

THE MAKING OF A DISCIPLE

BY KEITH PHILLIPS

WORKBOOK



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The Making of a Disciple Workbook
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Unconscious Influence

"Then went in also that other disciple". John 20:8

A footrace on Easter morning
Brought Peter and John to the tomb;
John reached it more quickly than Peter,
Yet entered not into its gloom.

Peter, breathless, and spent with his running,
Arrived within seconds of John;
He entered at once where the grave-clothes
Mutely told him his Master had gone.

No words spoke Peter, enticing,
No argument did he begin;
Scarce thinking, he set the example,
And the other disciple went in.

We, too, hurry on in life's footrace,
We jostle and outrun our brother;
But often the simplest action
Will determine the course of the other.

We seek to dispel by our logic
The ground of another man's fears;
Our actions are far more impressive,
He can see much more than he hears.

In running life's race toward heaven,
I am hoping some brother to win,
And when I shall enter its portals,
May still another disciple go in.

-- Rev. J. A. Robb

CHAPTER ONE

Story

Consider the simple breakfast meal of bacon and eggs. There were two animals necessary to provide this meal for you. However, the chicken is only involved. The pig is committed. The chicken gave her eggs. The pig gave his life.

When it comes to your faith, are you more like the chicken or the pig?

What difference does it make as a disciple to be involved versus committed?

Taking it a step further, with commitment you are the one still in control. With surrender, you have given up the control. On this scale, where would you place yourself when it comes to your relationship with Jesus?



Make Disciples, Not Converts

Many people in the city have "accepted Christ" or "believe in Jesus" or "been saved," yet their lives do not often reflect this. They still do drugs, sleep around, live with addictions, belong to gangs, steal, and live violently. Many people have been led to accept Christ or pray the sinner's prayer, but have never been taught what it means to be a disciple, or follower, of Jesus.

Many churches preach the gospel, baptize, teach Sunday School and have outreaches. Yet the streets they exist on remain unchanged. What could be the problem?

The process of making disciples was the only strategy that Jesus left with which His disciples could win the world. The Great Commission, Jesus' last words in the gospel of Matthew, was to make disciples of all nations.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 28:18-20.

What were Jesus' actual words in His Great Commission?

What are our main responsibilities as followers of Jesus?

- 1.)
- 2.)
- 3.)
- 4.)

What is the difference between just teaching what Jesus commanded and *teaching to obey* what Jesus commanded?

Who is a convert?

Who is a disciple?

What is the difference between a convert and a disciple?

What is the difference between Jesus just being our Savior versus being our Lord?

Churches are on many street corners in the city, and some streets have multiple churches within a block of one another. Since this is the case, why are the streets and the neighborhoods so violent, broken and dirty?

Application

Memorize Matthew 28:18-20.

Think of an area in your life in which you have not given Jesus control. Pray and open yourself up to the possibility of surrendering that area this week.

CHAPTER TWO

Story

Let's suppose that on January 1 you are flying over Kansas when the plane explodes. Your body falls to the ground and you are dead on impact. Before long a farmer discovers your corpse. There is no pulse, no heartbeat, and no breath. Your body is cold. You're obviously dead. So the farmer digs a grave, but by the time he places your body in the earth, it is way too dark to cover it. Deciding he will finish in the morning, he returns home. Then Jesus comes to you and says, "You are dead. Your life on earth is over. But I will breathe into you the breath of new life if you promise to do anything I ask and go anywhere I send you." Your immediate reaction may be, "No way! That's unreasonable. It's slavery." But then you realize that you are not in a good bargaining position, so you quickly come to your senses. You agree. Instantly, your lungs, heart, and other vital organs begin to function again. You come back to life. You are born again! From that point on, no matter what Jesus asks you to do or where He asks you to go, you are more than willing. No task is too difficult, no hours too long, no place too dangerous. Nothing is unreasonable. Why? Because you have no claim to your life. You are living on borrowed time, Christ's time. You died on January 1 in a Kansas cornfield.

How does this story make you feel?

Would you make this deal with Jesus, if it actually happened to you like in the story?

Read Galatians 2:20. When was a time when you "died to yourself" and obeyed Jesus?

"A great paradox of life is that there is tremendous freedom in this death. A dead man is no longer concerned with his own rights, his independence or the opinions of others." What do you think about this quote, referring to the above story?

What Is Discipleship?

The philosopher Plato was a disciple of Socrates. Aristotle was then a disciple of Plato. Plato founded the Academy, which taught philosophy and science for 900 years. Their influence on Western thinking remains significant to this day.

This kind of modeling takes place all the time within families. Think of traditions, family recipes, or even patterns of abuse that continue unbroken for generations. The same can be said for fraternities, sororities or gangs.

Discipleship is an effective tool for persuasion, life change, and even cultural and global transformation.

“A disciple is a student who memorizes the words, actions and lifestyle of his teacher in preparation to teach others.”

Cycle	Disciples
1	12
2	24
3	48
4	96
5	192
6	384
7	768
8	1,536
9	3,072
10	6,144
11	12,288
12	24,576
13	49,152
14	98,304
15	196,608
16	393,216
17	786,432
18	1,572,864
19	3,145,728
20	6,291,456
21	12,582,912
22	25,165,824
23	50,331,648
24	100,663,296
25	201,326,592
26	402,653,184
27	805,306,368
28	1,610,612,736
29	3,221,225,472
30	6,442,450,944

Table 1

“Christian discipleship is a teacher-student relationship, based on the model of Christ and his disciples, in which the teacher reproduces the fullness of life he has in Christ in the student so well, that the student is able to train others to teach others.”

The two essential elements to Christian discipleship are *self-death* and *reproduction*.

The Great Commission has exponential growth built into it, as 12 disciples multiply themselves, which in turn yields 12 more, and these 24 multiply themselves, and so on into multiples of 12 many times over.

In Figure 1, the first generation of disciples are a group of 12 (the blue circles); the second generation yields 12 more (the red circles) for a total of 24; these 24 in turn yield 24 more (the yellow circles) in the third generation for a total of 48. If we follow this pattern to its logical end, we can see that even if we were to start from scratch today (say, 12 disciples) and took a complete year to disciple someone else, within one generation (30 years), we would have discipled the entire world’s population (see Table 1)!

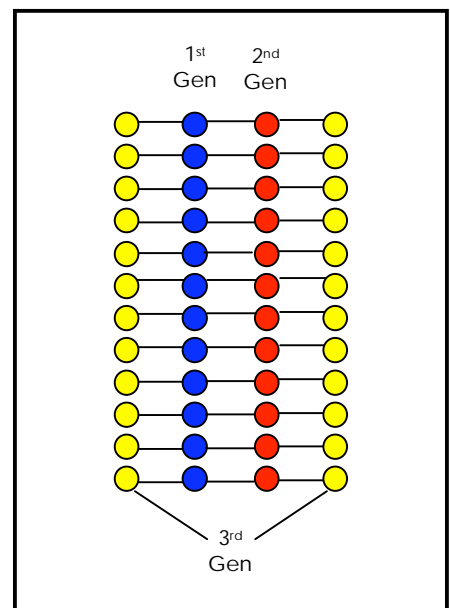


Figure 1

Reflection and Discussion

Read Luke 9:23-24 and II Timothy 2:2.

How often do you deny yourself for the sake of obeying Jesus?

Think of some examples of great sacrifice that you have made or others have made. Under what circumstances, or for whom, do people usually make these sacrifices?

What is the difference between bearing fruit and multiplying (Genesis 9:7)?

Think of people in your life who have influenced you the most. How did they do that?

Application

Memorize Luke 9:23-24 and II Timothy 2:2.

Think of one person whom you could be thinking of, and praying for, to disciple.

CHAPTER THREE

Story

A music-label executive was told by a friend that he had a lead on a great new band that was playing in town. The band was regularly making a minimum of \$1000 in weekend gigs, and were having trouble keeping up with the demand for bookings. At the friend's request, this label representative went to the club to hear this mystery band that might be the NEXT BIG THING. After the band got set up and the crowd was ready, the music started and the crowd went crazy. The rep walked out after two songs. He had heard enough. Why? The band only played cover songs of other bands. Sure, they may have looked the part. They played the same songs as the stars with the same instruments, and they may have even played them better. But the music label will never sign them to a deal, because they are not the real thing. They are fake.

If you had a choice to see the real band play or a cover band that played the same songs, whom would you see? Why?

How Do You Know If You Are a Disciple?

Who you are is more important than *what you do*. You can act the part and do the right things for a while, but if you lack character, and your relationship with God is not authentic, you will eventually be found out. If, however, you focus on who you are in Christ, on your relationship with Him, being endeared to Him and letting the Holy Spirit transform your character, then the deeds will naturally follow. In other words, it is possible to "do" good works without "being" a disciple, but it is impossible to "be" a disciple without "doing" good works. We need to focus on who Jesus wants us to be first in order to ensure both the being and the doing are happening.

The evidence of your spiritual authenticity is the presence of Christ-like character.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 7:15-29.

The first story above and the story from Matthew contrast people who DO the right thing with people who ARE the right people.

What kind of fruit is Jesus talking about in Matthew 7?

How do you tell if someone is truly a disciple?

What are the fruits of the Spirit?

What kind of disciple is God looking for: a talented individual lacking character or submission, or a simple servant surrendered to God? Obviously the latter. If this is the case, what area should we be spending more of our time developing?

Application

Memorize Matthew 7:21 and Philippians 3:8.

The Holy Spirit often uses people to help us grow in Christ-like character. Ask your discipler who has helped him or her develop Christ-like character. Share with your discipler some character traits and fruit that you believe the Lord wants to grow in you. If you have trouble finding areas, ask your discipler for help.

CHAPTER FOUR

Story

"At the village church in Kalinovka, Russia, attendance at Sunday school picked up after the priest started handing out candy to the peasant children. One of the most faithful was a pug-nosed, pugnacious lad who recited his Scriptures with proper piety, pocketed his reward, then fled into the fields to munch on it.

"The priest took a liking to the boy, and persuaded him to attend church school. This was preferable to doing household chores, from which his devout parents excused him. By offering other inducements, the priest managed to teach the boy the four Gospels. In fact, he won a special prize for learning all four by heart and reciting them nonstop in church. Now, 60 years later, he still likes to recite Scriptures, but in a context that would horrify the old priest. The prize pupil, who memorized so much of the Bible, is Nikita Khrushchev, the former Communist czar.

"As this anecdote illustrates, the "why" behind memorization is fully as important as the 'what.' The same Nikita Khrushchev who nimbly mouthed God's Word when a child, later declared God to be nonexistent--because his cosmonauts had not seen Him."
(Parade Magazine, February 11, 1962)

From Khrushchev's memoir we read, "I am not a religious believer, and the Bible is not an authority for me. I never did recognize it as an authority even before I joined the party. I always was an atheist."

How is it possible to memorize God's Word and not believe in God?

How much of what you know about the Bible do you apply personally to your life and your decisions?

Think of how many music artists you know who rap or sing about God and Jesus, wear a cross, were raised in the Church, and yet also glorify promiscuity, materialism, violence, drugs and alcohol in their lyrics and lives.

How much do people pay attention to how we live our lives versus what we claim?

Does the life you live on a regular basis back up what you say you believe?

Obedience

One mark of being a disciple is being obedient to Jesus. Using our definition of

discipleship, one cannot “reproduce the fullness of life he has in Christ” unless he is living as Christ did and as He asks us to do. Jesus said (John 14:15, 21 and 23) that if we love Him, we are to obey His commands.

Although much of our time in church and at conferences and retreats is about teaching us so we can gain more knowledge, knowledge is seldom our problem. Most of us, if not all of us, are educated beyond our obedience. We need to be marked by obedience to what we know, not by knowledge of what to obey.

Knowledge is important though. Otherwise, how can we know what to obey? Through knowledge of the Word of the Lord, we can know His heart, His will and His commands.

We also must *will* to obey God’s Word, even before we know what it says. We must commit ourselves to doing whatever we discover He is asking. Often this will run counter to what we *feel* like doing, but if we have died to ourselves, this will not matter.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Romans 12:1-2, John 14:1-24 and Psalm 119.

Describe the feelings that the author of the Psalms has for God’s laws (the Bible).

What is the best way to discern God’s will, according to Romans 12?

When you come to a difficult decision in your life, what steps do you use to make the decision? Are there ways you can change this process to be more Christ-like?

How does Jesus determine someone’s love for Him?

Do you feel this is an accurate measure of someone’s love?

Application

Memorize John 14:21 and Psalm 119:9-11.

With your discipler, apply the principles of the Bible to some decision you have to make this week and follow through with that decision.

CHAPTER FIVE

Story

A man was miserable with a cold. After suffering for a few days, his wife finally convinced him to go to the doctor to get a diagnosis and, more importantly, a prescription. After visiting the doctor and getting the prescription, the man went home. A few days later, the doctor's office called to follow up on him.

"How are you feeling?" the nurse asked.

"The same," replied the man.

"Have you been taking your medication?" the nurse followed up.

"Well, no. I didn't even fill the prescription from the pharmacy," he said.

"Well, what's the problem? Don't you trust the doctor's diagnosis?" the incredulous nurse queried.

"Sure I do," said the man, "I just don't want to do what he says."

"Well if you want to get better, you have to take the medicine the doctor prescribed!" the nurse declared.

"I believe you, and I trust the doctor, I just don't want to take it. I'm afraid it won't work," the man finally concluded.

Does this man really trust the doctor?

Can you obey someone you don't trust? What about trusting someone whom you won't obey?

What is the relationship between trusting and obeying? What about the relationship between trusting and submitting?

Submission

Submission to Christ's authority is another mark of a disciple. We need to learn to

submit to Jesus, *to trust Him*, if we desire to please Him. The Pharisees in the Bible, the religious group that Jesus had the most trouble and frustration with, were good examples of people who obeyed God (at least on some level) but did not submit to Him. They followed the letter of the law, but their hearts were far from Him, and their motivation and hearts were not submissive.

Authority is directly related to submission. In the military one is expected to submit to one's commanding officer. There is a strictly-defined order of rank and authority. If you break this line of authority, you have to pay the consequences. In our lives as followers of Jesus, He is our commanding officer. He declares His authority in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) when He says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you." Here we have the authoritative Jesus commanding us to go and represent Him. He delegates His authority to us. As a result, even the demons must submit to us in Jesus' name.

Authority is exercised through servanthood. Jesus modeled this for us, and He taught it when He said that whoever wants to be great must be a servant, and whoever wants to be first must be a slave. Godly authority is not meant to be a power trip or a tool to use to force our will or way.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Luke 7:1-10, Romans 13:1-5 and Hebrews 13:17.

What are the benefits of being under someone's authority?

What are the most difficult areas in your life to submit to God?

Can you think of people in your life to whom you have joyfully submitted? What made it easy to submit to them? What about those to whom it has been difficult to submit?

Application

Memorize Matthew 20:25-28.

Think of a person in your life to whom you need to submit and ask God to help you do that joyfully this week.

CHAPTER SIX

Introduction

Jesus taught, "Do to others what you would have them do to you." This has become known as the "Golden Rule." There are many versions of the "Golden Rule." From the following list of some of the major world religions, notice the differences and similarities.

Buddhism: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

Confucianism: Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.

Hinduism: Do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

Islam: None of you believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.

Judaism: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Taoism: Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.

With the exception of Judaism, which is at the root of Christ's teachings, these are all either the negative phrasing of what Christ calls us to or a passive phrasing. What Jesus calls His followers to is a proactive love. One cannot be a follower of Jesus and voluntarily isolate oneself from others. One may follow many religions to a tee by not breaking the rules or laws of that religion, but Jesus defines following Him not so much by what we can or should not do, as by what we need to actively do for God and others. This is a slight, but profound, difference.

Love One Another

The third mark of a disciple is that he loves other Christians. This is proven by his understanding and exercise of forgiveness and community.

There are four components to forgiveness:

- Accept God's forgiveness.
- Forgive yourself on the basis of God's forgiveness.
- Forgive others.
- Accept the forgiveness of others.

"You cannot experience true Christianity in isolation. God Himself is a community of three persons, constantly interrelating in an intimate way."

Community is your primary link to God. "If you are not part of a Christian body, you are outside of God's corporate, creative purpose for his people and you lose your most vital link with God. A Christian severed from the Head can appear to be alive for a while. But he will soon collapse because there is only one way to draw nourishment and direction from the Head—and that is to be part of a body (Colossians 2:19).

A Christian without community is like a chicken with its head cut off. Christian community is your primary lifeline to God."

Community is your link with other believers. "No Christian can be healthy without other Christians. That is why every believer immediately enters the Body upon conversion. Attempting to live the Christian life without a practical relationship to the body is risky speculation at best. Consequently, it is a top priority for every disciple to belong to a healthy, functioning Christian body."

"A healthy body is characterized by unity...No part of the body can act independently."

"A functioning Christian body seeks to stimulate maturity in all its members."

"A hurting Christian cannot withhold his struggles from the community. His burdens, heartaches and concerns are immediately relayed through the body to the Head, which coordinates an appropriate response. The body promotes health by channeling every weakness and hurt into its own bloodstream for purification through forgiveness and healing. Only a sick body lacks this intimacy."

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 18:12-35 and 6:9-15.

Who is it harder for you to forgive, yourself or others?

Whose responsibility is it to pursue forgiveness and unity in the Body of Christ?

Who is most hurt by unforgiveness, the victim or the offender?

Why is forgiveness so important to God?

How can the Church be a better community for one another?

Application

Memorize Luke 6:31 and Matthew 6:12.

Ask God to show you people or situations in your life to which you are in bondage because of unforgiveness. Ask God to help you to pray for and forgive these people.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Introduction

We are created for relationship. We crave it. We define ourselves through and by our relationships with one another. In times of crises, our perspective and priorities always shift to help us realize that relationships with others are the most important thing. Relationships are impossible without communication. It can be verbal or nonverbal, but for it to be possible, an exchange of ideas, emotions, thoughts, acts and will must take place. We may pretend we have a relationship with our car. When it breaks down, we express our disgust with it, or when it is brand new or just cleaned, we express our affection for it to others. We know, though, it is not a real relationship. The car cannot speak back to us (unless it is KITT from Knight Rider). It cannot express love nor an idea nor do us a favor. For our relationships to grow, healthy communication must be the bedrock foundation.

Who is/are your best friend(s)? How did they become your best friend(s)?

What causes the most problems in your relationship with others?

What causes the most joy in your relationship with others?

Prayer

Prayer is the fourth distinctive of a disciple of Jesus. Some basic guidelines for prayer follow the same communication principles we have with any good relationship.

- Compliment first.
Start your conversations with God by giving Him thanks and praise for what He has done for you and for the great things about Him.
- Be an active listener.
Prayer is a two-way conversation, not a one-way monologue. Listen to what God is telling you. This could be done through Him leading you to a story or verse in the Bible, through dreams, visions or other's words to you.
- Be consistent.
- Be completely honest.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 6:5-15 and Luke 11:1-4.

What are some of the distinctives of Jesus' model prayer?

What are some of the dangers or warnings Jesus gives us about how we are to pray?

What is the primary purpose of prayer? What Bible verses can you think of that would confirm this or challenge this?

How can we use the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray this week?

Application

Memorize Matthew 6:9-13.

Write down three things to pray for every day this week, including one person you know who needs to be saved. Share with your discipler the results of these prayers.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Story

The movie "Children of Men" gives a look into a futuristic negative earth where the women of the planet have become sterile. No one knows why, nor are any explanations offered, but we see a scenario of how quickly mankind degenerates into a hopeless mess when we cease to reproduce. There were no children, and the planet was going to depopulate itself of humans within one generation.

In Neil Cole's book, The Organic Church, he quotes a major denomination which found in its studies that 96% of churches in America would never plant a daughter church. In other words, 96% of conventional American churches are effectively sterile. Can you imagine the uproar in the media and in the health fields if this were true of women in America? There would be lots of questions asked, tests taken, research done and money invested--all to find the cause and solution to this terrible problem. What would happen to our country if 96% of all of our women were sterile? We would be living out a doomsday scenario.

Although the statistic above refers to church reproduction, the same is probably true for the percentage of Christians who reproduce themselves in others.

In the natural order, we are designed to grow to a mature physical state, and then reproduce. For some reason, in our spiritual lives and the life of our church, we think limitless personal or corporate growth is fine while not reproducing is normal.

What would happen to our churches if everyone in them were to regularly reproduce themselves in other disciples?

What would happen if it were the expectation of every Christian and every church to reproduce themselves regularly?

Created to Reproduce

Reproduction was touched on in chapter two, but here we examine in depth the responsibility of all disciples to reproduce themselves.

"Only the ill-informed or immature are so preoccupied with good works that they haven't got the time to nurture their spiritual children to reproduction. No mature Christian is content to be spiritually barren. Take a moment to examine your life. Is

there one person walking with God today and investing in others the fullness he has in Christ as a result of your ministry? One man? One woman? If not, you have been unfruitful."

"Activity is no substitute for obedience; busyness cannot replace reproduction... Reevaluate your priorities in light of Christ's commission to make disciples."

"Do not make a commitment before God to a discipling relationship until you count the cost."

"To excite someone to become a believer without equipping him to lead the Christian life is cruel irresponsibility."

Reflection and Discussion

Read John 12:20-28.

What is the relationship between self-death and reproduction? Is it possible to do one without the other?

Is "bearing fruit" or "being fruitful" primarily referring to character qualities in ourselves, in reproducing disciples, in both, or in neither? What Scriptures talk about bearing fruit?

Application

Memorize John 12:24.

Think of people in your life whom you have helped lead to believe in Jesus. Is there anyone you should be nurturing in the faith now?

CHAPTER NINE

Story

“Sandlot baseball was the rage in my neighborhood when I was a youngster. Every Saturday afternoon eight of us would split into teams and play until it was too dark to see. The success of my weekend was often determined by the quality of my teammates. Choosing the right players almost always led to victory. The selection of the person whom you will disciple is crucial.”

From *The Making of a Disciple*, by Keith Phillips.

Choosing a Disciple

First Principle: Set a high standard. Look for five characteristics in a potential disciple.

- They desire to know God intimately.
- They are available.
- They are submissive.
- They are faithful .
- They seek to become a discipler.

Second Principle: Pray Diligently.

Third Principle: Select Carefully.

Pre-discipleship (or follow-up).

Must be part of a healthy church body.

Must be practicing five core disciplines (Bible Study, prayer, memorization, meditation and worship).

You must “tell [them] why...show [them] how...get [them] started...keep [them] at it.”

Watch them closely.

Take the initiative.

Issue the invitation.

Explain the relationship.

Commitment.

Submission.

Communicate the vision.

Let them decide.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Luke 6:12-16.

What process did Jesus go through when He chose His disciples?

What activities or experiences did Jesus have with His larger group of disciples before He chose the 12 apostles?

What matters more in the success of reproduction--the process of discipling, the discipler, or the person to be disciplined?

Application

Memorize John 15:16-17 and II Timothy 2:2-3.

Evaluate yourself according to the criteria set out in the first principle for choosing a potential disciple. Do you display these characteristics yourself?

Practice each of the five core disciplines this week.

Continue praying about who you could be discipling.

CHAPTER TEN

Introduction

Luke Skywalker had Yoda. The Karate Kid had Mr. Miyagi. Neo had Morpheus. Frodo had Gandalf. The movies are full of great mentor/protégé relationships. We see all of them experience great struggles on their journey, both from the task and in their relationship with one another. With all of them they had to work through misunderstandings, anger, confusion and fear.

What are some of the best examples you have seen of mentor/protégé relationships?

What are common threads in all of these relationships that help the dynamic work?

What are some negative dynamics or patterns that could hinder or destroy this kind of relationship?

Discipleship Is Relational

Qualities of a healthy relationship with your disciple:

- Warmth—an attitude of love and gentleness. This relationship should not be authoritarian, judgmental or harsh. Just as Jesus demonstrated servant leadership with His 12 disciples by washing their feet, so the discipler should also model the role of a servant to his disciple.
- Loyalty—a consistent commitment.
- Fairness—being unbiased.
- Maturity—a steady, faithful walk with God.
- Availability—maximum access. Your disciple should be a high priority in your life, behind only your family.
- Patience—faith in action. Discipling takes a lot of time. Jesus took three years with the Twelve, and they were still very raw by the end of His earthly ministry.
- Honesty—open communication. This should operate both ways, from both the discipler and the disciple.
- Motivation—an impelling desire that moves us toward our purpose, utilizing direction, vision, confidence and urgency.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 15:1-20; 16:5-12, 21-23; 17:1-13; Mark 16:1-14; John 13:1-17; 17:6-19; 21:15-25.

In all of these passages, Jesus had very different types of reactions and interactions with His disciples. After reading the above sections, list some of the ways that Jesus showed His love to them.

How did Jesus correct his disciples?

How well do you accept correction?

How well do you offer correction?

Application

Memorize John 15:13-15.

Evaluate your relationship with your discipler in each of the above areas. Which ones do you most need to work on? In which areas are you doing the best?

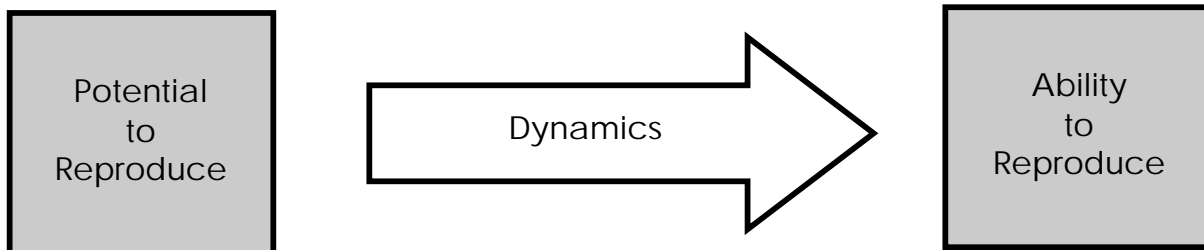
CHAPTER ELEVEN

Story

Michael Jordan was born with the DNA to be the greatest basketball player in the world. He had the talent, the physical strength and size, the mental toughness and the intellectual aptitude to learn the game. Before he became the five-time NBA MVP, winner of six NBA Championships and six-time NBA Finals MVP's, he had to go through the hard work and commitment to become the kind of player it would require. He was not guaranteed to accomplish any of this simply by virtue of how tall he was, how much he could learn, his raw athletic ability, or how much he wanted to win. It required great coaching, lots of time in the gym, taking care of his body, and practicing and playing with others in a variety of pressure situations. Many others were taller than Michael Jordan, could jump higher, were stronger, smarter, or even knew more than he did about the game, but none who had his raw ability and physical dimensions worked harder and had more desire to win than he did. It was the combination of all of these factors that got him where it did.

The Dynamics of Discipleship

"In order to transform your disciple's willingness to bear fruit [potential to reproduce] into the ability to reproduce, his spiritual environment must include seven elements [dynamics]."



1. Worship—membership in a worshipping community and the offering of his/her life as worship.
2. Ministry—encouragement and prayer for one another, and the use of his/her gifts.
3. Memorization.
4. Meditation.
5. Teaching.
 - Teach your disciples the Bible.
 - Teach your disciples how to think.
 - Teach your disciples how to make decisions.
 - a. What are the alternatives?
 - b. What Biblical principles apply?
 - c. What are the implications?

- d. What is the counsel of my leaders?
- 6. Correct weaknesses.
 - Discern their weaknesses.
 - Confront your disciple.
 - Pray together.
 - Develop a strategy.
 - Hold them accountable.
- 7. Develop their strengths (gifts).

Reflection and Discussion

Read Acts 18:18-28.

What dynamics of discipleship do you see in this passage?

How much do you practice the above dynamics?

Are there areas in your life that you know you have potential to grow in but have not done so? What is the reason for that? Can any of the above dynamics help unlock that particular area for you?

Are you taking the time to spiritually feed yourself during the week apart from your discipler?

Application

In meditating on Scripture, one great method is to take a verse and repeat it or write it down several times, emphasizing a different word each iteration. An example is from a phrase in John 15:16:

I chose you to go and bear fruit
 I *chose* you to go and bear fruit
 I chose *you* to go and bear fruit
 I chose you *to go* and bear fruit
 I chose you to go and *bear* fruit
 I chose you to go and bear *fruit*

Practice this method with one or more verses this week.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Story

A master carpenter, who worked for the same builder for nearly 50 years, announced that he wanted to retire. The builder told him how much he appreciated his work. He gave the carpenter a \$5,000 bonus and asked him if he would build just one more house. The builder owned a magnificent lot with a spectacular view and wanted to build a dream home.

The carpenter was bitterly disappointed at the small bonus, but his last building fee would help him buy a small cottage, so he agreed to build the dream house.

The carpenter prided himself on his uncompromising commitment to quality, but his resentment caused him to cut corners, ignore details, and accept shoddy workmanship from other workers. He even looked the other way when some of the workers substituted cheaper materials and pocketed the difference.

When the house was finished the builder shook the carpenter's hand, and with a huge smile, he gave him an envelope with a thank-you card and a folded piece of paper. The carpenter was disdainful -- until he unfolded the paper and found the deed to the house he had just built.

The carpenter was ashamed that he had misjudged his old friend and betrayed his own values. He was remorseful that the house he would live in for the rest of his life was made so carelessly.

Our character is the house we live in; it is built piece-by-piece by our daily choices. Deceit, irresponsibility and disrespect are just like shoddy workmanship. Whenever we put in less than our best and ignore our potential for excellence, we create a future full of creaky floors, leaky roofs and crumbling foundations.

The Disciple's Standard: Excellence

"Jesus demanded excellence in all that His disciples did."

"God is excellent and everything He does is excellent" (Psalm 119:68).

"Your disciple needs to understand that as a child of God his entire being must reflect the excellence of his Father."

Paul offered five areas to his disciple, Timothy, that "reveal whether a disciple is accurately reflecting his God and Father." I Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone look

down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life [conduct], in love, in faith and in purity.”

These five benchmarks guide us so that we are above reproach and a model for others.

Reflection and Discussion

Read I Timothy 4:8-16.

In which of these areas do you take shortcuts or offer rationalizations when you fall short?

In which of these areas have you experienced the most growth?

Over which of these areas have you experienced the most victory?

Are there areas you think Paul should have included in his standards for modeling excellence?

Application

Memorize I Timothy 4:12.

Take a moment to confess an area in which you are most in need of God’s transforming power. Ask God for opportunities to exercise excellence in this area this week.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Story

The year was 1998. Roger Maris' longstanding record of 61 home runs in a season had stood untested for 37 years. Then three players started a home run derby that would electrify the nation and restore the sport of baseball to its once hallowed heights. Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa and Ken Griffey Jr. were all having stellar seasons. Although McGwire led the hunt for virtually the entire season, all three were on pace or close to it for beating the mark of 61. The home-run balls being caught were being sold for tens of thousands of dollars. Finally, McGwire ended the race by finishing the season with 70 home runs. That ball was sold for \$3 million. This was the greatest season in Major League Baseball's history. Then, a few years later, steroids allegations started coming, and McGwire and Sosa were completely discredited. Although both of them beat Griffey that season and beat the old record, now both are considered cheaters and Griffey has the respect of the nation. Who is the real winner?

Can you think of an instance when the end might justify the means?

Have you ever cut corners or compromised your principles to get the desired result? How did it feel? Did you regret it?

Have you ever stuck to your principles even if it cost you in the end? How did that feel? Did you regret it?

Who is your final source of approval?

The Master's Model

"Careful observation of His strategy reveals that training a person to become a functioning disciple demands a two-fold approach. First, Christ's method and message was, 'Be like me.' Then He provided practical training over a long period of time. If either of these are missing, discipleship will not occur."

"Most of who we are today is a result of watching and listening to others. Doing things with your disciple is one of the most effective methods of modeling."

“Practical training necessitates involving your disciple in your life and ministry. This is accomplished through delegation. Delegating is entrusting responsibility and authority to others and establishing accountability for the results.

- Jesus delegated responsibility.
 - Never delegate prematurely.
 - Delegate clearly.
 - Delegate gradually.
 - Inspire confidence.
- Jesus delegated authority.
- Jesus exercised accountability.”

“When Jesus was confident that His disciples had been trained, He handed over to them the leadership of God’s work on earth and commissioned them to make disciples everywhere.”

Reflection and Discussion

Read Matthew 9:35-10:42, Luke 10:1-24, and I Corinthians 11:1-2.

What do you notice about Jesus’ instructions for His followers?

Do you have a tendency to be overprotective?

Who is currently watching your life? What effect have you seen this have on them?

When you are being trained, do you tend to want more responsibility early or do you like to take it slow?

Application

Memorize I Corinthians 11:1-2.

What are some things you should be delegating to others? Develop a plan to do this.

What are some things you should be taking charge of? Ask your discipler for this.