

Produced to Reproduce / Part 2, Discipleship

*Desiring to be and equipped to be
like Christ through His power.*

We must be something if we are to help others to be the same something. In other words, we must be devoted Christians if we desire to be used by God to reproduce devoted Christians. The mold must be of good quality to reproduce properly. Every word, action, and thought counts and matters. When our flesh is winning, due to a lack of true relational closeness to Christ, we are losing. We then do not look attractive to those that we are trying to reach, nor do we possess the spiritual strength to accomplish the important work of reproducing.

The great news, again, is that we do not have to perform; God does the work. He is the One who makes us authentic. He produces His fruit in us in greater degrees as we submit to Him in greater degrees. So through confession of sins, reliance on God, and a serious recommitment to the Scriptures, we get back on the path to spiritual strength.

The Process of Change

We must stay in a constant state of worship of God to see our lives built, repaired, and powerful. Nothing in discipleship is more important. For “Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in [Jesus]” (John 15:4b). God does the work; we participate through submission and humbleness.

We ought to worship Him in our homes, jobs, schools, and in public. Every action has the capacity for worship. I am not talking about breaking out a hymnal in the restaurant. I am talking about being in a constant state of mind of desiring God’s glory to be known around us. He is on the throne over our lives, but we experience change through our interactive worship in the day to day. We worship Him by:

- Thinking about Him.
- Talking to Him in the car.
- Praying to Him on bended knees in the home.
- Living an authentic, humble life in front of children.
- Asking questions of God.
- Asking for wisdom in situations.
- Praying for strength to witness about His grace to others.
- Thanking Him for that great cup of coffee, for hot showers, for air-conditioning in the summer, for a pillow at night.
- Etcetera.

There are countless ways to worship God. Most of them involve being in the moment with Him. We are told, “*So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God*” (1 Corinthians 10:31, emphasis mine). Drink your coffee at the coffee shop for the glory of God!

We need a mindset change at times: you need to live life with the understanding that God is right there. He is on your side. He cares about you, and He is doing amazing things in your life. Through tragedy, He is there; through the best times of joy, He is right there. He cares about what you are going

through.

Start interacting with him during different times of the day. You will see the difference. When we are in a constant state of worship, the glory of God will become our only priority; everything else will become a detail. Be in the moment with Him then you will experience Him, and He will use you to change lives. One of the best examples of this is Paul and Silas in jail in Acts 16:16-40. Check that passage of Scripture out for the first time or again. One will see a powerful example of what I am taking about there.

We May be Agents of Blasphemy

When we don't have a close relationship with God, know that our lives and our testimonies degrade. We all have had our moments when we have not represented God well; those moments defame God. But when those moments start stringing themselves together, we become worldly Christians, and our witness may be used as an example for people to even blaspheme God. Paul explained this to the Roman church when he wrote, "For just as it is written, 'the name of God is being blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you'" (Romans 2:24). Moments matter. String moments together for God's glory. If we are not in close relationship to Christ in a moment, that moment will be off message. We "either embody or contradict the story we are seeking to share."⁵⁷

Holiness is Key

When we talk, think, and act like the common world, our message is contaminated and corrupted to the unsaved. Make no mistake, authenticity equals holiness. As Kraus has said, "Life and witness, method and message, nature and mission are one whole integrated experience."⁵⁸ When we are

⁵⁷ David Augsburger, *Dissident Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 176

⁵⁸ Norman C. Kraus, *The Authentic Witness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 56, as quoted in David Augsburger, *Dissident Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 176.

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experiencing God, others see His holiness through us and that holiness is beautiful and attractive.

When we talk, think, and act like the common world, our message is powerless. God doesn't use common actions to change lives. We must pursue holiness to be used in the Church among our brothers and sisters and in the lost world.

Some may be saying, "You just said, 'God does the work!'" Yes, but remember: God does the work; we participate. Our participation is through remembering what God has said, confessing where we fall short of loving our neighbors as ourselves, humbling ourselves toward God, and worshiping in all of our actions.

Paul told the young Timothy,

"Now in a wealthy home there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also ones made of wood and of clay, and some are for honorable use, but others for ignoble use. So if someone cleanses himself of such behavior, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart, useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. But keep away from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace, in company with others who call on the Lord from a pure heart. But reject foolish and ignorant controversies, because you know they breed infighting. And the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness" (2 Timothy 2:20-25a)

Spiritual Children

We have a responsibility to share the Gospel with others—for that is their greatest need. We also have a responsibility to teach and model Christ until that new believer can stand on his own in faith. "In the physical realm when your children have children, you become a grandparent. Your parents become

great grandparents [...] And so it should be in the spiritual.”⁵⁹ If it is at all possible, a person led to Christ should be disciplined and taught by the person who shared the Gospel with them. At times, this will not be possible, so we must all be on alert for those who have come to faith but do not have a mentor (a spiritual father so to speak.)

If you want to be used by God, you must act. God is doing His part. Dawson Trotman said to an audience, “Are you producing? If not, why not? Is it because of a lack of communion with Christ your Lord? Remember, ‘Nothing under Heaven except sin, immaturity and lack of communion will put you in a position where you cannot reproduce.’”⁶⁰

The Smaller the Better

Jesus spent the most time with three disciples, Peter, James, and John. Discipleship can be accomplished no better than the way Jesus did it. We look to Him for the framework and the how to.

For a case study, I once lead a Men’s Monday Night Bible study. On average there was 8-12 men each Monday. I once challenged the men of the study: “Let’s meet for study two months; then take a month to do ‘hands-on’ ministry in the community.” They agreed. We went and did construction at a homeless shelter for the first endeavour. By the end of the first “hands-on” month, the Bible study had three men left. Holy huddles are appealing. It is a difficult thing to move even 12 men toward common goals. I have found that groups of two or three men are easier to move and motivate toward accomplishing the more difficult ministry goals than larger ones.

Scripture Passages

⁵⁹ Dawson Trotman, Sermon “Born to Reproduce”, 1955, accessed Dec. 4, 2019, <https://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/AA094.pdf>, 5.

⁶⁰ Dawson Trotman, Sermon “Born to Reproduce”, 1955, accessed Dec. 4, 2019, <https://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/AA094.pdf>, 11.

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Matthew 10:5-42

Luke 10:1-24

Questions

Below are questions for Christians that have known the Lord Jesus for at least 2 years.

- 1) Did you disciple a person last year? Yes or No
- 2) Are you producing fruit at all?

Aim Point

- 1) Pray to God and ask Him to send you someone. If you know someone you could disciple, ask them; be proactive.