

The Philosophy of Ministry – Week 7

“A Commitment to Discipleship”

- How would you define Discipleship?
- Who has played an individual role in personally discipling you and how has it impacted your spiritual life?
- Who have you been able to help disciple in the past year? How have you helped disciple them?
- What challenges have you found in discipling others?
- Is discipleship quick or slow? Why?
- At the heart of ministry is discipleship, no one will have an effective life of ministry who is not involved in making disciples. To do so you must understand what discipleship is, why it is God's plan to reach the world, and how you can be involved in discipleship.

➤ **The Navigator and the Hitchhiker**

↳ **The name Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators, will forever be associated with discipleship**, because discipling others became the passion of his life. It happened like this. One day early in his ministry Dawson was driving along and he saw a young man walking down the street on his way to caddy at the golf course. Trotman often picked up hitchhikers, for it gave him a chance to witness. The hitchhiker on this day swore as he got into the car; Dawson reached into his pocket for a gospel tract and handed it to him. The man glanced at the tract, then looked at Dawson and said, “Haven’t I seen you somewhere before?” Dawson looked at him closely. As it turned out, the two men had met on the same road the previous year. Dawson had witnessed to him, led him to Christ, and had “sped on my merry way” confident that another soul had entered the kingdom. But now, a year later, there was no more evidence of the new birth in this young man than if he had never heard the gospel. “After I met this boy the second time on the way to the golf course, I began to go back and find some of my ‘converts.’ I want to tell you, I was sick at heart.” Motivated by that experience, Dawson Trotman began working on follow-up, on developing ways of mentoring those whom he was winning to Christ. “Before I had forgotten to follow up on the people God had reached through me,” he later said. “But from then on I began to spend time helping them.... You can lead a soul to Christ in anywhere from twenty minutes to a couple of hours. But it takes from twenty weeks to a couple of years to get him on the road to maturity.” (Dawson Trotman, *Born to Reproduce* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1975).

↳ How does that story affect you?

- ↳ Have there been people you have led to Christ who you do not see fruit in their lives now? How did you follow up with them? What do you feel you could have done more to help them?
- ↳ Who has made the greatest impact on your life in helping you grow as a Christian? Why?

1. What is discipleship?

- A.** The word “disciple” (Greek - *mathetes*), simply means a _____; it speaks of someone who follows another’s teachings. It speaks of a _____-teacher relationship.
- 1) A disciple is one who **listens to, imitates, and** _____ his teacher. But not only do they receive the teacher’s instructions, a disciple also spreads their teachers message on to others.
 - 2) Adding ‘ship’ to the end of ‘disciple’ means ‘the _____ of being a disciple.’
 - 3) A Christian disciple then is one who is a learner and follower of who? _____. To be a disciple not only means we “learn” from Jesus but we live out His teachings and spread His _____.
- B.** The word “disciple” occurs _____ times in the New Testament. The word “Christian” is used _____ times in the Bible.
- 1) **Acts 6:1–2 — 1;** *And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2; Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.*
 - 2) **Acts 6:7 — 7;** *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*
 - 3) The first use of the Word “Christian” is found in Acts 11:26.
 1. **Acts 11:26** - *And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the _____ were called Christians first in Antioch.*
 2. Here you see that God’s Word speaks of believers as “disciples” overwhelmingly. “Christian” was originally a derogatory term assigned to those who followed “Christ”; but for believers it is an honor to bear the name of Christ.
 3. Question: Can you be a Christian and not be a disciple?
 4. *The disciple of Jesus is not the deluxe or heavy-duty model of the Christian—especially padded, textured, streamlined, and empowered for the fast lane on the straight and narrow way. He stands on the pages of the New Testament as the first level of basic transportation in the kingdom of God.—Dallas Willard* (Morgan, R. J. (2000). Nelson's complete book of stories, illustrations, and quotes (electronic ed.) (Page 223). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.)

C. What is the Goal of Discipleship?

- 1) God’s desire in our salvation is that we look, act, talk, think, behave, and resemble Jesus in absolutely everything we say and do. The goal of

discipleship then is to see someone become a fully formed follower of Jesus Christ.

1. Whose image does Paul say we are to be conformed to in Romans 8:29? _____

† **Romans 8:29** - *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

2. Whose image are we being changed into in 2 Corinthians 3:18? _____

† **2 Corinthians 3:18** - *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

3. Who are we to “put on” in Romans 13:14 and Ephesians 4:24 and what does that mean? _____

† **Romans 13:14** - *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

† **Ephesians 4:24** - *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

4. Who are disciples of Christ to walk like?

† **1 John 2:6** - *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

5. Who are disciples of Christ to think like?

† **Philippians 2:5** - *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

6. Whose perfect image are believers being conformed to?

† **Ephesians 4:13** - *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:*

7. What was Paul’s desire for those he led to Christ?

† **Galatians 4:19** - *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,*

2) From the previous verses, what then would you say the goal of discipleship is? What is discipleship wanting to produce? _____

2. What Discipleship is not

A. Discipleship is not just information, but rather is _____.

- 1) Discipleship is not a “spectators” event. Discipleship is the transferring of information and lifestyle to the other person who then not only has a new mind but a new life.

† **2 Corinthians 5:17** - *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

- 2) Discipleship is not accomplished by simply giving someone the truth, but rather teaching them how to follow the truth. It is not just telling someone “what” God says, but also showing them how and why and seeing them live out those truths.

B. Discipleship is not just for _____ believers.

- 1) Since the goal of discipleship is to be fully conformed into the image of Christ, when does that task stop?
 - 2) Did the great Apostle Paul feel he had arrived and was perfect? What do you learn from Paul's own words in Philippians 3:12-13?
- † **Philippians 3:12-14** - *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

C. Discipleship is not only for _____

- 1) God has not only called leaders to be disciples and to disciple others, but has called all believers to be a part of making disciples. We are all called to win the lost and teach them to observe all that God has taught them.
- 2) Discipleship is not a _____ for a few, but a _____ for all.
- 3) God expects parents to disciple their children (Deut. 6:4-9).

D. Discipleship is not _____

- 1) Was discipleship a suggestion or a command from God?
- 2) Every disciple is on the journey. Every Christian is involved in discipleship. It is not an option. It is just a matter of how good it is going.

3. Discipleship is God's _____ to reach the world with the Gospel.

A. God is infinitely wise. God knows what it takes and the best method to reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The vehicle God is using to reach the world is the Church, which is made up of believers who in turn make disciples.

B. In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus gave instructions to His followers in what has become known as the "Great Commission".

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

C. What were the instructions that Jesus gave to His disciples?

† "Go ye therefore, and teach (Gr. "matheteuo - make disciples of) all nations..."

1. **"teach"** (matheteuo is the verb form of mathetes) – here it is used in the transitive sense and means to make a disciple of someone, to cause them to be a pupil, to teach or instruct them. Here it speaks of making disciples of all nations.
2. It is in the imperative which is a command. Christ is commanding his disciples to go into all the world and make _____ of all nations.

D. Discipleship starts with _____

- 1) Discipleship is not separate from evangelism, rather evangelism is the ____ step in making a disciple. To make a disciple they must first be born again (John 3:3). Therefore, discipleship must start with evangelism.
- 2) Some say a Church is a “soul-winning” Church or they are good at discipleship. But soul-winning is not separate from discipleship, rather it is the first step in making a disciple. For someone to be disciple, they must first be _____.
- 3) The problem is not that those kind of churches are not involved in discipleship; the problem is they are not getting past the _____ step in the process.

E. Discipleship continues with _____

- 1) Matthew 28:19b - “...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”
- 2) Baptism is the believer’s first step of obedience. Those who are led to Christ are to be taught the importance of baptism so that they can obey the Lord in being baptized.
- 3) Can a person be considered a true disciple who will not obey the Lord’s commands?
 1. **Luke 6:46 — 46**; *And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*
 2. **Matthew 7:21–22 — 21**; *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22; Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*
 3. **John 8:30–31 — 30**; *As he spake these words, many believed on him. 31; Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;*
- 4) **Can a person say they truly love Jesus if they will not obey His commands?**
 1. **John 14:15** - *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*
 2. **1 John 2:3–5 — 3**; *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4; He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5; But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

F. Discipleship involves teaching the believer to follow all of the Word of God.

† Matthew 28:20 - “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...”

- 1) What is the teacher’s responsibility in Matthew 28:20? _____
- 2) What is the disciple’s responsibility in Matthew 28:20? _____

4. The Effectiveness of Discipleship

A. Discipleship works off of Multiplication instead of _____

- 1) Most Church’s work on the level of addition but God has designed for the Church to work on the principle of multiplication. Through multiplying disciples, it is possible to reach the entire world with the Gospel.
- 2) **Example of addition vs. multiplication in making disciples:**

1. Imagine a Christian who is so effective that he wins 10 people to Christ a day, that would equal _____ converts a year. But this Christian does not disciple these converts, rather he only wins them to Christ. This is the principle of addition, you have 1 person leading people to Christ in a Church and 3,650 come to Christ each year.
2. Imagine on the other hand a Christian who is committed not only to soul-winning to but also to disciple-making. He only leads 1 person to Christ, but then discipled that individual all year long. He teaches him, trains him, and mentors him until he is a godly man who is now ready to lead and disciple someone else. At the end of one year you have 2 disciples (the Christian and the disciple).
3. Continuing with this illustration, after two years the first Christian would have 7,300 converts with 10 people being saved each day, and the second Christian would now have 4 people (including himself) who have been saved and discipled.
4. Taking this equation out 10 years, Christian #1 has 36,500 converts and Christian #2 has _____ disciples.
5. By year 15 Christian #1 has 54,750 converts and Christian #2 has _____ disciples
6. By year 20 Christian #1 has 61,300 converts and Christian #2 has _____ disciples! The second Christian individual is still only leading 1 person to Christ a year, but because they chose to thoroughly disciple those they led to Christ, their efforts are now working on the principle of multiplication and not addition. Though they have only personally led 20 people to Christ in 20 years, their efforts of making disciples who make disciples have multiplied to over one million people. That is the impact of multiplication.

B. The reason the early Church impacted the Roman world so dynamically was because it was working on the principal of multiplication. The Church was “adding” believers in Acts 2-4, but by the time you get to chapter 5 the principle of multiplication began to take effect.

- † **Acts 2:41** - *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were **added** unto them about three thousand souls.*
- † **Acts 2:47** - *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord **added** to the church **daily** such as should be saved.*
- † **Acts 4:4** - *Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.*
- † **Acts 5:14** - *And believers **were the more added** to the Lord, **multitudes** both of men and women.)*
- † **Acts 6:7** - *And the word of God increased; **and the number of the disciples multiplied** in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*
- † **Acts 9:31** - *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, **were multiplied.***

† **Acts 17:6** - *And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, **These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;***

↳ **By the year 350 A.D. Christianity had exploded from just an estimated 1000 believers in 40 A.D. to over 33 million by the year 350 A.D.** That is an average 106,448 people saved a year over a 310-year period! That equals over 290 people saved every day on average over 310 years! That is the power of multiplication from 1000 believers in 40 A.D. to over 33 million by 350 A.D. [Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity*, 156; Dinesh D'Souza, *What's So Great About Christianity*, 297]

C. Multiplication starts out much _____ than addition

1) In the illustrations above, the first pastor had many more converts in the first few years than the pastor who made disciples. Although multiplication is much more dynamic and powerful later on, it is often forsaken for the less influential work of addition because it is a much slower process up front.

2) Do you think some Churches and Christians do not focus on discipleship because of its slow process up front? Who wants to see only a handful of disciples at the end of a couple years? Churches and Christians often choose the path of addition in ministry over multiplication because it is much easier to win people to Christ than it is to disciple them. That takes time.

D. Multiplication takes _____

1) The process of multiplication is slow and takes a lot of time and energy. Any shortcuts in the process can completely jeopardize the entire process. Because people like quick results, discipleship has never been attractive because of the investment of time it takes.

E. Disciples cannot be “mass produced” by one individual. You cannot disciple 50 people effectively at one time, but you can disciple 1-2 people. Investments need to be made into 1 or 2 people that you pour your time and energy into.

5. _____ believed in investing in a handful of people.

A. Jesus preached to the crowds but He did not spend His time with them, instead Jesus intentionally invested nearly all of His time of 3 years in ministry privately training 12 men. Jesus believed in investing in individuals.

B. Jesus specifically called 12 disciples

1) **Jesus prayed all night specifically for those 12 disciples whom He would invest the majority of His ministry into.**

† **Luke 6:12-13** — *“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, **and continued all night in prayer to God.** And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;”*

† **Matthew 10:2-4** — *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus,*

whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

2) Jesus had an intentional purpose in calling these 12, what was it according to Mark 3:13-14?

† **Mark 3:13-14** - *And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, **and that he might send them forth to preach,***

↳ The result of Jesus' investment in these men are seen 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead when the 11 disciples (Judas had already hung himself) preached and _____ souls were saved on the day of Pentecost.

C. Jesus intentionally spent time with _____ of those 12.

1) Out of the 12 disciples Jesus had an inner core group of 3 men, who were they? _____.

2) Jesus allowed these three to see His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration.

† **Matthew 17:1-3** - *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

3) Jesus had these three come with Him apart from the other 12 in the garden to pray the night before His death.

† **Mark 14:33-34** - *And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.*

4) In Mark 5:37-43 Jesus heals the ruler of the synagogue's daughter and only allowed Peter, James, and John to enter the home to witness the miracle.

† **Mark 5:37** - *And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.*

D. At the end of 3 years with those 12 disciples, He sent them to lead in the evangelistic efforts of reaching the world with the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:4-8, 12-14, 2:1-47).

E. Jesus knew the best method in reaching the world isn't done by mass gatherings and teaching settings, but rather by discipling one person at a time. Discipleship is God's plan to reach the world and it happens one soul _____ at a time!

6. Are you involved in discipleship?

A. To begin to disciple someone what needs to first happen in your own life? _____

B. Can you pass on what you don't have?

- † **2 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.***

C. Am I ready to be a Disciple-Maker?

1) Are you in a position that you feel you could start investing in the life of someone else to grow them or do you still need to grow in your walk personally before you are ready to start investing in others? No one is perfect who starts discipling others, but they need to mature past spiritual infancy and youthfulness to be mature enough to help others grow in those early spiritual stages.

2) **Use the following 5 questions to help identify if you are ready to disciple someone else.**

1. **Am I being _____ in my walk with Christ?**

- † **2 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.***

2. **Am I _____-hearted?**

- † **1 Corinthians 9:19** - *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.*

- † **Philippians 2:3** - *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

3. **Can I be _____ and gracious with others?**

- † **1 Thessalonians 5:14** - *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, **be patient toward all men.***

4. **Do I have a good _____?**

- † **1 Corinthians 11:1** - *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

- † **Philippians 4:9** - *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

5. **Am I _____?**

- † **John 13:34–35** - *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

D. I feel I am ready to disciple someone.

1) If after examining yourself you feel ready to pour into someone, the first step is to _____ for God to reveal someone to you. Pray specifically for God to bring someone into your path that you can disciple. Usually God will very clearly impress someone on your heart. He will give you a heart for that person and desire to help them grow. Is there anyone that immediately comes to mind?

2) Along with praying, ask those in spiritual leadership over you if there is someone they feel would be a good potential for you to disciple. Who is a spiritual leader you could ask?

- 3) Examine your life for those who have been recently saved who perhaps God allowed you to be a part in bringing them to Christ. These are great prospects for discipleship. Is there anyone that comes to mind?
- 4) Those you lead to Christ are those you are responsible to make sure are given the opportunity to be discipled either by you personally or someone at Church. Do you have anyone you have led to Christ that you could start with?
- 5) **Note:** One of the greatest ways to grow spiritually is to disciple someone else. Why might that be the case? How can holding someone else accountable and challenging someone else to grow cause you to grow?

E. What if I'm not ready to disciple someone?

- 1) If after examining yourself, you do not feel you are ready to begin to disciple someone else, but rather have need to be further mentored and discipled than you must pursue a disciple-maker. Someone who will hold you accountable, challenge you, pray with you and for you. Someone you can trust in. Someone to help you mature in your faith. Who is someone you could ask to help mentor you? _____

2) Read John 1:35-39

1. Here are two of John the Baptist's disciples who are close and faithfully learning from him. What do they do in verse 37 when John declared Jesus was the "Lamb of God" (v.36)? _____
2. What did these 2 disciples want in verse 38? _____
3. How does Jesus respond to them in verse 39? _____

- F.** Here we see two men who sought to be disciples and learn from others (both John the Baptist than Jesus). They pursued the truth and pursued mentors who grew them in their faith and walk with God. They didn't wait for John or Jesus to call them, they wanted to grow! We must not wait for others to come and ask us to help us grow, but rather the responsibility is on our part to pursue growth and accountability!

Assignment:

- Read: chapter 7 – Pursuit of God – “The Gaze of the Soul”
- Answer 4-6 questions in regards to discipleship – write a paragraph response for each.
- Study for the test over Discipleship