

## LIFE APPLICATION

Spend some time in Bible study and prayer this week studying these passages.

- Q: Do you believe that Jesus expected all of his followers to be in discipling relationships?
- Q: Are you currently involved in healthy discipling relationships?
- Q: If so, with whom?
- Q: If not, what can you do to begin building them?

### Concluding Thoughts

Jesus set a very clear pattern of love, modelling, training, and encouragement. He called us to follow imitate him. Paul built the same kind of relationships and called those that watched him to imitate.

Discipling relationships are more than coaching or mentoring relationships. They embrace the sacrificial love and whole-life perspective that Jesus taught us.

## FURTHER STUDY

Peter, James and John were three very close disciples of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Look at the following passages from letters that they wrote. Make a list of the convictions they had about discipling relationships based on these passages.

### PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN

- James 5:16
- 1 Peter 4:8–11
- 2 Peter 1:3-11
- 1 John 2:6
- 1 John 3:16
- 1 John 4:17
- 3 John 11

<sup>1</sup> See [Matthew 17:1](#), [Mark 5:37](#), [Mark 9:2](#), [Mark 13:3](#), [Mark 14:33](#), [Luke 8:51](#), [Luke 9:28](#)

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# GROUNDED

## FOUNDATIONS OF DISCIPLING CLASS 01: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

A Bible Study

### Introductory Thoughts

The Bible is filled with stories, examples, and commands of spiritual relationships. These relationships provide example, assistance, encouragement, help, and training for those whom love God.

In the church, we call these relationships "discipling relationships." There is something special and unique about them. They are divine, meaning they were created by God. They were modelled for us by Jesus and we are called to imitate his example.

There are metaphors often used that describe certain aspects of these relationships but as with any metaphor, they are limited in their scope.

**coach** - a person who trains an athlete, student or performer in a particular subject area

**mentor** - someone who teaches or gives help to a less experienced person

These relational metaphors can help but neither capture the sacrificial love or the whole-life perspective of a true discipling relationship.

### THE GOSPELS: THE PATTERN SET BY JESUS

Jesus came to spread the most important message in the world. Although he taught and addressed the crowds, real transformation happened with the intimate relationships he built with his disciples. The classroom is important but the "on the job training" is where real change happens. All four gospels clearly demonstrate the pattern of discipling relationships that Jesus expected.

**Mark 1:14-18** Jesus called these men to follow and learn how to eventually call others.

**Mark 3:13-19** Jesus wanted them to "be with him" so that he could "send them out."

- \* Jesus spent three years loving, modelling, training, and encouraging these men
- \* At the end of his ministry, he was very specific about his expectations for them

**John 13:34-35** The night before his death, Jesus calls his disciples to imitate what he had built.

**Love as I have loved you** - Jesus calls them to imitate the pattern he has set

**Everyone will know that you are my disciples** - Jesus' followers would be identified by imitation

- \* disciple = mathetes = pupil or learner

**Matthew 28:18-20**

**Go and make disciples** - Help people become pupils/learners

**Teach them to obey everything** - Complete imitation of the pattern that Jesus set

**discipling relationships** - relationships that follow the pattern Jesus set

### ACTS: THE EVIDENCE

After the baptisms of thousands from different cultures, the new disciples immediately bound themselves to the same pattern of love, modelling, transformation, and encouragement.

**Acts 2:42-47** They devoted themselves...all the believers were together...everyday they continued...

**Acts 4:32-35** All of the believers were one...no needy persons among them...

**Acts 11:26** The pupils/learners were called by the name of Christ - they imitated the pattern!

### THE LETTERS OF PAUL: THE CALL TO IMITATE

**1 Corinthians 4:16** Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

**1 Corinthians 11:1** Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

**Galatians 4:12** I plead with you, brothers and sisters, become like me...

**Philippians 3:17** Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

**Philippians 4:9** Whatever you have learned or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice.

**2 Thessalonians 3:7** For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example.

**2 Thessalonians 3:9** We did this...in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.

### Modelling before calling

Paul only challenged the disciples in the churches he founded (Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, and Thessalonica) to imitate him!

Q: What Christ-like characteristics are you imitating? In whom?

### THE PASTORALS: THE EVIDENCE

These letters demonstrate the incredible discipling relationship Paul had with Timothy & Titus.

**1 Timothy 1:2** To Timothy my true son in the faith...

**2 Timothy 1:13** What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching

**Titus 1:4** To Titus, my true son in our common faith...

- \* In all three letters, we see the elements of great discipling relationships
- \* Paul teaches, trains, commands, encourages, urges, points out, insists, and reminds

### HEBREWS: ENCOURAGING MATURITY

**Hebrew 5:11-6:3** The Christians being addressed in this passage were not growing.

» The author calls the listeners to move on to maturity through training and repetition

**Hebrews 12:1-3** The Christians are called to be inspired by the models in front of them (Hebrews 11)

» There is a great connection here between modelling and Jesus

**Hebrews 13:7, 17** Look at the examples leading you. Imitate their faith. Submit.

### THE APOCALYPSE

**Revelation 14:1-5** Those who had been redeemed...they followed the lamb

**144,000 = 12 tribes of Israel x 12 disciples of Jesus x 1000**

- \* The redeemed are those in the 12 tribes of Israel & those following the pattern of discipleship
- \* 1000 represents completeness, totality, and perfection