bored or disinterested audience at one time or another. Their message may be well-prepared; the subject may be interesting and even important for the growth and well-being of those who came to hear them; but somewhere between the important and exciting message that was prepared and the students’ response to that message, there is a disconnection. All the pastor or teacher sees staring back at them are blank

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expressions and apathy – it is obvious that their audience’s thoughts are elsewhere. The temptation at that point is for them to blame the audience for not hearing; or on the other hand to become discouraged and think they are just not called to preaching.

The answer is to look to Jesus and see what He did when faced with a similar problem. Remember the people who came to Jesus were expecting Him to be a warrior-king to throw out the Roman oppressors with the edge of His sword and usher in a utopian kingdom where everyone was healthy, wealthy, and wise. They were looking for something other than what Jesus knew they needed. But Jesus, in His infinite wisdom and knowledge, knew how to solve this problem. Jesus took a **five-step approach** towards building the interest of His audience for what He came to teach. And if we apply that same approach then the people will sense a need to hear what we have to teach them.

Master teachers have dissected the method Jesus used to ensure that all He taught would be received by His disciples. They have identified five important and relevant steps. To demonstrate this model, we will look at the passage from John’s Gospel recounting Jesus’ encounter with the woman at the well in the village of Sychar (John 4:5-30). Remember: the world was Jesus’ classroom, and He used everything around Him to teach His disciples. This one woman showed up to get some water, but she did not know that she needed something far greater than water from that well. Jesus knew what she needed and led this woman through the five stages to teach her and bring her to the point where she could see her greatest need. Observe how He caused her to *want* to learn, and then to be drawn into His net. All she came for was some water to quench her thirst, but Jesus showed her need at a deeper spiritual level that only He could meet and met it.

The first step of Jesus was to **capture her attention**. Getting your students’ attention is the first universal requirement of any teaching situation. Jesus did not have to do much to get the Samaritan woman’s attention: “Give Me a drink.” may have seemed like an innocent enough statement, but within the context of the time and place, it was startling to the woman. Teachers should be creative in how they approach their subjects. There are a number of “Attention Starters” that trained public speakers use to get the attention of their audience. Some of them are provocative statements, skits, a short video, visual aids, jokes or funny stories, thoughtful questions, sudden changes in their normal delivery style, or poignant moments of silence in their message. All of these are legitimate methods, but what must never be lost in making disciples is that we are speaking spiritual truths and not just trying to entertain an audience.

If the teacher relies too much on “gimmicks” to hold disciples’ attention without being able to bring them to a deeper revelation of what their life in Christ is

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all about, the speaker may win a reputation as a “lively and engaging” speaker, but they will lose their standing in the kingdom.

In this case, Jesus uses a combination of speaking to this woman who normally would be ignored, while making a provocative statement to her to open the dialog. Without going into a detailed Bible study on this passage, it can be noted that there were three major reasons why Jesus starting the conversation with this woman was startling and provocative:

1. She was a Samaritan and the Jews considered them inferior because they were a mixed race of Jews and other ethnic people.
2. She was a woman and it was highly unusual for a Jewish male – and a rabbi – to talk with a woman in an intimate setting.
3. She was an idolater. The Samaritans were not only a mixed race, but they also practiced a mixed religion that included some elements of Judaism but worshiped other gods as well.

Attention dissolves quickly if the teacher does not stir up a greater **curiosity to learn more**. This is the second step. Jesus stirred the Samaritan woman’s curiosity by moving beyond a discussion about water from the well and physical thirst to talking to her about “living water”. This leads her to start asking questions. “What is this gift of living water?” “Where is it?” “How do I get it?” “Who is asking me about it?” “Why is it important for me to get it?”

Jesus talking about the “living water” was intended to provoke her curiosity; He was drawing her into His net where she would find the “living water” of the Holy Spirit. The “net” in this case is:

- His Gift – “If you knew the gift of God...”
- His identity – “(if you knew) who it is who says to you...”
- His offer – “He would have given you living water...”

Jesus the Master Teacher used more than one thing to arouse her curiosity and draw her into His net. He took a very careful and considered approach that guaranteed to build her curiosity so she could not help but seek, and desire, further information.

The Samaritan woman’s attention has been captured. Her curiosity has been stimulated and she is seriously considering Jesus’ offer of “living water.” Now it is time for Jesus to bring her to the **fourth step**: to recognize what her true need is. Before the teacher begins to speak, they should make the effort to discover what the felt need is of those they are addressing. A group of seniors will have different felt needs than a group of college students or young married couples with children. It is a little more complicated for the preacher because he must find out what are the felt

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needs of his church. And those needs may be varied and multi-dimensional based upon the size of the church or the cultural setting. What their audience is thinking and feeling is the best *starting point* for the teacher to craft their lessons, but the *ending point* should be the same for all: **transformation into being like Christ**.

Kingdom Discipleship has a specific goal in mind: to help lead or guide the disciple to the point where they are ready and able to receive the fullness of the life of Christ within. The goal should never be lost in the process. Therefore, Jesus the Master Teacher was always surveying the people He encountered to pick up where they were at that moment, and then He would engage them in creative ways to cause them to come where He always intended to bring them. With the Samaritan woman, He wanted to bring her to the place where she “will never thirst again...” and the spiritual void in her life would “become a fountain of water...” This made her feel very strongly: **“I want this”** which is the final step.

The people that disciples encounter all around them will always be interested in something; the Holy Spirit can lead the disciple to discover others’ real place of need in context of that interest. When the disciple has died to their self-life and allowed *Agape* to motivate them, they will not waste time working on some kind of clever program or entertaining routine to figure out how to raise the interest of those in need. Instead, they will be free in the Spirit to genuinely explore how to *involve* the interests of those they encounter along the way.

From the beginning of His encounter with the woman, Jesus had only one intention: **to share His gift of salvation** with this woman. But the woman was still a long way from recognizing her true spiritual need for the “living water” drawn from the well of God’s salvation. Perceiving in His Spirit what was preventing this woman from receiving the gift of salvation, Jesus once again shifts her attention by asking her to “Go, call your husband and come here.” The woman came looking for water for her thirst. Jesus drew her attention to the need she felt: to experience true intimacy with the Father. Then He brought her real need to the surface: her need for intimacy had led her into an emotional prison that manifested in her life through a series of failed relationships with men on the one hand and with idolatry on the other. Jesus saw the need for her relationship with God to be restored so that the life of the Father could flow into her. This is the real climax of need building: **bringing to the surface the real need of the person in such a way as they see it, feel the need for it, and will confess, “I need this!”**

As the Samaritan woman set off on the short walk to fetch some water from the village well that fateful day, she had no idea what she needed. Her life was characterized by a string of broken relationships that left her empty inside. She was living with a man who was not her husband. Her idolatrous religion left her spiritually empty and confused. Jesus met her where she was and when He spoke to

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her of *living* water she began to have greater awareness that there was something that could fill her need, but still she did not know exactly what that was. Jesus assumed the responsibility to address her need and addressed that need in a gentle and sensitive manner. He brought to the surface her need for intimacy in human relationships. When she asked about where to worship God, she was aware of her need for intimacy in her spiritual relationship with God.

Jesus took responsibility for drawing her attention to her real need. He knew the woman had caught up with her real need when she said to Him, “I know the Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus withheld the answer until she asked the appropriate question. Then He told her, “I who speak you am He.” Jesus the Master Teacher did not start with His message, “I AM the Messiah you have been looking for and need.” He created the hunger for the message, brought her into the net, and then delivered it. In this case, Jesus spent a lot more time building the need than teaching the lesson. Jesus did not chase after His “fish” with the net but dropped it in the appropriate spot and slowly drew the fish into the net.

Instead of starting our encounter with an individual or class or congregation on Sunday mornings by presenting the main content of what we want to say, we should first create a hunger for that content. If the hunger is not there, then when the main content is revealed, the audience will not be ready for it. If a person has no idea that they need Jesus Christ, then handing them a tract with the “Four Spiritual Laws” will not have any real meaning to them. But if the disciple first leads that person to the place where they see their need for salvation, then presenting “The Four Spiritual Laws” or “The Roman Road” or any other information on how to be saved will become relevant to them.

The goal of the master discipler is to be like Jesus. Jesus was skilled in teaching His students in such a way that their needs are surfaced, and once surfaced, they are met in a kind and loving manner – with *Agape*. That is how good fishers of men are able to draw men into their nets!

A MASTER TEACHER IGNITES THE STUDENTS’ INTEREST

A master teacher is one who provides the spark that ignites the students’ **interest** before they begin teaching their content. It’s not up to the teacher to just throw in the net anywhere into the sea and hope and pray the fish will come into the boat. At Jesus’ command we follow where His Spirit leads and cast our net where and how He commands. The teacher understands it is the Lord who attracts them to the net because it is the Lord they need and not the teacher. The teacher’s part is to

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draw in the net and bring in the catch. Therefore, he must use every skill to draw into the Kingdom of God those whom the Lord has called to follow Him.

Remember, your students (or members of your church) come to you with needs that already exist before you begin to teach them. The woman at the well had a need when she met Jesus. She did not need to hear a great sermon from Jesus about Joshua and the walls of Jericho, or a history lesson on the Jews in Babylon. There is a time or place for that, but people come to church on Sunday morning with their marriages in trouble, with all kinds of family problems, financial problems, spiritual confusion, and sicknesses; they need to be brought back to the truth (James 5:19-20). A person with cancer does not need to hear another sermon on healing; they need the elders of the church to anoint them with oil and pray to the Lord to come and heal them! (James 5:13-14).

Jesus the Master Teacher started with the needs of those who came to hear Him. He did not ignore the content of His primary message (Mark 1:15), but He engaged every person at their point of need, listened, and allowed their real need to surface. The need determined what and how He taught. (See HANDOUT “Practical Methods to Find the Needs”).

Teachers who teach and preach to the emotions of the congregation often allow the feelings of their audience to determine the choice of text or even the meaning assigned to a text. They believe that a good message is one that stirs the emotions of the crowd on Sundays. It is not important for them to build a sense of real need and address it, but only to get some kind of emotional response.

The preacher who only wants an emotional response is more like a cheerleader than a discipler. The congregation comes into the church building feeling sad, depressed, worried, and beaten down by life, so the speaker believes it is up to him to make sure everyone leaves upbeat, positive, and feeling happy at the end of the service. The congregation may believe they need to be lifted emotionally, but an emotion-based faith will be unstable and shallow at best. “Feelings have a crucial role in life, but they must not be taken as a basis for action or character change. That role falls to insight, understanding, and conviction of truth, which will always be appropriately accompanied by feeling. Feelings are not fundamental in the nature of things but become so if we assign to them that role in life, and then life will not go as it should. Many sincere professing Christians suffer in their walk with God because they made a commitment prompted by a feeling of ‘need’ and not by insight into how things are with God and their soul.” *Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart*, p.138

Too often we teach in a way that is opposite to Jesus. We come to the pulpit every Sunday with a prepared message and hope that at least some will need to hear our message. But the most important first step in preparing a lesson is the selection

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of the correct subject for the right audience; this cannot be done unless we have some kind of intimate knowledge of those we disciple. There are times when the Holy Spirit can give us spiritual discernment to address the need of a person or group. Jesus operated in the perfect will and flow of His Father's will and therefore was able to minister to the real needs of people – like this woman at the well. Very few have that kind of spiritual discernment. For most of us intimacy comes from “with-ness” – getting to know those we are discipling on an intimate level. You cannot disciple strangers.

Emotional responses are not bad, but should be used sparingly and in a proper context of the real need of the disciple being met by Jesus Christ. Use your words to build the real need that exists within the student: **the need for intimacy with the Father where life-change takes place** (Isaiah 58:11). The master teacher knows how to light a fire in the heart of the student so they will want to learn, have a desire to learn, and feel intense longing to learn. From Nicodemus to the Samaritan woman and the Twelve – they all had a deep desire to learn the way of transformation from the Master to become like the Master in everything. Jesus said, “A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40 (NIV)

Taking the time to build the need for your message is worth it because the content is useless unless your students are prepared to receive it. Effective evangelists know that unless the people they are addressing sense their need for Christ, there's no reason to offer Him as the solution. They are not ready to receive Him. We've all heard it said: “Christ is the answer for every need.” And in a spiritual sense, that is true. However, most people do not know that need a Savior from sins.

In John 6:25-69 we see a collision between Jesus and those who followed Him wanting their wrong needs to be met. Note the confusion on the part of the people over what they truly needed. They only wanted their immediate physical needs to be met by Jesus and were unable or unwilling to partake of Jesus' *life* (the blood and manna of the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world). They wanted loaves, fishes, and miracles, but Jesus was offering them what they truly needed: *life-change* that came from intimacy (communion) with God. Those who were not ready or who were unwilling to receive the answer to their real need turned away. Only those who were truly disciples of Jesus Christ were hungry for the intimacy with the Father that would lead to real transformation.

Some who read this passage from John see this as a tragedy for Jesus because He lost so many of His followers, but they are missing the point of what Jesus was teaching at that moment. In fact what Jesus was doing at that moment was deliberately sifting out those who were not ready to follow Him on His terms. So

those who were chasing after Jesus for the wrong motives turned away when confronted with their real need. Note how different this is from evangelism today; in our day the more the better – even if they are there for the wrong reasons, the point is to fill the evangelistic meeting or the church pews to overflowing. The emotional response to the felt needs of the audience is of most importance. However, for Jesus and disciple-makers like Him, the content (discipleship) is the real need. The real need is what draws deeper into His net those who see the need for transformation into Christlikeness.

The teacher's job is to keep the students focused on their need for Christ. Prove it from Scripture; prove it by your lifestyle; prove it by leading them into a deeper, more genuine relationship with Christ. When they experience the “fruit of abiding” which is *life-change*, they will not have to be persuaded to embrace kingdom discipleship, they will clamor for it. Until they finally face up to the fact that their greatest need is for intimacy with the Father through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, all the music, lights, and fanfare of Sunday morning church services and evangelistic meetings will never convince them to count the cost of total surrender to Jesus Christ as more than Savior, but also as their Lord and Master.

Teachers do not always have the luxury of having one-to-one teaching moments like Jesus with Nicodemus or the Samaritan woman at the well. Teachers do not always have the benefit of the controlled environment of a classroom or church building to communicate.

The teacher must be sensitive to internal and external factors that hinder the student's motivation or ability to hear them. Even the best of environments can have their external distractions that make it hard for the teachers to be heard. Internal factors also exist in the hearts and minds of the audience that make it hard for them to receive the message. Inner conflicts produce worry and fear. Distracted, wandering thoughts, personal prejudices, hunger, fatigue, physical ailments, etc. all have negative effects on effective communication. The selfish, self-centered will may intensify these internal struggles.

Before anyone can be convinced that they need a Savior, first they must be convinced that they have a sin problem, and that Jesus' atoning sacrifice is the only answer to their sin problem. The teacher should not ignore the spiritual warfare that must take place. We have an adversary, the devil, and he will attempt to throw us off the track of being and making disciples. The devil will use all sorts of tricks to distract us from speaking, and distract those who want to hear the gospel (Note: Acts 13:6-12; 14:1-7; 17:5-9; and 16:16-24). Therefore, the teacher must be prepared to engage in spiritual warfare in the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20).

Understanding the emotional and felt needs of your audience is important. How your students feel; what they are struggling with in their personal and

professional lives; what their responsibilities are; what their hopes, dreams, and desires are all play a large part in their ability to hear and receive their real need for *life-change*. The master teacher learns from Jesus how to look for the felt needs and build in the disciple the real need: transformation to become like Jesus Christ in their heart and soul.

Questions for Lesson Eight

1. Explain the statement “Jesus can show us the way because Jesus is the way.”
2. As “fishers of men” how do we work the net and close in for the catch those Jesus has supernaturally attracted?
3. Review how Jesus talked to the woman at the well in John chapter 4. How did Jesus surface her needs and make her aware of her true needs? Think about how you can apply this method and apply it.
4. How does the teacher, keep the students focused on their real need for Christ? What are the proofs?
5. What are some of the external and internal factors that have to be overcome to reach an audience with their need for a Savior?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-9

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn

JESUS TAUGHT “I AM THE TRUTH”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Jesus equipped, encouraged, and educated His disciples for evangelism.
- II. Jesus the master teacher focused on the right audience.
- III. The measure of success of the teacher for equipping is disciples making disciples.



JESUS EQUIPPED, ENCOURAGED, AND EDUCATED HIS DISCIPLES FOR EVANGELISM

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ **Matthew 28:18-20**

“EQUIP, ENCOURAGE, and EDUCATE for EVANGELISM.”

A Job Description is a very important statement because it defines in clear and objective terms what the leader expects his followers to achieve. The leader is responsible to define those expectations clearly, and the follower is responsible to fulfill those expectations to the best of their ability.

Jesus the Master Teacher understood this principle and made sure His disciples knew that they had a job to do and what the duties and responsibilities of His disciples were. He spent three- and one-half years with them to equip, encourage, and educate them to fulfill the Great Commission to evangelize the world. Jesus also

made it clear that all will be held accountable for their Final Performance in His parables of the **“Talents”** and the **“Sheep and the Goats.”**

The evidence from the New Testament is clear that the early church understood they had work to do and would be held accountable for how well they did it:

- **1 Cor. 3:5-15** “...each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor” and “If anyone’s work which he has built on [the foundation which is Jesus Christ] endures, he will receive a reward...”
- **2 Cor. 5:10-11** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.”

Jesus left His disciples with a divine Job Description which is the mission of the church. In the end He will not evaluate us on whether we are doing a “good thing”, but on whether we are doing the LORD’S will, which is expressed in Matthew 28:18-20.

Everything Jesus did and everything Jesus taught was intended to equip His disciples for the work He has for us to do. If we understand this, our preaching and teaching ministry becomes focused not only on what God taught us to do, but also practically EQUIP our students to accomplish that mission as well.

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”
Ephesians 4:11-12

This is what Paul was teaching in Ephesians 4:11-12. It is the model for the entire church even up to today: “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”

In their letters, the Apostles identified the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they equipped the church for ministry. In these verses from Ephesians Paul expressed the model that Jesus and all leaders like Him use to make disciples:

- TEACHER – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc. are given by God to equip the church for ministry; **they teach by word and deed.**

- SAINTS – (those who know and follow Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord) are the recipients of the God-given ministers to the church. The saints are the **primary audience** for the teachers who teach for **life-change**.
- WORLD – the unsaved or unreached. The delegated responsibility of the teachers is to “equip”. The delegated responsibility of all the saints (including the teacher) is to evangelize the world by **being and making disciples**.

JESUS THE MASTER TEACHER FOCUSED ON THE RIGHT AUDIENCE

Jesus had a limited time to make disciples. Therefore, He focused His attention on those disciples who were totally committed to Him. The ministry of church is to follow Jesus’ example:

1. Jesus focused on the **right audience** – disciples: those who whole-heartedly believed and followed Him without compromise
2. Jesus equipped His disciples for **effective service** – He focused upon the outflow of their lives, not merely upon the input of information from their teacher
3. Jesus focused as much upon the **character of His students**, as He did upon the content of His teaching. Jesus expects His character (the “fruit of the Spirit”) to be physically seen by others and carefully tested.

“...till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:13-16

Based upon Jesus’ teachings and the teachings of His Apostles, there are two primary things teachers are to equip their students to do which Paul expressed in Ephesians:

1. **WORK OF MINISTRY** which is to make disciples by preaching the gospel of salvation, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey everything Jesus taught

2. **EDIFICATION OF THE BODY** teaching them to observe or obey everything Jesus taught is for the building up of Christ's body the church.

Both are for the purpose of evangelizing the world and advancing the kingdom to the end of the age.

The responsibility for **Teaching to Equip** falls directly upon the shoulders of the teachers, which includes apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors because in one way or another all teach as a part of their ministry. This model for teaching to equip is also expressed in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." The model of these verses says:

- The Word of God is a **gift from God** ("All Scripture was given by God...")
- To a primary audience of **Christians** ("...that the man of God...")
- For a primary purpose of **edification** ("...may be complete" or perfect or mature);
- and for the purpose of **equipping** ("...and thoroughly equipped") which will result in "every good work" of transformation in the disciple.

When we compare Ephesians 4:11-16 with 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we can add that every teacher of God (including apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors) is a gift from God for the church (the saints – the body of Christ) with the primary purposes of **edification** and for **equipping** the saints for the good works of ministry. In other words, both the Word of God and the Teacher:

- Are gifts from God
- Are for the Christian community
- Are for the purpose of edification and equipping
- Are for the result of good works

EDIFICATION: the focus is on **character** (being a disciple)

EQUIPPING: the focus is on **conduct** (making disciples)

Jesus the Master teacher taught His students that the Word of God was not a book to be studied for knowledge, but it was to be studied to be practiced. Note:

- "If you love me, you will obey what I command." **John 14:15** (NIV)
- "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." **Matthew 7:24** (NIV)

- Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." **John 8:31-32**

The model of *teaching to equip* is best when the disciple-maker assumes the **biblical role**. God's expectation is that 100 percent of our students will be serving Him through good works. He gave the teacher to help them do more ministry and to do it more effectively. God does not seek those who know all the answers to questions, but He seeks **the fruit of service**: Fruits of the Spirit and Disciples.

For Jesus the "content" He was seeking was the character and conduct of His students. Think about Jesus and the fig tree (Matt. 21:18-22). It was an acted-out parable by Jesus the Master Teacher, warning His students that genuine faith means bearing fruit for God's kingdom. "We may well believe that Jesus used the lesson of the fig tree to say to the Jews – and to us – that uselessness invites disaster, and profession of faith without practice is doomed. That is surely what this story means, for we cannot think of Jesus as literally and physically cursing a fig tree for failing to bear fruit at a season when fruit was impossible." William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 2*, Theological Publications in India, Bangalore, © 2009, p.297

Preachers tend to place too much emphasis on the delivery of their sermon and the immediate response of the congregation, which is most often emotional or intellectual than a change of behavior. Classroom teachers have a similar tendency in that they often place too much emphasis upon what happens in the classroom for evaluating the performance of their class. In that case, test scores and assignments completed are all that matters to them. Pastors do the same thing when evaluating their churches; they use church growth and membership numbers as indicators. But do any of these statistics accurately reflect how God evaluates the teacher or pastor? If God evaluates teachers on the character and actions of the disciples they make, then how do they measure up?

Practical questions that measure the success of the teacher in equipping disciples for effective work of evangelism are:

1. What percentage of your students shared the gospel with another person during the past week?
2. What percentage of your students led a person to Christ during the past twelve months?
3. What percentage of new believers attending church during the past twelve months are the result primarily of lay evangelistic efforts rather than the pastor's preaching or other staff involvement?
4. What percentage of last year's new members are involved in a formal evangelism training class?

5. What percentage of new converts came through ministry in the neighborhood or workplace rather than through the church?

THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS OF THE TEACHER FOR EQUIPPING IS “DISCIPLES-MAKING-DISCIPLES”

Measurements for an effective work of disciples-making-disciples is not likely to be found in charts, graphs, and numbers, but will be discovered when a high percentage of students are involved in regularly scheduled meetings (cell or home groups) with other laypersons for the purpose of accountability and spiritual growth. Fellowshiping for tea and casual conversation may have their time and place, but the central purpose for Christians meeting together is for mutual edification in Christ.

Disciples-making-disciples does not come naturally. If the church leadership believes they can throw people together in small groups without leaders specifically trained to disciple others and equipped with the right materials, then making disciples like Jesus is not very likely to happen. Discipleship classes that are designed to keep the students attached to and dependent upon the church leaders will not succeed because they will not be outward focused and stretching their limits. Being a disciple who is able to disciple others requires a certain degree of originality, spontaneity, and independence; and should come after some formal discipleship training. When it is done right, a high percentage of lay discipleship groups will be spawned by other groups. When a church or ministry is focused on making disciples, exponential growth should be seen within twelve months. Whether it is disciples making disciples or churches planting churches, the end result of making disciples should be rapid, exponential growth – inwardly in the heart of the disciple and outwardly as disciples go and make more disciples.

There is a way to measure success and evaluate the progress of the process of disciples-making-disciples. Success in making kingdom disciples is measured by how well the students are being equipped for spiritual vitality. The life and strength of committed disciples of Jesus Christ can be measured by how many of those disciples have daily personal devotions – not from compulsion as a “requirement” of a program, but from their own volition without any outside demands. The same holds true for family devotions: how many married disciples have regular family devotions? There should be a healthy percentage of students that are engaged in regular ministry that is designed to fulfill the mission of the kingdom expressed in Matthew 28:18-20. Measuring success also includes the attitude of giving: how many give generously from their income to support the ministries of the church?

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Measuring the success of kingdom discipleship is not as simple as filling out a pie chart, taking a spiritual gifts survey, or even counting the numbers of believers attending a mid-week Bible study or a home fellowship. It would be great if students could honestly rate their spiritual life and growth in Christ in a practical way. But spiritual growth into Christlikeness is an inward process that is not easy to measure. Like Jesus said, the kingdom of God is like leaven which a woman hid in three measures of dough until it was all leavened (Matthew 13:33); it is like a treasure hidden in a field that a man discovers by accident (Matthew 13:44). And the kingdom of God is like a seed planted in the field; it sprouts and grows in its seasons and the farmer does not know how it happens, but when the time comes, he reaps the harvest (Mark 4:26-29). So it is with making disciples: it is a deeply **personal and intimate process** that is not always the same pattern for every person. Progress can only be discerned by the impact the lifestyle of being a disciple of Jesus Christ has on the character and conduct of the one being transformed by the love of God abiding in them: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23)

Jesus never allowed His disciples to forget that all our work for the Lord comes out of our **walk with the Lord**. Our conduct must be motivated by *Agape*, which is the result of our character; and Christlike character comes from *Abiding* (My heart = Christ’s home). When Jesus the Master Teacher told His disciples to, “abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me” (John 15:4), He was saying that who we are, comes from His *Life Abiding* (Christ living in us); and this determines what His disciples do. Paul understood this perfectly and wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

Therefore, equipping disciples for service must influence both **the actions and the attitudes** of the heart. If the teacher equips his student with the right theology, the right methods for church growth, the right skills for administration, counseling, the art of preaching, etc. (all those things that are considered the essentials of a good Seminary education) but they ignore building the inner, spiritual life by abiding in Christ, then the teacher has failed to equip his student for ministry.

A godly ministry requires a godly minister! And making godly ministers requires a teacher who is godly. To make disciples like Jesus requires a discipler who is like Jesus. The spiritual principle involved is *reproduction after kind*. Jesus expressed this in His example of the good tree that bears good fruit, and the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit (Matthew 7:17-20).

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This is hard for some people to accept, but Jesus modeled the principle that discipling should focus more intensely upon the most committed disciples.

“Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, ‘Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.’

And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’

Then He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’

Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.’

And another also said, ‘Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.’

But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.’” **Luke 9:57-62**

When we study the passages found in Matthew 4:23-25; 17:1-3; Mark 5:37; Luke 9:1-6, 57-62; 10:1-2 we discover that there were different groups of people who followed Jesus for different reasons. And not all that followed, did so for the right reasons.

The Lord observed those who followed Him for a period of time before He prayerfully chose the ones He would personally disciple. Out of all those who followed Him, Jesus selected only those He believed would endure the trials ahead to become His apostles. Those that Jesus personally selected became the focus of His most intense equipping for the work they would be given to do after He ascended into His heavenly kingdom. There were decreasing numbers of people the closer they were to Jesus’ circle of followers:

- **The multitudes:** the “wayside” followers and the curious onlookers. Those who followed Jesus seeking signs and wonders; healings, and the “loaves and fishes.” But had no intention of fully committing themselves to Him as their Savior *and* Lord.
- **All disciples:** those who believed in Him and gathered around Him as He traveled from place to place, but were only partially committed to Him
- **The Seventy:** those who were committed to Jesus, but were not a part of His inner circle. These were the ones who would be disciplined by the ones Jesus personally disciplined.
- **The Twelve:** Jesus’ inner circle. Those who were absolutely committed to Him and personally trained by Him

- **The Three (Peter, James, John):** Jesus’ innermost circle and most trusted followers; they went almost everywhere with Jesus and became the first leaders of the church after Jesus’ Ascension (Acts 1:9).

Jesus the Master Teacher knew he had to carefully manage His time and energies with His disciples to maximize the growth of the kingdom. He prayed all night before He selected twelve that He was going to personally equip for the work ahead. Jesus tested their resolve and commitment to Him on many occasions.

“The New Testament seems to present two principal methods of reaching the world with the gospel. The first is by public proclamation; the second is by private discipling... The second method of propagating the Christian faith is by private discipling of individuals. This is the method which the Lord Jesus used in the training of the twelve. He called this little band of men that they might be with Him and that He might send them forth. Day after day, He instructed them in the truth of God. He set before them the task to which they were appointed. He forewarned them in detail of the dangers and difficulties they would encounter. He took them into the private counsels of God and made them partners with him in the glorious, yet arduous, divine plan. Then He sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they launched forth to tell the world of a risen, ascended, glorified Savior. The effectiveness of this method is seen in the fact that the band of disciples, reduced to eleven by the defection of the traitor, turned the world upside down for the Lord Jesus Christ.” William MacDonald, *True Discipleship*, pp.59-60.

This is the pattern of Kingdom Discipleship that Paul and the others followed – and what should be taught to disciples today. 2 Timothy 2:2 says, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

In his book *Out of the Comfort Zone*, George Verwer, the great contemporary missionary leader and founder of Operation Mobilization wrote: “We need more emphasis in the church on the training of leaders, old and young. I am often reminded that those leaders of the church in Thessalonica, with whom Paul corresponded, were just a few weeks old in the faith. Training can start with the young. I am committed to the task of training people for leadership right where they happen to be, while at the same time presenting them with the truth of a world vision. What a powerhouse the church would be if we could amalgamate the kind of biblical teaching that creates

dynamic spiritual leaders in home countries, with the kind of vision which we read about in Acts 1:8.” (© 2000, Authentic Books, Secunderabad, p.36).

Equipping disciples for ministry is one the hardest things the teacher will ever do. It requires knowledge, skill, and long-term commitment. It also takes a major investment of giving everything they have and offering it to their students. It requires a **lifetime of commitment**. Jesus the Master Teacher had a long-term perspective for His students when He said, “...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

When we are fully engaged as disciples making disciples, we will be equipping the next generation of disciples. After studying Jesus’ methods, we discover that equipping is a three-step process:

1. **Careful and prayerful selection** of faithful men and women of God (Luke 6:12-16)
2. **Imparting** to them the glorious vision of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:11)
3. **Sending forth** these disciples to make disciples of others (Matt. 28:18-20)

It’s the long-term perspective that the Lord wants from us, not the short-term. He wants our commitment to equip not for the sprint, but for life’s marathon so that we might say at the end of our life as Paul said, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).

Jesus told His disciples to “Go... and make disciples...” because He wants the godly line to grow and increase in influence through physical and spiritual principles of multiplication (disciples-making-disciples). The ultimate goal of **Equipping** is to make more independent equippers who:

- Have carefully considered and accepted all the terms of **Kingdom Discipleship**
- Are actively engaged in **taking up their cross** and denying the self
- Are **Abiding in Christ**
- Have the fruit of *Agape* in their **life and ministry**
- Have mastered one or more of the **ministry gifts** and are actively using them
- Are **enlisting and teaching** others to become Kingdom Disciples
- **Sending** those disciples out with ongoing guidance to do the same

The end goal of teaching disciples to equip them for ministry is to prepare the disciple for service in the field. The master teacher should Equip, Encourage, and Educate disciples for the purpose of Evangelism for a lifetime of service and edification.

Questions for Lesson Nine

1. How did Jesus equip His disciples for the work He had for them to do?
2. What are the two primary things teachers who are like Jesus equip their students to do?
3. What are the things that measure the success of the teacher in equipping disciples for effective work of evangelism?
4. For the purpose are disciples-making-disciples involved in a regularly scheduled meeting with other believers?
5. Equipping disciples for service must influence both the actions and the attitudes of the heart. When leaders are fully engaged as disciples making disciples what are the expected results?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-10 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn

JESUS TAUGHT “I AM THE LIFE”

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Making Disciples for *Life-change* means Transformation into Christlikeness
 - a. God’s Agape creates a Longing and Intention Toward Him
 - b. The purpose of revival is to cause a daily consecration and renewal

- II. Steps to Bring a Christian to a Full Life In Christ
 - a. Commissioned
 - b. Confront
 - c. Commandments
 - d. Consequences
 - e. Confession



MAKING DISCIPLES FOR LIFE-CHANGE MEANS TRANSFORMATION INTO CHRISTLIKENESS

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

Philippians 3:7-11

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“The power of His Resurrection...” It all comes back to the place where we started: transformation into Christlikeness. The entire process of making disciples for *life-change* depends upon the power of God working from within. If in the end the disciple is no closer to being like Christ in their character and actions than when the entire process began, they failed.

You can change your lifestyle; change your habits; change the company you keep, and your routines, but if the heart remains unchanged, then all you have done is rearrange the furniture in a house that was supposed to be demolished and rebuilt into something totally brand new.

The kingdom that Jesus came to reveal in its present reality is not entered into apart from the cross. Everyone wants the power of the resurrected life, but no one wants the cross. But the truth is you have to go through the cross to live the resurrected life. This is the fatal flaw in much of what passes for revival these days: if all they want are the miracles, signs, and healings... if all they want is the miracle-working power of God unleashed through them in their worship and in their meetings then they will miss the true life Jesus has for them. If the miracles are truly of the Holy Spirit, they will come only after the disciple has died to everything in this life (this is the lesson of the temptation of Christ). The way of discipleship is the way of the cross; it leads to the death of everything in this world including the self-life.

In the Key Parable of “The Sower and the Soils” (Matthew 13:3-23) is all about how the condition of the heart determines the progress and quality of the disciple. At its core, discipleship is about dealing with those things in the heart that block the flow of *Agape* in the life of the disciple. As the old dies out, the new is being revived day-by-day. **Dying to self** is the process of rooting out those things in the heart that prevent the disciple from reaching maturity in Christ by *Abiding* with the Master. **Reviving the heart is goal**; as the disciple dies to the self-life the reign of God in the indwelling presence of Christ is established in their heart:

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

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that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” **Ephesians 2:1-10**

God’s *Agape* Creates a Longing and Intention Towards Him

“God is not only the origin of the command to love; He is also the source to release that love. He does not give love as a gift; He gives Himself because He is the source of *Agape*. The Son is the begotten of *Agape* Incarnate. The Holy Spirit is the manifestation of *Agape* proceeding from the father and the Son. Love, biblically understood, is a longing and intention toward another person, object, or experience. God’s *Agape* creates a longing and intention toward Himself – He is the One who retains the initiative. *Agape* does not need to be discovered or observed. It absorbs our own failure as well as the failure of others; it seeks to be there in someone’s need or crisis; it depends upon truth and faithfulness; it functions as a team in mutuality; it seeks to build up, release, and encourage. *Agape* is an inner authority that is not controlling or possessive. One cannot receive God’s command to love and remain unchanged.” Bob Mumford, *Agape Road: Journey to Intimacy with the Father*, Destiny Image Pub., Shippensburg, PA, © 2002, 2006 p.49

The first thing to realize about a true heartfelt *revival* is that it leads us to living by the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. However, until the disciple has truly met Jesus Christ who is *Agape Incarnate*, they are still “dead in their trespasses and sins” and therefore cannot be “*revived*.” A student cannot be *revived* until they are first made *alive*. Therefore, technically speaking, evangelism centers on bringing the unsaved *to Christ* in the first place. Revival centers on bringing the disobedient saved person (or community) **back to Christ**.

The Purpose of Revival Is to Cause a Daily Consecration and Renewal.

The purpose of **evangelism** is *conversion* or *rebirth* (John 3:3-5); this first coming to Christ graces the new believer with eternal life. The purpose of **revival** is to cause a daily **consecration and renewal** in the inward life of the disciple. These later occurrences grace the believer with “the power of the resurrection” which is a renewed life of enduring fellowship with Christ and His body. We must never strive to produce revival in our students without the assurance that they have already

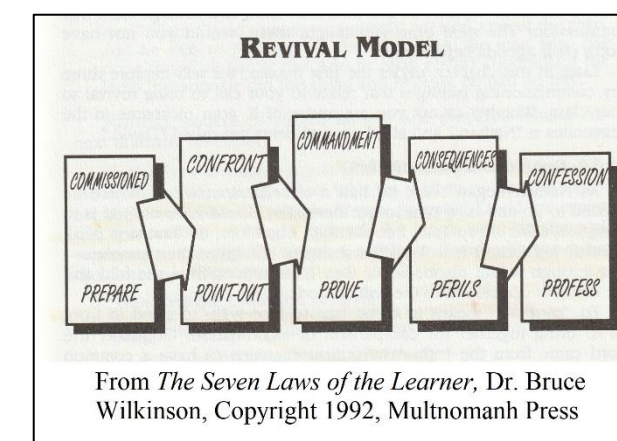
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received Christ and become “children of God” by believing in His name. This is why the mysteries of the kingdom are not intended for those on the outside, but are only for disciples (Matthew 13:11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-8; 4:1; Ephesians 3:8-12; Colossians 1:27)

STEPS TO BRING A CHRISTIAN TO FULL LIFE IN CHRIST

Seminary teachers should not make the mistake of assuming that their students are Christians just because they come from a Christian family, or appear to be Christians by their speech. (And students should not assume that just because someone is teaching at a Christian College or Seminary that they are saved and walking in the light, love, and life of Christ.) Jesus comes looking for the “fruit” of revival in the heart, not for the outward conformity to religious doctrines or seminary degrees.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to know their disciples’ **heart conditions** and know whether *Evangelism* or *Revival* is the appropriate content. Jesus the Master Teacher gave us the model to bring back to full life those who once were spiritually alive, but have stopped growing or have slipped back into sin and rebellion. A careful study of Jesus’ interactions with His disciples will discover He had a purposeful method to bring revival in His disciples when necessary.



In his book, *The 7 Laws of the Learner*, (Copyright © 1992, Multnomah Press, Sisters, Oregon) Dr. Bruce Wilkinson included a lengthy chapter on this topic. In that chapter he laid out the five-steps. The teacher who successfully applies Jesus’ method of bringing revival in His disciples will follow. This five-step process will bring back to full life a Christian who has fallen into sin and is living in known

disobedience to the Lord. But always remember that when dealing with the souls of men, it is never as simple as following a process of 1, 2, 3... This model is to be used for general guidelines only because every person is an individual and not everyone responds to these steps in the same way.

Step 1: Commissioned. Jesus made it very clear that the Father had sent Him and that He was commissioned by God the Father to speak to the nation (See John 4:34; 6:38; 7:16; 8:16; 9:4; and 17:3). “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the

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Father has sent me, I also send you.” (John 20:21). Everything about Jesus’ birth, baptism, temptation in the Wilderness, and ministry of miracles was intended to prepare Him for His mission to **seek and save the lost** and **make disciples** to fulfill the Great Commission. They confirmed to the nation that He truly was the Son of God, was sent from God, and as such had the authority to speak the Word of God to them: “This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’” John 3:2

Wherever Jesus went, the Scripture says that the people were astonished or amazed at His teaching, “for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:29). And because Jesus has all authority, He is able to pass that authority on to whomever He chooses (Matt. 16:17-19).

The teacher, preacher, ministry leader, etc., first and foremost, must be **commissioned by God** to speak with authority into the life of another believer. It is not the Seminary degree, or a particular denomination’s certificate of ordination that gives that authority, but being “sealed” (possessing and bearing the “authenticating stamp” of the presence of God by the Holy Spirit) that gives one disciple the authority to speak revival to the life of another (John 20:21-22).

Step 2: Confront. One misses a very important part of Jesus’ ministry if they lose sight of the fact that for over three years a key part of His prophetic ministry to the nation of Israel was to *confront* a people who were in rebellion against God. At that same time, Jesus was gathering to Him those who were willing to repent and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The Gospels make it clear that as soon as Jesus returned from the Wilderness and began to teach and preach in public, His message was, “**Repent**, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus. His ministry was to prepare the people for the coming of their Messiah. John’s message was a message of *revival* in order to prepare the hearts of the people for the eminent arrival of the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the nation of Israel and the world.

Jesus’ ministry was one long, confrontation with the religious leaders who were deep in the rebellion of unbelief. This rebellion caused by hearts filled with sinful pride, and self-righteousness, which not only prevented them from receiving *Agape* for their themselves but also made them stand in the way of and exclude others from the Lord’s kingdom of *Agape* (Matthew 23:13). As we follow Jesus through the Gospel narratives, we see Him like one of the Old Testament prophets, confronting a rebellious nation through His parables, sermons, and in His confrontation of the religious leaders.

Confrontation is not easy for anyone, but the Lord admonishes all of us to “speak the truth in love.” Do you fear God or the rejection of men? (Matthew 10:28; Galatians 1:10). We must hold each other **accountable** to God for if we allow anyone to continue in sin, teaching false doctrines or living in rebellion against the Lord it will only make matters worse for them spiritually, will impact their family, and disturb the whole body of believers. Paul had to deal with this issue with the Corinthian church. The entire church was out of order and Paul had to sternly address several critical issues before they destroyed the whole church there. For confrontation to be effective it must be:

- **Direct, specific and true**
- Always use the **specific biblical word for the sin** (Do not move beyond this step of confrontation with a person before they openly admit his/her sin. If the person is unable to confess his sins to you in private when you are confronting him, he probably cannot confess it to God.)
- And most important of all, confrontation must be **motivated by brotherly love**. If you do not love that person unconditionally as Jesus loves them, then your confrontation will fall upon deaf ears. It will be met with resistance, mistrust, and drive them deeper into sin and rebellion.

If you do not love them as Jesus loves them, then your motives will be tainted by self-righteousness and spiritual pride. See to it that you remove the log from your own eye before you attempt to remove the speck from your brother’s or sister’s eye (Matthew 7:3-5). Apart from a genuine love and concern for their well-being, the teacher’s ability to forgive and restore them to the Body will be seriously hampered. Apart from love, they will most likely place certain “strings” or conditions upon them before being accepted back into full fellowship.

Step 3: Commandments. Revival is intended to bring the disciple’s life back in alignment with the Word of God and not with the traditions or words of men. When we study the Gospels, we will discover that Jesus’ teachings from the Sermon on the Mount are important to understanding that God is primarily concerned with the inner life of the disciple and not just with an outward conformity to the Law. Jesus’ teachings from the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere can be summed up in these few words: “Agape is the fulfillment of the Law.” Revival is intended to bring the heart back into alignment with the **“greatest commandment”** to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength; and to love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater revival purpose for reviving the heart than that, but it takes the transforming power of the resurrected life to achieve it.

Step 4: Consequences. “Consequences are simply the negative reasons why a person should not commit a sin. In the book of Proverbs, you can read many consequences which repeatedly picture how foolish it is to choose evil. The greater the feeling of anticipated pain, the less power that temptation exerts... Nathan’s presentation of consequences so overwhelmed David that he immediately broke and confessed his sin.” (Bruce Wilkinson, *The 7 Laws of the Learner*, Multnomah Press, Sisters, OR © 1992, p.350).

Jesus was not shy about warning those who refused to believe that they would be cut off if they did not believe (Note the parables of the Wicked Tenants, the Fig Tree, and Wise and Foolish Builders). For consequences to be effective besides the obvious consequence of breaking our communion with God, they must also address:

1. Consequences to **ourselves**
2. Consequences to **our immediate family**
3. Consequences to **the Christian community**
4. Consequences to **the community at large**

Step 5: Confession. Confession is where Jesus wants to lead those who are in sin and rebellion. Jesus presented the offer of revival to the nation of Israel, but they refused, and for the most part rejected His call to revival. Eventually, they rejected Jesus Himself. This is the reason why those who start on this journey of being a kingdom disciple must deal with the strongholds and other issues of life that threaten their walk with Him. No doubt, in the beginning Judas never thought he would ever betray Jesus, but after years of refusing to repent and confessing his hard and sinful heart, he found himself selling out his Lord for a few silver coins. But for those who do see their need for revival, Confession is the first step in the right direction; it is the turning away from sin and rebellion and heading towards complete revival and restoration.

One of the greatest and most often quoted passages in the Bible concerning Revival is 2 Chronicles 7:14 “...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

One of the most often overlooked truths about revival is the necessity to meet certain conditions before revival can come. **Transformation of the heart** is the work of the Holy Spirit; it begins when the disciple turns to God in prayerful repentance and, as King David did after his great sin, asks the Lord to “Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).

Yes, we must pray for revival, but revival will not come to a heart that is unwilling or unprepared to receive it. It is only natural that we want our Father God in heaven to hear our cries for help and deliverance, to forgive our sins, and to bring healing. However, we cannot expect for that to happen apart from a broken and humbled heart that leads a person to abandon praying for material blessings and start praying only to know God intimately (face-to-face).

Revival will not come because we teach someone to follow a step-by-step process that tells them “How to do it.” It will come only after the disciple **repents and turns from their sins** and obeys the Word of God. Salvation is far more than a one-time confession of sins and a lifetime of bathing in God’s material blessings. Salvation means to pick up your cross daily, die to yourself, and follow Him. Then and only then will true transformational revival of the heart come to an individual, a family, a church, a community, or a nation. We can pray and proclaim 2 Chronicles 7:14 for our nation as much as we please; we can hold rallies in stadiums; we can paste the verse on our car, wear it on our clothing or jewelry, etc. but it will not come before there is a genuine outpouring of national repentance with a heartfelt cry from individual disciples for God to return to the midst of His people.

Making kingdom disciples requires the teacher to lead their students by example. None of us are perfect, sinless human beings and so we all need to develop a transparent lifestyle of **mutual accountability**. We are all accountable first to the Lord and then to each other. This is something King David forgot when he pursued Bathsheba. Because of their prominent positions, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers can harm many Christians if they fall. Therefore, James wrote, “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.” (James 3:1-2).

Because of their influence, the Lord puts the responsibility of teaching for transformation squarely on the shoulders of the teacher. Jesus instructed His disciples how to treat a believer who sins: “... if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector” (Matthew 18:15-17).

These guidelines were meant for:

1. **Christians**, not unbelievers
2. **Sins committed against you** and not others
3. **Conflict resolution** in the context of the church, *not* the community at large.

Nor are these guidelines intended to be a license to attack others in the church, or to start a destructive gossip campaign against someone. They were intended for **Revival** for, “if he hears you, you have gained your brother.” Galatians 6:1 adds: “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”

Master teachers recognize that they have the responsibility not only to teach the word but to **repair and restore** any of their students from the damage wrought by sin: “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.” (James 5:19, 20)

By taking the initiative, praying for the person, and acting in love, we can meet the person where he or she is and bring them back to God where they will find His forgiveness and restoration. This is the essence of revival that transforms us by the power of Christ’s resurrection.

Since *Evangelism* centers on bringing the unsaved individual or community to Christ, it involves conversion or new birth. However, *Revival* centers on bringing the **disobedient but believing** individual or community back to Christ, and therefore, involves **consecration or renewal**. We make a great mistake when we strive to produce revival in our students without the assurance that they have already received Christ and are born again children of God (John 1:12). Until they have met Jesus Christ, the Bible says they are still “dead in their trespasses and sins” and therefore cannot be revived until they are first made alive in Christ.

As already stated, Christians are not immune to sin. But 1 John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Therefore *Revival* must not be presented as a one-time “event” or annual “meeting” but must be taught as part of the **ongoing journey** of walking in Christ’s resurrection – in the light, love, and life of “Christ in you.” The theological term for *Revival* is **Sanctification** (the process of acquiring sanctity, of being made or becoming holy). True revival is not a special event to hold annually in church meetings, but it is something that must be sought continuously by disciples who are in the process of being made – transformed into a holy vessel in the Lord’s service. So anytime a Christian who is overtaken by any trespass, turns from their sin and rededicates their life to the Lord *Revival* takes place.

We fail to make disciples when we tell Christians that Jesus loves them no matter what – that they can go on sinning because God’s grace will abound to them: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ

Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” **Romans 6:1-8**

When we skip over sanctification and promise rewards in heaven, we turn our churches into sheep pens that feed unrepentant sheep on Sunday mornings. Our churches become hospitals for sinners who are always being treated for symptoms, but never being cured of the disease. Teachers that cater to the feelings of their students will not want to communicate the spiritual reality that they have to go through the crucified life to reach the glory of the resurrected life in Christ. Being a disciple of the kingdom means walking in the footsteps of Jesus; and as we all know the footsteps of Jesus led to Calvary. This is not the easy way. It is not the broad way. The life of the discipleship is found only by entering by the narrow gate and following Christ no matter what the cost (Matthew 7:13-14).

Because dying to self is a difficult and long journey filled with many mountain tops and valleys along the way, the master teacher understands that each of their disciples may fluctuate in and out of fellowship. Sometimes they fail the test and stumble or fall, but Proverbs 24:16 reminds us that, “...a righteous *man* may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity.” Therefore master teachers will look for any signs of spiritual need in their students and must be ready to teach and guide their students to revive the heart whenever it is needed.

Questions for Lesson Ten

1. What does the process of making disciples for *life-change* mean?
2. What kind of life does a true heartfelt *revival* lead us to?
3. Why is it essential for the teacher to know their disciples’ heart conditions?
4. Describe the model for true revival that Jesus gave us to revive those who need to be brought back to full life in the Spirit?
5. Why is Revival needed by most disciples most of the time?

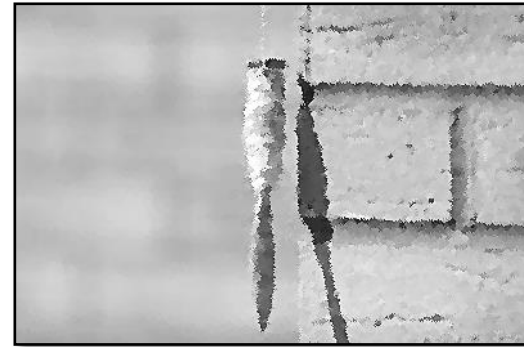
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REVIVING A NATION

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Revivals are not limited by geography, numbers, or stage of life
 - a. Revival is a Corporate Responsibility
 - b. The Holy Spirit can use anyone at any time to bring a revival.



II. True Revival Is More Than Modifying Bad Behavior

III. Revival Of the Heart Is the Work of The Holy Spirit

- a. Revival is Needed by Most Disciples Most of the Time

REVIVALS ARE NOT LIMITED BY GEOGRAPHY, NUMBERS, OR STAGE OF LIFE

“Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Return to Me,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I will return to you,’ says the LORD of hosts.” **Zechariah 1:3**

The biblical record and the history of the church demonstrate that revivals can occur in:

- An individual
- A family
- A small class or group
- A church
- A town, region, or a whole nation

The Old Testament book of Nehemiah is often used to express the meaning of revival. Nehemiah 2:11–20 can be used to show how people can be renewed by having a shared vision for God’s work. Nehemiah had a vision for rebuilding Jerusalem after the long exile of the Jews was over. He shared that vision with passion, inspiring Jerusalem’s inhabitants to rebuild its ruined walls. He took the time to make sure his vision was clear and compelling and then he told them, “You know full well the tragedy of our city. It lies in ruins, and its gates are burned. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and rid ourselves of this disgrace!” He told them about how the hand of God had been with him when he asked the king of Persia to let him return to the city and rebuild it. The fire of his vision ignited the people he gathered around him, and they responded at once, “Let’s rebuild the wall!” So they began the work.

Christian leaders often underestimate people and do not challenge them with inspiring dreams and broad visions for God’s work in the world. God planted a vision in His disciples for reaching the ends of the earth with the “good news” of salvation; it is a vision that has yet to be fulfilled. When the Holy Spirit plants an idea the mind of someone to accomplish something great for God, they should share it with others and prayerfully trust the Holy Spirit to impress them with the same vision.

Christians often make the mistake of thinking that they are only one through whom God is working. However, often God gives a person a vision for something that is impossible for one person to accomplish. He does this because it is important for His church to work together in unity to accomplish His will. One person may express the vision, but God uses others to turn it into reality. A valuable lesson from Nehemiah is when the Holy Spirit is moving, He encourages and inspires others to join the work. God will gift leaders who use teamwork to put into action everything needed to accomplish His goals. (See HANDOUT “Vision”)

Revival is a corporate responsibility. One of the Old Testament concepts that is lost in modern cultures is the concept or principle of **corporate responsibility in the moral and civil life of the community.** Corporate guilt or innocence were reflected in the moral and civil laws of Moses.

In Moses’ account of the covenant curses found in Leviticus 26, God indicated the linkage between the sins of the forefathers and the sins of the contemporary generation in the punishment. For example, verse 39 states, “And those of you are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies’ lands; also in their fathers’ iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.” Because of this corporate responsibility for sins committed, the children are to confess both their own sins and the sins of their fathers: “But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers... then I will remember my covenant with Jacob... I will remember the land” (26:40-42).

The book of Proverbs reminds us that “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” (14:34); and because Jesus said, “blessed are those who mourn...”, Christians believe that for a national revival to occur, it must begin with a genuine brokenness over the sins of the nation. “We need to be so broken that we will confess the sins of God’s people as our own. This is what Daniel did (Daniel 9:3-19). He was not personally guilty of most of the sins he catalogued. But he identified himself so closely with the nation of Israel that their sins became his sin. In this he reminds us, of course, of the One who ‘took our sins and our sorrows and made them His very own.’ And the lesson for us is that instead of criticizing other believers and pointing the accusing finger, we should confess their sins as if they were our own.” (William MacDonald, *True Discipleship*, p.131). This is where we discover the key to national revival: taking corporate responsibility for the sins of the people and grieving over those sins as if they were our own.

The Holy Spirit can use anyone at any time to bring a revival. Therefore, the master disciple-maker must prepare his disciples for revival. The discipler must pray and plead for revival in every context of their life, in the lives of their students, and for the nation as a whole.

An individual needs revival for only one reason: **personal sin**. True Repentance is more than an acknowledgement of sin; it first requires the disciple to remove himself from the sin, and then return to the Savior where freedom from sin is found. “Here is the problem: every minute spent on working on the past is another minute lost to the present moment. The present is on standby when we live in the past. Sure, there are legitimate issues for us to deal with from our past. But addressing these things needs to be done intentionally and with the goal of moving beyond the past. The only way our past can become an asset is for us to use it as a teacher. The past becomes an asset when we use it as a springboard to launch us into the future.” (David Cooper, *Unfinished Business*, Charisma House, Lake Mary, FL, © 2013, p.17)

“A highway shall be there, and a road,
And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean shall not pass over it,
But it shall be for others.” **Isaiah 35:8**

The only way to revive a nation is for the people of that nation to seek reconciliation with God through the cleansing and forgiveness at the foot of the cross. It is there where all sins are “washed away” by His precious blood. This is God’s way of releasing a person or a nation from the past and setting them back on

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the highway to holiness. Revival allows us to continue on our journey of becoming all that God wants us to be in Him.

As a pastor, teacher, and discipler our roll of restoring our students is never complete until the disciples’ behavior aligns with the Word of God with full obedience in love. This is how Jesus the Master disciple-maker taught His disciples, and if we are to be like Him, then we too must do the same.

Revival is undeniably related to the need for a turning away from sin. It can be argued that any so-called revival that does not begin with a powerful move of repentance from sin and is not saturated throughout with a renewed zeal to live a sanctified life in Christ is not a genuine revival. When significant sin is soundly defeated in a believer, then genuine “fruit of repentance” will become evident (Matthew 3:8). The lack of sanctification was the fatal flaw of the false revival led by Eli’s sons Phinehas and Hophni in 1 Samuel chapter 4 – that revival ended in disaster for the nation.

TRUE REVIVAL IS MORE THAN MODIFYING BAD BEHAVIOR

The story of King Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 30:1–31:21 tells us that without a true, heartfelt brokenness over sins, modifying bad behavior is not enough to sustain a revival from generation to generation.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: King Hezekiah oversaw the changes throughout all Judah. Doing what was pleasing and good in the sight of the LORD brought the blessings of God upon Him and the nation (2 Chronicles 31:20–21). All that the King did in the service of the Temple of God and in his efforts to follow the law and the commands, Hezekiah did wholeheartedly. However, as soon as Hezekiah died, his successor, Manasseh “did evil in the sight of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 33:2) and the nation quickly followed him into idol worship and all the sins associated with it.

Although Hezekiah did “what was pleasing and good in the sight of the LORD his God,” His son, Manasseh had to learn the hard way that we are renewed by obeying God. After much suffering, Manasseh learned the lessons of Hezekiah:

- **He remembered God’s compassion** (30:9).
- **He kept going** despite being ridiculed for calling upon the nation to repent of their sins and return to the Lord (30:10).
- **Hezekiah was determined** to remove all evil influences from his life (30:14; 31:1) so that he could see clearly to address his people’s need for repentance (Matthew 7:1-5).
- **He interceded for the people**, asking for the Lord’s pardon (30:18–20).

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- **Hezekiah encouraged the Levites** to lead the people in heartfelt worship (30:22-23), and then contributed generously to work so that all could come and worship the Lord (31:3).

If any of these lessons are lacking in your teaching ministry, consider how you might apply them and teach them to others so that all may renew their commitment to God.

A surface revival that does not go deeper than modifying bad behavior will miss the point of dealing with those deeper spiritual issues that choke out the joyful heart and quench acts of service (Matthew 23:23-28). Worldliness, prayerlessness, and the endless distractions of an entertainment-fueled culture like America do more spiritual damage to Christians on a daily basis than the obvious sins of breaking the Ten Commandments. Kyle Idleman in his book, *Not a Fan* told this story: “Several years ago I heard the testimony of an elderly missionary who was returning from the foreign field to the United States to live out the days he had left with his married daughter in the Midwest. Upon arriving on the California coast he boarded a bus to begin his trip across the country. The first night the bus stopped in Las Vegas. He had been out of the United States for more than thirty years. He had never been to Las Vegas. He checked into a hotel and took a walk down the strip. Although it was close to midnight, it looked like midday, because of all the lights. As he walked down the strip he heard loud music, saw the amazing hotels, and even went to a car show where he saw the world’s finest automobiles. He saw the games being played in the casinos and heard the money coming out of the slot machines. He saw the marquees announcing the amazing entertainers. He saw the drink specials announced and the amazing food advertised in the restaurants. Eventually he went back to his room in the high-rise hotel where he was staying. He entered the room but didn’t turn on the light. He walked across the room and opened the curtains. In the quietness of his room he got on his knees in front of the window, and looked down at the Vegas strip, then into the more impressive lights of the heavens, and prayed this prayer, ‘God, I thank you that tonight I haven’t seen anything I want more than I want you.’” (Copyright © 2011 by City on a Hill Studio, LLC, p.136)

A similar story to Idleman’s story of this nameless missionary can be found in Matthew 4:1-11. In this event from the life of Jesus, He was offered all the kingdoms of this world in exchange for His Father’s kingdom (the price for worshiping Satan). Jesus said in essence, “No thanks. Nothing you have to offer compares with the Kingdom of heaven.” It takes a surrendered heart set upon seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness to resist the temptations and distractions this world offers.

The spiritual dynamic of living by the power of the resurrection within is that it takes the private and internal change of heart to produce a public and external change in behavior that will last a lifetime. Jesus, the Master Teacher was always on the lookout for spiritual fruit in the lives of His disciples: “A bad tree cannot produce good fruit... neither can a good tree produce bad fruit... by their fruits you shall know them” (see Matthew 7:17-20). He is the vine; we are the branches; apart from Him we cannot bear fruit. Revival restores our broken relationship with the Lord and reattaches us to Him, the true vine. Once the heart is revived, His resurrected Life flows into the spirit unhindered by “every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us.” The fruit of the Spirit is manifested in our life as we experience a zeal for God and His kingdom being renewed on a daily basis as we “run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

When Jesus led His disciples Peter, James, and John to the mountain where He would be transfigured in front of them (Luke 9:28–36), near the end of the experience, Peter, not realizing what he was saying, exclaimed, “Master, this is good! Let us make three shrines—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Peter is like so many believers who believe miracles are enough to cause people to worship the Lord. But Jesus would not allow them to remain on the mountain and immediately they were led back down to the village below where ministry was needed. “We are renewed through being active in ministry. Peter, James, and John experienced a wonderful moment on the mountain, and they didn’t want to leave. Sometimes we too have such an inspiring experience that we want to stay where we are—away from the reality and problems of our daily life. Knowing that struggles await us in the valley encourages us to linger on the mountaintop. Yet staying on top of a mountain prohibits us from ministering to others. Instead of becoming spiritual giants, we would soon become dwarfed by our self-centeredness. We need times of retreat and renewal, but only so we can return to minister to the world. Our faith must make sense off the mountain as well as on it.” (Neil S. Wilson, *The Handbook of Bible Application*, Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., © 2000, 509).

REVIVAL OF THE HEART IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

True revival is born of the Holy Spirit; it is an internal, spiritual process that ultimately realigns the disciple with his:

- **God**
- **Others (family, church, friends)**
- **Himself**
- **And the world around him.**

The problem with Christians who do not regularly revive the heart is that over time, the trials and temptations of life tend to build resistance to the work of the Holy Spirit within. Most Christians are content with the Lord making a few minor modifications of their behavior, but when it comes to allowing the Holy Spirit to dramatically change the course of our life, most Christians will refuse. But Jesus wants to turn our lives upside down. Fans don't mind him doing a little touch-up work, but Jesus wants a complete renovation of the heart. Most Christians are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to rearrange the spiritual furniture where they live, but Jesus wants to completely remodel us – tear us down and remake us new from beginning to end. Disciples must open themselves up to inspection by the Holy Spirit and allow Him to expose the hidden places of the heart before revival can take place. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit separates out those who are just curious observers of the Christian life and those who have truly been born again of the Spirit.

It is easy to “give to Jesus” those things that are obviously destroying us – the dysfunctional relationships, the illegal drugs, the alcohol, and the dangerous and immoral behaviors that plague us. But when it comes to surrendering the good things that this life has to offer, it becomes an entirely different story. The point at which non-disciples turn away is the point where following Jesus might actually cost them something of great value. But Jesus says to them, “... whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:33).

Jesus was in constant conflict with the Jewish leaders of his day because they used their religion to produce an outward conformity to the Law while their unrevived hearts were opposed to the Lord. They were more than willing to give up idols, and make other concessions to maintain their religious purity, but when it came to pride, envy, greed, wrath, and other sins of the heart, they were violently opposed to Jesus' efforts to expose their sins and root them out.

Jesus' confrontations with the religious leaders of the Jews were intended to shine the light of truth that says efforts of outward conformity apart from a heart surrendered to God will only lead to a form of pharisaical legalism. If students are unwilling to allow the Holy Spirit to renovate their hearts, eventually that will discourage and defeat both teacher and student. Both must face the fact that ultimately, **reviving the heart is the work of the Holy Spirit in a heart surrendered to God.** The teacher can only encourage and build the need in the heart of the student for genuine life-change. The teacher can equip and prepare the student for a life of ministry, but in the end, it is up to the student to take that step of total surrender and follow Jesus no matter the cost.

Jesus, the Master Teacher knew that the Holy Spirit must work from the inside out to produce Revival of the heart, which then leads to true repentance and the fruit of righteousness. The world tries to impose change from the outside; it strives for behavior modification based upon cultural norms. Jesus ignored that strategy and taught His disciples, “You must be born again.” That is what He taught the Pharisee, Nicodemus. And in His Sermon on the Mount He expressed the same thought: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Making kingdom disciples means the teacher should encourage an **ongoing personal revival** in students' lives.

Revival is absolutely needed by most disciples most of the time. There is nothing to be ashamed of or to be embarrassed about. It is only the self-righteous and deceived that believe they do not need the resurrection power of Christ to walk in the way, truth, and the life. The Christian's relationship to the Lord should be central to their life. However, at any given moment, most Christians are struggling over some sin or temptation in some area of their life. Therefore, we must make revival one of the top priorities when we teach. “You see one of the greatest challenges of today is that many people who have been made citizens of the kingdom look, well, like citizens of the world. Yet King Jesus is making a new people who live like *his* people. They are changed to be agents of the kingdom because they live differently – that's a mark of being a kingdom citizen. And it changes us. It changes the things in our lives. Jesus is unapologetic to connect who you are in Christ with how you live for Christ. Those things matter.” (Copyright © 2012, Ed Stetzer, *Subversive Kingdom*, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, p.109)

Those who study revivals in history often discover that intense, and persistent private prayer followed by corporate public prayer almost always precedes a revival. In the Great Awakenings in America in the 18th and 19th centuries, the revival tents that sprang up were always following the flames of revival that had already begun in small towns and communities across the American landscape. Prayer is what ignites the fires of revival – not the other way around.

Therefore, not only must the master teacher pray for revival, but they should also encourage their students to join and pray with them. The parable of “The Persistent Widow” (Luke 18:1-8) is often understood to mean that if we persist in prayer God will give us whatever we ask for because if a godless judge can respond to constant pressure, how much more will our great and loving Father God respond to us? However, if we read on from verse 8 and study “The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector” (verses 9-18) in context of the first eight verses, a picture emerges of a God that we can trust and believe hears our cries for help. When we repent, persistently and humbly seeking Him for Revival, He will hear us.

“Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner.” Is the heart's cry of the sinner who returns home forgiven. For the proud heart shall be humbled, but the humble of heart

shall be honored: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:3

Those whose hearts are set on being and making disciples intuitively sense that something is wrong when their church is filled with people who have not changed their attachments to **worldly pursuits**:

- They may talk the spiritual talk of the church but live like everybody else around them that never goes to church.
- Their goals in life and value systems are little more than Christianized versions of what the world values.
- They give their loyalty to earthly governments and value their worldly citizenship over their citizenship in the kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of heaven is for people who have been liberated from slavery to sin to be slaves to righteousness and servants of God (Romans 6:15-19). The big challenge for the master teacher is to find **meaningful and effective ways** to lead their students to the place where they too can see that something is lacking in their spiritual life; and then make them ready to repent and enjoy Revival in their hearts. Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus contain several instructions urging these young ministers to urge believers in their care to stay away from false teachers and to hold to the faith handed down to them from Jesus Christ and His chosen apostles. This is especially hard to do when Christians have the attitude that the kingdom is all about them having the best of everything and want to live like privileged children. Immature believers will resist any move of the Holy Spirit to bring genuine Revival in their heart; but God is looking for disciples who will not give up and persist in prayer for Revival to take place in their heart and in the hearts of others.

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” **1 Timothy 4:12–16**

Charismatic Christians tend to over-spiritualize revival. They often look for huge dramatic leaps of faith with signs and wonders falling from heaven like winter snow in Alaska. But more often than not, if revival is going to last longer than a single season it must be accompanied by the knowledge and practices of some basic

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spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines are not complicated or difficult for any believer to master; they are simply to **read and study your Bible** every day, **walk by the Spirit** and not by the flesh (obey God’s commandments), and **pray without ceasing**.

The carnal mind looks for and expects big changes to happen in dramatic fashion. We think of revivals in terms of big evangelistic meetings with signs, wonders, and fantastic healings. However, that is not where revival of the heart takes place; it happens when the still, small voice of the Spirit speaks to the inner man who is listening and waiting on God. “Small strides are actually God’s deliberate design for effective growth. It’s how his kingdom happens. Jesus was born in a manger in a little town on the backside of nowhere, and today more than a billion people on the planet consider themselves his followers. That’s kingdom economy. A mustard seed ‘Becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches’ (v. 32). Little by little it produces shocking, unexpected growth until ‘birds of every kind will nest under it’ – representing all the nations of the world – ‘taking shelter in the shade of its branches’ (Ezek. 17:23).” (Copyright © 2012, Ed Stetzer, *Subversive Kingdom*, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, p.39)

When revival comes, it will come more like an invitation than a random wave. Some might point to the Day of Pentecost in Acts as sudden and unexpected, but keep in mind the fact that Jesus had prepared His disciples for what was coming. He had given them instructions to wait for the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem. They were gathered together in prayer and worship waiting for the promised arrival of the Holy Spirit – although they did not know exactly how that was going to be manifested.

The call for revival is similar to the call for salvation because in both instances it requires a specific call for that moment. If the disciple decides to take a “pass” on the invitation for revival, only God knows when or if that call will come around again. “Whether we are calling one or one thousand to repentance and revival, we must invite them clearly and with a sense of expectancy and urgency... Because of the desperate struggle our students face, you and I must invite them to return to the Lord with great courage and unwavering resolve. Our courage must lend immediate strength. Our confidence in the Lord must carry them through their Red Sea.” (Bruce Wilkinson, *The 7 Laws of the Learner*, Multnomah Press, Sisters, OR © 1992, p.385).

John the Baptist is a role model for making a passionate plea for Revival. He lived uncompromisingly and refused to sugar-coat his words to make people think they could go through the outward motions of repentance without demonstrating the fruit of that repentance. Preparing the way for the Savior to bring revival to the heart is not for the timid or for the man-pleasing teacher.

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Satan hates true, heartfelt revivals; he is not bothered by a thousand converts, but when one of them becomes a true disciple and the Holy Spirit starts to bring revival in their soul, the devil will move against that person. Teachers need to understand that intense spiritual warfare will be required of them for each of their students. Students must also be mindful of the fact that their walk with God will not be without opposition.

Revival is directly opposed to the work of our enemy, the devil; it involves radical actions of pulling down strongholds, uprooting those thorns and tares in the heart that choke out the Holy Spirit, and taking back what the enemy of our souls had captured. Therefore, we must expect revival to be met by strong resistance from Satan. In this world, we will always have tribulation, but Jesus says, "...take heart for I have overcome the world." Every disciple needs to be armed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to win the battle against the "mighty powers in this dark world" and fully revive the heart for life-change.

Jesus said that it is the Spirit who gives life and the very words He has spoken to us are spirit and life (John 6:63). Our proper response to the justification we have received by grace through faith is to lay ourselves before the Lord as a clean vessel committed to Him as the Lord of our life, which is **sanctification**. Discipleship is the means to that end. Sanctification is the inward work of revival by the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple. Because it is the work of the Holy Spirit, sanctification also comes by grace through faith as we humbly submit ourselves to Him as our Lord and Savior.

Jesus, the Master Teacher would not settle for the mere transfer of information. He came for the **transformation of individuals** into holy vessels containing the power and presence of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Kingdom Discipleship means we are to be master teachers like Jesus. To make disciples like Jesus, we must first become disciples like Jesus by joining our hearts with the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to cleanse us (sanctify) through a process of being renewed (revived) day-by-day. And once cleansed, with the heart motivated by pure *Agape*, disciples can be committed to teaching God's truth God's way without the flesh getting in the way:

"Whenever revival is openly discussed, I almost want to take off my shoes, for the bush is burning and I sense we are standing on holy ground. Whatever applications we may make, whatever needs we may address, whatever found when we take the heart of the student and place it in the hand of the Lord. How precious are those teachers whose hearts join with the heart of the Lord to 'seek and restore those who have strayed.' Why not pause right where you are and make sure your heart

is prepared for this ministry of revival?" (Bruce Wilkinson, *The 7 Laws of the Learner*, Multnomah Press, Sisters, OR © 1992, pp. 388-389)

Questions for Lesson Eleven

1. The biblical record and the history of the church demonstrate that revivals can happen on different levels. Review Nehemiah 2:11–20; how important was Nehemiah's vision for rebuilding Jerusalem?
2. When preparing for ministry, how important is Jesus' vision for building the church? (Note Matthew 28:19-20; and Mark 16:14-18)
3. Why do individual Christians need revival? And what happens to those individuals when their leaders in the church do not encourage revival?
4. What is the greatest challenge of the master teacher for his students?
5. Do miracle signs and wonders mean revival in the hearts of believers is taking place? Explain your answer.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 201-12 KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

Parts of this lesson were taken from: *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Kingdom Disciples* © Frederick Osborn

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR DISCIPLESHIP

Lesson Outline for the Students

- I. Why The Way of Being a Disciple of Jesus Christ Is Not Taken.
 - a. We Do the Abiding; God Does the Making.
- II. The Process of Choosing and Calling Disciples
 - a. Christ Chooses Us Before We Choose Him
 - b. Four Phases of Being and Making Disciples
 1. Salvation
 2. Service
 3. Sending
 4. Sacrifice
- III. The Rewards of Discipleship



WHY THE WAY OF BEING A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT TAKEN

“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master.” Matthew 10:24–25.

In these lessons on Kingdom Discipleship we saw the problem that for far too many Christians, the way of being a disciple of Jesus Christ is not being taken. The truth that Christians are supposed to be and act like Jesus brings us to ask the question, why are Christian leaders (pastors and teachers) not encouraging and teaching Christians the essential teaching of Jesus that His followers must be like Him?

Being a disciple is only part of what we have been called to; we have also been called to “go and make disciples.” This is the Great Commission: being salt and light to the world as we make disciples of those who respond to the call of God. The intended result of being salt and light to the world is to go and make disciples. Disciples-making-disciples is an integral part of Kingdom Discipleship because disciples must teach and be taught all that Jesus taught to His very first disciples.

Those who are more mature in Christ and who are further along in the process of being like Christ are the “trailblazers” who teach and train other disciples to follow Christ. The fulfillment of the Great Commission will only happen if the leaders equip, educate, and encourage disciples to: (1) go and evangelize the lost; (2) baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and (3) teach them to observe (obey) all that the Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples.

Christian leaders who are like their Master, do not study the ways of Jesus the Master Teacher just so they can create clever formulas for preaching a sermon or to provide step-by-step instructions for people on how to act like Christians. They study Jesus’ methods of teaching to learn the most effective ways to keep their students on the right road of being transformed in love into the image and likeness of God. In other words, they learn from Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher how to teach others to be true disciples of His. It all comes down to the fact that it is Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, who does the actual “making” (John 16:12-15). The Holy Spirit is the One that identifies those things that obstruct the Lord’s work of reviving the hearts of His people (John 16:8-11). All the disciple does is respond in faith and remove those obstructions to revival (the sins of the flesh). Disciples make disciples by teaching and sharing with others what it takes to become more like Christ, which is the same way others taught us. **We do the *Abiding*; God does the *Making*.**

In its fullness, being a disciple of the kingdom is about *becoming* and *teaching* disciples like Jesus. Disciples-making-disciples is Jesus’ chosen method of advancing His kingdom on earth until His 2nd Coming. It is the only way the church will ever fulfill the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20. If we fail at this, we fail at everything we have been called to be and do.

THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING AND CALLING DISCIPLES

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to

nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption – that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.” **1 Corinthians 1:26–31**

When we examine closely how Jesus selected His disciples who would later become His chosen Apostles, we see that Jesus followed a specific strategy for calling those He wanted to follow Him.

Before entering the phases of being and making disciples, it is important to understand through it all that **Christ Chooses Us Before We Choose Him**. In the Psalms we read:

- “But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts.” (22:9)
- “I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You have been My God.” (22:10)
- “By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother’s womb. My praise shall be continually of You.” (71:6)
- “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb.” (139:13)

In the New Testament we see specific examples of the Lord choosing someone before they chose Him. In John chapter one, Jesus has already had His first encounters with Andrew, John, Peter, and Philip. After Jesus found Philip, Philip found Nathanael and told him he had found the Messiah. Nathanael was skeptical at first but followed Philip to Jesus. Jesus saw Nathanael and said, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” When Nathanael responded, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” (John 1:43–48).

The Four Phases of Being and Making Disciples

When we study closely the way Jesus selected and prepared His disciples for ministry, it will give us the strategy we should adopt for our ministry of disciples-making-disciples.

Jesus did not select randomly those who would eventually become His first Apostles. And most of those Jesus chose did not immediately abandon everything and start following Him. His first disciples found Jesus near the beginning of His

public ministry by the Jordan River near where John the Baptist was baptizing and preaching (John 1:35-51 describes this first phase). Andrew and Philip were disciples of John the Baptist. They heard John say “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Andrew found Simon (Peter) and introduced him to Jesus. After he returned to Galilee, Philip found Nathanael and introduced him to Jesus. **This is the first phase of their calling: SALVATION.**

Jesus told Nicodemus “You must be born again...” and then spoke of His sacrifice for the sins of the world. (John 3:1-21). He gave Nicodemus (and everyone who hears the gospel of salvation) the truth that salvation comes by faith (to whoever believes) in the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. This makes SALVATION the first, essential step to being a disciple. Teachers must make sure those they are preparing for a lifetime of being a disciple who is able to make disciples are saved in the first place. Before they can follow, students must believe that the one they are following is who He said He is: the Son of God. Before they can take their next step, students must believe with all their hearts that there is no salvation in any other, “for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

The first stage of the disciples’ call does not involve full-time discipleship. The Gospels indicate that although the disciples heard Jesus’ teachings on salvation and believed in Him, they were not ready to leave their homes, families, and professions. The Gospels still describe them at their work – such as fishing and mending their nets.

Luke chapter 5 details Jesus calling his disciples to leave everything and follow Him. **This is the second phase of their calling: SERVICE.** Jesus takes Peter and Andrew out on the Lake for a miraculous catch of fish, then He tells Peter, “From now on you will be catching men.” Luke informs us that as soon as they brought their boats to land, “they left everything and followed Him.” Matthew adds that when their partners, James and John, saw the miraculous catch of fish, they “Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him” (Matthew 4:22). The next person Jesus calls to leave all to follow Him is Levi, a tax collector. We are not told when or how Levi knew who Jesus was, but it is obvious that Levi understood what it meant when Jesus said, “Follow me” because without any further instructions, Levi left everything and followed Jesus.

The Call to Service is the most intense step of faith any disciple will take. It is the call to serve Jesus Christ with the whole heart, mind, soul and strength. It means making Jesus Christ and His kingdom more than first place in your life; it means making Jesus Christ and His kingdom the **only** priority in your life. Nothing else and no one else comes close. Jesus said it this way:

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” **Matthew 6:19–24**

Serving God does not mean that we have to live a life of poverty and need. It does not mean that we must live alone like wandering hermits without a spouse, children, or friends. But it does mean that to truly serve God, we must be prepared to let go of anything or anyone that hinders our Master-disciple relationship with Jesus. It is quite possible that many of the people who know us will not understand or accept this change in lifestyle that we take, but take it, we must if we are going to follow Jesus wherever He leads us and enter the next phase of our calling.

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.” **Luke 6:12–16**

Matthew chapter 10 gives us the greatest detail of Jesus preparing His disciples for apostleship.

NOTE: The word *apostolos* (GR ἀπόστολος) literally means, “one sent forth”: *apo*, “from,” + *stello*, “to send”. (Source: *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*)

This is the third phase of their calling: SENDING. It was at this point in their training that Jesus selected for apostleship from those who believed in Him for salvation, and who were committed to serve God with their whole hearts. Jesus gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease (10:1). He gave them specific instructions and sent them out on a test mission. “Throughout this phase of their training, the Lord Himself stuck closely with them. He was like a mother eagle, watching the eaglets as they began to fly. They were always checking back with Him, reporting on how things were going (cf. Luke 9:10; 10:17). And after a couple of seasons of evangelistic labor, they returned to the Lord and remained with Him for an extended time of teaching, ministry, fellowship, and rest (Mark 6:30-34).” (John MacArthur, © 2002, *Twelve Ordinary Men*, the W Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, pp.4-5)

At this same time, Jesus began to prepare them for the persecution that would come. “I’m sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves...” (Matthew 10:16-25). Christian ministry is not an easy road for most apostles. It would be wonderful if disciples were only sent to safe, comfortable places where Christians were well-fed and gave their tithes and offerings faithfully to make sure the pastors and leaders of their church would live in nice houses, drive new cars, and retire with fat bank accounts. But that is not the reality for the overwhelming numbers of those around the world who have been called to reach the unreached to the ends of the earth.

Jesus sent His disciples out with only the clothes on the backs and instructed them not to accept any pay for their ministry. Once Jesus entered full-time ministry, He never looked back. He had no home to call His own – no mortgage, no business, nothing to tie Him down. Jesus would not turn away from His followers even for His own family (Matthew 12:46-50). His disciples knew completely how their Master Teacher lived. So they knew what He was asking of them when He told them, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master...” (10:24–25_a).

This is a difficult phase for most Christians to bear, which is why so few are willing to accept it. Some may even be offended by the teaching; some may accuse you of setting an impossible standard for being an apostle of Jesus Christ. But Jesus often encountered people along the way who thought they wanted to follow Him, until they heard His terms of discipleship (Luke 9:57-62). But that is the purpose of this phase: are you willing to serve the Lord with your whole heart and hold nothing back? At what point will you say, “Sorry, Jesus, but you are asking too much of me.” and turn back? But Jesus says to all of us, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

This leads us to the fourth phase of their calling: SACRIFICE. Why do so many pastors, preachers, teachers, and ministry leaders burn out or fall away?

Some Christian leaders have gone the way of Judas and betrayed the Lord, telling the world that Jesus is a fraud, that the Bible is full of mistakes, and that the Gospels cannot be trusted. If disciples are not prepared for the hardships that accompany the vast majority of “sent ones” (missionaries), they will quickly fall away when trials, troubles, or persecutions happen to them. This is why perseverance is an essential quality for anyone who wants to minister in the name of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.” **Romans 5:1–4**

The Apostle Peter wrote similar words to encourage Christians:

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” **2 Peter 1:5–8**

Peter went on to say that perseverance through trials makes our call and election sure. “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

For Christians in the early church, and for most Christians around the world today, the call to apostleship (being sent into all the world to disciple the nations) is, in effect a call to sacrifice and suffering – even to the point of martyrdom. We know from the writings of the early church that after the resurrection, the remaining eleven chosen Apostles experienced martyrdom. The Apostle John miraculously escaped the attempt on His life but was exiled on the Isle of Patmos. Most of the early church fathers faced punishment or death, but they accepted their suffering as necessary for the sake of the gospel. Ignatius the Bishop of Antioch wrote to the church in Rome on his way there as a condemned prisoner: “The Christian is not the result of persuasion, but of power. When he is hated by the world, he is beloved of God. For says [the Scripture], ‘If ye were of this world, the world would love its own; but now

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ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it: continue in fellowship with me.”

The church has grown from its small beginnings into a mighty tree (Matthew 13:31-32) largely in part to the enduring sacrifices of countless unknown missionaries who carried the gospel message of salvation beyond their comfort zones to the unreached nations: “Despite the obstacles they faced, they triumphed. In the midst of great persecution and even martyrdom, they fulfilled their task. Against all odds, they entered victorious into glory. And the continuing witness of the gospel – spanning two thousand years’ time and reaching into virtually every corner of the world – is a testimony to the wisdom of the divine strategy.” (John MacArthur, © 2002, *Twelve Ordinary Men*, the W Publishing Group, Nashville, TN, p.5)

THE REWARDS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus warned His disciples before sending them out that sacrifice was not an option: they would all face the world’s hatred and would be persecuted. However, Jesus also promised rewards for following Him.

Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.” So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Mark 10:28–31

When Jesus spoke to His disciples about the cost of following Him, the disciples were perplexed and asked among themselves, “Who then can be saved?” Hearing them, Jesus looked at them and said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”

Jesus never promised to provide His disciples with more than what they needed for each day. His Sermon on the Mount was very clear: “Seek first the kingdom of heaven,” and all these things (the necessities of life mentioned in the previous verses) will be provided by the Father’s hand – no more and no less is guaranteed.

It is a not popular teaching, but if we are going to be honest with the people we are discipling, then we must ask them, “Will you follow Jesus Christ even if it costs you your house, car, your career, and your family and friends turn against you?”

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The fact is more people in this world live in nations where becoming a follower of Jesus will most likely cost them their livelihood, their standing in the community, and maybe even their life.

For the true disciple of Jesus Christ, seeking the kingdom of God is more than a priority, it is all-consuming. The commission to “go and preach the kingdom of God” without compromise and without equivocation will cost you *everything*; it is not an option (Luke 9:23-27). It is for this reason that so few enter the narrow gate of discipleship. And it is for this reason that so many shrink back from the inner circle of the Master’s followers and melt back into the crowd (John 6:66).

Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.” (John 6:53). It was a hard saying then, and it is a hard saying today. Those who are looking only for the things of this world to sustain them will lose their taste for God’s presence. Jesus never gave us the option to serve both God and mammon – it must be one or the other. To serve God with a whole (undivided) heart will cost you everything (Luke 14:33). And for most, that is just too high a price to pay.

But for those who are willing to lay aside every weight this world places upon our shoulders, who will put aside the sin that so easily ensnares us and run with endurance the race of faith in Jesus Christ alone will experience the true joy that is waiting for us beyond the cross of shame that disciples share with their Lord (Galatians 2:20).

Following Christ as a faithful and true disciple means leaving behind everything this life values most, but His promise is we will not have to walk this life alone. Disciples may lose one house, family, or a set of friends, but they become part of a new family of believers (the church). Disciples learn from the Master how to share what little they have with one another. When the church functions as it is supposed to, disciples discover the truth that they received a hundredfold of what was left behind:

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” **Acts 2:42–47.**

Today’s so-called churchianity has the entire process turned upside down. Christians are encouraged to give to build bigger structures for well-paid clergy to administrate an ever-growing bureaucracy designed to feed itself. The crumbs left over are used for social works or missions that are designed for self-promotion of the church. This is exactly like the Pharisaical system that Jesus stood against (Matthew 6:1–8).

Disciples may lose the love of this world, but they will not be abandoned; they will be given a new, expanded family. Jesus demonstrated this from the cross. His mother and His closest disciples witnessed firsthand the hatred this world has for the Son of God and His followers, but with His dying breath, Jesus introduced them to their new family: “When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your mother!’” (**John 19:26**). The Apostles understood this; Paul wrote to the church:

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” **Ephesians 3:14–19.**

Only those who have learned the secret of forsaking all to follow the Lord will have the joy of discovering they have lost nothing but have gained everything. In fact, it is only by living for the kingdom of heaven that those who have left “house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands” for Jesus’ sake will receive a hundredfold in this life and even more in the life to come. However, the promised blessings do not come without persecutions too. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:17–18). **The trivial and momentary sufferings experienced for Christ will only multiply the joys in the Messianic age to come and for all eternity.**

Therefore, disciples take heart because they know that many who are first in this world will be last, and those who are the least – the persecuted, downtrodden,

forgotten, and poor by this world's standards – will be first in the kingdom of God. It is not those who have accumulated worldly wealth and who are showered with awards and accolades in this life that will be at the head of Christ's table. It is those who have humbly and selflessly forsaken all in this life for the sake of Christ who will be given the places of honor at the great Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.” **John 12:24–26**

The secret of the abundant life in Christ is discovered in the parable of the falling seed. Jesus revealed the truth to His disciples that the disciple who holds onto this life and all it offers, remains alone. But it is in the dying – the letting go of what we think we have – that our life will produce a plentiful harvest of new life. Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will live abundantly in the Spirit and keep their life for eternity. To be where Christ is, we must follow His lead and serve God and others – not for our sakes, but for theirs. By dying to the old Adam, we live in the new Adam: Christ (Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-49). We are His seed, a living body of believers who truly live where Christ lives: “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.” (**John 14:1–4**). As the church we have received a hundredfold of houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands now and in the kingdom of heaven to be revealed in its fulness at the end of the age.

Questions for Lesson 12

1. Explain why the way of being a disciple of Jesus Christ is not taken.
2. Before discipling others why is it important to understand the principle that “We do the Abiding; God does the Making”?

3. What are the four phases of discipleship? Briefly describe each one.
4. Why is it so important to encourage all believers to count the cost of being a disciple of Jesus Christ before attempting to disciple them?
5. Explain how the parable of the falling seed relates to the being and making disciples of Jesus Christ?



Rev. Dr. Frederick Osborn traveled the world teaching and preaching the Word of God. His first trip to South Asia was in 2001, and since 2005 he has been fully involved in ministry. Currently he volunteers his time on the mission fields of South Asia and around the world as a speaker and lecturer, distributing Bibles and biblical resources to pastors, evangelists, and ministry leaders. His books and study guides have been used in classrooms by hundreds of students.

In 2013 he earned his M.Div. from Andhra Christian Theological College in Hyderabad, India and in that same year was officially ordained into the ministry in a holy convocation administered by Indian pastors representing AG, CSA, and other independent ministries. In 2017 he completed his D.Min. from Covenant Bible College & Seminary, Florida, USA. He and his wife, Deena, now live near Atlanta, GA where he continues to preach, teach, write, and publish his books and study guides.

Books Written by Frederick Osborn

1. *Church Planting Movements – India*
2. *Daniel: Kingdoms in Conflict*
3. *Deceived! Overcoming the Age of Mass Deception*
4. *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Disciples Like Jesus*
5. *Disciple- to-Disciple: Making Disciples Like Jesus, Study Guide*
6. *Exploring the New Testament*
7. *Exploring the Old Testament: Vol. One – The Pentateuch*
8. *Following Christ on the Indian Road: A Missionary's Story of Discipleship*
9. *From Genesis to Revelation: Interpreting the Book of Revelation Through the Old Testament Scriptures*
10. *Healing Miracles of the Bible*
11. *Jesus Over India: A 52 Week Spiritual Journey Through the Heart of India*
12. *Judges: A 21st Century Prophetic Commentary*
13. *Keys to Effective Faith: Living by a Faith that Can Move Mountains*
14. *Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming Like Jesus*

15. *Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming a Disciple Like Jesus, Study Guide*
16. *Kingdom Economics*
17. *Living in Dystopia: A Christian Guide Victory in an Orwellian World*
18. *One Holy Passion: A Daily Devotional Guide for 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting for the 1040 Nations*
19. *Our Jehovah Rapha: A Christ Centered Holistic Approach to Wellness*
20. *Reviving A Nation*
21. *Seven Laws of Dying to Self*
22. *Spiritual Lessons for the Grafted-In*
23. *The Apocalyptic Vision: Understanding the Apocalyptic Writings of the Bible*
24. *The Blood*
25. *The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements*
26. *The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements- Study Guide*
27. *The Gospel of John: Speaking Truth to Power*
28. *The Gospel of Salvation*
29. *The Gospel of Salvation: Study Guide*
30. *The Healthy Heart*
31. *The Holy Spirit in You: Nourishing the Life of Holiness and power in You*
32. *The Keys to Effective Prayer*
33. *The LGBTQI Community and the Church*
34. *The Legacy of Women in the Bible – Study Guide*
35. *The New Reformation: An Assessment of the New Apostolic Reformation from Toronto to Redding*
36. *The Physics of Heaven: The Theology of the New Apostolic Reformation*
37. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: John the Apostle's Heavenly Vision of Christ the King*
38. *The Spirit of Religion*
39. *The Way, the Truth, and the Life: the Teachings and Ministry of Jesus the Messiah*
40. *This Gospel of the Kingdom*
41. *This Gospel of the Kingdom – Study Guide*
42. *To the Heart of the Nations – Prayer Journal*
43. *Twelve Woes*

Supplemental Handout Materials

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 201-1

THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP

There are six specific terms of discipleship that Jesus said were for everyone who truly wanted to follow Him as their Lord and Savior. These commands were covered in detail in lessons 106-6 through 106-12 in this curriculum. Before setting out on the way of discipleship, Jesus said, “count the cost” (Luke 14:27-30).

1. A Supreme Love for Jesus Christ (Luke 14:26)
2. A Deliberate Choosing of the Cross (Luke 14:27; Matthew 6:19-24)
3. A Life Spent Following Christ (Luke 14:28; 9:57-62)
4. A Fervent Love for All Who Belong to Christ (Luke 14:26; 12:46-50)
5. An Unswerving Continuance in His Word (Luke 14:27; Mark 8:34-38)
6. Forsaking All to Follow Him (Luke 14:33-35; Matthew 5:13; 6:24; 6:33; 7:13-14)

HANDOUT
DISCIPLESHIP 201-8SEVEN UNIVERSAL MOTIVATORS

1. **Describe the need in a factual presentation.** Informed students are able to understand the need; *information* motivates the student to respond.
2. **Express the need through storytelling.** Jesus was the Master Storyteller. Parables and *stories* motivate the student by allowing them to identify with the need.
3. **Increase the need through your delivery.** How you say something can often have more impact than what you say. The intensity of body language, tone of voice, range of gestures, eye contact, and speed of speaking are effective builders of *emotion* which motivates the student.
4. **Sensitize the need through drama, music, and dance.** Students are inspired by an artistic presentation of the need. *Inspired* students are motivated students.
5. **Exhibit the need with a diagram.** A blackboard or flipchart can become a moving picture of the concepts you are discussing, engaging the imagination of your student; *imagination* inspires your students.
6. **Symbolize the need with a picture.** A drawing, photograph, painting, video, power point, or pictures can build the need dramatically. *Illustration* provides visual motivation for the student.
7. **Demonstrate the need through action.** Jesus' every move was observed by His students. As they saw Him respond to the needs of others it motivated them to do likewise. *Action* motivates the student.

HANDOUT
DISCIPLESHIP 201-8PRACTICAL METHODS TO FIND THE NEEDS

How the master teacher uncovers the students' felt needs may be done in the following ways:

1. Direct Method

- Ask direct questions
- Low-key (informal) interviews
- Anonymous Questionnaire
- Personal visits to the student's home or work
- Interaction with family members
- Personal observation

2. The Indirect Method

- Books
- Magazines and Newspapers
- Research studies and polls
- Individuals interacting with the public

3. The Need Inventory - Develop a Need Inventory for your class based upon:

- Key need areas (temptations, sin, family problems, fears, persecutions, education, etc.)
- Time references (what are the needs the student has faced, is facing, and will face)
- The roles they play (husband/wife, father/mother, friend, boss, employee, child, grandparent, widow, etc.)
- Major categories of life (physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and financial)

NOTE: It is important to distinguish between ministering to the need, felt need, or ministering to the feelings of the believer. Feelings are extremely influential over much of what we do.

Right or wrong, feelings have a powerful influence over everything that humans do. Psychologists define a *felt need* as "something that is experienced

consciously that may relate to a sense of deprivation or a discrepancy with the affective ideal.” As often as not, what a person experiences as a felt need is a real need. For example, if a natural disaster strikes and destroys a person’s home, there is no difference between their felt and real need to have their home rebuilt. However, much deeper than needing a new home, may be a need to rebuild and restore trust in the Lord in the heart of the person who lost their home.

There are many such examples of real needs and felt needs intersecting, but it is often the case that a person’s felt need is not their real need. The felt need of the woman at the well in John 4, was water from the well; the real need was *living water*. The woman did not need a beautiful sermon on how the Israelites were given water from the rock in the Wilderness. She needed life-giving water of the spirit-filled life.

Our difficulty as teachers comes when our students are so focused on their felt need that they are missing what their real need is. Some preachers only want to cater to the felt needs of their congregation. They may feel that what they need most of all is health, wealth, and prosperity, but their true spiritual need for transformation into the image and likeness of Christ is lost on them. They may feel good every Sunday morning after hearing a sermon telling them that Jesus loves them no matter what and that being good is good enough for them to slide into heaven, but that most certainly is not good enough. If Jesus’ teachings on loving your neighbor and taking care of the poor, sick, elderly, orphans, and widows in distress among us is emphasized as the proof they are truly Christians, the pews can become awfully uncomfortable places to sit on Sunday mornings. Preaching on Sunday mornings what Jesus preached to the Laodicean church (Revelation 3:14-22) may clear out a church, but those who are left will be the ones who truly want to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

Jesus often spoke to both the felt need and real need, but the felt need was as often as not the place where he began. Making disciples sometimes means we need to zero in on the real need and raise it to the level of a felt need – that process is sometimes called “building the need” or “surfacing the need.” A good message will often do that. People come to church on a Sunday morning, and they don’t start out with transformation as a felt need. But when you teach for *life-change*, by the time you’re through with your sermon or Bible study lesson, you will have addressed the real need in your text. When we are making disciples like Jesus we will speak to the real need behind every felt need, and if successful, we will raise the real need for spiritual *transformation into Christlikeness* to the level of a felt need for every disciple.

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 201-11

VISION

*This is what the sovereign Lord says,
"The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled."
(Ezek. 12:36b)*

VISION COMES FROM GOD. It is God who initiates a vision, not us. When God's people start with God's vision, they can more easily maintain direction and keep their motives pure. (Ezek. 11:24; Ob. 1:1; Micah 1:1)

IDENTIFIES STRENGTHS. The vision that comes from God will fit God's people. God's vision will match the specific skills and strengths – along with the needs and desires – of those chosen to fulfill the vision. (Psalm 89:19; Acts 18:9; Acts 26:19-23)

SOLIDIFIES ETERNAL VALUES. The vision that comes from God will strengthen and reinforce the godly values. Values like holiness, righteous obedience and love will increase in the character of the person who follows the vision. (Gen. 15:1-6; Dan. 10:1-19)

INCLUDES OTHERS. God's vision always involves and blesses others. God blesses His people with vision in order that we become blessings to those who have not experienced the fullness of God's salvation. (Acts 11:1-18; Acts 16:9-15)

OVER AND ABOVE HUMAN CAPABILITIES. The vision that comes from God will be beyond human ability. A vision that does not need God is too small. God's vision should go far beyond our wildest dreams and involve more than one person's lifetime to fulfill. (Gen. 15:1-6; Gen. 46:2-4)

NARRATE THE VISION. The vision that comes from God will be tangible and easily communicated. When God gives His people a vision, He will give them a tangible way to understand the vision and the ability to communicate the vision so that others will become a part of the vision. (Gen. 22:17-18; 1 Sam. 3:15-17; 2 Chron. 32:32; Ezek. 11:24; Dan. 10:14; Hab. 2:2)

By: Frederick Osborn

HANDOUT
DISCIPLESHIP 201-12

Recommended Supplemental Reading for Being and Making Disciples

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