



This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the united States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain condition specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be *“used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.”* If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.**

### **Contact**

B.L. Fisher Library  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
204 N. Lexington Ave.  
Wilmore, KY 40390

**B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content**  
[place.asburyseminary.edu](http://place.asburyseminary.edu)



**Asbury Theological Seminary**  
205 North Lexington Avenue  
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

800.2ASBURY  
[asburyseminary.edu](http://asburyseminary.edu)

THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR DISCIPLESHIP  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

by

Charles C. Lake

A project-dissertation  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Ministry  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
May, 1981

Approved by Harold W. Burgess

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Date May 12, 1981

## CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	iv
LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	v
Chapter	
1. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: AN INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	4
The Problem Expanded . . . . .	5
Optional or Inherent . . . . .	5
Program or Purpose . . . . .	8
Individual or Group . . . . .	9
The Problem Delimited . . . . .	10
Theoretical Framework . . . . .	10
Review of Related Literature . . . . .	12
Method of Procedure . . . . .	15
Summary . . . . .	16
2. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: PRE-PENTECOST . . . . .	18
The Commission . . . . .	18
<u>Mathetes</u> . . . . .	22
Two Patterns of Discipleship . . . . .	26
Specific Usage: Apostle . . . . .	26
General Usage: Disciple . . . . .	28
Summary . . . . .	31
3. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: POST-PENTECOST . . . . .	32
The Book of Acts . . . . .	32
Apostle . . . . .	32
Disciple . . . . .	34
Elder . . . . .	35

The Epistles . . . . .	38
Disciples . . . . .	38
Saints . . . . .	39
The Church . . . . .	40
"How To" . . . . .	44
The Goal . . . . .	46
Summary . . . . .	47
4. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: CONTEMPORARY EMPHASIS . . . . .	49
Discipleship Terminology . . . . .	49
The Influence of Evangelism . . . . .	50
Available Resources . . . . .	52
The Contemporary Emphasis Evaluated . . . . .	52
How Is a Disciple Defined? . . . . .	53
Is a Biblical Basis Provided? . . . . .	54
What Is the Biblical Model for Discipleship? . . . . .	55
Are Leadership and Discipleship Training Distinctive? . . . . .	56
What Is the Goal of Discipleship? . . . . .	56
What Is the Role of the Church in the Discipling Process? . . . . .	57
Which Discipleship Method Is Preferred? . . . . .	58
Summary . . . . .	58
5. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: GREENWOOD, INDIANA . . . . .	61
A Church Is Born . . . . .	62
A Discipleship Program Begins . . . . .	63
The Program Today . . . . .	65
The Program in Context . . . . .	69
The Program Evaluated . . . . .	70
Summary . . . . .	76
6. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: THE FUTURE . . . . .	78
Criteria for Biblical Discipleship . . . . .	78
What Constitutes a Disciple . . . . .	79
Calvinistic-Arminian Debate . . . . .	81
Discipleship-Leadership Training . . . . .	83
Follow-up or Lifestyle . . . . .	85

The Role of the Church . . . . .	86
Methodological Implications . . . . .	87
Para-church Organizations . . . . .	88
The Ultimate Goal . . . . .	90
A Plan . . . . .	91
Follow-up . . . . .	91
An On-going Program . . . . .	92
Effective Body Life . . . . .	93
Conclusion . . . . .	94
7. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: CONCLUSION . . . . .	96
The Problem Restated . . . . .	96
The Procedure Reiterated . . . . .	97
The Findings . . . . .	97
Conclusions . . . . .	98
Recommendations . . . . .	99
Further Study . . . . .	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	101
APPENDIXES	
A. SURVEY OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES . . . . .	105
B. REGISTRATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING . . . . .	107
C. WEEKLY REPORT FORM . . . . .	108
D. LESSON MANUSCRIPT . . . . .	109
E. DISCIPLE WORKSHEET . . . . .	111
F. JOB DESCRIPTION: DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP . . . . .	112
G. JOB DESCRIPTION: ASSNT. DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP . . . . .	114
H. QUALIFICATIONS FOR DISCIPLERS . . . . .	115
I. DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING EVALUATION . . . . .	116
J. DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING BROCHURE . . . . .	118
K. DISCIPLESHIP "LEADER" QUESTIONNAIRE . . . . .	119
L. DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONNAIRE . . . . .	120

TABLES

Table	Page
1. The Growth Rate of Community Church . . . . .	64
2. Disciplier's Preference of Method . . . . .	72
3. Disciple's Preference of Method . . . . .	74

## FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. A Harmony of the Great Commission . . . . .	19
2. The Evolution of the Word "Disciple" . . . . .	40
3. Topics Considered in <u>Discipleship Training</u> . . . . .	68

## CHAPTER 1

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: AN INTRODUCTION

"We . . . have gathered like eagles round the carcass of cheap grace and there we have drunk of the poison which has killed the life of following Christ"<sup>1</sup> - so Dietrich Bonhoeffer described his church in 1937. In the tradition of Luther's followers in the days of the Reformation, Bonhoeffer saw "costly grace turned into cheap grace without discipleship."<sup>2</sup> The result, as he saw it, was a weakened church no longer able to make its impact on the world.

Over forty years after Bonhoeffer's insight, a number of other writers view the church of Jesus Christ in quite the same way for the same reasons. Christianity Today editor, Kenneth Kantzer, in his opening editorial of the decade of the '80s, wrote:

The confusion of American values with values that are truly biblical . . . the hypocrisy of the church, the woeful ignorance among professing Christians of the most elementary doctrines of the orthodox faith, the crass materialism of lip-serving evangelicals, and the careless disobedience of the "born again" all remind us that we do not live in the church glorious . . .<sup>3</sup>

Recent surveys affirm that one out of every three Americans "testify" to a "born again" experience. One-third of America's

---

<sup>1</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: MacMillan, 1937), p. 57. (Hereafter identified by Cost).

<sup>2</sup>Bonhoeffer, Cost, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth Kantzer, "Editor's Note," Christianity Today, XXIV (January 4, 1980), 4.



population profess faith in the redeeming, transforming grace of God. The potential for world impact is staggering. Yet the quality of life is missing, and as a result the influence of the church in the world is anemic.

David L. Waterman, writing for Eternity, commented: "There is a feeling of frustration among both clergy and congregation that despite our sparkling buildings and specialized programs, Christians are just not 'making it' as we should."<sup>4</sup> Donald E. Miller, assistant professor in the school of religion at UCLA, expressed his concern in The Christian Century.

With a few outstanding exceptions, liberal Christianity is in the doldrums. Liberation theologians evoke a few gasps of guilt from North American audiences, but the inner reserves of liberal Christianity are largely depleted, drained by too much secular theology and too many radical theologies, and not getting enough nourishment at the fount of religious experience.<sup>5</sup>

"Just not making it" and "inner reserves depleted" are the telling lines often descriptive of both evangelical and liberal Christians. Miller continues in his article by presenting a case for liberal Christians to return to the basic disciplines of Christian discipleship. He believes that through a return to Christian discipline the influence of the church in the world can be rejuvenated.

Such realizations have awakened a renewed interest in discipleship. A number of church leaders make the same appraisal. A church gaining some expertise in evangelism is failing to conserve its fruits

---

<sup>4</sup>David L. Waterman, "The Care and Feeding of Growing Christians," Eternity, II (September 1979), 18.

<sup>5</sup>Donald E. Miller, "Spiritual Discipline: Countering Contemporary Culture," The Christian Century, XCVII (March 19, 1980), 320.

through discipleship. Mass evangelism continues to be effective in producing converts to the faith. The church has developed a sophisticated system and terminology of church growth and in various places of the world is growing numerically at a greater rate than the general population. The failure to disciple those converts, however, minimizes the church's gains. As new believers are added, others "fall by the wayside" leaving the faith or converting to other religious movements.

The impotent influence of Christians in the world reflects the failure of the church for decades to make discipleship a condition for being a Christian. Believers unskilled in the Word have fallen easy prey for cults and modern religious "fads." For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons both boast that the larger percentages of their members were once members of Protestant churches. Some of their converts even come from churches considered evangelical. "Undisciplined disciples" fall easy prey to false teachers. Such facts are a strong indictment against today's church.

Carl F. H. Henry in an article in Christianity Today entitled "Evangelicals: Out of the Closet But Going Nowhere?" wrote:

Discipleship: beyond lay evangelism alone to responsible church membership. The church growth movement must stress this goal along with evangelism if it is to meet the requirements of biblical discipleship. As people discover their gifts and abilities, they should be given opportunity to use them. Ordinary men and women should help in local church life and leadership.<sup>6</sup>

The recent renewed call to discipleship is evident in various areas of the Christian community. Evidences are seen in (1) numerous

---

<sup>6</sup>Carl F. H. Henry, "Evangelicals: Out of the Closet But Going Nowhere?", Christianity Today, XXIV (January 4, 1980), 16.

articles in Christian periodicals, (2) a large quantity of new books with the word "disciple" or "discipleship" in their titles, (3) congresses and seminars held on both local and national levels and (4) new programs of discipleship produced by denominational, inter-denominational and para-church organizations. Are these efforts, however, meeting the requirements of biblical discipleship?

### The Problem

A return to basic discipleship is mandated for the church of the '80s. If such a renewed emphasis on discipleship is to be effective, it must be built on a firm biblical foundation. Thus, it is relevant to ask: "Is the renewed emphasis on discipleship taking shape in our day truly biblical?"

A survey of contemporary discipleship literature will reveal a serious lack of biblical basis. Few authors have taken the time to build a strong biblical foundation. There is, however, disagreement among those who do attempt to be biblical. Defining the term "disciple" is one major area of disagreement. Along with the lack of biblical definition is the absence of a theoretical framework within which suitable materials can be developed for use in the local church.

The basic purpose of this study is evaluative. The contemporary emphasis on discipleship will be compared with biblical teaching on the concept. The basic thesis of the study is that the biblical pattern for discipleship rightly established can produce an effective church with a far-reaching redemptive impact upon the world. The exploration of the biblical pattern must, of necessity, answer some basic questions:

1) What constitutes authentic discipleship? What is a disciple of Christ?

2) What is the role of the New Testament church in the discipling process? Is the church unique or incidental to the process?

3) Does the biblical pattern provide a methodology which can be utilized in today's church? Is it applicable in the context of a local church? What is the process of making disciples?

The study will attempt to answer each of these questions. Each question is viewed as having specific relevance to obtaining an understanding of biblical discipleship.

### The Problem Expanded

#### Optional or Inherent

Is one required to be a disciple in order to be a Christian? Much current literature on discipleship either states outright or implies that the Christian may not be a disciple at all, even after a lifetime as a believer. That all disciples are Christians but not all Christians are disciples summarizes the conclusion of a number of current writers on the discipleship theme. Is that conclusion, however, biblical or are Christians and disciples synonymous?

Defining "disciple" is a primary problem. Some tend to define it broadly by equating anyone who is a church member or who has made any kind of spiritual decision with being a disciple. On the other hand, and far more frequently, the term is defined narrowly referring to either the original Twelve or someone who has reached an advanced stage of spirituality in his life and experience. J. Dwight Pentecost does so in Design For Discipleship:

In the light of New Testament teaching few have any right to claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ . . . There is a vast difference between being saved and being a disciple. Not all men who are saved are disciples although all who are disciples are saved. In discussing the question of discipleship, we are not

dealing with a man's salvation. We are dealing with a man's relationship to Jesus Christ as his Teacher, his Master and his Lord.<sup>7</sup>

Pentecost continues:

But until you present yourself in a definite act to Jesus Christ, you are not a disciple. Born again through faith in Jesus Christ, yes; saved, yes; saved forever, yes; a disciple no.<sup>8</sup>

Such positions are not uncommon in current discipleship literature. However, is such a position biblical? Is being a disciple an advanced stage of growth and commitment in the Christian life or did Christ intend for a Christian and a disciple to be synonymous?

There also appears to be a disagreement as to the ultimate goal of discipling. Several discipleship texts use the term "multiplying disciples" with the strong inference that the goal of the discipling process is to make Christian workers who, through a multiplication process, will ultimately win the world for Christ. The term used so narrowly projects every disciple as one capable of teaching others who will in turn teach others until world evangelization is accomplished.

A number of texts give impressive examples of the multiplication factor showing how quickly the world could be won if the principle could be applied. Although few would deny the intended influence the Christian is to have on the evangelism of the world, is the ultimate goal of New Testament discipleship that of world evangelization? Is its basic purpose that of training Christian workers? Is it possible that discipleship training has been confused with leadership training? Did Christ intend for all believers to become leaders?

---

<sup>7</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Design For Discipleship (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), pp. 13-14. (Hereafter identified by Design).

<sup>8</sup>Pentecost, Design, p. 38.

The Dynamics of Discipleship Training written by Gary W. Kuhne is subtitled Being and Producing Spiritual Leaders.<sup>9</sup> If all disciples must qualify and enter discipleship by way of training in spiritual leadership, it would be necessary for God to redistribute His gifts to enable more believers to qualify for being a disciple. Obviously all Christians do not have the gift of ruling.

LeRoy Eims, in his book The Lost Art of Disciple Making, portrays spiritual development occurring in three specific stages: (1) being a convert, (2) becoming a disciple and (3) being a worker. A timetable is even suggested. According to the author, it takes two years for the average convert to become a disciple and two years for a disciple to become a worker.<sup>10</sup> Disciple and Christian are definitely not considered synonymous and the end result is seen as producing "multiplying disciples."

What happens to the average Christian who, by no fault of his own, possesses no leadership qualities but by the quiet witness of his relationship with Christ influences many toward Christ? He may never share the "four spiritual laws" with another. Is he exempt from ever being identified as a disciple of Christ? Is discipleship optional and only intended for a qualified few?

For at least a decade the churches of the Western world have not made discipleship a condition of being a Christian. One is not required to be, or to intend to be, a disciple in order to become a Christian, and one may remain a Christian without any

---

<sup>9</sup>Gary W. Kuhne, The Dynamics of Discipleship Training (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977).

<sup>10</sup>LeRoy Eims, The Lost Art of Disciple Making (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1978), p. 187. (Hereafter identified by Lost Art).

signs of progress toward or in discipleship. So far as the visible Christian institutions of our day are concerned discipleship clearly is optional.<sup>11</sup>

Did Jesus intend it to be so? The very nature of being a Christian is in question.

#### Program or Purpose

The nature of the discipling process is also important. What is the relationship of discipleship to the activity of the church? Is it to be a program carried on in the church or is it the inherent purpose of the church? Could it be both?

An editorial in the October 10, 1980, issue of Christianity Today speaks of the modern evangelical community as being increasingly defined in terms of "particular personalities, movements, organizations and causes."

In recent years evangelicalism has given birth to numerous "transdenominational" enterprises and para-church organizations. Aided by mass market advertising and given exposure via the ever-expanding Christian media, they have produced the slogans, seminars and celebrities with which millions of American Christians identify. But just as single issue politics so often leads to tunnel vision and lack of wholeness, the evangelical equivalent . . . can have damaging consequences for those immediately involved and for the larger Christian community.

Many Christians no longer find their badge of belonging in the church universal, but in a person or a movement. There seems to be an unprecedented hungering for adjunct affiliations with those Christian organizations providing shepherding, marriage enrichment, inner healing, motivational impetus, financial success, conflict resolution or political guidance.<sup>12</sup>

Discipleship could easily be added to the writer's list. Why the birth of so many such organizations? Are the provisions of

---

<sup>11</sup>Dallas Willard, "Discipleship: For Super Christians Only?", Christianity Today, XIV (October 10, 1980), 23.

<sup>12</sup>"Of Shepherds, Fiefs, and the Flock," Christianity Today, XIV (October 10, 1980), 14.

these movements outside the purpose of the church? Is it not potentially disastrous for a believer to find his source of spiritual identity in a person or movement rather than in the church as the body of Christ? Is the church even necessary for discipleship to take place?

#### Individual or Group

Is discipleship development to take place on a one-on-one basis or as a group process? There is little agreement on this question among contemporary writers. Also in question is whether or not one method is more biblical than the other. What is the biblical model of a discipling relationship? Various answers are suggested. A number of writers prefer the relationship between Jesus and the Twelve as the biblical model. Those writers advocating the Jesus model do not agree as to whether He trained them individually or as a group.

Other writers prefer the example of Paul's relationship to young Timothy as the biblical pattern. Paul's discipling of Timothy is frequently used to support the preference of a one-on-one methodology. Still other writers see the nurture of new Christians in the early church as a model to be duplicated. Their spiritual formation developed within the framework of the church and was group oriented.

The question regarding methodology raises another relevant issue. Is there a failure to distinguish between leadership training and discipleship development? Are believers in the local church disciplined in the same way Paul trained Timothy for the ministry? Were the methods of Jesus in training twelve men for the work of apostles to be the pattern for discipleship training in the twentieth century? Can a biblical pattern be found which is applicable in the context of a local church today?



### The Problem Delimited

Literature from the mainstream of evangelicalism has been the primary source of information for the study. The major objective of the research was to evaluate the contemporary evangelical emphasis with biblical data of the New Testament period. Although denominational sources were examined, the major source of discipleship material was supplied by the interdenominational para-church organizations who specialize in discipleship ministries.

The study, therefore, is a comparison of discipleship of the first century with discipleship of the twentieth century. Biblical data is compared with contemporary literature to ascertain similarities and differences. Is today's church biblical in its approach to discipleship development?

### Theoretical Framework

Three basic assumptions underlie the study. (1) It is assumed that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and provides the most adequate definition of the discipleship development process. By carefully researching related literature and exegeting related biblical passages, it is believed that a methodology can be extrapolated which will be relevant and useful in the local church today. (2) The church as the body of Christ is believed to be divinely instituted to play an important role in the preparation of a people for God's eternal kingdom. (3) The priesthood of all believers is affirmed, thereby validating the role of believers in the ministry of the church in the world.

Phrases in the thesis statement need definition. The phrase "biblical pattern" means one proceeding from the New Testament Scriptures

by way of an accurate rendering of the essential content of the passage, that which corresponds to the biblical norm. "Discipleship" refers to all that is involved in the process of nurturing a spiritual "babe" to "maturity in Christ." The specifics of that process will be explicated in this study. An "effective church" is a body of believers functioning so as to produce a quality product in accordance with its inherent purpose. A "redemptive impact" is one in which each opportunity is seized for the purpose of the ultimate expansion of God's kingdom upon earth.

Historically, discipleship development can be traced from the New Testament church to the catechisms of the early Roman church. The "divorce" of the clergy from the laity had far-reaching implications on the nurture of believers. The monastic movement made its contribution to the field of discipleship. The movement was a reaction to the cheapening of grace by the church. It produced a double standard, a two-level discipleship which separated the monastic from the average believer in the secular world.

Luther restored value to Christian commitment. The principles of his faith demanded a life of daily discipleship. His followers, however, allowed their orthodoxy to be a substitute for godly living and "costly grace turned into cheap grace without discipleship."<sup>13</sup> Discipleship, throughout the church's history, has had its highs and lows. This study focuses on the contemporary emphasis. A historical study encompassing the second through the nineteenth centuries is therefore out of the scope of the study.

---

<sup>13</sup>Bonhoeffer, Cost, p. 46.

Discipleship development involves other classical disciplines. For example, the sociological and psychological implications of discipleship are significant. The psychological dimensions of interpersonal relationships and group processes would be material sufficient for a separate study. The study, however, by its nature is limited to a biblical study. The ultimate goal and objective of the study is a scriptural foundation for discipleship development.

#### Review of Related Literature

Related literature is available in abundance. However, most of the sources are contemporary sources and are limited in their usefulness in establishing a biblical framework for discipleship. Reference books, four major works considered classics in their field, a dozen or more books written during the '70s and several program notebooks comprise the bulk of literary sources useful to this study. Recent periodicals and graduate theses also serve as limited sources.

The two major reference resources consulted were Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich<sup>14</sup> and The New International Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by Colin Brown.<sup>15</sup> The latter source was most valuable in a comprehensive study of the word mathetes meaning a learner, pupil or disciple.

---

<sup>14</sup>Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, IV (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967).

<sup>15</sup>Colin Brown, ed., The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, I (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975).

A. B. Bruce wrote what is considered the most comprehensive and careful study of the training of the twelve disciples. First printed in 1871, The Training of the Twelve was revised and improved in 1894 and since then has undergone numerous printings.<sup>16</sup> The "classic" is limited, however, in its relevance to the present study. Bruce sets forth the basic methodology used by Christ to train twelve disciples who were later to assume the specific role of apostleship. It is the opinion of the writer that although helpful principles can be extracted, the source is more relevant for leadership training than for discipleship development. Seldom is such a distinction made in related literature.

In 1937 G. Campbell Morgan published a book under the title Discipleship.<sup>17</sup> His book, possessing great spiritual content, deals primarily with the nature of discipleship. Two books published in 1963 add significantly to the study. Waylon Moore's study in New Testament Follow-Up, written primarily for ministers to enable new converts in their initial growth, is helpful.<sup>18</sup> Moore makes an attempt to set a biblical basis for his suggested methodology. Robert E. Coleman, Professor of Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary, wrote exclusively of Christ's basic methodology in preparing the Twelve for their work as apostles. The Master Plan of Evangelism may be seen as a manual for

---

<sup>16</sup>A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971).

<sup>17</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, Discipleship (New York: Revell, 1897).

<sup>18</sup>Waylon B. Moore, New Testament Follow-Up (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963).

leadership development with particular emphasis on training individuals for the work of evangelism.<sup>19</sup>

The books written on discipleship in recent years reflect the current renewed emphasis on the subject. Most of the books are written by persons who are presently or were previously associated with para-church organizations. The Navigators were the pioneers in the development of contemporary materials. Along with Inter-Varsity and Campus Crusade for Christ, they have been the leaders in the field of discipleship ministries.

Among the more noted Navigator works are The Lost Art of Disciple Making by LeRoy Eims<sup>20</sup> and Disciples Are Made - Not Born by Walter Henrichsen.<sup>21</sup> Both books are "how to" references which suggest that the making of reproducing disciples is the ultimate objective in the discipleship process.

Carl W. Wilson, former Campus Crusade staffer and more recently the president of Worldwide Discipleship Association, has written the most comprehensive new entry in recent years. With Christ In the School of Disciple Building is a scholarly work which is biblically oriented.<sup>22</sup> The work is a biblical philosophy built upon a case study of Christ's method of building disciples.

---

<sup>19</sup>Robert E. Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1963).

<sup>20</sup>LeRoy Eims, Lost Art, 1978.

<sup>21</sup>Walter Hendrichsen, Disciples Are Made - Not Born (Wheaton: Victor, 1974).

<sup>22</sup>Carl W. Wilson, With Christ In the School of Disciple Building (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976).

Significant biblical passages include the Great Commission recorded in Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:46-49, John 20:21-23 and Acts 1:8. Luke 14:25-33 capsulizes the cost of discipleship as communicated by Christ. Various portions of the Book of Acts give helpful insight into (1) the practice of the early church (2:41-47), (2) the birth and upbuilding of new churches (14:21-23) and (3) the evolution of the words "disciple" and "apostle." First Thessalonians 2:7-13 contains Paul's description of a discipling relationship and Romans 12-15 gives insights into unstructured discipling in the church by way of Paul's use of the phrase "one another."

#### Method of Procedure

The research on the biblical understanding of the nature and methodology of discipleship began with the tracing of the historical usage of the Greek word mathetes. The Gospels, the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles were studied using an inductive approach to develop the use of the concept in two specific periods: pre-Pentecost and post-Pentecost. Commentaries were also consulted to aid in the understanding of more difficult issues arising from the study.

Biblical implications were compared with contemporary emphases to evaluate whether or not the renewed emphasis on discipleship is developing along biblical lines. Using biblical principles extracted from the study, criteria were developed by which the leading reference sources were evaluated.

The empirical research for this study was completed in the contextual setting of a local church. The Community Church of Greenwood is nearly four years old and is located in the town of Greenwood, Indiana,

a southern suburb of Indianapolis. Simultaneous to the research for this study, a discipleship program was being developed utilizing material and methods learned. Four nine-week programs were developed utilizing the principles which were discovered. The leaders of the program experimented with two different methodologies: (1) the one-on-one relationship and (2) the group process.

Teachers who had used both methods were selected to assist in evaluating methodology. Believers who had experienced discipleship training under both methods were also utilized. Both disciples and disciplers filled out a questionnaire which indicated their preference of method and why that method was preferred.

The questionnaires were developed with the assistance of the Congregation Reflection Group to attempt to reflect on the spiritual, sociological and psychological dimensions of the discipleship relationship. The objective was to note whether or not the method preferred by laymen was the method considered the more biblical. Would human experience deem the biblical pattern more valuable? Behavioral evidence was also sought. Would the difference of methodology used have any effect on the disciple's attendance, accountability and attitude toward the discipling experience?

Throughout the study the King James Version of the Bible is used unless otherwise indicated. Conclusions and applications of the research findings complete the study.

### Summary

The church with a weakened influence in the world needs to rediscover the concept of discipleship. The discovery must be biblical

in nature. To be adequate, discipleship must be defined, the role of the church determined and a methodology explicated.

Chapter 2 pursues the nature of being a disciple. The role of the church in discipleship development is explored in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 the contemporary emphasis on discipleship is evaluated. Discipleship within the contextual setting of the study follows next. Chapter 6 contains reflections on the implications of the research findings. Conclusions, recommendations and projections are included in the final chapter.



## CHAPTER 2

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: PRE-PENTECOST

"Go ye 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 whatsoever I commanded you . . ." (Matt. 28.19-20).

Before leaving His disciples to ascend into the presence of His Father, Jesus left with them a command, commonly referred to as the Great Commission. The command is recorded in different forms in the Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John and the Acts of the Apostles. Christ's primary intention was to instruct and motivate His followers. They were to establish the faith He proclaimed to them by sharing His witness to the distant parts of the earth.

#### The Commission

A study of the references in Figure 1 serves as a valid "launching pad" for an understanding of the word "disciple." They provide assistance in understanding both what a disciple is and how disciples are made.

The grammatical structure of Matthew's account of the commission is significant. In verses 19 and 20 four Greek verbs are used, one aorist imperative and three participles. The three participles include one in the aorist and two in the present tense. The primary objective is set forth by the aorist imperative matheetuo, a verb form of the noun mathetes, translated "disciple." The disciples were commanded to "make disciples."

<p>"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."</p>	<p>"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."</p>	<p>"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnessed of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."</p>	<p>"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:"</p>	<p>"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."</p>
<p>Matt. 28:19-20 (NIV)</p>	<p>Mark 16:15-16</p>	<p>Luke 24:46-49</p>	<p>John 20:21-22</p>	<p>Acts 1:8</p>

A Harmony of the Great Commission

FIGURE 1

The aorist participle translated "go" literally means that making disciples was something the disciples were to do "as they were going." "Therefore as you are going make disciples of all nations" would be a valid translation.

The remaining two present participles, indicating a present and continual process, do help in understanding the method of making disciples. They were to baptize believers and teach them "to observe all things" he had taught them.

Mark's account uses the same word for "go" as in Matthew but broadens the understanding of discipling by adding the verb keruso meaning "to preach." As they went, they were also to "preach the gospel to every creature." Mark also mentions the relevance of baptism to the disciple making process.

Luke gives an expanded version of the commission. He ties the commission to the death and resurrection of Christ. He asserts that it was Christ's intention that the gospel be preached "among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke defines, to some degree, the content of that gospel to be preached. It was to include "repentance and remission of sins." The word "to preach" is the same Greek word as used in Mark's account. The meaning of the word "repentance" is crucial in understanding authentic discipleship in the New Testament.

Luke also includes the concept of "witnesses," a term used again in Acts. The English word "martyr" comes from this Greek word. It communicates the fulfillment of the commission as imperative, even though human lives may need to be given in the process. Following Jesus in obedience to His command is not cheap. Jesus wanted

His disciples to be willing to sacrifice their lives for the spread of the gospel. The word "witnesses" links with Matthew's phrase "whatsoever I have commanded you" in another sense as well. The disciples were to preach, teach and witness to first-hand information. They were to share facts which they had learned from their association with Christ on earth.

Additional preparation was needed by the disciples, however. Before they were to begin on their mission, Jesus commanded them to "tarry in Jerusalem." The waiting, as Luke records, was for the purpose of receiving a special spiritual endowment of power from above. The task was too big for them to accomplish in their own strength. They needed power beyond their own.

The Book of Acts would best be considered next because of identical authorship. Luke again uses the Greek word for "witnesses." He stresses both the same geographical boundaries of each of the previous accounts and the need for the power of the Holy Spirit before attempting the task. Simultaneously with the disciples' reception of the promised power, an institution, the church, was born. Was that "birth" incidental to the making of disciples or was it to be an integral part of the process? This will be considered later.

John, in his usual philosophical mode, expresses the commission in quite different terms yet says nothing contradictory to the other writers. John records Jesus as having "sent" the disciples into the world to communicate the message of remission of sins. The word indicating the disciples' being "sent" is different from the Greek word for "sent" used of Christ to refer to Himself and in connection with the Twelve as apostles, the "sent ones."

John also mentions the need for the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples. He joins Luke in recording the command of Jesus for the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit and His power before undertaking their assignment. Christ was not sending them on a mission without the proper equipment for success. With the command came the necessary strength for successful completion of the task.

The references to the Great Commission clarify the method more than the meaning of the word. More is expressed about making disciples than in defining what constitutes a disciple. It can be concluded, however, that a disciple is one who (1) repents, (2) is baptized and (3) follows Jesus in total obedience.

The use of the word "disciple" elsewhere in the Gospels will, however, make clearer the way in which Christ used the term. A study of the Greek word mathetes and how it is used is essential.

### Mathetes

The word mathetes appears over 260 times in the New Testament. It is significant to note that it appears exclusively in the Gospels and Acts. Although the word is used in a wider frame of reference, its primary usage refers to the disciples of Jesus. The wider frame of reference to "disciples" of John the Baptist, Moses and the Pharisees accounts for less than a dozen occurrences of the word, while the remainder refer specifically to Christ.

The word is borrowed from the Greek culture and expanded in its use.

The evangelists who . . . are the only ones to use the word, probably took it over from Hellenistic Judaism. But despite

possible overtones of the figures of the Rabbinic talmid, it is given a completely new character through its association with Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

The basic meaning of the word mathetes is a learner, pupil or disciple. The verb form manthano means to learn. But how, specifically, did Jesus use the term? What "new character" did He give to the word? Although the term appears over 250 times in specific reference to the person of Christ, a careful study manifests its particular usage.

Luke 6:13 is critical to the understanding of the word. "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." The verse unfolds two specific usages of the word. One is to denote the followers of Jesus in general while the other refers to "the Twelve." Twenty-five times the word "disciple" is used specifically to identify "the Twelve" who were later to be apostles. Elsewhere, the crowds and multitudes who followed and listened to Jesus were called disciples. Yet, there was a distinction between all who followed and those who wore the label of disciple.

In Luke 6:17 the distinction is seen. "And he came down with them (the Twelve), and stood in the plain, and the company (indicating a large crowd) of disciples, and a great multitude of people . . ." (Parentheses added). Not everyone who followed and listened to Jesus was seen by Him as a true disciple. What made the difference? What was the "completely new character"<sup>2</sup> given by Jesus to the word?

---

<sup>1</sup>Dietrich Müller, "mathetes," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, ed. I. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 487. (Hereafter identified by NIDNTT).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Frequently in His ministry Jesus found great multitudes following Him. Drawn by His personality and power, they found it easy to identify with the new teacher. Frequently, however, Jesus turned to the multitudes who followed Him and confronted them with the cost of discipleship. An example is found in Luke 14.24-33.

"And there went great multitudes with him; and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (vss. 25-27).

Eligibility for discipleship depended on their willingness to place Christ first in their priorities even before family, friends, possessions and selves. Similar passages appear in Matt. 8.18-22, 16.24-26 and Mark 8.34-38. The condition for discipleship was one of a "crucified lifestyle," a willingness to say "no" to oneself and "yes" to the claims of Christ on one's life. Discipleship was not cheap; it was costly.

Other conditions were also expounded by Christ, all of which were included in "all things whatsoever I commanded you." Faith, obedience, renunciation, humility, a willingness to serve and suffer were all mentioned as characteristics of discipleship.

Several characteristics of discipleship, at the time of Jesus, emerge. There is clearly a difference between His usage of the word "disciple" and the more common Jewish terminology of His day. Seven characteristics are listed:

1. Men did not join His school. His call was decisive. He seized the initiative and called men to discipleship.
2. Discipleship was not a course which could be completed and left to start on one's own. It was for the whole of life. There was a progressive nature to such a relationship.

3. To be a disciple meant to be bound to Jesus and to do God's will for life. They literally "followed" Jesus.

4. His discipleship had the special nature of grace. He broke through barriers in calling His followers.

5. His call to be a disciple was at the same time a call to service.

6. Such service led His followers into identification with Him and His sufferings.

7. Fellowship in His suffering also included a sharing of His authority.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus modified the meaning of disciple to describe something uniquely different from its secular Greek usage. Emil G. Kraeling in The Disciple writes, "Jesus and his disciples do not fit the 'regular' pattern of Jewish theological education. Jesus had not studied in the schools of the Hillelites or Shanimaites, and He had been taught no technicalities of law."<sup>4</sup> Christ's classroom was often a busy street corner, the marketplace or a quiet hillside. His disciples, though learners, were not aspiring to be scholars. They were simple, ordinary folk attracted by His teaching, His personal magnetism and His miracles. Their relationship was not simply between a pupil and a teacher but between a disciple and his Lord.

In the New Testament sense, a disciple was one who followed after Christ, entered into a personal relationship with Him, placed Him first in his priorities and sought to live daily a life of obedience to His will. Jesus' call for men to follow Him presupposed a life of discipleship. Life in Christ fails to make realistic sense apart from it. Discipleship is

---

<sup>3</sup>Müller, NIDNTT, pp. 488-489.

<sup>4</sup>Emil G. Kraeling, The Disciples (New York: Rand McNally, 1966) pp. 13-14.



the heart of personal salvation. It is progressive in nature. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31b).

There is no biblical evidence that Jesus ever made provision for anyone to identify with Him apart from a genuine commitment to "take up their cross and follow." He did not create levels of commitment. No man could serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). Jesus viewed men as either for or against Him (Matt. 12:30). There was no "middle of the road."

### Two Patterns of Discipleship

Although Jesus did not recognize levels of discipleship, He did create two patterns of discipleship. The term "disciple" was used generally to note true followers of Christ. It was also used specifically to denote a special twelve. The calling of the Twelve from the larger group is recorded in each of the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 10:2-4, Mark 3:16-19, Luke 6:14-16). Theirs was a special assignment.

The circle of the Twelve was both a symbolic representation of the twelve tribes of Israel, and thus of the whole people of God, and also a larger circle of disciples which Jesus summoned to discipleship from a still wider group of adherents. The disciples would have been a circle of immediate followers who were commissioned to a particular service.<sup>5</sup>

That they were called to be "apostles" is a fact fully attested in the Scriptures.

#### Specific Usage: Apostle

Luke 6:13 states, "And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples; and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles."

---

<sup>5</sup>Müller, NIDNTT, p. 489.

The Greek word apostolos appears only nine times in the Gospels, once each in Matthew, Mark and John and six times in Luke.

In striking contrast with classical Greek, apostolos is used in the New Testament only in the general sense of messenger, and particularly as the fixed designation of a definite office, the primitive apostolate. With the exceptions of Luke 11:49 and Acts 14:14, Luke applies apostolos expressly to the Twelve.<sup>6</sup>

The two exceptions use the term more generally to denote others called to such a high office. Pre-Pentecost, however, the term is always synonymous with the Twelve. All the apostles were disciples although all the disciples were not apostles. Character did not separate them. The difference was one of calling.

What specifically was their calling? R. V. G. Tasker in The Tyndale New Testament Commentary on The Gospel According to St. Matthew wrote:

What He (Jesus) did choose to do, as the word "therefore" in verse 19 indicates, was to send His apostles not, as He had done earlier in His ministry, on a restricted mission "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5), but to all nations." From these various nations His universal church was to be formed - a company of learners to be brought by baptism into union with the Father the Creator, the Son the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier, and enabled in the strength of this divine fellowship to live obediently to the precepts that Jesus had taught His original disciples, that they might transmit them to others.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the Gospels reveal two patterns of discipleship. Jesus taught and related to all those disciples who truly followed Him,

---

<sup>6</sup>Dietrich Müller, "apostolos," NIDNTT, Colin Brown, ed. I (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 128.

<sup>7</sup>R. V. G. Tasker, ed., The Gospel According to St. Matthew, Vol. I of The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), p. 274.

teaching them the cost of discipleship, its nature and its ultimate goal in establishing His kingdom. On the other hand, because of their closer proximity and the uniqueness of their calling, the Twelve related to Jesus more closely and were taught in greater depth. They were to be given a special, sacred mission in leadership positions within His church.

When understanding the word "disciple," one must consider its dual usage in the Gospels. It was used specifically to denote twelve men called to be apostles and generally to identify all who followed Jesus and met His conditions for authentic discipleship.

Is the mention of the church again simply incidental? Did it have a specific role in the process of making disciples and expanding the boundaries of His kingdom?

#### General Usage: Disciple

How then are disciples to be made? A. B. Bruce in his book, The Training of the Twelve, gave an exhaustive study of the methodology of Jesus in training twelve men for the work of apostleship. Robert E. Coleman did the same in The Master Plan of Evangelism. Jesus gave the major portion of His earthly ministry to train twelve men, although He did not ignore the larger groups who followed in commitment to His person and His purpose. Bruce defines His method with the Twelve as "unsystematic and occasional"<sup>8</sup> but highly effective. He saw the training of Jesus as "fitted to make the disciples what they were required

---

<sup>8</sup>A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1971), p. 544.

to be as apostles of a spiritual and universal religion . . ."9

Coleman followed the same line of thought.

What practical value is in Jesus' example in the training of the Twelve? Olan Hendrix, writing in the "Forward" of The Training of The Twelve, comments that Jesus' example teaches the man of God in the Christian ministry to (1) reproduce himself and multiply his endeavors, (2) know practical, theological guidelines for working with his flock and (3) get things done through other people.<sup>10</sup> In other words, it provides a pattern for leaders to train leaders who will perpetuate the propagation of the gospel and the extension of the kingdom of Christ. His method produced the intended results.

How were the Twelve to make disciples of all nations? Their task was far more extensive than training a few. They were to make disciples who would permeate the earth as witnesses of the gospel of Christ.

When Jesus commanded the disciples to "go, make disciples," He supplied the framework for their ministry. They were to go and preach, baptize and teach - activities suggested as means of making disciples. The content of their message was also elaborated. They were to preach repentance and remission of sins. They were to teach obedience to all the things they had heard Him teach. The message and the method were to have universal relevance. No one was to be excluded from the scope of their ministry.

---

<sup>9</sup>Bruce, Training, p. 545.

<sup>10</sup>Olan Hendrix, "Forward," in A. B. Bruce, Training, p. iii.

The methods given to them by Christ can be observed in terms of Christian experience. The going, the preaching and the witnessing was to precede the actual "birth" of the disciples. Baptism was to accompany their commitment as they followed in obedience to His command. The actual follow-up was to be by means of teaching "all things He commanded." It was to be a lifelong process. Nothing was truly learned in the school of Christ until it became a reality in their lives.

Although a concise, formalized statement of method or content is not given, Jesus gave both the principle and the methodology for the task of disciplinmaking. With the command came the "how to" for successful completion of the task. Some ingredients, however, were still missing. The picture was not yet complete. The church was to have a role - the role was not yet clear. The Christian doctrine of salvation was yet to be more fully developed.

A brief mention of the emphasis on discipleship in John's gospel is noteworthy. John (1) acknowledges both the narrower and wider circles of disciples, (2) equates the word disciple with Christian and (3) uses mathetes in the plural to refer to the disciples as the gathered community, the church. John writing after Pentecost viewed the statements of Jesus, particularly in the Upper Room discourses (chaps. 13-17), as speaking of that day when He would no longer be with the disciples in human form. Then, they would live "in the Word" (8:31) and "in the Spirit" (14:15-17, 15:26f). They would maintain a new fellowship with Him. He would not be "with them" but "in them" in the person of the Holy Spirit. They would be recognized by their devout love for one another (13:34f). Their disciplèship would manifest itself

in service as they "washed one another's feet" (13:1-17). It would bear much fruit (15:1f). Their works would be even greater than those accomplished by Christ (14:12).

#### Summary

Christ's command to His church was to make disciples. He gave the word "disciple" a new and unique character. His usage of the word was two-fold. Generally, disciple was used to note true followers of Christ. Specifically, it was used to denote a special twelve who later were called "apostles." Methods for making disciples included preaching, baptizing and teaching. The process of making disciples, however, was not to begin until the original disciples had received a special endowment of power from above.

To develop a theology of discipleship on the Gospels alone would be to develop an incomplete theology. The concept developed in stages. The New Testament church was to make its contribution to the fuller understanding of the process of making disciples. The meaning of the word "disciple" had yet another stage. The methods for discipleship development were in process. The coming of the person and power of the Holy Spirit literally changed history. His coming completed the revelation of God for the nurture of His followers and the building of His kingdom upon earth. In Chapter 3 Pentecost and its impact on discipleship will be studied.

## CHAPTER 3

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: POST-PENTECOST

Pentecost serves as a pivotal point in understanding authentic discipleship. On that day the church was born and the concept of Christian nurture took on new dimensions. From that day biblical terminology related to discipleship changed significantly. The Book of Acts was a transitional chapter in the development of the New Testament concept of discipleship.

#### The Book of Acts

The continuing evolution of the word "disciple" in Acts is important to observe. As was seen earlier in the Gospels the word had both a specific and a general usage. It was used specifically to refer to the Twelve chosen as apostles and generally to refer to all true followers of His cause. In Acts the word "apostle" was substituted for the more specific use of the word "disciple." The more general usage of disciple denoted those who followed Christ in obedience.

#### Apostle

Whereas the word "apostle" is used only nine times in the four Gospels, in Acts it appears at least thirty times. In the Gospels, the word is used to indicate the twelve Jesus had chosen for a special work. They were to be known as apostles. No definitive word was given as to the roles and functions they would assume.

The development of the word "apostle" continued in Acts and the Epistles. Like the word "disciple" the word "apostle" proceeded from a specific to a more general use. Originally, apostle referred only to twelve men "hand-picked" by the Master. Early in Acts (1:26) Matthias was "numbered" with the eleven apostles, filling the vacancy created by the defection and death of Judas. The number twelve was maintained but not permanently.

The choosing of Matthias set forth the qualifications of apostleship. Acts 1:21-22 indicate that the apostles were to be men who (1) had accompanied Jesus from His baptism to His ascension and (2) were eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ. Paul in his Damascus Road experience, "saw" the resurrected Christ. Although he had not been a lifetime follower of Christ, it is obvious by repeated references that he too was given the title of "apostle." (See Rom. 1:1, I Cor. 1:1, Rom. 11:13, Eph. 1:1, I Tim. 2:7, II Tim. 1:11 and Tit. 1:1). Barnabas, Junias, Andronicus, Titus, Epaphroditus and others were also referred to as "apostles." (See Rom. 16:7, Acts 14:4 and II Cor. 8:23). Debate exists as to whether or not the use of the word "apostle" in these particular cases differed from its use in connection with the Twelve. The explanation is beyond the scope of this study.

However, it can be concluded that the term "apostle" was used beyond its original usage and referred to more persons than it had at the beginning. The Twelve were not the only ones in the church to be referred to as apostles. Although there is no evidence of a continuation of the original apostolate, the concept continues into the present by its inclusion in the gifts and offices of the Spirit outlined by



Paul for the New Testament church (I Cor. 12:28-29 and Eph. 4:11). Others were to be "sent ones" with particular ministries to maintain.

### Disciple

The Twelve are known in Acts as the Apostles of the church. The word "disciple" is used exclusively in the more general sense to refer to followers of the Way. "Disciple" is not used to refer specifically to church leaders but more generally to refer to those whom the Lord added daily to His church.

Acts 1:15 recorded the disciples in the Upper Room as numbering "about a hundred and twenty." In Acts 6:1 and 7 the "number of the disciples was multiplied." Converts during the first missionary journey were referred to as "disciples" in Acts 14:22. Throughout Acts the term was used exclusively for all who were or came to be followers of Christ. In Antioch the disciples became known as Christians (11:26). The word "Christian" appears only three times in the New Testament, twice in Acts and once in I Peter. Its usage, in reference to Antioch, introduced the disciples in a situation where they could no longer be regarded as a sect of the Jews. They were then called "Christians." The terms "disciple" and "Christian" were used synonymously.

Following the day of Pentecost, the disciples had banded together "continuing stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). As a collective body they were enjoying nurture, support, encouragement and numerical growth. Converts joyfully received the gospel, were baptized and immediately identified themselves with the church. There they experienced doctrinal instruction, Christian fellowship, the observance of the Lord's Supper and prayers. In that format they deepened their

commitment. Christian nurture and growth were constantly available and experienced. Their spiritual prosperity was evidenced in their victorious praises, their evangelistic fervor and their success in bringing many others to Christ.

They continued worshipping in the Temple temporarily while they studied and fellowshiped in small groups. Although the apostles assumed responsibility for nurture of the disciples, their commitment to each other and daily interaction provided the atmosphere in which nurture took place.

The expansion of the church by way of persecution (Acts 8:1-4) and missionary endeavor (Acts 13:1-4) brought the matter of discipleship into sharper focus. The disciples had not been commanded simply to evangelize but to make disciples, not simply to preach but also to baptize and teach. The disciples of Christ were not silent. They took the commands of Jesus seriously. Persecution could not silence their teaching and preaching. The Holy Spirit gave them fruit. The care and nurture of new "babes in Christ" took on primary importance.

### Elder

The establishment of the eldership occurred as the church continued to grow. The church separated itself from Judaism and the work of the apostles was modified. "The primitive conception of the church was not based on the temple, but on the synagogue, where the congregation met for instruction, praise and prayer."<sup>1</sup> The early church patterned after the Jewish model. It is, therefore, not surprising to find elders in the church. The when, how and why of

---

<sup>1</sup>George T. Purves, The Apostolic Age (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), p. 95. (Hereafter identified by Age).

the establishment of the new office in the church is not clearly spelled out in the New Testament. At the Jerusalem Council, however, elders are seen sharing leadership with the Apostles (Acts 15:2, 22 and 16:4).

It is generally held that as the church grew and the apostles took on responsibility for the larger context of the church, it was necessary to expand the base of leadership to provide adequately for local congregations. When the apostles preached outside Jerusalem, leadership was delegated to the elders. Their primary role was that of spiritual oversight of the congregation.

The apostles, who had been the sole officials of the church, found their work modified both by the appointment of "the seven" in Acts 6:1-7 and the establishment of the eldership. No longer responsible for the care of the widows and the poor, the scope of their ministry moved away from the local congregations to the superintendence and advancement of the cause at large. George T. Purves in The Apostolic Age writes:

From this time we hear no more of most of the original apostles. We cannot doubt that they went abroad, as tradition affirms, as missionaries and founders of new churches, and that to them, as well as to other laborers, the spread of Christianity was due."<sup>2</sup>

The care and nurture of the disciples in the local congregations became the responsibility of the local leadership. The follow-up of the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas "confirmed the souls of the disciples and exhorted them to continue in the faith . . ." (Acts 14:22). In the following verse (v. 23) their method of assuring continued nurture, growth and expansion is outlined. They "ordained elders in every church" and "commended them to the Lord."

---

<sup>2</sup>Purves, Age, pp. 95-96.

The word "confirm" is used only in Acts. It refers exclusively to an action of the apostles. The word "exhort" appears over a hundred times and is used as an activity of both apostles and fellow disciples toward the goal of nurturing the Christian community. In Acts the word parakaleo, translated "to comfort, beseech, exhort or encourage," is primarily an activity of missionaries and apostles in their role with the Christian community. In the Epistles, however, it is used frequently as an activity of disciples with one another. Its aim was toward mutual growth and edification. Disciples were "ones called alongside to help" their fellow disciples. The gift of exhortation ranks high on the list of the gifts of the Spirit given for the edification of the body of Christ. (See Rom. 12:8).

It should be noted that even with developing "body life" in the church, the pattern of one-on-one discipleship-leadership development also progressed in Acts. Ananias disciplined Saul. Cornelius greatly influenced the ministry of Peter. Barnabas had a ministry of encouragement throughout the church and Paul built a continuing relationship with Timothy.

The methods of Jesus in the training of the Twelve are duplicated in the case of Paul and Timothy. Paul later encouraged Timothy to continue that pattern of discipleship training in the often quoted verse in II Timothy 2:2, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." As in the ministry of Jesus, Paul maintained two patterns of discipleship, never allowing his one-to-one relationship to interfere with his discipling ministry with the larger segment of the Christian community.

The word "disciple" in the Book of Acts became the exclusive label of all those who followed Christ in obedience. The words "disciple" and "Christian" were used interchangeably. The Twelve continued their identity as apostles as their job descriptions were modified to meet the demands of a growing church. The church and local elders received the major responsibility for discipling those who came to faith in Christ. Still, the role of leadership development was not neglected as leaders trained other gifted individuals who assisted with the great task which was before them.

### The Epistles

The Pauline Epistles provided another transitional chapter in the development of the concept of New Testament discipleship. Discipleship terminology and the theology of the church became more clearly defined and a biblical methodology was more clearly revealed.

### Disciple

The word "disciple" disappeared. It is not found in the Epistles. The reader is left to speculate why it is missing. Several reasons have been suggested. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology suggests:

Its (the word disciple) use indicates a stratum of tradition in which the corporate concepts for the Christian community had not been formulated. It belongs to the period of the first gathering of people around the earthly Jesus, and in Acts around the exalted Jesus, thought of as present in the Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>Dietrich Müller, "ecclesia," NIDNTT, Colin Brown, ed. I (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 304.

G. Campbell Morgan, in his book Discipleship, comments:

It is somewhat remarkable that the word (disciple) is not to be found in the Epistles. This is to be accounted for by the fact that the Epistles were addressed to Christians in their corporate capacity as churches, and so spoke of them as members of such, and as the "saints" or separated ones of God.<sup>4</sup>

Both sources see the church as the determining factor in what believers were called. Earlier their identity was tied solely to their relationship with Christ, now it was solidly tied to their relationship both to Him, who called them to be holy and to each other as the "called-out ones," the ecclesia, the church.

### Saints

The word "saints" appears forty times in Acts and the Epistles. In Acts, Luke began to record instances in which disciples were called "saints." Twice Saul of Tarsus is referred to as having persecuted the saints (Acts 9:13 and 26:10) and disciples at Lydda and Joppa were also called "saints" by Peter (Acts 9:32 and 41). It is a term used of the calling of every Christian, not just the attainment of a select few. Its use in the Epistles further reinforces that it was used of all believers. Although the word has a distinct connotation, it does not contradict the usage of the previous word "disciple."

Karl Barth, in Volume IV of his Church Dogmatics, wrote:

The men who compose the Church . . . are not only described with astonishing frequency as holy but are actually called "the saints." The term . . . does not figure in the Gospels, and only infrequently in Acts, but in the earlier and later strata of the Epistles and Revelation it has become almost a technical term for Christians . . . Yet rather strangely no individual Christian is ever called a saint. The saints of the New Testament exist

---

<sup>4</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, Discipleship (New York: Revell, 1897), p. 12.

only in plurality. Sanctity belongs to them, but only in their common life, not as individuals. In this plurality they are, of course, identical with the Christian community.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the evolution of the word "disciple" is significant. It has relevance to one's understanding of authentic discipleship. It can be diagrammed as follows:

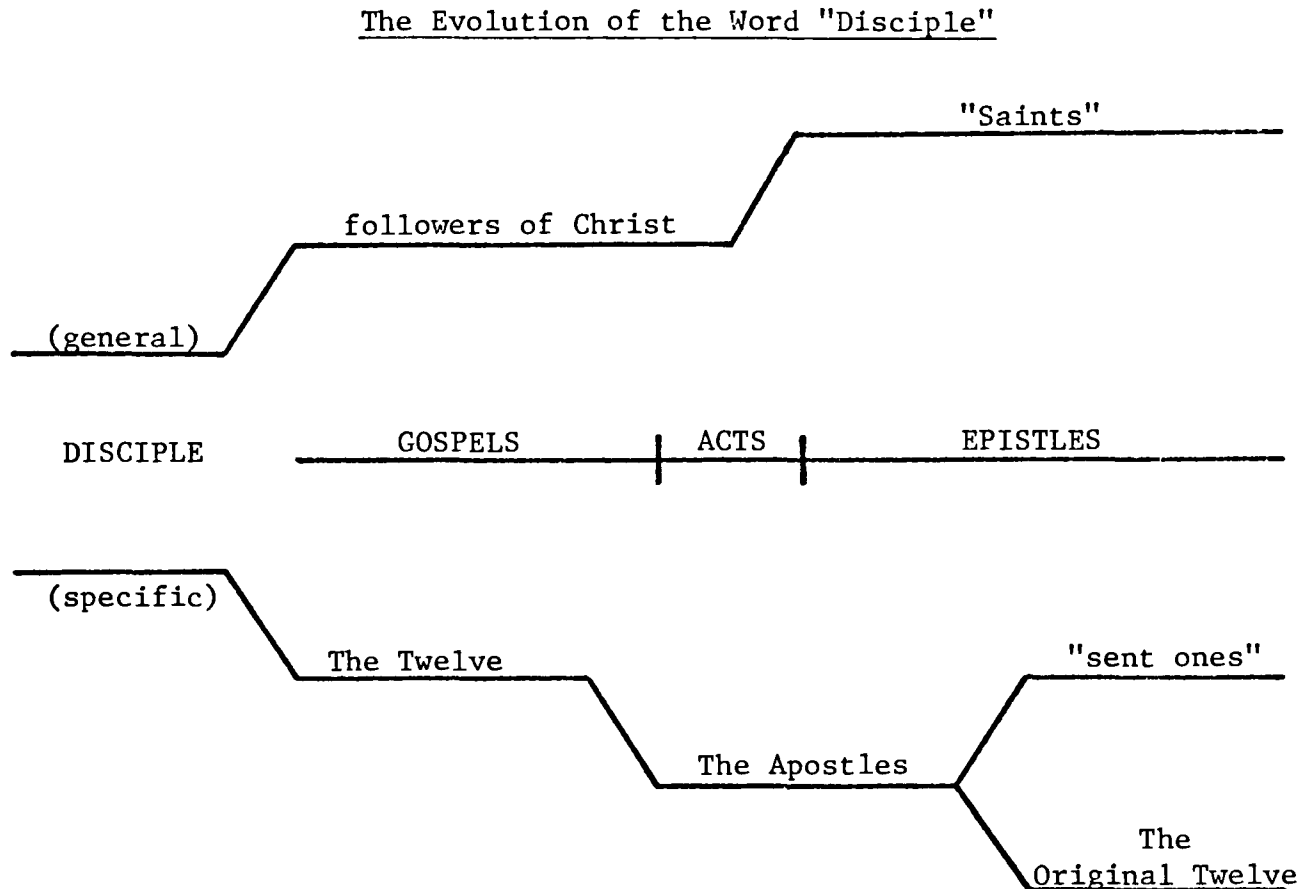


Figure 2

### The Church

The Pauline formulation of the corporate concept of the Christian community, the church, has far reaching implications for

---

<sup>5</sup>Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), IV, 512-513.

an understanding of authentic discipleship. Paul expresses his understanding of the Christian community in a word which best characterizes his concept of the church. He speaks of the ekklesia as the soma, the body of Christ (cf. Rom. 12:1ff. and I Cor. 12:12-27).

Paul develops the concept to stress the believer's oneness with both his Lord and his fellow believers. Although the primary emphasis appears to be on the unity of the believer with Christ, Paul is also interested in dealing with one Christian's relationship to another. There is one body and yet it has many members. And even though the members differ greatly, as they realize their unity in relationship to Christ, the body functions properly.

Converts found their identity in a body of believers as they were baptized in the faith. They became a vital part of a living organism. As a part, each believer possessed his own spiritual gift and provided his own special function. The total corporate functioning became the mechanism for growth and edification:

In modern times, under the influence of Pietism, we have come to think in terms of the edification of individual Christians - in the sense of their inward inspiration and strengthening and encouragement and assurance. The cognate idea has also arisen to that which is specifically edifying. Now all of this is not denied. It is, indeed, included in a serious theological concept of upbuilding. But it is only included. In the abstract, it is quite impossible. Even in Jude 20, which as far as I know is the only verse to which appeal may be made epoikodemein cannot possibly mean private edification. No such thing is ever envisaged in the New Testament. The New Testament speaks always of the upbuilding of the community. I can edify myself only as I edify the community.<sup>6</sup>

Paul stated in Ephesians 4 that the ultimate ministry of the church in the world would be carried on by saints who were ordinary, yet Spirit-filled Christians, not by professionals or the spiritual

---

<sup>6</sup>Barth, Church Dogmatics, IV, 727.



elite. He further stated that, although the equipping of saints would be the primary responsibility of the "pastors and teachers," the growth and edification of the body would be the shared responsibility and privilege of every believer. It is clear that each member does not seek first his own growth; the body as a whole seeks to edify the whole. As the whole is edified, the individual is edified as well. Paul implies that in a fellowship of love and mutual growth, numerical increase inevitably follows.

It should be noted that Paul recognized the gathering together of the saints as an essential element in the church. He always thought of the church in concrete terms, never spiritualizing an invisible church. To Paul the church had its location, existence and being within definable geographical limits.

Larry Richards in A Theology of Christian Education explicates the practical implications of Paul's concept of the church as a body and makes the specific connection of that concept with discipleship. "We have been looking at the Church as an organism designed by God for discipling."<sup>7</sup> To him the church does not exist primarily for evangelism but for discipling. Such a theological difference has practical implications in the formation and function of a church. An evangelistically-oriented church will be designed primarily for the non-Christian and the preaching of the gospel of repentance. The discipleship-oriented church will be designed for the Christian to interact and mature.

---

<sup>7</sup>Lawrence O. Richards, A Theology of Christian Education (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), p. 119. (Hereafter identified by Theology).

Richards views relationships within the body as essentially discipling ones. "When the church gathers as the church, the concern is nurture."<sup>8</sup> Evangelism will be the natural outcome of such a local church.

Building a nurturing church frees us from the necessity of urging babes to attempt to reproduce themselves. Building a nurturing church assures a growing maturity which will naturally express itself in the communication, and reproduction, of God's life in others through the living communication of His Good News.<sup>9</sup>

A summarization of these thoughts is expressed by Richards in chapter eight of his book:

1: Upon conversion Christians are joined to other believers in a Body relationship. They are not meant to "go it alone."

2. The Body is designed for nurture: "to make increase of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16c).

3. Every member of the Body is gifted by the Holy Spirit to enable him or her to make a contribution to growth.

4. Individual and bodily growth come through "that which every joint supplies": believers functioning together promote and support the church's nurturing task (Eph. 4:16b).

5. The Body's ministry requires members of the Body to be with each other, and to minister to each other. Jesus' example in choosing twelve to "be with him" is reflected in the biblical injunction for believers not to forsake gathering together (Heb. 10:24).

6. Leaders in the church are selected from those who not only can know and teach truth, but who can model truth by the example they provide (I Tim. 3 and Tit. 2).

7. The stress on relationships within the Body reinforce the uniqueness of this group's existence as a distinctive community within human societies and cultures.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Richards, Theology, p. 120.

<sup>9</sup> Richards, Theology, pp. 121-122.

<sup>10</sup> Richards, Theology, p. 81.

Two additional questions need yet to be addressed. How then is the body to edify itself and what is the ultimate goal of the discipling process?

### "How To"

The answer to the "how to" of edification and nurture is set forth today in such books as Ray C. Stedman's Body Life and Gene A. Getz's Building Up One Another. In his chapter on "Keeping the Body Healthy," Stedman comments:

What is terribly missing is the experience of "body life"; that warm fellowship of Christian with Christian which the New Testament calls koinonia, and which was an essential part of early Christianity. The New Testament lays heavy emphasis upon the need for Christians to know each other, closely and intimately enough to be able to bear one another's burdens, confess faults one to another, rebuke, exhort and admonish one another, minister to one another with the word and through song and prayer . . .<sup>11</sup>

The remainder of the chapter explores the "one another" phrases from biblical and practical perspectives. Building Up One Another, by Gene A. Getz, is subtitled How Every Member of the Church Can Help Strengthen Other Christians. The twelve chapters are all built around the "approximately 12 significant actions Christians are to take toward 'one another' to build up the body of Christ."<sup>12</sup> Each chapter ends with suggestions for the practical application of these actions in the Christian community. Karl Barth referred to these "one another" phrases as "reciprocal actions and attitudes."<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Ray C. Stedman, Body Life (Glendale, California: Regal Books, 1972), p. 107.

<sup>12</sup>Gene A. Getz, Building Up One Another (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1976), p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>Barth, Church Dogmatics, IV, 648.

In the Epistles the phrase "one another" occurs repeatedly. Referring to positive interaction between Christians, it appears in Romans twelve times alone and at least thirty-six times in the other epistles combined. It is obvious by their use in the Scriptures that such activities and attitudes can be exercised and manifested both formally and informally as well as structured and unstructured.

The phrases bear a close relationship to the gifts and fruit of the Spirit. Some of the "one another" phrases refer directly or indirectly to specific gifts while others denote the attitude in which gifts are to be exercised. For example, in Romans 12:10 Paul writes "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." Such reciprocal attitudes have a direct relation to the fruit of the Spirit. In Hebrews 3:13 is written these words, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today . . . ." Such reciprocal actions have a direct relation to the gifts of the Spirit. Thus, teaching concerning the fruit and gifts of the Spirit is essential for Christian nurture. It is important that every Christian be able to identify what his spiritual gift or gifts are.

Ray Stedman writes concerning a believer's gifts:

There seems to be little doubt that this is where the early church began with new converts. Whenever anyone, by faith in Jesus Christ, passed from the kingdom and power of Satan into the kingdom of God's love, he was immediately taught that the Holy Spirit of God had not only imparted to him the life of Jesus Christ, but had also equipped him with a spiritual gift or gifts which he was then responsible to discover and exercise.<sup>14</sup>

Edification then takes place as the church provides a two-fold function for every "saint." First, the church must assist the

---

<sup>14</sup>Stedman, Body Life, p. 39.

new believer in discovering his or her spiritual gift or gifts. Secondly, the church must provide the atmosphere whereby those gifts can be exercised and the fruit of the Spirit manifested in frequent interaction with other believers.

Thus, as believers exercise their gifts in commitment to one another, each one doing his part, the body and the individual grows. G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "No lesson is considered learned in the school of Jesus, which is only committed to memory. That lesson only is learned which is incarnate in the life . . ." <sup>15</sup> Believers, through personal discipline, can orient themselves toward godliness, but it is only as knowledge is tried and gifts are exercised within the framework of human relationships that real growth is realized.

#### The Goal

Ephesians 4:13 states, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Each of the terms "perfect," "man," "stature" and "fulness" speak of maturity. Maturity is experiencing life in Christ in its fulness. It is the possession of all the gifts and graces Christ seeks to impart and finding them in useful, fruitful function within the body and the world.

Romans 8:29 restates the same idea in different words, "For whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." The Body is designed to fulfill the purposes inherent in the nature of the

---

<sup>15</sup>Morgan, Discipleship, p. 37.

new life given to us in Christ Jesus. And it is the Body of Christ which exists uniquely for that purpose.

The ultimate goal of discipleship is not evangelism. Christ-likeness is the priority. Evangelism is, however, a valid by-product. Growing Christians multiply. Christ always placed character over accomplishment knowing that the former would produce the latter and that accomplishment without character was doomed to fail.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer summarized the goal of discipleship in these words:

Those who follow Christ are destined to bear his image . . . Their goal is to become "as Christ." Christ's followers always have his image before their eyes, and in its light all other images are screened from their sight. It penetrates into the depths of their being, fills them, and makes them more and more like their Master.<sup>16</sup>

#### Summary

A number of changes took place following Pentecost which have influenced a proper understanding of discipleship development. The church was born and the concern for the nurture of new converts became a priority. The role of the apostles was more clearly defined. They assumed responsibility for the larger context of the church as the church and local elders assumed spiritual oversight of believers in individual congregations.

The writers of the Epistles substituted the word "saints" for the word "disciples." Paul's theology of the church as the body of Christ assigned the ministry of the church to the saints. Their growth

---

<sup>16</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: MacMillan, 1937), p. 337.

and edification was the shared responsibility of every believer. The two patterns of discipleship, established by Christ, were continued by the apostles and elders.

Howard Snyder wrote in his book The Community of the King, "Too little attention has been given to the doctrine of the church in much modern thinking about evangelism, discipleship and social action."<sup>17</sup> The relationship of discipleship to the church is of extreme importance. In fact, authentic discipleship cannot be understood apart from a healthy theology of the church.

In the post-Pentecost period, Christian discipleship came to its full development. Believers were known as saints, not only followers of Christ but members of His divine family. Finding their identity in their relationship one to another, they assumed major responsibility for the edification of one another. Discipleship was the determining factor in the identity the church was to maintain in the world. The church must be efficient in its ministry of Christian nurture to have a redemptive impact upon the world.

---

<sup>17</sup>Howard A. Snyder, The Community of The King (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1977), p. 12.

## CHAPTER 4

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: CONTEMPORARY EMPHASIS

What once would have been described as an area of "benign neglect" is now being rapidly populated with recently published materials; in the last five or six years discipleship has come into its own as a subject worthy of a publishing explosion.<sup>1</sup>

Webster's dictionary does not contain the word "disciple" as an English verb. However, the word coined in verb form is having wide usage today among evangelical Christians. Justified by Christ's command "to make disciples," discipling is a familiar term and activity in today's church. However, as with many other religious terms, there are wide differences in how the term is used and defined.

#### Discipleship Terminology

Other terminology is joined with the concept of discipling in modern usage: "one-on-one," "the multiplication process," "discipler," "disciplee," "growth groups," "discipling relationship," "spiritual parenting" and "spiritual pediatrics." All the terms refer to the same topic. The theme is the nurture of the Christian believer. Each term, however, carries its own particular implications. For example, some terms refer to a methodology which is usually a one-on-one relationship in contrast to a group process. Some refer to the ultimate goal of discipling as "the multiplication process" in contrast to

---

<sup>1</sup>David L. Waterman, "Sheep Food," Eternity, II (September, 1979), 20.



"spiritual pediatrics." The former term emphasizes the aspect of ministry and the latter term emphasizes maturity.

Some terms distinguish between discipleship as a life-long process and "follow-up" which, more generally, refers to the immediate span of time following a believer's "birth" into the family of God. Other terms fail to make a distinction. Many people equate discipleship with the post-war concept of "follow-up." Discipleship is far more. What has precipitated the recent emphasis on discipleship?

### The Influence of Evangelism

The earlier Billy Graham crusades brought back the concept of "follow-up" into frequent usage in today's church. With frequent criticisms and accusations of conversions as "short-lived," the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association gave careful attention to the follow-up of every convert.

Through the years, crusade follow-up has been the primary responsibility of team associate, Dr. Charles Riggs. His associate, Dr. Tom Phillips, during a recent interview discussed the Association's continuing concern for the evolution of follow-up strategy.<sup>2</sup> "We consider our approach a 'shotgun' approach. Basically, nine 'buck shots' are used to assure the follow-up of every decision maker. The methods include:

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) radio follow-up      | 6) <u>Decision</u> magazine |
| 2) church follow-up     | 7) nurture groups           |
| 3) correspondence study | 8) telephone follow-up      |
| 4) literature           | 9) special follow-up.       |
| 5) counselor contacts   |                             |

---

<sup>2</sup>Interview conducted with Dr. Tom Phillips on April 1, 1980 at 11 a.m. in the Greater Indianapolis Crusade Office.

The Crusade Handbook defines follow-up as "the process of giving continued attention to a new Christian until he is integrated into the church, discovers his place of service, develops his full potential for Jesus Christ and helps to build Christ's church."<sup>3</sup> Admitting that the definition might be a bit "idealistic," it is viewed as biblical. In reading the Association's literature one senses the careful concern for biblical authority. Paul is envisioned as the "pacesetter" and attempts are made to build on his strategies and methods.

In his doctoral studies, Dr. Phillips evaluated the follow-up of the Greater Memphis Crusade. He questioned pastors by way of a survey as to whose responsibility they perceived follow-up to be. The pastors believed that the responsibility belonged to the church, yet, almost as great a number admitted they were not sure how to go about it.

The Association continues to stress the church's responsibility in discipling new converts. They attempt in pre-crusade sessions to train lay persons to carry on follow-up ministry in the church following the crusade. Back-up programs assure follow-up if the church fails.

"Our basic procedure is group-oriented," said Dr. Phillips, "although training is given for one-on-one to counselors." Follow-up training is also made available to pastors for use on a one-on-one basis. The course was developed and is taught by Dr. John Courts, a pastor from Tampa, Florida. It consists of a series of pamphlets to be used weekly in sharing basic concepts with new converts. Now in

---

<sup>3</sup>Crusade Handbook (Minneapolis: Billy Graham Evangelistic Association), p. 15, (no date given).

addition to the materials available through the Billy Graham Association, many other resources have been made available.

#### Available Resources

A survey of available material noting the various conflicting definitions, concepts and procedures should leave a local pastor confused as he tries to find something workable for his parish. A number of the materials ignore the role of the church in the discipling process, thus further complicating the issue. Few of the materials available take the time or effort to provide a working biblical basis for foundation.

The materials appear in various forms. Appendix A lists several examples of materials available in various forms. It is not to be considered as an exhaustive list.

#### The Contemporary Emphasis Evaluated

An evaluation of the contemporary emphasis along specific biblical lines was of particular interest in the writing of this study. Do the major written works on discipleship development answer the basic questions necessary for acquiring a sound biblical basis?

For a specific study five books were chosen. Two are considered classics in their field. The other three are among the better selling discipleship books on the contemporary market. The books were evaluated by asking seven specific questions believed necessary for building a strong biblical basis. The questions emerge from the findings of the research of this study. The books chosen were:

1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship, 1937.
2. A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve, 1871.

3. LeRoy Eims, The Lost Art of Disciple Making, 1978.
4. J. Dwight Pentecost, Design for Discipleship, 1971.
5. Carl Wilson, With Christ in the School of Disciple Building, 1976.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran. A. B. Bruce was an ordained minister of the Free Church of Scotland. LeRoy Eims serves as the International Ministry Representative for the Navigators. J. Dwight Pentecost is the professor of Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary. And Carl Wilson, formerly of Campus Crusade for Christ, is presently the president of Worldwide Discipleship Association, Inc. The writers give a cross section of the contemporary emphasis.

The seven questions to be considered are:

- 1) How is a disciple defined? Are disciples and Christians synonymous?
- 2) Is an attempt made to provide a biblical basis? If yes, how extensive?
- 3) What is perceived as the biblical model? Is it Christ, Paul or the New Testament church?
- 4) Is a distinction made between leadership training and discipleship development?
- 5) What is perceived as the ultimate goal of discipleship?
- 6) What is stated as the role of the church in the discipling process?
- 7) Which method appears to be preferred, one-on-one or group?

The questions will be considered in the order stated and the books will be identified by the last name of their respective authors.

#### How Is a Disciple Defined?

Bonhoeffer. The disciple is viewed as one who lives a life of total obedience in total submissiveness to the will of Christ. Disciples and Christians are definitely the same. Bonhoeffer raises a high standard for qualifying as a believer. He makes no other categories

to provide for those followers who are less than totally committed to Christ.

Bruce. Disciples are defined as those forsaking their sin and placing their faith in Christ. Although the full emphasis of the book is on the Twelve, the other believers are also referred to as disciples.

Eims. In his Preface, the author alludes to three stages of growth: convert, disciple and worker. The distinction is followed to the Appendix wherein he states a timetable for progression. Two years are required on the average for a convert to become a disciple.

Pentecost. A disciple is defined as "one who has a love for the person of Christ, confidence in the word of Christ, and is completely committed to Christ in service and obedience."<sup>4</sup> The author views disciples progressing through three stages: the curious, the convinced and the committed. Not until he reaches stage three can he rightly be called a disciple. As quoted earlier, Pentecost believes that being saved and being a disciple are vastly different. Pentecost and Bonhoeffer take definitely differing positions. Bonhoeffer would not believe a person saved until he reached Pentecost's "third stage."

Wilson. His definition of disciple is inclusive of all believers. No distinction is made between a believer and a disciple.

#### Is a Biblical Basis Provided?

Bonhoeffer. A thorough attempt is made for a biblical approach with primary emphasis on a strong theology of the church.

---

<sup>4</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Design For Discipleship (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), p. 20.

Bruce. Yes. The basis, however, is limited to the Gospels and the life of Christ with His disciples.

Eims. Chapters 2 and 3 cite biblical examples of discipleship and provide a sketchy progression of discipleship in the early church. The author's biblical base is, at best, limited.

Pentecost. From a professor of biblical exposition one would expect a strong biblical orientation. Each chapter is an exposition of a New Testament passage. He limits his study, however, to the Gospels.

Wilson. The book biblically analyzes Jesus' ministry to the Twelve and draws on other significant data primarily from the Gospels. The Gospels are seen as being of greater relevance than the Epistles in formulating a biblical base.

What Is the Biblical Model  
for Discipleship?

The author's responses can be listed as follows:

Bonhoeffer	Bruce	Eims	Pentecost	Wilson
The New Testament Church	Christ and the Twelve	Christ and Paul	Christ and the Twelve	Jesus Christ

Wilson commented: "Obviously, the Epistles present no overall, all-inclusive description of how to build disciples . . . If one is to discover a pattern for building disciples, his source must be the Gospels, for they primarily record the ministry of Jesus Christ and the method He used to build men."<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Carl W. Wilson, With Christ in the School of Disciple Building (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), pp. 60-61. (Hereafter identified by WCSDB).

Are Leadership and Discipleship  
Training Distinctive?

Bonhoeffer. Yes. He stays strictly with the discipling of all believers and never equates it with the training of leaders.

Bruce. The original intention of the author is not totally clear. It appears that he wrote consciously to prepare a text for leadership training while also showing the nature of discipleship.

Eims. No. All disciples are viewed as capable of becoming "multiplying disciples."

Pentecost. The author deals primarily with the growth of the average believer. He is more concerned in differentiating between a believer and a disciple which he holds to be at a more advanced stage.

Wilson. As perhaps no other writer, Wilson presents a balanced handling of this issue. Primarily in Chapter 7, "Leadership Development and Government Under God," the author places the relationship of discipleship and leadership in the proper perspective. He sees discipleship as inclusive of all believers and leadership as reserved for only a few.

What Is the Goal of Discipleship?

The writers respond as follows:

Bonhoeffer	Bruce	Eims	Pentecost	Wilson
The image of Christ	Apostle-ship	"Multi- plying Disciples"	Maturity and Ministry	The image of Christ

Bonhoeffer answers the question in the title of his last chapter, "The Image of Christ." "Those who follow Christ are destined to bear his image, and to be the brethren of the firstborn Son of God.

Their goal is to become 'as Christ'."<sup>6</sup> Wilson comments: "Evangelization, church building and disciple building have as their end the building of persons into the image of Christ, and those who bear the image and character of Christ glorify Him."<sup>7</sup>

What Is the Role of the Church  
in the Discipling Process?

Bonhoeffer. The latter section of this book deals with the church and its relationship to the discipleship process. "No man can become a new man except by entering the Church, and becoming a member of the Body of Christ. It is impossible to become a new man as a solitary individual."<sup>8</sup> Growth takes place through the mutual sharing of the Body in the preaching and teaching of the Word, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper and fellowship.

Bruce. The ministry and mission of the church in the world is out of the scope of his writing. He wrote of the period immediately preceding the birth of the church.

Eims. The church is given a very low profile in his work. His theology of the church is weak. No specific role of the church in the discipling process is seen apart from that of providing fellowship with other believers.

Pentecost. The ministry and mission of the church is out of the scope of his writing. He limited his writing to the Gospels.

---

<sup>6</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: MacMillan, 1937), p. 337. (Hereafter identified by Cost).

<sup>7</sup>Wilson, WCSDB, p. 53.

<sup>8</sup>Bonhoeffer, Cost, pp. 270-271.



Wilson. Wilson frequently makes reference to the church. He has a strong love for it and a hope for the return of the church to New Testament discipleship. He writes, however, of discipleship more as a program needed in the church than as its inherent purpose. Although he does not present a systematic theology of the church, his emphasis on the Gospels rather than the Epistles partially explains his conclusions.

#### Which Discipleship Method Is Preferred?

Bonhoeffer. With his strong emphasis on the church, his preference is for group methodology almost to the exclusion of a one-on-one relationship.

Bruce. The author, although not stated specifically, reveals Christ as using a small group approach with supplemental one-on-one encounters.

Eims. The author sticks strictly to a one-on-one methodology to the exclusion of any group process.

Pentecost. Methodology lies outside the scope of his book in that it deals totally with the nature of discipleship.

Wilson. The predominance of emphasis is placed on small groups with supplemental one-on-one relationships. A summary breakdown of methodology proceeding along the author's seven steps of development can be studied on page 174 of the text.

#### Summary

If contemporary discipleship emphasis is proceeding along biblical lines and if the books chosen are at least a sample expression

of that emphasis, there is significant difference in the interpretation of what is biblical. The defining of the word "disciple" highlights an age-old controversy in the church regarding the question of the security of the believer and the Lordship of Christ. Can a man know Christ as Savior without knowing Him as Lord? Bonhoeffer and Pentecost would solidly disagree. Wilson and Eims would see Lordship as a future stage for a believer as would Pentecost. Thus, for some a disciple is a believer while for others a believer may not be a disciple at all.

Some writers use the Bible as their text while others use it as a pretext. Some limit their study to the Gospels while others include the Epistles. A significant role for the church is viewed by some while others advocate a program of discipleship which would "succeed" even if the church failed to exist. Wilson and Bonhoeffer address the church directly while others only refer to the church indirectly.

The producing of leaders is primary for some writers while others aim at producing followers of Christlike character. Few make any solid distinction between the discipling of believers and the training of leaders. As to methodology, there is little unanimity of approach. Those strong on a biblical theology of the church appear to favor a group approach. Those who ignore the church seem to favor one-on-one discipling. There are exceptions.

The church must come to a wider scope of agreement on what is biblical. The theology of the church needs occasional re-examination lest the biblical perspective is lost and Christians forget the very nature of the institution to which they are committed.

The clarification of these issues is of utmost importance if practical and relevant materials are to be developed. Materials must be based on a strong biblical basis and a clear understanding of the nature of Christian experience. Only then will discipleship development in the local church be effective and fruitful.

## CHAPTER 5

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: GREENWOOD, INDIANA

Discipleship Training: A Venture in Training and Accountability is a major part of the discipleship development program of the Community Church of Greenwood. The training consists of four courses each lasting nine weeks. Each course attempts to establish the believer in the basic disciplines of discipleship. The evolution of the program has progressed simultaneously with the growth of the church.

The church began with a deep concern for the nurture of each believer. Discipling was to be a major activity.<sup>1</sup> As founding pastor, the writer made a firm commitment to develop a meaningful program of discipleship training. The writer had been reared in an "altar-orientation" where spiritual problems were solved with a "crisis experience" and little was said about discipline and discipleship. Church members sought instant "cures" for needs and problems which realistically could only be found by way of a maturation process.

Quantity, not quality, had often been the priority in previous pastorates. The results were often seen in believers whose commitment was more to a pastor or a program than to Christ as Lord. The church was filled with "undisciplined disciples." There was no interest in perpetuating this self-defeating strategy. The problem was that many professing Christians lived beneath their potential in Christ. Where were the living examples of those experiencing the

---

<sup>1</sup>"Discipling" is defined as the teaching and encouraging of spiritual "babes" through systematic, personal and Spirit-directed training, holding them accountable for discipline.

"abundant life" Christ came to give? Where was the biblical emphasis on discipleship?

The preservation of spiritual "fruit" was the major concern. Community Church desired to find its identity in Christ by living in the light of His Word and His Spirit. These major concerns prompted the development of a discipleship program in the early days of the church.

### A Church is Born

Community Church of Greenwood was "conceived" in the fall of 1976 and brought to actual "birth" in May of 1977. The church was "conceived" by a small group of local businessmen who felt the Greenwood community needed the option of an independent, inter-denominational church. The first services were held in the local library. The group soon outgrew the library facilities and later occupied a store-front building and the local high school cafeteria before moving to their present and more permanent location.

In less than four years the church family has grown to over 500 members. A person must identify with the definition of church membership to be considered a member. A member is defined as anyone possessing a personal, growing relationship with Jesus Christ who attends and supports the church faithfully. Before identifying with the church family, the new "member" is made aware of the church's desire for everyone to complete at least the first section of Discipleship Training. The results have been encouraging.

The growth rate of the church, as seen in Table 1, can be attributed to a number of factors: (1) its location in a growing community, (2) a Bible-centered teaching and preaching ministry, (3) a world-wide missions emphasis and (4) a family-oriented program. It is believed by some, however, that the major growth factor has been the discipling program. Disciples, excited about their faith, share that excitement with others. Believers are making new discoveries in the Word and encouraging their friends and neighbors to come and share in the instruction.

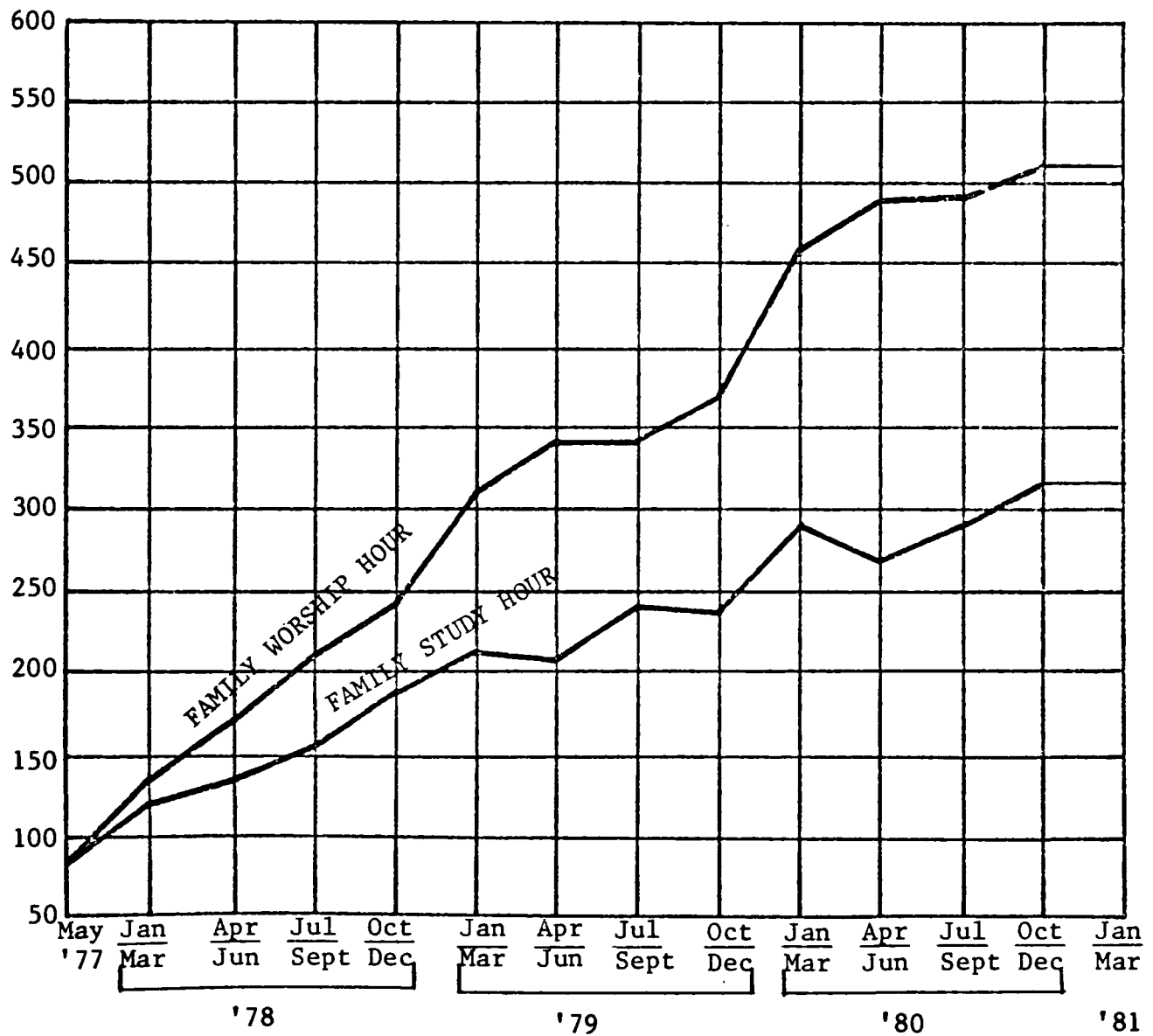
#### A Discipleship Program Begins

Two discipleship groups were formed within the first few months of the church's existence. One group met on Tuesday mornings and the other group met on Thursdays at noon. There were fourteen men and twenty-three women involved. The course lasted fourteen weeks with sessions dealing with various topics ranging from the daily quiet time to time management. Each week the disciple was responsible for a minimum of fifteen minutes spent in a daily devotional period, the memorization of one to three verses of Scripture and a time of prayer with a prayer partner.

The initial results were encouraging. Twelve men and twenty-two women completed the course. Two major questions emerged: (1) Where do we go from here? (2) What can we do to improve what we have experienced? A second course, more advanced in its content, was the obvious answer to the first question. The second question required more time and evaluation.

Table 1The Growth Rate of Community Church

The growth of the Sunday morning worship and Sunday evening study hour are charted from May '77 through March '81.



An evaluation conducted among those completing the first course revealed these conclusions: (1) fourteen weeks was too long, (2) the scope of the subject matter was too broad and (3) greater use of group dynamics should be utilized. While developing a new nine-week discipleship program, a new group of believers was led through a revised nine-week starter course. The evolution of the program continued.

The development of the program grew out of the frustration of not finding suitable materials available. Much of the material found was of a "workbook" format. The books systematically "fed" believers by asking questions they were to answer from the Bible. The church desired a process whereby believers could be taught to raise their own questions, find answers in the Word and make applications to their daily lives. The hope was for basic disciplines to be so well established that they would continue in the lives of each disciple when the programs were over. Actually the goal was two-fold. The church desired every believer to "orient themselves toward godliness" (I Tim. 4:7) while learning a systematic method of nurture which they could use in discipling others.

#### The Program Today

Discipleship groups, comprised of six to twelve believers (eight preferably), meet each Wednesday evening for nine week periods. The class hour consists of: (a) twenty minutes of instruction, (b) ten minutes of assignment, (c) ten minutes of accountability and (d) twenty minutes of body life. Classes are also arranged for those who cannot take them on Wednesdays. The extra classes are conducted on Sunday mornings and evenings following the regular services. No one is



outside the possibility of one of the classes if he or she desires enough to take one. If attempts to get a believer into a group fail, discipleship training on a one-on-one basis is offered.

To sign up for a class, a believer must make a commitment to faithful attendance and application of the daily disciplines. The commitment sheets have greatly decreased the number of "drop-outs" from the courses. Perfect attendance is required of all disciples with make-up sessions expected in cases of unavoidable absences. Three absences or failure to maintain the requirements necessitates termination. Certificates of completion are given only to those who make a wholehearted attempt to apply themselves. The registration and commitment form is Appendix B.

Accountability is considered the major ingredient. Disciples apply themselves more readily to the required disciplines when they know that a weekly discipleship report form must be handed to the discipler and memory verses must be quoted to a group member. A sample weekly report form is included in Appendix C. The accountability factor is viewed as essential to the success of the discipling process.

The discipler teaches from a prepared manuscript. A sample is in Appendix D. The manuscript was prepared to allow ample opportunity for the discipler's own commentary and additions. Disciples have "workbook type" sheets on which they take lecture notes. A sample sheet is in Appendix E. Although every attempt is made to make the class session meaningful, the real dividends are in the daily exercise of the disciplines taught.

The weekly assignments are considered the normal expectation of every growing Christian. Disciples are guided in having a daily

quiet time which consists of systematic reading through the Scriptures with a required application of what is read. Prayer ends the quiet time. Practical suggestions are given for the use of a prayer list and later in the course an hour of Bible study is required weekly. The topics for consideration in the four sections are found in Figure 3.

In Discipleship Training II, two weeks are spent in discovering and developing the believer's spiritual gifts. Training classes are planned for acquiring skill in the exercise of those gifts. A class is formulated around each of the seven body-edifying gifts listed in Romans 12. The classes coincide with discipleship classes and last for nine weeks.

Recurring themes run throughout the four sections. The person and work of the Holy Spirit is taught in the first division under the theme of "My Relationship with Christ." The lesson emphasizes the witness of the Spirit. In section two the lessons on spiritual gifts, "The Ministry of the Holy Spirit" and "The Lordship of Christ" continue the theme. "The Fruit of the Spirit" is considered in section three and a further emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit in section four round out the theme. Similar themes continued throughout the studies include prayer, witnessing and the study of the Word.

The addition of lay leadership has strengthened the program. A lay director and assistant director give general oversight and provide accountability and assistance for disciplers (Job descriptions in Appendixes F & G). They have defined qualifications for disciplers (Appendix H) and designed an annual training program for new and continuing disciplers. The lay directors also do an evaluation of each discipler following each program (Appendix I).

Topics Considered  
in  
Discipleship Training

DTP I

The Disciplined Christian  
The Daily Quiet Time  
Practical Disciplines  
Memorizing God's Word  
My Relationship With Christ  
Effective Praying  
Studying God's Word  
Witnessing In My Sphere of  
Influence

DTP II

The Bible: An Overview  
Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts  
Developing Your Spiritual Gifts  
My Commitment To My Church  
The Ministry of the Holy Spirit  
Dealing With Temptation  
Disciplining the Mind  
The Lordship of Christ

DTP III

Accepting Ourselves As Created  
How To Give a Testimony  
Knowing God's Will  
Personal Problem Solving  
Resolving Interpersonal Conflict  
The Fruit of the Spirit  
Discerning Good From Evil  
Setting Priorities

DTP IV

Setting Your Own Goals  
Digging Deeper:  
The Use of Silence  
My Pilgrimage In Prayer  
Sharing Christ With Others  
Exercising My Spiritual Gifts  
The Discipline of Fasting  
Christian Maturity: What is it?  
Charting the Course For Future  
Growth

The topics are also listed in a brochure which describes the entire program and is included in Appendix J.

Figure 3

### The Program In Context

Discipleship classes are taught within the scope of the total church program. Community Church is structured functionally in an attempt to minister to what is considered the believer's three most basic needs:

1. to worship - to experience God, first through the new birth and subsequently in corporate worship with fellow believers.
2. to study - to acquire a working knowledge of the Scriptures, capable of making relevant, daily application to every area of life.
3. to train - to develop spiritual gifts, to acquire practical skills in reaching out to touch the lives of others redemptively.

As a result, the Community Church family meets on Sunday mornings to worship, Sunday evenings to study and Wednesday nights to train. The Sunday evening study hour replaces the traditional Sunday School. On an average Sunday over 500 will attend the Family Worship Hour and over 300 will attend the Family Study Hour. Attendance will be over 250 on an average Wednesday evening. The word "family" is used legitimately as programs for all ages are offered each time the church meets. Discipleship Training has been taught to groups of teenagers. The church foresees the day when the program will be adapted for use by children.

Discipleship classes are viewed as a basic prerequisite for ministry. They are a part of a continuing curriculum available to adults on an elective basis for training in outreach. Other courses include:

- Basic Christian Doctrines
- People Helper Training
- Witnessing in the Working World
- Advanced Bible Study Methods
- Practical Principles for Service
- Evangelism Explosion

Some of the courses require the completion of Discipleship I and II as prerequisites for enrollment.

The discipleship training program is only one facet of the total discipling process of the Greenwood church. "Body life" can be experienced both in the structured times of worship and the unstructured times of fellowship and sharing. The public sharing of joys and concerns is always in order at Community Church. The first half of each Sunday evening's gathering is spent in singing, sharing and praying. Before our Wednesday evening classes, time is spent in praise and intercessory prayer. The congregation experiences numerous answers to prayer.

Discipleship training also influences the counseling and pastoral care administered by the church staff. Often members and counselees are looking for quick answers to problems which should be subjected to time and discipline. Individual weekly lessons are often used as supplementary counseling material and homework assignments.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Program Evaluated

From the beginning the question of methodology, one-on-one or group sessions, was debated. The effectiveness of the two processes was tested by way of a survey conducted among participants in our program. Seven disciplers were given questionnaires (Appendix K) in an attempt to evaluate their feelings toward the choice of methodology. They had experience using both methods within the framework of our program. Ten disciples were given a similar questionnaire (Appendix L). They had taken at least one section of the program on a one-on-one basis

---

<sup>2</sup>e.g. "The Disciplined Christian" is often used with the impulsive person, "Disciplining the Mind" with the addicted or depressed, "Accepting Ourselves As Created" with the one struggling with a negative self-concept.

and at least one section in a group situation. The sample was small. After three years of offering the class within the context of the church only seven disciplers were found who had taught both groups and individuals. No more than a dozen believers had experienced training on both a group and individual basis. Both disciples and disciplers had been allowed to choose their method and the primary choice was the group process. The questionnaire did not primarily determine the preference of method but the reason why one method was preferred over another.

The disciplers felt unanimously that the group experience was more beneficial. The primary reasons for valuing the group process more than the one-on-one included: (1) group dynamics, mutual sharing, encouragement and realizing common problems and difficulties, (2) the group process was less threatening and (3) the group provided greater accountability. In measuring specific aspects of the discipling relationship some viewed one method preferable while in other areas the other method was preferred. The preference of method in regard to individual traits is found in Table 2.

The group process was more highly valued in each trait with the one noticeable exception. "Freedom to express needs and feelings" appeared to the disciplers as greater in a one-on-one relationship. The disciplers unanimously commented on the loss of the more intimate relationship possible in the one-on-one arrangement.

The personal contributions to the discipler included: (1) the "knitting together in one Spirit," (2) a sense of usefulness in helping others, (3) a greater awareness of the needs of others and (4) the challenge to continue one's own discipline. Six

Table 2Discipler's Preference of Method

The chart reflects the disciplers' preference of method in regard to individual traits.

TRAIT	one-on-one	group	neither
a)encouragement toward growth and and change?	2	4	1
b)freedom to express needs and feelings?	5	1	1
c)instruction?	-	5	2
d)opportunity to share experiences with others?	1	6	-
e)assurance of being supported in prayer?	1	4	2
f)sense of belonging to the "family of God"?	-	6	1
g)opportunity to learn from another/others?	-	6	1
h)acquisition of spiritual insight?	-	6	1
i)challenge for deeper commitment?	1	4	2

disciplers indicated their preference to teach groups in the future while one indicated his willingness to teach either.

The disciples also showed a preference for the group experience. Four disciples preferred the one-on-one and six disciples the group relationship. The primary reason given for preferring the group experience varied but included: (1) the ability to identify with fellow believers, (2) the opportunity to learn and share with others and (3) more insights from group members sharing with one another. Those preferring the one-on-one relationship listed as their reasons: (1) more personal and relaxed instruction, (2) easier scheduling of meetings and (3) unique friendships established with disciplers.

The results of their preference of method in regard to specific traits are included in Table 3. Again with the noticeable exception of "b" the group process scored high in the areas questioned. Those preferring the one-on-one method missed: (1) identification with others with similar problems, (2) fellowship "beyond a surface level" and (3) knowledge from others' ideas. Those preferring the group method missed the freedom to express more personal feelings.

The disciple's listing of personal contributions to them as a disciple included: (1) a more personal knowledge of God, (2) a consistent daily walk with Christ, (3) application from the Word daily and (4) memorization of Scripture. When they were asked their preference in taking another course, two indicated they would prefer a one-on-one relationship while six desired a group experience. Two indicated they would be willing to be involved in either process.



Table 3Disciple's Preference of Method

The chart reflects the disciples' preference of method in regard to individual traits.

TRAIT	one-on-one	group	neither
a)encouragement toward growth and change?	3	6	-
b)freedom to express needs and feelings?	7	2	-
c)instruction?	2	5	2
d)opportunity to share experiences with others?	3	5	1
e)assurance of being supported in prayer?	3	5	1
f)sense of belonging to the "family of God"?	1	7	1
g)opportunity to learn from another/others?	-	9	-
h)acquisition of spiritual insight?	1	8	-
i)challenge for deeper commitment?	1	7	1

The survey, although a limited sampling, did help clarify why the group experience was more frequently chosen. The one exception, "feeling free to express needs and feelings," could be an indication that the church often fails to produce the atmosphere in which needs and feelings can be more freely expressed. Disciples have been trained in group techniques and in producing a climate conducive for sharing. It should be noted that there will always be those matters which can be shared only in a one-on-one relationship; group sharing, however, appears to maximize the benefits to the disciple of the discipleship experience.

Some of the comments shared by participants in their evaluations highlight the program's overall effect:

"Finding how prayer is so important; that prayer is important for small problems also. Allowing the Bible to speak to me; I now read the Scripture as though it were written to me, for me."

"Memorizing Scripture. How can we help others find the Lord until we have the Word in our lives? I experienced more growth in prayer. It becomes easier. At one time I couldn't say that."

"Through Discipleship Training I, I have learned love for others. I have better understanding for the needs of those around me. I experienced the most growth in dealing with temptation, evidenced by recognizing temptation and finding greater victory over it."

"Most significant growth was realized in a greater awareness of God's love and my own love toward others. Also, I overcame great feelings of guilt and loneliness."

"The most growth I discovered was in developing my spiritual gifts. At the same time I was doing this, the Lord involved me in situations where my gifts were needed. That's exciting."

"The most helpful discipline was exercise because I normally wouldn't have done that at all."

"The discipline which was the most helpful was Scripture memorization. I have always had a desire to know Scripture. The accountability forced me into action. The verse for the week almost always met my need for that week."

"I experienced the most growth in the quiet time. In order for me to keep my life in order to mature, I must spend time each day in the Word."

"The most growth was experienced in a total commitment to the Lord, as evidenced by a greater desire to learn from Him and to obey Him in all areas of my life."

Several strong convictions resulted as the research for the study and the development of the program progressed simultaneously:

1. Discipleship training should be made available to every believer in the congregation. Discipleship is the church's responsibility.
2. It should be done primarily in a group consisting of five to twelve persons.
3. Nine week courses are preferable, allowing adequate time to cover the material without expecting too much commitment from the individual. Long term commitments are more difficult to secure in our fast-paced society.
4. Accountability is the most important factor for the success of the program and its value to the disciple.
5. Group dynamics should be maximized for greatest results.
6. Discipling is a spiritual gift. Several members, believing that their gifts are teaching and/or exhortation, have discovered a fulfilling and continuing ministry that greatly contributes to their own growth and maturity.
7. Discipleship is a universal need. Discipleship I has been translated into Cantonese and is used in Hong Kong and Taiwan to train national pastors in developing discipling ministries in their local churches.

### Summary

Discipleship Training: A Venture in Training and Accountability is by no means a perfect program. It is constantly being revised and updated. A program that works effectively in one church may not work as effectively in another. Community Church's program, however, is based on carefully exegeted biblical principles that can be applied in a wide range of local parishes.

Major problems still exist. There will always be believers who will react against discipline and will not subject themselves to a discipleship program. Other Christians who begin the process will drop out after the first session. The complaint is still heard that it is just too much work, although the requirements are viewed as reasonable. Discipleship is not cheap and not all Christians are willing to "pay the price."

Effective disciplers are essential for successful discipling. The quality must be high. Their commitment to their own personal disciplines must be consistent. They must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and to the needs of others. Spiritual discernment is necessary for a competent discipler.

The maximizing of group dynamics remains a challenge. Disciplers can be trained to facilitate groups in order to create an atmosphere of cohesiveness, honesty and concern. Such an atmosphere is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit and disciplers can be channels through which the Spirit can work.

Believers can only come "into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13) by way of a caring community of growing Christians. To "weep when one weeps and rejoice when one rejoices" (Rom. 12:15) and to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) is to begin to discover the climate for maximum growth. The local church can best foster that kind of climate.

## CHAPTER 6

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: THE FUTURE

The recently renewed emphasis on discipleship should be encouraging to any serious-minded Christian. A corresponding concern for the emphasis to be biblical should also exist. A house built on a shaky foundation is ultimately doomed. Discipleship development must be more than a man-made program or a passing fad. Its roots must go deep, if its fruits are to be conserved. What then should be the criteria for a biblical approach to discipleship development? How might it be implemented in the contemporary church?

#### Criteria for Biblical Discipleship

Certain criteria emerge from the study which are essential for a discipleship program to be biblical:

1. a biblical definition of what constitutes a disciple.
2. a clear distinction between:
  - a. discipleship training and leadership training
  - b. basic follow-up and discipleship as a lifestyle.
3. a realistic understanding of the role of the church.
4. a perception of the ultimate goal of discipleship.

The above criteria can be validated by the results of the research stated in this study. Each item is adequately addressed within the Scriptures to provide a clear comprehension of a biblical approach relevant to today's church.

### What Constitutes a Disciple?

A clear understanding of what a disciple is, is a good place to begin. A workable program cannot be built without a clear knowledge of how the word was used in the New Testament. How the word "disciple" was used clearly defined its meaning. Jesus' use of the word was unique when compared with its earlier usage in Judaism. He left no doubt as to what was expected of the disciple. The price of discipleship was high.

Disciples had to follow Him in absolute abandonment of their own will and in total submission to His Lordship in order to identify as one of His followers. His Lordship extended over self, family and possessions. "Deny yourself . . . take up your cross . . . follow me . . . keep my commandments . . ." were the criteria for belonging to Christ. There is no biblical evidence that Christ ever used the term "disciple" so narrowly as to exclude any who would follow Him in obedience. Nor did He use disciple so broadly as to include all who followed Him regardless of the nature of their response to His commands.

Jesus constantly made His followers aware of the cost of discipleship. Frequently, large numbers would turn away and cease following Him. Others, however, made the commitment He asked and followed in submission to Him. Jesus' call to men to follow Him presupposed a life of discipleship. Discipleship was not a one time decision; it was a commitment to a lifestyle. Discipline was at the very heart of a personal salvation. It was not optional. To be a follower of Christ was to be a disciple. "A person is either a disciple of Jesus Christ or no Christian at all."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Howard A. Snyder, The Community of the King (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977), p. 157. (Hereafter identified by Community).

Jesus' closing words to His disciples in His Great Commission commanded them to continue the process of discipling just as He had begun. They were to preach repentance, baptize those who responded and follow up with teaching. The substance of their teaching was "all things whatsoever He had commanded."

Repentance was more than a mere sorrow for sin. It also dealt with man's intention for the future. It involved a turning around, a change of lifestyle and an abandoning of one's own selfish way. Baptism was a public witness to that change of life and gave identity to believers as members of the Christian family. Follow-up involved a life time of learning and submitting to the teaching given to them by Christ over the three and a half years of His earthly ministry.

There was no biblical evidence that Christ ever provided for a lower grade of commitment. "Come forward and accept Christ" was hardly the invitation given by the apostles as they proclaimed the gospel after Pentecost. Followers of Christ were to experience a change of mind, heart and will. Their commitment to Christ involved the whole of their lives. No area of their lives remained unaffected.

A prevalent theme of contemporary discipleship emphasis is totally rejected by such conclusions. That all disciples are Christians but all Christians are not disciples cannot be supported biblically. Little attention has been given to the progressive nature of personal salvation. People have been led to believe that by a public confession of Christ their spirituality is complete and eternally guaranteed. In Bonhoeffer's words we have proclaimed "a cheap grace which justifies the sin without justifying the sinner."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: MacMillan, 1937), p. 57.

Discipleship, obedience and the Lordship of Christ have too frequently been presented as options. Biblical data speaks otherwise. A life of discipline, obedience and submission is inherent to authentic Christianity.

Calvinistic-Arminian debate. Defining the word "disciple" highlights the age-old debate of the Calvinists and the Arminians as to the security of the believer. The question is, "Can a man lose his relationship with Christ and forfeit his hope of eternal life?" An Arminian would answer "yes." The result has often been an unrealistic number of believers who are experientially-oriented and fall in and out of grace repeatedly. A loving, developing relationship with Christ is not achieved - a relationship in which there is security. What it really means to be a disciple of Christ is basically never understood.

A Calvinist would answer "no." The result is often an unrealistic number of believers who are legalistically-oriented and prize their position in Christ without a corresponding concern for spiritual fruit in their lives. They feel secure in an experience which often does not develop into a dynamic relationship with Christ which would base their security on a valid foundation.

Although the Christian experience begins with a confession of faith, it is progressive in nature. "If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;" (John 8:31). "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple"



(Luke 14:27). When followers found the cost of discipleship too great, they turned away from Christ and ceased following Him.

Jesus did not offer an easier way - neither did He "justify the sin without justifying the sinner." Men were not saved from sin to continue to live in sin. He offered a continual cleansing as His followers lived a life of obedience to His commands. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

The person understanding the progressive nature of salvation in Christ does not need to question whether or not salvation can be lost. The question is irrelevant. The person who is genuinely converted and accepts the claims of Christ as Savior and Lord grows in that relationship and knows a security that does not need to be questioned.

The opposites of Christ's statements are also true. If any man does not continue in His Word, then he is not one of His disciples. If a man fails to bear his cross and follow in obedience to Christ, he is unworthy to call himself a Christian. Jesus told the multitudes that the only man who finished building his tower was the man who counted the cost beforehand and was assured there was sufficient resources to finish (Luke 14:28).

The evangelical church often fails in the communication of basic New Testament Christianity. The tendency is to overemphasize the divine aspect to the neglect of the human. The promise of God's provisions is not always balanced with man's obligation. The

disciples of the New Testament church understood the real nature of being a disciple. Their responses in the Christian community could only have been made by men and women who had said "yes" to Christ and "no" to themselves. Exceptions existed. Ananias, Sapphira and Demas inadequately considered the cost of discipleship.

Discipleship begins with conversion. The first step in discipling is a clarification of the biblical definition of what it means to be a disciple. A more victorious walk is enhanced by an adequate understanding from the beginning of the progressive nature of personal salvation. All Christians must be disciples.

Every professing Christian in the church needs to be disciplined. Their response to discipling efforts will reflect the character and legitimacy of their commitment to Christ. A convert's refusal to respond to the basic disciplines must never be complimented with false hopes of eternal life. He must be challenged to re-examine his commitment and discover the biblical pattern for discipleship.

The church has the privilege and responsibility to aid the growth and development of those who do respond to the challenge of discipleship. The church can teach the new convert that being a disciple is never static; it is always dynamic and always progresses toward maturity in Christ.

#### Discipleship-Leadership Training

Jesus set two patterns for discipleship. He trained leaders and He trained disciples. Paul followed His example and encouraged other leaders to do the same. He disciplined leaders and he disciplined disciples. Those in whom he saw potential leadership also needed to master the basic disciplines for every follower of Christ.

Serious implications result from a failure to make the distinction between the two patterns of discipleship. Every believer needs to be included in the scope of discipleship development. No one should be omitted. Every believer will not have leadership potential. Everyone, however, is called to maturity in Christ.

Believers in whom God has invested the gift of leadership need to be trained not only in leadership qualities but also in character. The discipling principles are the same for them as for others. Leaders merely proceed further to encompass the development of their gift which other believers may not have.

Greater time may be required in developing leaders. The principles of training are the same. The methods will differ. Christ and Paul give the best example. Although few will be expected to train potential leaders, every believer can disciple another believer, if not to maturity in Christ, at least through the initial follow-up stages.

The church needs disciples who are capable of discipling others. Some believers will find their gifts in evangelism. Others will discover gifts of teaching and exhortation to be used in discipling. But until both tasks are completed, the Great Commission remains unfulfilled. The command of Christ is to "make disciples."

Leadership training will include the training of disciplers who can effectively disciple in structured group settings. Small groups can be disciplined by them into deeper, more advanced stages of Christian growth. Disciplers should possess the necessary gifts of teaching and/or exhortation in order to do a satisfactory job.

The two patterns of training are both needed in the church. The crisis in many local churches is often one of leadership. Pastors and teachers are to equip the saints to do the work of the church. Any church lacking either leadership or discipleship training will be an ineffective congregation. There is the danger that those who fail to make the leadership-discipleship distinction will, in limiting themselves to the few, neglect the many. The opposite danger is also possible. Concentration on the many may not leave enough time and attention to train the few. Discipleship is for every believer. The church is only as strong as the depth of the commitment of each member. Careful attention to adhere to the biblical patterns and distinctions will aid in assuring an effective, growing local congregation.

#### Follow-up or Lifestyle

Another necessary distinction is between the follow-up of new converts and discipleship as a lifestyle. It is not an either/or proposition. It must be both. Follow-up, traditionally, ends with the basic principles. Whether taught on a one-on-one or in a new believers' class, the "babe" once taught to "walk" is placed on his own. Jesus taught more than the basics. Our task is not complete until we have taught believers "to observe all things" He commanded. Discipleship is a style of living. It includes everything in the process of taking "newborns" and bringing them to maturity in Christ. Being a disciple never ends.

Churches will need to provide both an adequate follow-up of new believers and programs to provide the atmosphere in which the discipling process continues. The task is never complete. Investment

in the development of believers pays great dividends by infusing life and vitality into an otherwise "dead" congregation. Growing, enthusiastic Christians attract others.

### The Role of the Church

Authentic discipleship cannot take place apart from the fellowship of the local church. Immediately, new believers need to find their identity in a local body of believers. The privilege of the church is to accept its new "brothers or sisters" in Christ and provide the loving, supportive atmosphere wherein they may grow. No one individual can ever supply the encouragement and help that can be given by a group of believers.

"Babes" will grow in the atmosphere of the church. They will want to re-define their commitment both to Christ and to their new spiritual family. The discovery of their gift or gifts for exercise in the body provides a sense of belonging, usefulness and service.

Corporate worship within the church is a must. There believers can receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, hear the preaching of the Word and share in the koinonia of the Spirit. No other organization can provide what the church can provide for the nurturing of the "newborn."

The language of the Epistles, the "one another" phrases for the building of the body, can best be incarnated within the church assembled. Members strengthening other Christians, building one another, models the church as it should be modeled. Loving, accepting, honoring, admonishing, serving, bearing, submitting, encouraging and exhorting one another, the church truly becomes the church.

Spiritual growth occurs best in a caring community. There are spiritual truths I will never grasp and Christian standards I will never attain except as I share in community with other believers - and this is God's plan.<sup>3</sup>

Methodological implications. The Bible strongly implies that discipleship is primarily a group process. The group approach is not to the exclusion of a one-on-one methodology but is the primary method. One-on-one discipling is supplemental to the group process.

Paul's follow-up of the new congregation at Thessalonica included both methods. When he wrote to the church, he reiterated his ministry among them (I Thess. 2:2-12). He speaks in verse 11 of the individualized attention given as supplemental to the corporate ministry. "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children."

The church will always find a place for both methods but must not overuse the secondary method to the neglect of the primary method. It will always be easier to arrange one-on-one discipleship relationships. It is difficult to organize groups, find suitable times convenient for everyone and create the interaction needed to effectively accomplish the intended purpose. The effort, however, is worth it. Many churches have discipling ministries in which a few persons work with a few individuals while the remainder of the congregation is untouched. The valuable resources of body life are virtually ignored.

The basic priority given to the church in the Great Commission was to make disciples. The birth of the church gave believers the channel through which to accomplish that goal. The local church is a

---

<sup>3</sup>Snyder, Community, p. 75.

unique and effective framework within which to fulfill that priority. As God ordained that children should grow and mature within the framework of the family, so Christians are to grow and mature within the framework of the family of God. "Spiritual pediatrics" are best accomplished within the church. Discipleship is its purpose for existence. Discipleship is far more than a supplemental program to be offered on an optional basis. The church has a contribution to make to the growth and maturity of believers that no other institution can duplicate.

Para-church organizations. Para-church organizations are not the church. They are, however, increasing in number, and by their own decree, exist for the purpose of serving the church. Otherwise, it is valid to question their right to exist.

Para-church organizations have made significant contributions to the evangelical church. Appreciation must be expressed for those contributions. It must be admitted, however, that if local churches and denominational structures were adequately doing their job, the need for many para-church organizations would be minimized. Many para-church organizations could cease to exist if local churches effectively ministered.

Writing of para-church structures, Howard Snyder suggested:

The important thing for every form of ministry is that the biblical Church be built and grow to maturity in Christ, that is the local Christian communities or fellowships be multiplied . . . and that the Church live in the world as a redeemed people of God.<sup>4</sup>

Christians have an increasing right to question the relationship of the para-church organization to the local congregation.

---

<sup>4</sup>Snyder, Community, p. 164.

The increased number of para-church structures is staggering. Most groups seek to assist the local church although some unfortunately compete. Some local pastors grow weary of the many contacts made annually by representatives of these groups.

Discipleship movements do exist which seem to ignore the church or, at best, consider the role of the Body of Christ in discipleship development as an addendum or supplement. Significant numbers have operated independently of the local church. Seminars are often conducted over weekends drawing Christians away from their local body of believers. One-on-one relationships often obscure the relationship of the believer to the Christian community. Leaders and workers in such movements frequently turn to the local church for the basis of their financial support while never identifying with a local congregation in their area. They model a contradictory message to what they teach. Their statements about being "partners" of the local church are only token expressions.

The theological implications related to discipleship are significant. Much of the contemporary literature on discipleship ignores the role of the church and the gifts of the Spirit for the edifying of believers. Writers suggest that the process of making a disciple is not complete until the believer is associated with a local body of believers. Implications are made that one can be discipled apart from the church and then be added to it. Such a thought suggests that the role of the church supplements the role of the discipler whose relationship with the disciple is primary. Discipleship training seen only as a one-on-one relationship totally ignores any consideration of group dynamics.



Believers need to develop inner spiritual resources apart from fallible human ties. The perils of hero worship, the temptation to control the lives of others and the pride of reproducing spiritual "children" can all be avoided when discipling takes place within the immediate framework of the community of faith.

Para-church organizations can learn from one another. There are groups which relate far more closely to the local church than do others. There are para-church organizations that come to the local pastor offering assistance within the confines of the congregation. Their aim is to assist laymen in ministering within their own local body in order that it might grow and effectively minister as God intended.

Every discipling organization must recognize its biblical limits. Discipleship is one ministry that cannot be as effectively accomplished independent of the local church. Hindering believers from finding their identity in a local church is detrimental. Ignoring the contribution that only body life can make yields a weakened program of discipleship development. The uniqueness of the church must be recognized.

#### The Ultimate Goal

The goal of Ephesians 4:13 should always be kept in view. "The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" is the ultimate objective. Other accomplishments which are each implicit within the passage accompany that goal. Along with Christlikeness secondary goals are included:

1. saints involved in ministry (vs. 12)
  - a. intrinsically "edifying of the body"
  - b. extrinsically "doing the work of the ministry."
2. unity in Christ (vs. 13).
3. stability in doctrine (vs. 14).
4. effective body life (vss. 15,16).

Proper discipling produces not only nurturing believers but also multiplying disciples. You can have multiplying disciples without Christlikeness, but you cannot have Christlikeness without having multiplication. It is better to have both.

#### A Plan

Adequate discipleship development in the local church must contain several ingredients among which are:

1. an effective program for immediate follow-up for new converts;
2. an on-going discipleship ministry of teaching and instruction in the deeper truths of Christian living;
3. an atmosphere of honesty and openness wherein body life can be effectively realized.

#### Follow-Up

Three basic objectives are necessary in the follow-up of new converts. They are:

1. to gain a sound biblical understanding of the nature of Christian discipleship.
2. to discover both their identity and their gift of gifts of the Spirit for useful service within the church.
3. to acquire the basic disciplines of discipleship including the daily quiet time, Bible reading, prayer and Scripture memorization.

These objectives can be achieved in various ways. New Believer's classes taught by a pastor or lay person could suffice. One-on-one arrangements with spiritual "big brothers" or "big sisters" could supplement the class experience. The unstructured response of an interacting fellowship is not to be minimized. As believers welcome and encourage new believers, growth takes place. Body life experiences of worship, prayer, teaching and sharing will contribute greatly.

Periodically, in times of corporate sharing, more mature believers can be encouraged to share what they found most helpful to them when they first began their walk with Christ. New believers could be given opportunity to share some of the difficulties they are experiencing and more mature believers be permitted to respond from their experience. So many of the "one another" phrases are needed by the new "babe" in Christ.

Accountability will be a major factor in successfully discipling a new believer. Either the leader of the class or a fellow Christian could serve that function. One-on-one personalized attention could help with the problems the believer seems to find unique to himself and not covered in class material.

#### An On-Going Program

The possibilities are limitless. Every contact or group meeting of the church could be utilized for nurture. Beyond the basics of follow-up other material needs to be shared systematically with the growing "child." A formalized, structured program like Discipleship Training, mentioned in the contextual setting, could be

used. A series of discipleship sermons could be preached. A series of reading materials could be developed and shared. Most discipleship books make suggestions as to what content needs to be communicated and when. Discipleship workshops, seminars and retreats could be conducted periodically. A number of resources and resource persons could be utilized. A survey of available resources appears in Appendix A.

Instruction in discipleship is not always verbal. Modeling is one of the most effective methods of communication possible in the church. Pastors, teachers and lay leaders modeling a disciplined lifestyle will effectively communicate with their disciples.

Continued encouragement in the area of developing one's spiritual gift is essential. A six to nine week course on each of the seven gifts listed in Romans 12 could serve as an effective elective program. Each person developing his primary gift for use within the body further insures the success of discipling within the church.

#### Effective Body Life

Churches need to be careful not to be so structured as to make body life impossible. In addition to the informal, unstructured times of interacting every congregation needs a weekly time structured for body life. A time when the joys and concerns of individual members are allowed to be shared with the entire body is essential. The sharing of prayer concerns and appropriate personal problems deepens the body life experience.

The same goal can be accomplished by way of small groups such as shepherding groups, small group Bible studies or mission groups.

Believers can be taught to be open and honest with one another, but ultimately such openness is a work of the Holy Spirit. A sermon series or series of Bible studies on the "one another" phrases in the Epistles would make for profitable preaching or teaching. The study could highlight the relationship of the "one another" phrases to the gifts and fruits of the Spirit.

The attitude of warmth and openness of the pastor and church leaders will largely influence the openness of the congregation. Pastors who wear "masks" and never allow their weaknesses to be seen may stymie more than encourage sharing. Body life is not a time for airing everything but can be a time of mutual understanding that within itself can be therapeutic. Confidential matters can be left for counseling situations.

Every pastor and church leader could be encouraged to read both Body Life by Ray Stedman and Building Up One Another by Gene Getz. The books are excellent material for small group study and interaction. They express the real nature of discipleship through body life.

#### Conclusion

The mandate of the '80s in evangelical Christianity is for authentic discipleship. The world wants to see modeled in the life of believers that which is professed with their lips. Discipleship is not an option. It is mandatory for all believers in every church. The church's task is not complete until it brings all men to maturity in Christ.

"Cheap grace" produces weak churches. Only as churches return to the biblical pattern of New Testament discipleship can they

fulfill their inherent purpose and produce the kind of believers that affect the world. Discipleship is a program of the church, but far more it is the church's purpose for existence.

Discipleship development must continue to evolve. The best books or materials have not yet been written on the subject. In the meantime, the church must do its job with the materials available while praying that God will call others who, with creativity and innovation, will supply additional insights and instruction on how best to accomplish the task biblically.

## CHAPTER 7

### AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP: CONCLUSION

#### The Problem Restated

Christ's command to His church was to make disciples. The command went beyond evangelism to the ministry of bringing believers to maturity in Christ. In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the process of disciple making. However, a serious problem exists. The church (1) lacks a sound biblical basis for discipleship development and (2) needs a theoretical framework within which to develop discipleship materials.

Contemporary writers do not agree as to what constitutes a disciple. Some view a disciple as being equivalent with a believer while others differentiate between the two. The role of the church in the discipleship process is also undefined. One writer views the church as essential to the process while another writer ignores the church altogether. The lack of a biblical understanding of discipleship has had a negative effect upon the production of practical materials which can be used in today's church.

The biblical pattern for discipleship, rightly established, can produce an effective church with a far-reaching redemptive impact upon the world. Certain issues need to be resolved to establish the biblical pattern. The word "disciple" must be clearly defined; the role of the church must be discovered and a workable methodology determined.

With these issues resolved a nurturing church can develop disciples according to the biblical pattern and produce quality Christians in accord with its inherent purpose.

### The Procedure Reiterated

A careful study of the Gospels, the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles was pursued inductively to gain a biblical understanding of the nature of discipleship. Contemporary emphases were compared with the biblical implications discovered to evaluate the renewed emphasis on the subject. The contextual setting of the Community Church of Greenwood, Indiana was used for an experiment with two basic methods of discipleship training: one-on-one and group process. A questionnaire was used to measure a small sampling of disciples and disciplers as to why they preferred one method to the other. An evaluation was made of the findings for insight into improvements for discipleship development in the local church.

### The Findings

The historical development of the word "disciple" in the New Testament provided an adequate understanding of the concept of discipleship. A definite pattern for discipleship was discovered. A clear distinction was found in the Scriptures between making disciples and training leaders. Discipleship was described as a life-long process. The Scriptures gave examples of both one-on-one relationships and group dynamics as means of discipling. Group process was the primary method stated. The priority of the group method reflects the nature of the church and its role in the discipling process. The church as the body of Christ was primarily intended for a nurturing community.



Within the church believers would grow as they interacted with the Holy Spirit and each other. Sound nurturing of believers yielded an evangelistic church. The ultimate goal of discipleship was for believers to bear the image of Christ.

### Conclusions

The New Testament clearly defines a disciple. A disciple is one who repents of sin, is baptized and follows Christ in total obedience. The words "believer," "disciple" and "Christian" are all used synonymously in the Scriptures. Following the baptism of a new convert the major discipling method is that of teaching. Such teaching includes "all things whatsoever He commanded" and can be accomplished in various ways including instruction and modeling.

Personal salvation is progressive in nature. Although it may begin with a crisis, it must continue as a process in order to exist. Salvation apart from a life of discipleship cannot survive. Disciples who pursue their relationship with Christ in an consistent life of discipline are indeed secure in Christ.

The Bible makes a clear distinction between making disciples and training leaders. All believers are not called to be leaders but all believers are called to be disciples. Both patterns of discipleship - training leaders and discipling disciples - are necessary within the church.

The worth of the church in the discipling process can never be overestimated. The church is not optional; it is essential. The church makes a contribution to the making of disciples that no other organization can duplicate. The church exists for discipleship.

Every activity of the church can be a nurturing experience. The ultimate goal of every believer is to bear the image of Christ and discipleship is geared toward that end.

Effective discipleship yields effective evangelism. The two are interrelated and inseparable. A living church cannot stay small. Growth is inevitable. Although an evangelistic church may not be a nurturing church, a nurturing church will always be evangelistic.

### Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are three-fold: (1) The Christian community should work together for a more suitable, biblical framework for discipleship development. (2) Emphasis on discipleship should be given at least equal, if not greater importance than the current emphasis on evangelism. (3) Para-church organizations with discipleship expertise should re-evaluate their methods in light of biblical truth and then serve the local church to increase the church's effectiveness in developing disciples.

The contemporary church with its vast network of seminars and conferences could make a substantial contribution to the local church by directing future emphasis toward discipleship. Christian writers and publishing companies could make their contribution by producing biblical materials which are practical and relevant in local church settings. The Christian community could work together toward the common goal of producing quality believers and re-establishing authentic discipleship in this generation. The present resources of the church are more than adequate to accomplish the task if they are directed toward the right objective.

### Further Study

The pursuit of a biblical basis for discipleship has opened a number of areas for future study. The historical dimension of discipleship is virtually untapped. The history of discipleship from the second century to the present with emphasis on the Didache, the early catechisms and Augustine would be of great interest. Of special interest would be the influence of John Wesley on the subject of the nurture of believers. A study of his classmeetings would be relevant. In more modern times the development of the para-church movement has made its contribution to discipleship ministries. A study of how the movement began and where it is heading today would also be fruitful.

A deeper theological study of the nature of the church would be beneficial. Special emphasis could be placed on a study of Paul's view of the church as the Body of Christ. Biblical studies on the gifts and fruit of the Spirit and their relationship to the "one another" phrases of Paul are of interest.

The spiritual and psychological factors of the group process in relation to spiritual maturation would be of particular interest. The findings of the study could contribute greatly to the improvement of group discipling within the local church setting. From the findings of the study training programs could be developed for assisting disciplers in effective group process.

The mandate for discipleship is not limited to any decade. It is an integral part of Christ's commission to His church. The task of the church is not complete until "all nations" are discipled. The mandate necessitates a rediscovery of authentic discipleship and that discovery must be made within the Word of God.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Bibles

- The Holy Bible; American Standard Version. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1901.
- The Holy Bible; Authorized Version. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1917.
- The Holy Bible; New International Version of The New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

### Books

- Barth, Karl. Church Dogmatics. Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-1977.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. The Cost of Discipleship. New York: MacMillan, 1937.
- Brown, Colin, ed. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.
- Bruce, A. B. The Training of the Twelve. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971.
- Buswell, J. Oliver. A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962.
- Coleman, Robert E. The Master Plan of Evangelism. Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1963.
- Collins, Gary R. How To Be a People Helper. Santa Ana, CA: Vision House, 1976.
- Crusade Handbook. Minneapolis: Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, n.d.
- Eims, LeRoy. The Lost Art of Disciple Making. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. What Every Christian Should Know About Growing. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1976.
- Foster, Richard J. Celebration of Discipline. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978.

- Getz, Gene A. Building Up One Another. Wheaton: Victor, 1979.
- Growing by Discipling: A Plan for Your Local Church. San Bernadino, CA: Churches Alive, 1976.
- Hartman, Doug, and Doug Sutherland. A Guidebook to Discipleship. Irvine, CA: Harvest House, 1976.
- Henrichsen, Walter. Disciples Are Made - Not Born. Wheaton: Victor, 1974.
- Kittel, Gerhard, ed. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1967.
- Kraeling, Emil G. The Disciples. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966.
- Kuhne, Gary W. The Dynamics of Discipleship Training. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.
- Ladd, George Eldon. A Theology of the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Luft, Joseph. Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1970.
- McGovern, J. D. "Group Dynamics." New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967, VI, 815-817.
- Meissner, William W. Group Dynamics in the Religious Life. Notre Dame: University Press, 1965.
- Moore, Waylon B. New Testament Follow-Up. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Morgan, G. Campbell. Discipleship. New York: Revell, 1897.
- Ortiz, Juan Carlos. Disciple. Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1975.
- Pentecost, J. Dwight. Design for Discipleship. Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1975.
- Purves, George T. The Apostolic Age. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955.
- Richards, Lawrence O. A Theology of Christian Education. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.
- Shank, Robert. Life in the Son. Springfield, MO: Westcott, 1960.
- Skinner, Bette Lee. Daws: The Story of Dawson Trotman, Founder of the Navigators. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.

- Snyder, Howard A. The Community of the King. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977.
- Stedman, Ray C. Body Life. Glendale, CA: Regal, 1972.
- Tasker, R. V. G., ed. The Gospel According to St. Matthew. Vol. I of The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Taylor, Richard Shelley. The Disciplined Life. Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1962.
- Trotman, Dawson. Born to Reproduce. Lincoln, NB: Back to the Bible, 1970.
- Weatherhead, Leslie Dixon. Discipleship. New York: Abingdon, 1934.
- Wigram, George V., and Ralph D. Winter. The Word Study Concordance. Pasadena: William Carey, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Word Study New Testament. Pasadena: William Carey, 1978.
- Wiley, H. Orton. Christian Theology. 3 vols. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1952.
- Wilson, Carl W. With Christ in the School of Disciple Building. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- Woods, C. Stacy. The Growth of a Work of God. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978.
- Yalom, Irvin D. The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy. New York: Basic Books, 1970.

#### Periodicals

- Chandapilla, P. T. "How Jesus Trained the Twelve." Evangelical Missions Quarterly, V, No. 4 (1969), 210-218.
- "Discipleship: Forum in Fort Lauderdale." Logos, VI, No. 2 (March, 1976), 45-52.
- Henry, Carl F. H. "Evangelicals: Out of the Closet But Going Nowhere?" Christianity Today, XXIV (January 4, 1980), 16-22.
- Kane, J. Herbert. "Why Missionaries Fail." Moody Monthly, LXXVII, No. 5 (January, 1976), 53-56.
- Kantzer, Kenneth. "Editor's Note." Christianity Today, XXIV (January 4, 1980), 4.

Miller, Donald E. "Spiritual Discipline: Countering Contemporary Culture." Christian Century, XCVII, No. 10 (March 19, 1980), 319-323.

"Of Shepherds, Fiefs, and the Flock." Christianity Today, XXIV (October 10, 1980), 14-15.

Rogers, Cleon. "The Great Commission." Bibliotheca Sacra, CXXX, No. 519 (1973), 258-267.

Wagner, C. Peter. "What is 'Making Disciples'?" Evangelical Missions Quarterly, I, No. 5 (1973), 285-293.

Waterman, David L. "The Care and Feeding of Growing Christians," Eternity, XXX, No. 9 (1979), 17-22.

Willard, Dallas. "Discipleship: For Super Christians Only?" Christianity Today, XXIV (October 10, 1980), 24-27.

## Survey of Available Resources

- 1) Audio-Cassette Tapes. Sources: The NavPress, Billy Graham School of Evangelism and Youth Specialties.
- 2) Consulting Ministries. Florida-based Christian Growth Ministries (Charismatic); Churches Alive of Southern California; Search Ministries in Baltimore, Maryland; World Wide Discipleship Association, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia.
- 3) Seminars. Navigators hold area and national conferences on discipleship often lasting from one day to a weekend. Leaders of the consulting ministries also conduct seminars.

Many seminars are conducted by ministers or Christian leaders who have developed their own discipleship training programs and conduct seminars to demonstrate their use to potential disciplers.

One such example is Pastor Don Wellman of the First Church of the Nazarene in Denver, Colorado, one of the denomination's largest congregations. Pastor Wellman frequently travels holding area seminars for pastors of his denomination explaining the use of his 357-page, 2-year program Dynamics of Discipleship.

- 4) Workbooks. Among the better known and more widely used are Campus Crusade for Christ's basic studies for new converts, Ten Basic Steps to Christian Maturity, and Navigator's Beginning with Christ series. Navigators also produce a 6-booklet series Design for Discipleship.

A recent addition, copyrighted in 1979, is a Southern Baptist Convention Press publication called Survival Kit. Written by author/educator Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., the 11-week course deals with basic follow-up for the new convert. It is designed with a leader's guide for use in a group setting or on a one-on-one counselor-type setting.

Dr. Waylon B. Moore, author of the modern classic New Testament Follow-up, also publishes a Building Disciples In the Local Church Notebook, first copyrighted in 1971 and 1977. The notebook consists of a 26-week course for discipling a new convert.

- 5) Programs. Actual discipleship training programs of varying lengths, ranging from 6 months to 2 years, are multiplying. Numerous pastors have ventured into writing programs for their own congregations and then marketing them for other's use.

Several of the programs are designed for the teaching of some particular doctrinal distinctive of the minister's denomination. Dynamics of Discipleship spends 6 weeks instructing Nazarene disciples concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification as a second, definite work of grace for the believer. Charismatic-oriented programs lay heavy stress on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongue speaking.



It is interesting to note that although most all workbooks and programs begin with a concern for following up new converts, many are finding extreme usefulness with believers who have professed faith in Christ for a number of years. Testimonials were heard from a number of Southern Baptist as well as Nazarene believers that the Survival Kit and Dynamics for Discipleship were used respectively to acquire basic disciplines never before acquired in their long witness of the Christian faith.

Such is also true in the contextual setting of this study. Numerous Christians of long standing developed their first consistent pattern for daily Bible reading and prayer, conscientiously memorized their first verses of scripture and for the first time oriented themselves toward growth and maturity.

The Navigator's more recent contribution falls in this category under the title The 2:7 Series. Based on Colossians 2:7, the program is designed for use by laymen in the local church. Materials, however, may be ordered only by authorized instructors.

Unlike much of the one-on-one Navigator emphasis, The 2:7 Series is designed for groups consisting of 8 to 10 who meet weekly for a total of 72 weeks over a 2 year period.

- 6) Books. Books available generally fall into two categories: helps for a discipler and helps for the new disciple. The major books in the first category are mentioned throughout this study. Titles of books for new Christians include After You've Said, "I Believe" by Leroy Patterson, The Fight by John White and New Life, New Lifestyle by Michael Green. The latter books are made available by InterVarsity Press.
- 7) Magazine. Perhaps the very newest contribution to the field is a bi-monthly publication printed by NavPress, Discipleship Journal. The first issue, published in the format of a news magazine, was dated Jan./Feb. 1981. The first of its kind, Discipleship Journal shares articles related to many and various areas of the discipleship process.

REGISTRATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP TRAININGREQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATE:

1. Perfect attendance except in the case of unavoidable absences relating to work, illness or serious emergency. (Only two unavoidable absences are allowed. Three necessitates dropping out and repeating the course later.)
2. Memorization of all Scripture passages required.
3. The submitting of a weekly report form for each of 9 weeks of the course.
4. An honest attempt to pray weekly with your prayer partner.
5. For DT #1, 3 hours of Bible study. For DT II-IV, 9 hours of Bible study. Notes to be submitted with weekly report forms.
6. To encourage at least one other person to take discipleship when next offered or to disciple at least one on a one-to-one basis.

MY COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING -

To the best of my ability, I hereby commit myself to the next 9 weeks of Discipleship Training...to be faithful in my attendance and in applying daily the disciplines I am taught within the course.

---

(Signature)

---

(Tear off and place in name tag box)

MY COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING -

To the best of my ability, I hereby commit myself to the next 9 weeks of Discipleship Training...to be faithful in my attendance and in applying daily the disciplines I am taught within the course.

---

(Signature)

## REGISTRATION:

Discipleship Course    I \_\_\_    II \_\_\_    III \_\_\_    IV \_\_\_

Time:                    Wednesday \_\_\_    Sunday A.M.\* \_\_\_    Sunday P.M.\* \_\_\_

\*Will be scheduled if sufficient registration

Time	Scripture	Application (1-2 sentences)	Time up	Time to bed	Exercise	
					Yes	No
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						

Prayed with Prayer Partner: YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Memorized Scripture: YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Highlight of my week:

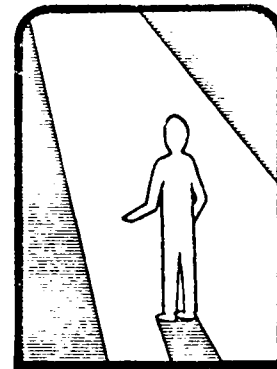
Discipler's comments:

DISCIPLINE - THE COSTLIEST INGREDIENT

WEEK #1

(Some reflections on "Godliness Through Discipline", a booklet by Jay E. Adams; published by both Baker Book House and Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. It is highly recommended that you secure a copy. It's "worth its weight in gold.")

In a day of "instants"; instant coffee, puddings, etc., many Christians seek instant maturity. But Christian maturity doesn't come that way.



The Apostle Paul shared the secret with his "disciple", young Timothy, "You must discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Discipline is the key to maturity. (I Tim. 4:7)

The verse literally translated means "to be oriented toward godliness." That speaks of structure, an organized daily lifestyle moving day by day toward maturity.

Discipline means work. The word Paul used is from the athletic arena, the one from whence we get "gymnastics." Just as there are no instant athletes there is no instant maturity. But likewise as there are fruits of discipline in the life of the athlete, there are numerous fruits in the Christians life as well. Things begin to happen. Change, exciting change, takes place and God begins the molding process which molds us into His likeness.

One of the greatest joys is to know you do not have to do it alone. In fact, you can't do it in and of yourself. The power of God's Spirit within alone can render you successful. "It is God who works within you" writes Paul in Philippians 2:13.

God has given to us an amazing capacity we call "habit". Not all are bad. In fact, we are so much the creature of habit that many good ones make up our daily routine, often without our conscious awareness.

We may use that capacity for good or for evil. Surrendered to Him, habit by habit, we can pattern our life toward growth and maturity.

Dr. Adams makes a practical suggestion in his booklet which to me is worth far more than the price of the booklet. I quote:

"It usually takes at least three weeks of proper daily effort for one to feel comfortable in performing a new practice. And it takes about three more weeks to make the practice part of oneself. But many Christians don't continue even for three days." (Page 10)

Six weeks and a new lifestyle can be created. We'll go on for nine. Think of the possibilities.

A last consideration. Many do not succeed in discipline because they are slaves to their feelings. Many times you won't feel like it and the choice will be yours, obey your feelings or act against them. Only the man who acts in obedience to what is required of him, whether he feels like it or not, is successful in acquiring the disciplines necessary for spiritual growth. Discipline is work, but it pays high dividends.

Discipline requires a struggle. Satan is terrified by the idea of a DQT. He won't allow it to be easy. A DQT requires discipline and that often means acting against your feelings. Remember however that right actions often result in right feelings. He will reward you for your faithfulness.

Use variety to avoid staleness. Read the message of some great hymns, a devotional classic or some other Christian literature. Occasionally spend the entire time in prayer. Should your mind wander ask the Holy Spirit to help you. "Bring every thought unto captivity." And, should you miss a day? Ask for the reason why. Learn from that experience and avoid the repetition of neglect. After three weeks of proper discipline one begins to feel comfortable with their new practice. In six weeks it becomes a part of the regular routine of the day.

To say, "but I can't do it, I've tried" is in all honesty to say, "I really don't want to." It may be too, that in feelings of self-confidence we are unconsciously saying, "I don't really need that appointment, I can make it without Him."

Don't miss your daily appointment. Make an appointment with some doctors and dentists, miss it and it will cost you just the same. They'll send you a bill for the missed appointment. But what about an appointment with the King of kings, Lord of lords? Miss it and although He will not "send you a bill", it will cost you in the long run. You will have missed your greatest opportunity to gain the strength and guidance you so desperately need to live your day to its fullest.

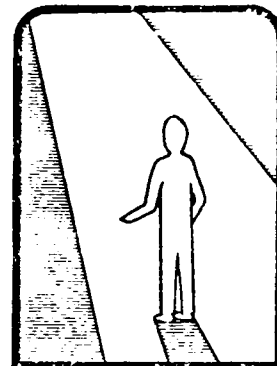
DISCIPLINE - THE COSTLIEST INGREDIENT

WEEK #1

There is no instant \_\_\_\_\_.  
is the key to maturity.

*"Timothy, you must discipline yourself for the purpose of  
godliness."  
I Timothy 4.7*

The word "discipline" actually means: "\_\_\_\_\_."



Paul uses a word from the athletic arena, the one from whence we get the word

"\_\_\_\_\_".

REVEALED + DISCIPLINED + THE POWER OF GOD'S = GROWTH + GODLINESS  
TRUTH + OBEDIENCE + SPIRIT WITHIN US = CHANGE + MATURITY

*"It is God Who worketh in you both to will to do of His good  
pleasure."  
Philippians 2.13*

God has given us an amazing capacity we call \_\_\_\_\_. We may use  
that capacity for good or for evil. Surrendered to Him, we can pattern our  
life toward growth and maturity.

*"It usually takes at least \_\_\_\_\_ weeks of proper daily effort  
for one to feel comfortable in performing a new practice.  
And it takes about \_\_\_\_\_ more weeks to make the practice  
part of oneself. But many Christians don't continue even  
for three days."  
Dr. Jay Adams*

One of the biggest hindrances to discipline is in being a slave to our  
\_\_\_\_\_.

RIGHT ACTIONS ----- RIGHT \_\_\_\_\_

Three suggestions for variety in our daily communion with Christ:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What evidences are there in your life that you are a disciplined person?

Director of Discipleship

112

Responsible to the Pastor

Major areas of responsibility:

- 1) Provide general oversight & direction to the Discipleship Training Program within the church.
- 2) Plan classes or one-to-one Discipling relationships for any and everyone within the church desiring the training.
- 3) Select, train and evaluate discipleship disciplers.
- 4) Teach courses as needed or felt advisable.
- 5) Evaluate, modify and update program as is deemed necessary.

Responsibilities defined:I. General oversight & direction

1. Answer correspondence and inquiries received concerning DTP.
2. Be available to disciplers for counsel and assistance when needed.
3. Maintain records both on disciples and disciplers taking part in the program.

II. Planning discipling opportunities

1. Work with the adult director of Christian Education to include DTP in the Wednesday evening curriculum during the 9-month school year.
2. Direct sign-up of interested persons and then assign to classes and meeting places.
3. Work with pastor to possibly provide Sunday opportunities for advanced classes (II, III, & IV) as an elective in the Family Study Hour.
4. When classes are not feasible for or available to an interested party, work out a one-to-one relationship with a qualified discipler.
5. Relate to the director of Growth Publications to assure adequate materials for all classes.

III. Selection, training & evaluation of disciplers

1. With approval of the pastor, select qualified disciplers for classes and one-to-one relationships.
2. Work toward providing a regular training program for all disciplers.

3. Evaluate disciplers by:
  - a) occasionally sitting in on one of their sessions
  - b) formal evaluation sheets during the last class session
4. Communicate evaluation to disciplers for their growth and development.

IV. Teach

Occasionally teach one of the courses so as to keep in touch with the material and needs of the discipler.

V. Evaluation

1. Work with the disciplers and participants toward improvement of materials and methodology in teaching.
2. Consider improvements, expansion, updating, etc. of the program.

TERM: One year with possible extension upon review.



Assnt. Director of Discipleship

Responsible to the Director of Discipleship

Major area of responsibility

To assist the Director of Discipleship in the areas of responsibility outlined in his job description (copy attached).

Responsibilities defined:

1. Assist the director as directed by him in any areas where assistance is needed.
2. It is suggested that specific responsibility be shared in these areas:
  - a) maintenance of records
  - b) arrangement of classes
  - c) liaison between director and Growth Publications in making materials available
  - d) assist in selecting of disciplers
  - e) serve as a trainer of disciplers when needed
  - f) occasionally teach one of the classes
  - g) assist in the evaluation of disciplers

(The assistant director's position is to be viewed as a "training ground" for later filling the director's position.)

TERM: One year with possible extension upon review.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR DISCIPLERS

II Timothy 2.2 - "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

1. Disciplers must be born-again Christians who are living in a growing relationship with Christ.
2. They should see their spiritual gifts as including the gifts of teaching and/or exhortation.
3. They must have completed Discipleship Training one level higher than they will be teaching.
4. They must be faithfully committed to the life and growth of their local church.
5. They must be willing to be accountable to the Director of Discipleship and give evidence of thorough preparation and follow-up of their material and disciples, respectively.
6. Disciplers should complete a two-week training course if made available to them.
7. They must love people and earnestly desire their growth and maturity in Christ.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING EVALUATION

In order to maintain high standards in instruction and course content, we would appreciate your responses to the following questions. Indicate your response by circling the number that most reflects your evaluation of the item on the left.

Rating Scale

Excellent Good Average Below Average Poor

Discipler: \_\_\_\_\_

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. Degree of Preparedness/Organization (Easy to follow, take notes, good learning pace.)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. Knowledge of Subject (Demonstrate knowledge of course material and practical application.)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. Did Discipler encourage class participation? (Use of good questions, allowed sufficient time for discussion, got everyone involved.)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. Use of Teaching Methods (Offered variety and appropriate use of illustrations, lecture discussion, group involvement.)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. Offered constructive criticism on assignments.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. Did Discipler demonstrate consistency in accountability on assignments, scripture memorization and prayer partners?	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The Material and Content

1. The degree to which your own expectations were met.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. Overall effectiveness of the discipler.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. The degree to which the Discipleship Course applied to you and your own personal growth in the Lord.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1



DEVELOPED BY CHARLES LAKE

# DISCIPLINE TRAINING

“A VENTURE IN TRAINING AND ACCOUNTABILITY”

## DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

### A Venture in Training & Accountability

#### An Introduction

Is "disciplined" a word which characterizes your Christian lifestyle? Do you want it to be?

Have you ever disciplined a "babe" in Christ, establishing him firmly on the path of spiritual growth? Would you like to?

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING seeks to answer both needs. Herein is both a disciple's manual and a discipler's guide. An attempt to assist in the developing of the daily disciplines of Christian discipleship.

The great commission is never completed until new converts are made into disciples. Sad, but true, discipleship is often an undiscovered art of the church. Churches are filled with "babes" while sadly needing the more mature to accomplish its mission in the world.

There are few simple, practical programs for making disciples. DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING is an attempt.

Discipling. What do we mean by it? The teaching and encouraging of spiritual "babes" through systematic, personal and Spirit-directed training, holding them accountable for discipline.

Accountability. The major ingredient. "For to whom much is given, of him shall much more be required...to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask more."

The Plan. A series of four nine-week ventures in training and accountability. A meeting together of a disciple or

disciples with a discipler for 50 minutes each week to consider:

- a) Instruction (30 minutes)
- b) Assignment (10 minutes)
- c) Accountability (10 minutes)

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATE

1. Perfect attendance, except in the case of unavoidable absences relating to work, illness or serious emergency. (Only two unavoidable absences are allowed. Three necessitates dropping out and repeating the course later.)
2. Memorization of all scripture passages required.
3. The submitting of a weekly report form for each of nine weeks of the course.
4. An honest attempt to pray weekly with your prayer partner.
5. For DT #1, 3 hours of Bible Study. For DT #II-IV, 9 hours of Bible Study. Notes to be submitted with weekly report forms.
6. To encourage at least one other person to take discipleship when next offered or to disciple at least one on a one-to-one basis.

#### Topics Include:

DTP I - The Disciplined Christian, The Daily Quiet Time, Practical Disciplines, Memorizing God's Word, My Relationship with Christ, Effective Praying, Studying God's Word, Witnessing in my Sphere of Influence.

DTP II - The Bible: An Overview, Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts, My Commitment to my Church, The Ministry of the Holy Spirit, Dealing with Temptation, Disciplining the Mind, The Lordship of Christ.

DTP III - Accepting Ourselves as Created, How to Give a Testimony, Knowing God's Will, Personal Problem Solving, Resolving Interpersonal Conflict, The Fruit of the Spirit, Discerning Good from Evil, Setting Priorities.

DT IV - Setting Our Own Goals; Sharing our Goals; Digging Deeper: The Daily Quiet Time, Building an Effective Prayer Life, Witnessing to my Sphere of Influence; Exercising my Spiritual Gifts; Christian Maturity: What Is It?; Charting the Course for Future Growth.

---

*It is exciting to witness in our church the spiritual growth in the lives of both new Christians and those who have known Christ personally for a long time. Many of them have realized the possibility of this growth through Discipleship Training.*

*Most Christians want to grow but are frustrated in their attempt because they lack the necessary ingredients of discipline and accountability. Through Discipleship Training the Christian is confronted with a methodology helpful for experiencing maturity in Christ.*

*We encourage you to consider the Discipleship Training Program and discover growth in your relationship with Christ. We stand ready to be of any assistance possible. Call or write us.*

BOB OLSON  
Director of Discipleship  
Community Church of  
Greenwood (Indiana)

ORDER FORM      Mail to: Growth Publications, 1477 Main Street, Greenwood, IN 46142  
DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING: A VENTURE IN TRAINING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
_____	Disciple's Manual (I, II, III & IV)	\$10.00	_____
_____	Discipler's Guide (I, II, III & IV)	\$ 5.00	_____
	<u>Companion Booklets</u>		
_____	"Godliness Through Discipline"	.35	_____
_____	"Christ & Your Problems"	.35	_____
_____	"What to do about Worry"	.35	_____
_____	"My Heart, Christ's Home"	.15	_____
_____	"Knowing God's Will"	.50	_____
_____	Manual, Guide and Booklets	\$16.00	_____
			SUB-TOTAL _____
			TOTAL _____

*\*Free to missionaries - 50% discount/initial copy for pastors.*

Prepaid - we pay postage.      If billed, postage will be added.

ENCLOSED

PLEASE BILL US

1) Overall I felt \_\_\_\_\_ one-to-one \_\_\_\_\_ group experience of Discipleship Training was the most beneficial.

2) The primary reason I felt it more effective was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

3) In which method do you feel you gave the greater: One-to-One Group Neithe

- |  |       |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|-------|
| a. encouragement toward growth and change?       | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| b. freedom to express needs and feelings?        | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| c. instruction?                                  | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| d. opportunity to share experiences with others? | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| e. assurance of being supported in prayer?       | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| f. sense of belonging to the "family of God"?    | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| g. opportunity to learn from another/others?     | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| h. acquisition of spiritual insight?             | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| i. challenge for deeper commitment?              | _____ | _____ | _____ |

4) Answer one of the following:

a. If you felt the one-to-one experience was more effective, what positive factors were present in the group experience that were missing in the one-to-one? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. If you felt the group experience was more effective, what positive factors were present in the one-to-one experience that were missing in the group experience? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Do you perceive one method to be more biblical than the other? Yes No  
If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6) a. What do you feel was the #1 contribution to your life as a result of your leadership of discipleship training? (list only one)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Other contributions you wish to mention: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7) Do you prefer to lead one-to-one or group? Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8) Any additional comments you wish to make?

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



One-to-One versus Group

- 1) Overall I felt my \_\_\_ one-to-one \_\_\_ group experience of Discipleship Training was the most effective.
- 2) The primary reason I felt it more beneficial was \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) In which method did you receive the greater: One-to-one Group Neither
- |   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| a. encouragement toward growth and change?            | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| b. freedom to express your needs and feelings?        | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| c. instruction?                                       | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| d. opportunity to share your experience with another? | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| e. assurance of being supported in prayer?            | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| f. sense of belonging to the "family of God"?         | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| g. opportunity to learn from another/others?          | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| h. acquisition of spiritual insight?                  | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| i. challenge for deeper commitment?                   | ___ | ___ | ___ |
- 4) Answer one of the following:
- a. If you felt your one-to-one experience was more beneficial, what positive factors were present in the group experience that were missing in the one-to-one? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- b. If you felt your group experience was more beneficial, what positive factors were present in the one-to-one experience that were missing in the group experience? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Do you perceive one method to be more biblical than the other? \_\_Yes\_\_ \_\_No\_\_  
 If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) a. What do you feel was the #1 contribution to your life as a result of your participation in discipleship training? (list only one)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Other contributions you wish to mention: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) If you had it to do over again, would you choose to take \_\_\_ one-to-one or \_\_\_ group? Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Any additional comments you wish to make?

Signed \_\_\_\_\_