

Introducing Discipleship

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This booklet is designed to help those who desire to obey Jesus' commission to make disciples for Him. It is especially useful for leaders who are implementing disciple-making into their Messianic congregations or churches. Although the material in this booklet would be helpful to anyone who is involved in some kind of discipleship, it is written primarily for those who are using Reuven and Yanit Rosses' discipleship series.

Chapter One

INTRODUCING REUVEN AND YANIT

Dear fellow disciple and disciple-maker,

When we first put together our manuals on disciple-making, we focused primarily on the content of the sessions. We realized later that we did not include enough explanation of how to use these manuals. This booklet is to remedy that situation. In here, you will find teaching on parenting others in their walk with God, instructions for using the discipleship materials we have written, and testimonies of those who have gone before you in that ministry.

We realize that you may know very little about us, especially if we have not had the pleasure of personally meeting you. So that you may know our backgrounds in the area of disciple-making, we are beginning this booklet with some personal information about us.

Reuven began his discipleship training in 1980 under Pastor Dale Crall, who was then on staff at First Assembly of God in Rockford, Illinois. Reuven and four other men met to be taught the Scriptures through Dale for 18 months. Because of their employment commitments, the men could only find a common meeting time at 5:30 AM on Wednesdays. During those months together, they grew in their knowledge of God and His Word, and they developed an understanding and appreciation of one another. They assisted each other in their spiritual growth and held one another accountable. The material they used for study and memory work was the Navigators Bible study series entitled *Design for Discipleship*. Reuven moved to Jerusalem, Israel in 1982, and there he began leading discipleship groups for men.

Yanit (the former Janet McElroy) was discipled primarily by her parents who pastored in Waco, Texas, and by various youth leaders and ministry workers. Some of her training for ministry came through her studies at Oral Roberts University in the late 1970's. In 1981, Yanit went to South Africa as a family counselor and youth worker. There she discipled many teenagers and young adults in her role as a youth pastor in two churches. In 1988, Reuven went to South Africa on a ministry tour, met Yanit in Pretoria, and within two months, they were engaged to be married. Their wedding and reception took place in Waco, and they were blessed with three additional wedding receptions soon afterward—two in South Africa and one in Israel. Living in Jerusalem, they began their ministry lives together, pastoring & discipling teenagers and single believers.

Since 1994, the Rosses have resided in Haifa, Israel. There they produced their discipleship manuals during a season of pastoring at Carmel Assembly. They began with a series of teachings aimed at rekindling disciple-making in leaders and older believers—the manual entitled *Go and Make Disciples*. Later, seeing the need for further discipleship material, they developed manuals using the same material Jesus used when discipling his own men, the **Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)**. The result was *The Making of a Disciple* and *The Lifestyle of a Disciple*.

The first discipleship manual, *Go and Make Disciples* (leader and student versions), is now available in print in English, Hebrew, Russian and French. It is translated or is being translated into seven other languages. This manual consists of ten teaching sessions with corresponding personal study exercises. It covers the commissions of Jesus, gives characteristics of disciples, and explains true discipleship. The primary goal of this discipleship series is to impart or restore God's vision for making disciples in our time.

The Making of a Disciple (A study of **Matthew 5** – the character of the Kingdom of God) is available in print in English, Hebrew, and Russian. Primarily looking at the character of a disciple of Jesus, this manual contains 19 sessions explaining what God expects of His covenant people who are passionately seeking Him. It is available in leader and student versions.

The Lifestyle of a Disciple (A study of **Matthew 6-7** – the conduct within the Kingdom of God) for leaders and students is available in print in English and will soon be available in Hebrew. It is currently being translated into Russian. This manual also has 19 sessions and is about God's righteousness being lived and 'walked out' in human lives.

Reuven and Yanit are still a part of Carmel Assembly and Or HaCarmel (Light on the Carmel) Ministry Center on Mount Carmel. They teach the Scriptures locally, nationally, and internationally. They have a special appreciation for believers who are single or single again; on occasion, they teach this group from their own experiences and Scriptural insights. Although they teach on a variety of themes from God's Word, their main focus of teaching and ministry is in the area of strategic, intentional disciple-making.

Chapter Two

EXPLAINING THE *GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES* MANUAL

We are all making disciples as we walk through life, whether they be disciples of ourselves, of our values and beliefs in general, or of Jesus Christ. People affect people. The Lord has called us all to encourage and train people to be *His* disciples! We can do this haphazardly with less effectiveness, or we can strategize in our fulfilling this commission. We believe having a strategy that works is the best use of our limited time on this earth. Because of that, we encourage you to seek God fervently about whom He would have you affect and influence for His Kingdom. Then, with your life disciplined by the Holy Spirit, seek to impart those disciplines to others.

2 Timothy 2:1–2 says, “*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*”

We can do nothing of ourselves; we live and give according to God’s grace in our lives. Therefore, *be strong in His grace!* Make sure you spend quality time in God’s presence through worship and Bible study. Keep your fellowship with Him intact by immediately confessing sin and receiving forgiveness. Forgive others quickly when they offend you. Make it your aim to be at peace with God and with all men/women. **(Romans 12:18)** Worship with others when you can; take the Lord’s Supper (Communion) when it is available. These are all means by which we partake of the Lord’s grace.

As recipients of His grace, we are to make it available to others. Teach and live it, entrusting to faithful ones what God has entrusted to you. Your knowledge and experience of Him would be a good place to start! Teach to others what you have received through inspired teaching and through revelation from the Holy Spirit as you have studied the Word. You may have to free yourself from unnecessary commitments and distractions so that you have the capacity to do what God has called you to do.

Organizing a Small Discipleship Group

Pray about who is to be in your discipleship group. Jesus spent all night in prayer before choosing His disciples and future apostles. Who is in your group is important as they will learn from one another (as well as from you) and may develop lasting relationships with each other.

We recommend that you choose only those of the **same gender** as you. Jesus chose men to impart His life and teaching into; men will share vulnerably when only men are present just as women will share much more freely when only women are present. This discipleship group is not a Bible Study/prayer meeting where anyone can come; it is a *closed group* (no visitors are welcome). In this environment, trust is built, and those in the group are challenged and helped to become like the Master.

When approaching someone to be in the group, tell him or her that you are starting a discipleship group with the purpose of growing deeper in the Lord and of becoming more like Him. Tell him or her when the group will meet (at the time which suits most of the group) and what will be expected. Do not present it as a boring Bible study! Be sure to tell them that it is an interactive time when you will **all** grow together as Jesus’ disciples. The gathering will include prayer, Bible teaching, study exercises, memory work from the Scriptures, and a time of sharing. They will need to bring a Bible, notebook and pen, and will purchase an inexpensive student manual to use. (Some groups use leaders’ manuals for everyone, especially when those in the group are gifted as teachers and plan to teach the material themselves later.)

Preparing Lesson One

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you as you study the preface, forward, and first lesson. Then read this material without stopping. This is not the time to look at details; it is the time to get an overview and to be taught by the Spirit.
2. Read through the lesson again, praying for the Holy Spirit to highlight to you what is most important for you to emphasize for the particular group that you are teaching. Write in any relevant Scriptures that God may give you that are not in the teaching; note personal illustrations or experiences that you can share that will make the teaching “yours.”
3. If it will be helpful, read the lesson aloud with the extra notes and illustrations you added.
4. Pray that God will anoint you and the material so that your group will easily understand and receive His Word through you.

Beginning Your First Class

1. Introduce yourself, trying to stay within a 5–6 minute period.
For guidelines, you can use such questions as:

- Where did you grow up?
- When did you come to the Lord?
- What are you doing now with your life? (Family, vocation, ministry, etc.)
- Why are you in this discipleship group?

If you share answers to these questions about yourself before requesting the others to share, you are not only giving them valuable information about yourself, you are also modeling the length and depth of sharing time that you expect of them.

2. Invite those in your group to introduce themselves in the same manner. Go around the room; it will be less threatening for them than if you randomly choose them. Affirm each one after they have shared, thanking him (her) for his (her) contribution.
3. Introduce the discipleship material that you are using. Give a general overview, and hand out their student manuals. Pray together as a group for God’s purposes to be accomplished in each one specifically and in the group as a whole during this course. Pray that each one receives a vision for making disciples.
4. Now you are ready to begin teaching.

Leading a Group Effectively

- Draw out the quiet ones and quiet the talkative ones. Make it easy for everyone to participate.
- Encourage openness and accountability.
- Practice good listening skills and eye contact.
- Stress confidentiality within the group.
- Notice when an expressed need or hurt requires prayer and be sensitive to know when it is best to pray (right then or at the end of class). Be prepared to pray through the issues that arise in the lesson and/or in the discussion.
- Try to end class on time!

Preparing the Students for the Following Week

- 1.** Point out the exercise to them that they are to do at home. Make sure they see the memory work! It is best if you memorize the Scriptures for next week in advance and can quote them right then. That shows the students that you are doing the same work—but in advance—and how easy it is to memorize and quote a verse in front of the group!
- 2.** Remind them to pray for the vision of discipleship.
- 3.** You might have everyone in the group exchange phone numbers. Then suggest they all pray for each other that week. If the Lord should give them an encouraging word to share with someone in the group, they have the phone number and can do so.
- 4.** Make sure everyone knows the time and place of the next weeks' meeting, especially if it differs from this week.

Chapter Three

AVOIDING CONFUSION WITH THE SESSIONS

It has come to our attention (a few times!) that the teachings and exercises in our manuals do not line up clearly. We apologize for that! The idea is for you to teach lesson one and then ask the students to do the first exercise that week, including the memory work.

The following week when the group meets for the second time, you will go over their exercises with them (Exercise #1) and hear their memory work. Then you will teach lesson two, which coincides with the homework they had ready for that day.

The next week the students will have done Exercise #2, which you will discuss within the group. Then you will teach Lesson 3. The content of the exercises and teachings match, but the numbers do not. They will always do the exercise that is numbered one back from the lesson that you will teach. Instead of trying to match up numbers, match up the content!

In teaching the Classes, remember to pray at the beginning, the end, and anywhere in between as the Holy Spirit leads you! In teaching, you do not want to only *inform*, you want to *impart*! So make sure the Word of God and life of God are *ministered*, not just taught verbatim.

Involve the members of your group as much as you can. Have them read the questions during the exercise sharing time. Allow each one to answer each question if the questions are personal or challenging. If the answer is the same because it is a “Find the Scripture and write _____” type of question, then it is not necessary for each one to answer. At times, you might want to ask, “*Did anyone get a different answer to that question?*” This allows for a variety of answers and breaks the monotony of hearing answers that are the same or very much alike.

Have the students share in reading the Scriptures. Since you are doing all of the teaching, keep their interest by having them read the verses or make comments here and there.

Strongly encourage them to **memorize the memory verses** each week. Scripture memory, although seemingly outdated in our modern age, enables us to stand firm against temptation and to be effective in spiritual warfare. Praying the Word is powerful. To gain incentive to meditate on and memorize the Word, read **Psalm 119!**

A few tips for memorizing: write out the verse(s) in your own handwriting. It is easier to memorize your handwriting than the typed page. You might want to write the Scriptures on small cards that you can put up around your home or in your car where you see them often. Read the verses each day. Toward the end of the week, spend 10 minutes concentrating on memorizing them. Notice the key words or the way particular words or phrases rhyme or go together. To keep the verse as a part of your life, use it in your daily prayer time or in conversations when it fits.

Chapter Four

OUTLINING A LESSON

The outline below was put together by Jan Rowland and Mintie Nel, who are discipling women in England and in other nations. They recommend to those leading groups that they prepare themselves by organizing each lesson into outlines. We are using this outline by permission to give you an idea of this method of study and preparation for teaching.

Lesson #1 - The case for discipleship

- a. What is a disciple?
- b. What are we without this vision?
Proverbs 29:18
- c. The vision and commission of Jesus
 - i. John 17:4–8
 - ii. Luke 4:18–19 (Part 1 of His work)
 - iii. John 17:6 (Part 2 of His work)
 - iv. John 17:18 (the work of the original disciples / our work)
- d. The three commissions
 - i. Matthew 9:37; Luke 10:2 **Pray** for more harvest workers
 - ii. Matthew 10:7–8 **Preach** the gospel, heal the sick
 - iii. Matthew 28: 18–20 **Make disciples** of Jesus
- e. Multiplication
 - i. Hebrews 5:12–14
 - ii. John 15:16
- f. God's plan for discipleship
 - i. Transformation
 - ii. Reproduction / Multiplication

Chapter Five

ME? MAKE DISCIPLES?

A disciple is a person who is in training to become just like his Master. A disciple submits his will to Jesus and makes Him the center of his life. Jesus is his first priority. He forsakes all selfish ambition and hopes of self-glory, and takes up his cross daily to follow Him. His life is one of surrender and of living his life for someone else—the Messiah and Lord.

But it does not stop there. All disciples are called to introduce others to Jesus and to help them embrace His Lordship over their lives. In **Matthew 28:18–20** Jesus said, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.*” We are not only to teach people to obey the Lord’s commandments, we are also to live in such a way that they observe His commandments being lived out in us.

Defining Discipleship

Discipleship is *any* activity that helps a person move forward in Jesus. It includes Bible studies, mentoring in specialized areas, and/or sharing the things of God together in a relaxed setting. However, we have found that the structured setting of a weekly discipleship group with Bible study and memory, prayer, and accountability is the most effective way to help new believers mature quickly. This type of small discipleship group does three important things: it **(1)** makes true disciples, **(2)** identifies potential spiritual leaders, and **(3)** gives people the close relationships they need. It provides them with a setting where they can share openly with others and ask the questions they may have.

To make a disciple requires teaching, mentoring, and modeling the lifestyle of Jesus. It is not just the informing of facts; it is the imparting of life. We must “rub shoulders” with those we disciple.

Discipleship also involves one-on-one times of pastoral care. It is listening to and praying with others as well as teaching them. Not everything can be shared in a group setting; sometimes a person may have personal struggles that he or she will want to share alone with the group leader. Meeting alone with each one in the group allows the leader to see the development of each person. It gives him or her an opportunity to see if the person needs further discipling or mentoring in particular areas. It reveals weaknesses, strengths, mindsets, and belief systems that may be good or that may need to be challenged.

Responsibilities of Disciple-Makers

When Jesus commanded us to disciple all the nations, He was commanding us to proclaim the availability of the kingdom of God to all people. He also commanded us to invite them into a discipleship training relationship until they would look and act just like Him. In discipleship, the teacher and the student each make a decision. The teacher is willing to receive the student and impart the Word of God and his own life into him. The student is willing to enter into a training relationship with the teacher to receive from the teacher. The teacher explains and demonstrates; the student watches, listens, and grows. He eventually absorbs the wisdom and much of the lifestyle of his teacher.

Luke 6:40 says, “*A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.*” In the areas where the discipler is weak, those under his/her leadership may develop those same weaknesses. The student is often susceptible to the same areas of temptation where his or her leader is susceptible. Similarly, if the leader attains victory in an area, there is abundant grace for the student to

attain victory in that same area. The spiritual authority of the leader over the student is like an umbrella of protection.

All those actively making disciples must take that authority seriously and walk holy before the Lord. (If you are thinking, “*Then I won’t make disciples! It’s too serious for me to do!*” then you are being disobedient to the Lord’s commission and will have to answer to Him! *DO* make disciples, and *DO* take that ministry seriously!)

James 3:1 says, “*My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.*” Those discipling others will be held accountable for exemplifying Jesus in their words, behavior, and responsibilities. A leader in God’s kingdom is judged more by his character than by his accomplishments. He must guard his heart and spirit diligently; if his heart is right, his behavior will be godly and his leadership fruitful.

Caring for the Lord’s sheep

Discipleship leaders need to assertively care for others. That means if you as a leader see that someone you are discipling has a need or a problem, take the responsibility of getting alongside that person and ministering to him. Draw him out, enabling him to share freely; be willing to help with practical needs if you can.

1 Thessalonians 2:7–12—“*We proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having thus a fond affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly, uprightly, and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; you know how we were exhorting, encouraging, and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*”

A healthy congregation requires the tenderness of a mother and the leadership of a father. Leaders must have parental hearts; the best leaders are both nurturing and strong. The gentle nurturer provides a place of acceptance and safety. Even though women fulfill this need fairly naturally, men also need to be able to nurture others. All disciplers need to give love, gentleness, and acceptance to those they serve. Many times when a strong man or a caring woman fulfills this nurturing role for a person with a love deficit or with a history of rejection, tremendous healing takes place.

Believers need strong fathers. The father is the authority figure, setting the family course and giving direction. A strong leader gives “the sheep” a feeling of protection and security. Pastors, elders, and teachers normally take the fatherly role in church life today. If a congregation has both of the parental roles—the nurturing of the mother and the leadership of the father—it can develop healthy, responsible congregants.

As trusting relationships develop in the discipleship groups, many needs are provided for besides the spiritual ones. Singles are included in family outings, mothers find willing baby-sitters from other members in the group, and holiday meals are shared. In general, the family of God is built. Community grows, and love increases within the Body of Messiah.

Three Dimensions of Discipleship Groups

1. They should be small enough for adequate sharing and transparency, and for trusting relationships to develop (four students with one leader is best). Keeping them homogenous (men with men and women with women) is best for the deepest, most vulnerable sharing and most effective ministry.

2. The leader must have attained a life enough like the Lord where others can recognize Jesus' Lordship over him or her (although none of us is perfect).

3. Leaders must inspire and encourage others to attain a godly life—through the Word, prayer, counsel, and in confronting areas where there is a further need for character development.

Description of Group Activities

A discipleship group usually **meets weekly** for class time that consists of teaching, prayer, and going over the study exercises and memory work. The leader should pray for each person in his group every day and encourage those in the group to pray for each other.

Sharing a meal together once a month, or celebrating birthdays can be special times of fellowship and bonding. Eating together at the end of the course is something most groups enjoy doing as they conclude their season of discipleship with one another.

The group may want to take the **Lord's Supper** together. Some groups do this weekly to cement the Word of God studied and received. Some do it monthly. A few choose to wash one another's feet at the end of the 10 or 19 weeks of studying together.

Some discipleship groups enjoy doing **community service projects** together. Servant evangelism to the community (i.e. free car washes, mowing lawns, carrying out trash, washing windows, doing odd fix-it jobs) is a great way to share God's love! Caring for the seniors, widows, or single mothers in the church or community can be a wonderful blessing for both the givers and receivers. Group service helps groups to bond and can reveal those with leadership potential. It gives the leader an avenue to notice who initiates, does excellent work, relates well to others, and has a servant's heart.

The Disciple-Maker and His Prized Relationships

Discipling or mentoring others in the ways of God is so exciting and fulfilling that it has the potential of taking over too much of one's life. No matter what else we do in Kingdom work, *we must always have enough personal time with the Lord Himself*. We must also make sure we are not too busy for our own families and close friends.

Pause for a minute and answer these questions:

- Who do you seek out for counsel and/or prayer when you have something personal that is troubling you?
- Who do you laugh or relax with?
- Who do you call when you want to see a movie or take a walk?
- Who really *knows* you?

If you don't have easy or ready answers to these questions, you are probably too busy to develop the kind of relationships you need.

In discipling others, we give ourselves away. We *pour* the life of God within us into them. In order to do that, we need loving, trusting relationships with other disciple-makers. We need the support, strength, and accountability that godly friendships offer as we disciple and train the next generation. That means we not only have to make time to make disciples, we must also make time to build mutually-supportive relationships with others.

It is undesirable, even dangerous, if all of our relationships are one-way where we minister to others only. We **MUST** have some relationships that are two-way. We need to have friends with whom we can be ourselves, knowing that we are accepted and loved for who we are not for what we can give.

Within the context of godly friendships, we encourage one another. We have times of release through laughter and fun. We will often share meaningful times of sorrow and tears as well. We all need these valued friendships; *make sure* that you are not too busy to develop them!

In our busyness, we believers tend to have shallow relationships. But if we will invest our time into developing meaningful covenant relationships with one another where real trust, understanding, and love are built, we will find that the next generation of leaders will benefit. It is the strongest marriages that produce the most secure and happy children.

Chapter Six

BECOMING SPIRITUAL FATHERS

“I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.” (1 Corinthians 4:14–17)

We all know what is involved in making natural children. There is an intimate exchange between a man and a woman, and then some nine months later their lives are changed forever! Men know how to become natural fathers, but comparatively few know how to be spiritual fathers. My prayer for you as you read this is that God will arouse desire within you to parent spiritual sons and daughters. With divorce and dysfunctional families today at an all time high, a “fatherless generation” is emerging. If there was ever a time for spiritual fathers and mothers to arise within the Lord’s Body, it is *NOW!*

One of the greatest blessings and challenges of becoming a disciple of Jesus is that we have the privilege and responsibility to invest the life of Jesus Christ into someone else. Helping others become His disciples is how spiritual leaders and fathers develop within the Body. Since I, Reuven, caught God’s vision for making disciples in 1980, I have had the joy of investing my life personally into the lives of 60–75 men. Today, by God’s grace, about a dozen of them are pastoring congregations. I can relate to the joy that the apostle John expressed in **3 John 1:4**: *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”*

The apostle Paul is a great example of a spiritual father for us today. What can we learn from his discipling of others and his example of fathering? I want us to consider **six** aspects of his life that we would do well to imitate in making disciples.

(1) Paul was a man of humility and brokenness. **Acts 20:17–19** says, “. . . *serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me.*” As a spiritual father, Paul modeled humility and endurance under trials.

Looking at Paul’s life from his epistles, we can see the growth of humility in his character development. Among the first of Paul’s epistles were his letters written to the Corinthians in 56 AD. Paul writes, *“For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.” (2 Corinthians 11:5)*. Paul again writes in **1 Corinthians 15:9**: *“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle...”* Some six years later, in 62 AD, Paul writes this to the Ephesians: *“To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given...” (Ephesians 3:8)* Do you see his progression in humility? Another six years passed, and in 68 AD Paul writes in **1 Timothy 1:15**: *“It is a trustworthy statement, I am chief of all sinners.”*

We can perceive Paul’s humility in his compassionate brokenness. Paul often wept in prayer because of his genuine love for others. Too many of our prayers today are prayed with dry eyes. Spiritual maturity will sometimes express itself in tears when we see the struggles and pain of others. Many men today think that weeping is unmanly, yet Jesus, the model of manhood, wept. Paul had the Spirit of Jesus within him, and his humility was an outward manifestation of that.

(2) Paul made spiritual deposits into the lives of those he disciplined—through prayer, teaching, and personal ministry. *“I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day. Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.” (2 Timothy 1:2-3,6)*

2 Timothy 2:2 says, “*And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*” Those who were around Paul heard him teach and undoubtedly received valuable ministry from him.

(3) He demonstrated a godly life. **2 Timothy 3:1** “*But you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance.*” Paul provided a blueprint for others to follow. They took on his attitudes, and they learned his purpose of life. In **1 Thessalonians 1:5-7** Paul said, “. . . *be followers of us.*” Spiritual children follow the example and attitudes modeled by their spiritual parents.

(4) Paul delighted in those he disciplined and was devoted to them. “*But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.*” (**1 Thessalonians 2:7-8**)

Paul genuinely loved those he taught. He was personally involved in their lives, and he did not keep them safely at a distance from his own heart and life. He never considered others as resources to accomplish a goal; he was genuinely interested in people. We are to love deeply and sincerely also, allowing those we have spiritual authority over to have access into our hearts and lives.

(5) Paul delegated ministry to disciples. **Titus 1:4-5** says, “*To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.*”

Paul sent Titus into ministry. What a job he entrusted to him; Titus was to appoint elders in every city! Paul taught those he disciplined, and then he entrusted service to them. We, in like manner, are to teach and train others until they reach some level of maturity in the Lord. Then we are to release them to minister. After releasing them, we should inspect their work and give further guidance and encouragement. We need to recognize and cultivate God’s gifts in others and then enable them to use those gifts. That includes allowing them to make mistakes as they grow into leadership.

According to **Ephesians 4:11-13**, the primary role of leaders is to train the people to do the work of the ministry! Those of you already in ministry, *learn to delegate!* If you do all of the work of the ministry yourself, you will frustrate those with gifts and maturity under your care. You will also wear yourself out!

(6) He depended upon his spiritual sons to become fathers themselves. They were to “reproduce themselves” by teaching and training others. **1 Timothy 4:12** says, “*Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*” Be an example, a blueprint for people to follow.

When God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply, we know He was talking about reproducing natural children. However, that command is applicable to us in our spiritual lives as well! We are to bear fruit for God and to multiply spiritual children for His glory.

I, Reuven, received the Lord’s vision for making disciples in 1980 while living in Rockford, Illinois. During that time, I had the joy of leading several small discipleship groups and the opportunity of investing my life into a number of dynamic young men. In 1982, I moved to Jerusalem, Israel. In 1987, I was invited to several places in North America to teach. One of the invitations came from Clint, a man whom I had disciplined during my years in Rockford. After attending Bible College, he took on the leadership of a small church in California. After Clint picked me up from the airport, we headed to a house where about 20 people had gathered to welcome me. While meeting these precious believers, I was approached by a young man who said, “*Are you Reuven? Reuven from Jerusalem?*” As I said “yes,” he squeezed me and shouted, “Grandpa!” This greeting shocked me, as I had never been married, nor had I any children! After his strong embrace, I asked him what he meant by addressing me as “Grandpa.” He simply replied, “*Clint has been discipling me.*” This response almost took the breath out of me for I had never experienced the impact of discipling another as I did in that moment. I sat down stunned,

touched—and within minutes, the same young man returned to me with another young man at his side. He then said, “*Reuven, I’d like you to meet your great-grandson!*”

I cannot describe the joy that flooded my soul that evening. Spiritual fathering has rewards that are beyond description. Jesus combines God’s glory, fruit-bearing, and discipleship in **John 15:8**: “*This is to My Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, proving yourselves to be My disciples.*” Not only does disciple-making give glory to the Father, it also pleases Him greatly. In **Colossians 1:10**, Paul wrote to the disciples in Colossae, “*We pray that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and may please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.*”

You know someone has genuinely received God’s vision for making disciples when they have faithfully discipled others themselves. And the **great blessing** is when those disciples continue in the Master’s Commission by investing into other lives. My prayer is that God would raise up spiritual mothers and fathers in this generation, and that **you** would be among that number.

Chapter Seven

DISCIPLING THE NEXT GENERATION

This teaching is primarily to mature, seasoned women about discipling less mature women in the ways of God. However, the truths in it apply to men discipling men as well, so ***please, men, read it!*** We will start by looking at how Mary received God's call and embraced it, and then sought out an older woman with wisdom to mentor her. Elizabeth was just months ahead in a similar life-changing, challenging situation.

Luke 1:26–28 *“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.”*”

Luke 1:30–33 *“The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.”*”

Luke 1:34–38 *“Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. Behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary said, “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.”*”

Luke 1:39–45, 56 *“Now at this time Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed among women are you, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.” And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.”*

What an amazing young woman Mary was! She made herself fully available to God and submitted to His will, although the cost of such obedience was great. She also recognized her need to be nurtured further in her knowledge of God. In her humility, she sought out an older, godly woman who would mentor her. Not just any older woman would do; she needed one who herself had had a special encounter with God and who had worked through some intense inner struggles to a place of contented victory.

Notice that Mary took the initiative in seeking out a mentor. Mary was young and obedient, but inexperienced in God's ways, and she wanted to learn from Elizabeth, who had walked with God for decades. Mary sought out the wisdom and counsel of someone more mature than she.

Many of you are like Mary. You know you are called of God, and that the call is bigger than you are. You know you need further mentoring. You need someone who will teach you, pray for you and with you, and be a spiritual mother (or father) to you at times. In fact, *most of us* need someone in our lives who knows more about God and has walked with Him longer than we have. Any time we get the opportunity, we need to embrace humility like Mary did and learn from those with more experience.

Don't think that because you have a call of God on your life that you are special and don't need the help of others! We all need help at times. Mary had a *very special* call, and yet she knew she needed the

wisdom of a mentor. If you have some spiritually mature people in your life, learn all you can from them! Ask questions and seek counsel. Take the initiative to sit at the feet of someone you respect who has wisdom and experience in the Lord.

Considering Elizabeth—the More Mature Woman

Elizabeth recognized the call of God on Mary. She saw that God had a special destiny for her, and that He had invested His own life into her. She knew that God had purposes for Mary that exceeded her own calling. **Luke 1:43** says, “*Why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*”

Having vision for the future, she invested into Mary, the one called to bear the One who held the future. Elizabeth was **available** for Mary. She opened her home and heart to her for those three months, teaching her the ways of the Lord. The Lord knew that Elizabeth was the perfect one to disciple Mary; He had been preparing her for this ministry for decades.

Investing Time rather than Spending it

We are all given the same amount of time, yet it seems that none of us has enough of it! We are familiar with the phrases “time is money” and “love is spelled t-i-m-e.” Because of time pressures, there is a temptation to begin a ministry without enough equipping, and a temptation to send others out into ministry before they are adequately trained. It is noteworthy that Jesus did not enter ministry Himself until he was 30 years old and had had plenty of time in the Word, in prayer, and in “*learning obedience by the things which He suffered.*” (**Hebrews 5:8**)

Then, in the three and a half years of Jesus’ public ministry, He spent most of His time with His 12 men. He also prioritized time with His Father in prayer and worship. What does that say to us? That our top priorities should be to spend a good amount of time with our heavenly Father and with those whom He entrusts to us to disciple or mentor. If we are doing *only* and *all* that God has called us to do, we will have enough time to get it all done.

A common misconception is that “spending time with God” means being *alone* with Him. As Jesus modeled, we do need time alone with God, but we usually only have a small part of our day that we can set aside for quiet devotions. However, if we invite God into *everything* we do, we will always be spending time with Him! We need to “practice His presence” (a term coined by Brother Lawrence in the 17th century).

Even though you “practice God’s presence” through the day, make sure you set aside time where you can focus *all* of your attentions on Him! Jesus knew the importance of being alone with the Father; His ministry to others was an *overflow* of His ministry to God. He knew He needed to hear from His Father *before* ministering to people, and He knew the importance of being in the Father’s presence *after* public ministry. Too many spiritual leaders today unwind in front of the TV after public ministry instead of seeking God’s presence to be refreshed. That is dangerous! At the time when we are empty and weary after giving out spiritually, physically, and mentally, we are open and susceptible to whatever is imparted to us. What a travesty that so many imbibe the language and ways of the world rather than drinking deeply from the river of God!

Our source of strength in anointed ministry to others is found in a lifestyle of prayer and worship. We need quality time with God before we give ourselves to others. As we get to know Him intimately, we will become secure in His love. And we all need that security! Although we receive salvation through the blood of Jesus, we will only reach wholeness and security within through knowing the love of the Father. Each of us must have a comfortable friendship with God and be confident in His faithfulness and goodness toward us. Otherwise, we will transfer our own *insecurity* and *lack of relationship* with the Father to those we mentor. If we are distant from Him or wary of Him, those we disciple will be as well.

Pouring your Life into Others

Although Jesus preached the gospel all over the Galilee and healed thousands of people, He spent the bulk of His ministry time with His disciples. Jesus had a ministry to the multitudes, but He poured His life into his men. They received the benefit of personal friendship with Him as well as the full explanation of His teachings.

Like Jesus, we are to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and teach the ways of God's Kingdom as we have opportunity. We are also commissioned to disciple a limited number of people. The Father has chosen those you are to disciple; these you need to make time for. Your children are first on that list, of course. *What does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own children?* But after your children, who are the others in whom the Lord wants you to invest? Jesus prayed all night before choosing His 12 disciples. It is crucial that you pour into whom you are to disciple.

Remember: Everything that the Lord gives you, He expects you to give away! We are not to be cisterns that collect and store living water! We are to be vessels that receive that water and then give it to others. Jesus said, *"Freely you have received, freely give!"* The question is not **whether** you are to make disciples, we are all commissioned to do that. The question is **who!** Whom has God called you to disciple and/or mentor?

1 Thessalonians 2:7–8 says, *"But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having thus a fond affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us."*

This is true discipleship—not giving the gospel only, but imparting your own life to others! It is sharing your heart with them, your experiences of victory and defeat, and your insights into the Word of God. If you are gifted or trained in an area of ministry, you might train them in that same area of ministry.

God has invested a lot in you. Don't keep that to yourself, and don't carry it with you to the grave. Take others under your wing and pour into them everything God has taught you. Don't think you can keep a safe distance from others and still be effective with them. It won't happen! You've got to risk in relationship!

Speaking of Commitment

You must be willing to be *committed* to those that God gives you to disciple. In all of our meaningful relationships, we have levels of commitment. When you know God is telling you to disciple someone, it is good to speak about the **time frame of discipleship** or the **goal of the mentoring**. You may want to mention the expectations you have or the time commitment that you are both willing to make.

You might say something like, *"I am committed to your growth in the Lord. I will pray for you and love you; I'll be honest with you. I would like to meet with you weekly if possible for the next three or six months."*

The one being discipled may say, *"I trust you and want to be mentored by you. Whatever you see that is not of the Lord in me, please tell me. All that you are willing to teach me, I want to learn."*

By voicing your commitment, you are establishing a **trust level** upon which you can build. You are defeating the enemy in advance who always comes with his lies and accusations to break up God-ordained relationships. You begin building unity, and the blessing that God commands on unity begins to flow in both directions. Both the one discipling and the one being discipled will grow and be blessed.

Affecting the Nations with Spiritual Children

Isaiah 54:1–3 “Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child; Break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed; for the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous than the sons of the married woman,” says the Lord. Enlarge the place of your tent; Stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; lengthen your cords and strengthen your pegs. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations, and they will resettle the desolate cities.”

Those of you who have not been blessed with natural children can rejoice because of the spiritual children that God wants to give you. Enlarge the place of your tent and look for expansion through spiritual kids! They will inherit nations! Broaden your vision!

I speak from experience on this issue. Reuven and I have not had natural children, and yet God has allowed us to touch nations through the spiritual children He has given us. I could have wasted years with prolonged grief over not having had my own children, but I chose to get on with obeying God’s call on my life. In choosing to nurture and train HIS children, I have found contentment, joy, and fulfillment.

If you are not investing your life into the lives of others, why not? There are not many investments that are as worthy as this one! This is eternal! You can leave a legacy behind by pouring everything God has given and taught you into others. Give yourself away. Make eternal investments into the next generation of spiritual leaders.

You may be asking, “Where can I find the time for this?” Good question! You might need to eliminate other important activities to make time for what is *more* important. Ask the Lord what is *most important for you at this season of your life*.

Identifying with Elizabeth and/or Mary

Let us conclude this chapter by looking at Elizabeth and Mary again. Can you identify with one of them? Or perhaps with both of them?

Are you like Elizabeth? Are you someone who has worked through years of rejection, disappointment, or grief, and come through on the other side still loving and praising God? Maybe you received the answer to your prayers years later, as Elizabeth did when she conceived. O perhaps your prayers have not been answered positively, but you have accepted the “no.” Perhaps you are still expecting answers with unwavering patience and faith.

God used the distress of Elizabeth to develop her into the yielded vessel He needed to mentor the mother of His Son. Have you gone through some deep waters? Could it be because God wants to send some less mature believers your way for you to open your heart to and mentor? Have you come through your trials without the smell of anger, unbelief, and bitterness on you? Have you embraced God’s mercy and believed His love (in spite of the pain) to a point of gratitude for the glory that has come or will come because of your suffering? Elizabeth rejoiced in the birth of John. Are you rejoicing at what God has brought out of your “spiritual pregnancy?”

Or are you like Mary? Has the Holy Spirit come upon you? Has He conceived something inside you—a vision perhaps? Are you pregnant with the life of God? Could God have given you a destiny that requires nurturing so that it can mature to a place of affecting nations and/or generations? If so, have you sought out mentoring by a godly woman who can invest her life with God into you? (What if Mary had not gone to Elizabeth and spent those vital months with her?)

Many of you have believed the devil’s lie that you are incompetent to disciple or mentor someone. God HAS gifted you and *I pray that gift will be released in and through you*. Ask the Lord: “*Who am I to disciple?*” and get on with fulfilling the Great Commission!

Chapter Eight

THE POWER OF IMPARTATION

by Francis Frangipane, <http://www.frangipane.faithhighway.com/cgi->

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I know a man who, as a youth, endured a violent outburst from his father. The incident had to do with a particular style shirt that other teens were wearing. First, his dad told him not to buy the shirt and then, after he showed up wearing it anyway, his father told him to take it off. When the boy resisted, his dad exploded and ripped the shirt while it was still on the boy's body.

For whatever damage the violence did to the young man's soul, there was a deeper side effect. Later in life, my friend married and had his own children. At one point, his oldest son wanted to wear a certain shirt, to which my friend objected. Later that day his son tried to sneak out of the house wearing the shirt but was caught. Just as his dad before him had done, my friend exploded. While the shirt was still on his son, he ripped it in several places.

My friend was not a violent man, but something had been imparted to him 25 years before. This enraged behavioral pattern had incubated in his spirit until the right circumstances arrived; then it repeated itself identically. He was shocked by his unpremeditated action. He was also amazed as he pondered the power of impartation. His father's deed was a seed that, apart from my friend's conscious choice, bloomed on its own in the garden of his life.

The principle of impartation shows itself in countless ways during our lives. There are things we are doing and ideas we defend, not because we have thought them through, but because they were imparted to us by others around us. The unfiltered human spirit is very much like a sponge that absorbs into our soul the substance of the world around us. The scripture warns us: "*bad company corrupts good morals*" (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). I know of many kids who were raised in Christian homes who became friends with others who were sexually active or experimenting with drugs. Soon, the morals of those children were quietly compromised through impartation.

Jesus warned, ". . . *take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him shall more be given*" (**Luke 8:18**). Whatever you listen to and focus upon, of that "shall more be given." What we openly yield to will conform us to itself to some degree. Consider wisely, therefore, the next time you turn on the television or watch a movie. Whether the impartation comes via the media, friends, or family, take heed what you allow into your spirit.

The good news is that impartation can be a wonderful and positive influence for you. A life-giving church can fulfill and support your spiritual journey. Prayer partners can stand before God with you and for you, encouraging you to be holy. God's Word promises "*he who walks with wise men will be wise*" (**Proverbs 13:20**). There are those whom God has put in our lives, whose influence inspires us to reach for the stars.

As a spiritual leader, I have the goal not just to inform you, but also to conform you to the Lord. This involves not only instruction, but impartation as well. If you are reading a certain author that God is using right now in your life, believe God for the best that ministry can supply. Receive of the grace given to that person. Jesus was talking about the value of godly impartation when He said, "*He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward*" (**Matthew 10:40-41**).

God may meet us sovereignly, and we *should* pursue times alone with the Lord in prayer and Bible study. Because there is much deception in the church today, each of us should know the written Word of God well. But often the Holy Spirit will desire to impart something to you through a righteous man or woman. Although impartation does not take the place of our personal relationship with the Lord, Jesus did say that God will “reward” us by our ability to “receive” from those He sends.

There is no limit to how much our spirits can absorb from others. As I study materials I receive from other Christian leaders, I am aware that these leaders supply teachings and mandates from God that are changing our world. God backs up these ministries and flows through them to impart spiritual substance into our lives. What an awesome God we serve, who uses men and women to impart His Spirit and grace to us!

The Bible supplies many examples of impartation: Elijah and Elisha, Saul prophesying among the prophets, and Jesus and His disciples (**1 Kings**; **1 Samuel 10:5–11**; **John 14:12**). Consider the commissioning of Joshua. Joshua followed the Lord fully; he didn’t need Moses in order to have a right relationship with God. Yet we read, “*Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. . . .*” (**Deuteronomy 34:9**). The laying on of Moses’ hands imparted the spirit of wisdom to Joshua. Joshua already possessed personal character, yet through Moses’ hands, God gave Joshua the spirit of wisdom. Joshua received Moses in the name of a prophet and received a prophet’s reward. Joshua received by impartation, and through his ministry, God imparted great faith to Israel. Consider what the Lord told Moses, “*Encourage [Joshua], for he shall cause Israel to inherit [the land]*” (**Deuteronomy 1:38**).

Joshua didn’t just lead the Israelites, he would *cause* them to inherit God’s promises! Just as my friend’s dad imparted something that caused him to temporarily fail, so there are people God has given us whose faith, example, and encouragement will “cause” us to succeed. That individual may be your mentor, your pastor, or a leader in your church. He may be a national leader whose messages seem perfectly timed for your needs. God has placed people in your life whose influence will *cause* you to inherit His promises! In your holding fast to the Lord Jesus as your head, may you also understand the gift and power of spiritual impartation.

Chapter Nine

TESTIMONIES OF DISCIPLE-MAKERS

Early on in my life as a believer in Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus the Messiah), I became convinced as to how important the task of disciple-making is. After all, that commission was the Lord's final marching orders to His disciples. In the course of my growth as a believer, I had several who discipled me at various levels. When I grew to be mature enough to disciple others, I relished the opportunity to help them grow and get established in their walk with the Lord.

Over a period of time, I discipled many Believers one-on-one, but early on and for many years I felt that my approach to discipleship was disorderly. That was primarily because I lacked materials to use with which I was satisfied.

A few years ago I was introduced to The Vision for Disciple-Making (*Go and Make Disciples*) when Reuven, Yanit, and two others came to our congregation to teach the material. We met in small groups, and I was just thrilled and blessed, not only by the substance of the lessons themselves, but by the very personal and relational way in which they could be communicated.

After the completion of the course, I had the privilege of meeting with two young men to disciple them with this material, passing along to them the blessings that had been given to me. They both confessed that those ten sessions were tremendously impacting and life-changing for them. I thank the Lord for giving Reuven and Yanit the vision and burden to develop the *Go and make Disciples* material and, later on, *The Making of a Disciple* and *The Lifestyle of a Disciple*, based on **Matthew 5–7**.

A. B., Jerusalem, Israel

In January 2002, my wife and I began to disciple a small group of believers who wanted to deepen their roots in the Lord. Using the *Go and Make Disciples* manuals, we met every Wednesday evening for eleven weeks. Our evenings took this form: after a short session of worship, we divided into two groups. I took the men whilst my wife took the ladies. In these groups, trust was built, especially when we as leaders took the lead in sharing vulnerably about ourselves. With the pointers from the book, we learnt of each other's struggles and victories in our spiritual lives. Because my wife and I had never had any "structured" discipleship experience ourselves, the manuals proved to be very useful.

From July, 2002, we continued with the same group using *The Making of a Disciple* as our resource. By December of that year, we had completed the entire book! In the course of those six months, practical issues related to relationships, devotion, behaviour patterns, and numerous other subjects were touched on with much transparency in our groups. My wife and I noticed changes in the lives of our friends, especially in the attitudes within marriages. One man shared how he overcame anger. In the women's group, a lady shared how she was very much strengthened in her walk with God, enabling her to go through some very difficult moments with her husband.

Needless to say, my wife and I experienced deeper bonding between us as we journeyed with those we were discipling.

I. B. O., Singapore

A group of seven ladies in the Modi'in area near Jerusalem spent several months meeting to study *The Making of a Disciple*. We were amazed to see how the Lord took this "familiar" portion of scripture and not only brought new revelation and conviction but showed us over and over again practical ways in which He was challenging us to apply these words in our daily lives. We remembered once again the joy and value of memorizing Scripture, which was a part of each weekly lesson. Our fellowship, which revolved around this study, was richly blessed. In short, we want more of what God has for us, and we plan to study Reuven and Yanit's book, *The Lifestyle of a Disciple*, now!

E. S., Modi'in, Israel

I have often wondered why some Believers can walk with God victoriously and others really struggle. I have questioned why some people try God and say "it doesn't work" for them. Why is it that some Believers grow into spiritual maturity and others do not? I am now convinced that it is the lack of true discipleship in the church. After I took a class with the *Go and Make Disciples* manual, I truly caught the vision of making disciples. Since then, I have discipled others with the Rosses' materials and found it very rewarding. It seems to touch all the major areas of a person's life in one way or another.

When a teacher does all the talking in a Bible Study, she or he never knows what the students are understanding or applying. I have found that in small discipleship groups, the Holy Spirit points out the gaps in a person's spiritual life to me (the leader) and to the student. After recognizing those gaps and applying the Word to her life, the student moves toward maturity and holiness. Keeping the classes small is essential so that everyone has an opportunity to share and receive solid mentoring.

One can pray for and counsel a person many times, but only as he (or she) is given calculated questions to answer and discuss, can one see where he "missed it" along the way. I often refer to this as laying the foundation stones, as we see in **Hebrews 6:1-3**. As we begin to build on a new foundation, the former one may sometimes crumble or begin to be unsteady. Usually we find that somewhere in one's spiritual foundation, something was not laid properly. As each lesson is studied, the gaps begin to be filled in. As a result, the students are more equipped to stand firm in Jesus, grow into spiritual maturity, and become more conformed to His image. Through this process of growth, they are more apt to fulfill their destinies chosen by God.

I have had such wonderful times teaching these classes that I could write experiences from each chapter of each book the Rosses have written. I believe that every Believer, no matter how long they have known the Lord, must capture the vision of making disciples. After all, it is the Great Commission that the Lord gave us Himself.

B. J. S., Maryland, USA

I have been a believer for 30 years, but I was discipled "by accident." What I mean is that my discipling process was never an intentional, ongoing, character-building experience with another believer I respected. When I was introduced to Reuven and Yanit's "Vision for Discipleship" series, it resulted in a paradigm shift for me. I began saying, "This is so important to Jesus. How could I have missed this?" My life and ministry have been permanently changed by this focus on strategic discipling, and I highly recommend these materials.

P. T., Haifa, Israel

"Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men" (**Matthew 4:19**) was the Word that impacted me when I became a follower of Jesus. I had just heard the wonderful good news that Jesus had sacrificed His life so

that I might have life. Part of the process of my becoming a “fisher of men” was to be disciplined by a deaconess whose Bible study I attended. By spending time with her in a church environment as well as in social settings, I learnt by her example of conduct. She taught me to love and trust the Word of God, and she instructed me concerning fasting, praying, tithing, and loving others. Through her ministry, the Holy Spirit was able to instill in me an understanding of Jesus’ command to “make disciples.” I had to first be a disciple of His myself, and while I am continuing to be transformed by the Lord into His likeness, I am able to reproduce His life in others.

J. A., Witbank, South Africa

As the leader of a discipleship group, I find it a privilege to hear my friends speaking from the heart about the Lord himself or about issues in life that affect us as Christians. The struggle to work out Scriptural application is both challenging and inspiring; we find we need one another to understand what we are going through and to be accountable to one another.

The discipleship materials written by the Rosses have particular insight into Jewish practices or outlook that formed the original context of words and events that we study in the scriptures. This results in a real understanding that is easily applied to my own life. Seeing Jesus as our High Priest and all that His death and resurrection has provided for us opened my eyes to the many areas of freedom He has given us. I also understand more fully the role I have as His priest in waiting upon Him and serving others in His name.

Going through the beatitudes has reinforced how much higher are His ways and thoughts than mine. In my confidence being transferred, once again, from myself to Him, I have found not only a sense of His Word cleansing me, but also clear challenges to my ego, my thoughts, and my behaviour toward others. This has helped me immensely in relating with forgiveness, repentance, and mercy to a certain brother with whom I had a serious disagreement. He, in turn, has treated me with great grace. With the love of God enabling us to honour one another, we have experienced the active application of one of the memory verses, **John 13: 34, 35** “*A new command I give you, Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*” Oh that others will be helped by us to be reconciled to God!

J. L., Worthing, England

**Different reactions and comments following the 10-week Discipleship course,
Go and Make Disciples, in a church in Switzerland:**

- A brother who joined our church 18 months ago from another assembly said with tears in his eyes, “After 40 years in the faith, I have discovered through the Discipleship course that the Holy Spirit is a *Person*, longing for a relationship with me!”
- Many expressed how the discipleship course increased their hunger for the Word of God and caused them to long for time spent in the Lord’s presence.
- Having been the first ones in the church to follow the course, the elders of the church discovered the importance of praying more together. Since then, each elders’ meeting starts with an hour of prayer! And you know what? Administration work then goes faster, and we don’t finish our evenings any later than before. Sometimes we even finish earlier!!
- Teenagers whose parents participated in the discipleship course have seen the results in their parents’ lives and therefore have asked to be discipled also! We hope to have at least two groups for teenagers begin this autumn, 2003.

- Several who took the course have now decided to become registered members of the church; two asked to be baptised, and many are definitely more committed to attending the prayer meetings.

S. & A. E., Echallens, Switzerland

The Lord Jesus has used me in the last several years to disciple women. It has been the best time of personal growth and deepening of my commitment and walk with the Lord that I have ever experienced. In teaching others, I have searched more intimately for the Lord and for His wisdom and discernment. I have also experienced extreme refining! There have been so many “God moments” in our groups that it is impossible to share them all, but I want to relate a few. God is so good, merciful, and omniscient!

One woman’s marriage was saved because of God’s timing in placing her in a discipleship group. Debbie (name changed) was a lady whom I did not know until the beginning of our discipleship series. She had believed in Jesus all her life, but she never knew how to let Him be her Lord. Even though she had attended church faithfully, Debbie did not understand how to integrate her faith into her life. During the fourth lesson of *The Making of a Disciple*, we talked about hungering for righteousness. One definition for righteousness was “doing the things God is for and refraining from those God is against.” All of a sudden, Debbie blurted out to our group, *“Well, I guess you should know that I filed for divorce from my husband and he does not know it! It will be final tomorrow. What do you think of that?”*

We were very surprised. I asked her, *“Do you really want to know what I think?”* She said she did, so I told her that, according to scripture, she would be going against God if she went through with the divorce. (There were no Biblical reasons to divorce; she just did not enjoy being married to him.) The other members of the group encouraged her to work on her marriage. We told her that she was choosing to go against God—a scary thing to do! It was so awesome for us to realize that God had placed her in the group at just the right time in her life. She had not previously known any of us, and she did not have other Christian friends. We told her that if she would follow God’s direction and stay with her husband, we would all be there to walk alongside her. She could call us day or night, and we would be available.

At that point, she angrily stormed out. We prayed, but we did not know if we would ever see her again. Late that night she called me and said, *“Well, I guess you will be glad to know that I cancelled the divorce proceedings.”* I said, *“Praise God!! Yes, I am glad to know. He has put us here in your life at this time to walk with you through this. We are here for you.”* Debbie stayed in the discipleship group and finished the study. That was four years ago, and she is still with her husband, and they are seeking the Lord in their marriage.

I led a college group a few years ago. One of the girls had gone to church but had never read the Bible herself. In the group, she loved discovering the Bible and God’s truths. She began to learn to integrate God’s truth into her daily life. She found studying God’s Word refreshing and exciting, even when she felt His refining process within her. During the study, her prayer requests revolved around finding an opportunity to share what she had learned with her family. She was not sure if her father was a Believer. She asked us to pray that she would have an opportunity to share Jesus with her dad and her brother during the summer. She told us that they had a family Bible placed on a stand in their house, but that no one had read it. When the discipleship group ended, she went home for the summer. A few months later, I received a letter from her. She excitedly wrote that, not only had she shared the gospel with her whole family, she also had begun to disciple them with the same material we had used!

At times, people have called me regarding discipleship classes. One woman said, *“I know someone that went through that study you teach. There are huge changes in her! She is not like she used to be. I want what she has; can I be in your study?”*

Last year I taught a group of high school girls. One girl had a question about her spiritual life. I asked her what her parents had said to her about that issue. She looked surprised and said, *“We never talk about Jesus in our house! My parents are both Sunday school teachers, but I don’t ever remember talking about*

spiritual issues with them. They never bring it up.” I have heard similar statements many times from the teenagers that come through our house. I would love to see parents share Jesus with and disciple their own children. These children are our “home-grown” disciples whom the Lord has placed with us for His purposes!

It is obvious to me that this discipleship series changes lives. I know it has refined and molded me into a more Christlike believer. One of the keys to discipleship is understanding how Jesus taught and disciplined His followers. He did not just pour information into them; He shared His life with them, and he was willing to walk alongside them no matter what was happening in their lives. Unfortunately, today we are so busy that true discipleship seldom takes place. Jesus wants us to put aside busyness and show people that we consider them worthy of our time. People are a worthwhile investment!

K. T., Lorena, Texas

Chapter Ten

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN INITIATING DISCIPLESHIP INTO YOUR CONGREGATION

Beginning a discipleship program in your congregation can be very challenging, but the impact of it is well worth it! Discipleship always results in wonderful growth in almost everyone who participates (the exceptions are usually those who are unwilling to change!). Some churches may feel the need to lay aside cell groups or extra seminars for a season as they incorporate a strategy of discipleship. Although each area of church ministry serves a distinct purpose, direct discipling of others must *always* be a part of our church life to some extent. All activity that lifts up Jesus and draws others closer to Him is a form of discipleship, but nothing can replace good old-fashioned Bible study, memorizing Scripture, and open prayer in small groups of men and women!

In our involvement with Messianic congregations and with local churches, we have seen tremendous benefits where discipleship has been incorporated. We have also witnessed the attack of the enemy on this vital ministry and on those who disciple others. Where discipleship is embraced and taught, the Church becomes a genuine threat to the enemy. To prepare you for both the positive and the negative, we have listed some benefits and backlashes that we have witnessed or experienced. In order to prepare for the enemy's backlash, and to avoid unnecessary spiritual attacks, we strongly suggest that you increase your personal and corporate intercessions for those involved and for your church in general!

The Positive Benefits of Disciple-Making

- Those being discipled develop a greater passion for the lost, increased hunger for the Word, and a stronger desire to pray and worship the Lord.
- Relationships deepen as trust develops within the discipleship groups. The open, vulnerable sharing generates caring, close relationships.
- Communication skills improve, and congregants grow in their understanding and acceptance of one another.
- General community life is built, and unity is fostered (especially as people talk through strife or damaged relationships).
- Deep personal issues surface and are dealt with through prayer and counsel. People overcome sin and compromise as a result, and they come out from living under guilt and discouragement.
- Inner healing often takes place as people deal with past pain and get secure in the love of God the Father.
- Disciples get established in the Word of God and are able to stand on it for themselves. As they get grounded in the Word, they are less likely to backslide, get divorced, or compromise with sin. They are also more likely to persevere through hardships or trials.
- Holiness and spiritual maturity in the lives of the disciples increase! They become more service-oriented and others-centered rather than being self-centered.

- Those who have not previously excelled in any particular ministry area suddenly come to the forefront as equipped servants and/or leaders. They begin to show their strengths in teaching, effective prayer, counseling, or servant ministries.
- Spiritual leaders emerge!

Possible Backlashes of the Enemy Because of Disciple-Making

- You can expect difficulty right away in trying to find a time when everyone in the discipleship group can meet together. If the enemy is successful here, the group never meets and they all miss this special appointment with God!
- Weekly scheduled group times are affected or cancelled by sickness or unforeseen events.
- Strife emerges within the families that are involved in discipleship.
- Those leading the groups may battle discouragement and have abstract feelings of not wanting to teach or to share personally in the teaching.
- People often find it hard to memorize the Scriptures, and they easily think of excuses not to memorize.
- Various attacks of sickness, inter-relational strife, family problems, and injuries increase.
- Distractions come up that get in the way of discipling others, such as: new relationships for singles or new work opportunities. We have even heard of a lady getting a job offer overseas when she was about to begin teaching a discipleship group!
- Computer problems may occur! We, along with others in this ministry, have had many system crashes, freezes, and multiple printing problems that never occurred before or since.

It is wise to have a time of praying against attacks initially and then to cover one another and the group leaders in prayer throughout the mission of making disciples (*“to the end of the age.”*)! All of us must engage in spiritual warfare and overcome any and all adversities in order to obey the commissions of Jesus!

Chapter Eleven

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

For over a decade now, we have been asked various questions numerous times. In this chapter, we will try to answer the most commonly asked questions.

(1) What is the difference between a cell group and a discipleship group? The two types of groups cater to different needs in the Body of Messiah. We need both! The cell group usually provides rich fellowship, group prayer and worship times, and some Scriptural input. It may include a meal regularly. The cell group builds unity across age and gender lines, and between people of varying levels of spiritual maturity. It provides an atmosphere where believers can meet for social interaction and where visitors can come and feel comfortable. The cell group provides an excellent opportunity for evangelism.

A discipleship group has basically two purposes: personal transformation into the likeness of Jesus and reproduction of His life into others. The discipleship group is most effective when it is homogeneous (men with men and women with women). It is usually limited to 5–6 people per group, and that group is “closed.” Visitors are not allowed. The discipleship material forces one to face issues and to apply God’s Word to his, or her, life on a consistent basis effecting change. This group is not intended for unbelievers, but for followers of Jesus who want to become His devoted disciples. However, we *have* heard of discipleship material being used for unbelievers in a home setting in order to answer their questions and to move them closer to commitment to Jesus.

(2) Why do you separate the men from the women, making each group homogeneous? We have found that people share much more freely and deeply when they are with their own gender. This type of vulnerable sharing rarely takes place in mixed company. Many areas of sin or abuse that have caused shame and have been hidden come to the light in a same-sex setting. It is very common to see deep healing come to areas of the soul after times of open confession followed by prayer (**James 5:16**).

(3) What is the difference between leading a discipleship group and teaching a Bible Study? The discipleship group is more interactive, and it includes memory work, Bible study exercises to be done at home, and focused prayer ministry. The discipleship leader is more of a facilitator than a teacher during the sharing times. A discipleship group includes personal sharing and accountability, which aid in helping one another toward more Christlikeness.

(4) What is a reasonable time frame for each class? In order to cover all the aspects of a discipleship class (personal sharing, memory work, teaching time, and prayer) we suggest two hours for a group of four students with one leader. For any additional student, add 30 minutes more to the two hours. (i.e. for a group of six students with one teacher, plan on a 3-hour class) We know of one Russian-speaking class that enjoyed 2 hours of teaching and sharing, and then had at least 2 more hours of personal prayer for one another! That group of 5 (including the leader) had 4–5 hours together each week, and grew quickly in many aspects of Spirit-led ministry.

Reuven has had groups of 10–12 men, and because he divides the group in half for the exercise sharing time, he is able to keep the class time down to 3 hours.

(5) What is the purpose of the memory work? Each verse memorized gives the Holy Spirit a rein over the life of that believer. It is a valuable tool in prayer, intercession, spiritual warfare, and in witnessing to one’s faith. It protects one in the face of temptation (**Psalms 119:11** “*Your Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You.*”).

(6) How much time do the home study exercises take? They can be done in 1–2 hours, or they can take longer if one does extra study generated by the questions. We have had some students who gave six hours to the exercises because they enjoyed the study and time with the Lord so much! Memorizing the Scriptures takes time as well; for some it is 30 minutes at once while others choose to work on memorizing a little a day over the course of the week.

(7) Should a time of singing be included in the discipleship class? Not necessarily. This is a special gathering for personal sharing, Bible teaching, and ministry to one another. It is not a “worship service.” However, you may feel led to lead out in a song at times.

(8) Do you have to be gifted or trained as a leader or teacher to disciple someone? No, that is the beauty of making disciples. *Any* mature believer can do it, and every responsible believer *should*! We are all commissioned to make disciples! It does help if we search out ways to disciple others that are uniquely suited to each of us. Someone who is gifted at leading or teaching may find it easy to lead a structured class, while others may prefer to do one-on-one mentoring.

(9) How should I choose the group leaders when I introduce discipleship into a congregation? Choose those persons who are somewhat gifted in teaching and in facilitating a group. Make sure they are people who have time and are not overwhelmed with a multitude of other responsibilities! They should also be spiritually mature, exhibiting the life of Jesus through their words and actions; they are to model a lifestyle of discipleship, not just teach material on it.

(10) Would you suggest someone to use your manuals for new believers? No, ours are better suited for believers who have known the Lord, but who are not yet disciples themselves, or for those who have not disciplined anyone else in the faith. Younger *and* older believers have used our *Sermon on the Mount* series, but it is probably better suited for older believers who know the Word to some degree, but who are short on applying it to their attitudes and lives.

In most Western countries, there are Christian bookstores that carry discipleship material for new believers. There are also a number of ministries or church denominations that have developed materials for new believers, and they make it available for others to use.

(11) Are your discipleship manuals good for teenagers? Yes, especially if the teachers can adapt the material to make it more applicable to those they are teaching. Some of the questions that require more thinking and maturity are harder for young people and can be modified by the leader if necessary. Our material has been taught to youth in Israel, Switzerland, Singapore, the USA, and possibly in other countries.

(12) Are these manuals suitable for children? Not unless they are significantly adapted! It has been suggested to us to modify the books for children, but we are not especially gifted at writing for children. We feel that is a job for someone else. (Please write us if you are interested!)

(13) Which is better: discipling believers one at a time or in small groups? Both have merit and advantages. Some new believers need individual time because they have many questions, needs, and problems. They also come from diverse backgrounds, so fielding needs and questions in a group can be a big challenge if the leader wants to fit in quality teaching time. Once a believer has walked with the Lord for a year or so and has had some personal discipleship, it is wise to put him or her into a small group. The group offers the advantage of expanded relationship-building, hearing the questions of others and their answers, hearing the Biblical insights of group members, learning consideration and listening skills, and so on.

(14) Can a cell group use your discipleship material successfully? Yes, to some degree. We have seen a number of churches integrate strategic disciple-making into their cell ministry. Since the first part of a discipleship group gathering is usually for going through the weekly home study exercises, the cell group separates into various rooms of the house for that one-hour segment. After that time of sharing, they come back together to hear the weekly teaching. The disadvantage of this arrangement is the limited personal

ministry that takes place. Praying aloud or sharing a personal prayer request connected with the teaching can be difficult in a big group or one of mixed gender.

(15) Can this material be taught in the Sunday School hour? Could the questions and memory work be covered one week and the lesson be taught the following week? Although this sounds like a workable plan, the many restrictions of that limited time, space, and privacy make it very difficult. Most groups have the deepest sharing and ministry times when there are no time constraints and when there is absolute privacy. Also, to make sure everyone comes *every time* would be difficult, as many people see Sunday School as optional. There is also the problem of keeping the group small and closed, as many churches don't have enough rooms for multiple small groups while offering other Sunday School classes simultaneously.

(16) Do you recommend serving food or drinks during the discipleship class? Most of the time we serve only water. Although many Christian meetings involve food, we feel this one should not. We find there is more focus on the Word and the Lord if there is less focus on the stomach! However, during winter months we may serve hot drinks.

(17) What about giving each one in a group a leaders manual rather than a student manual? This is a good idea if your group consists of gifted teachers or very mature believers, especially if they are serious about teaching the material once they have gone through it themselves. The format could change as needed too. For instance, they could read the lessons in advance and take turns teaching or could share in the teaching somehow.

Another idea is to make up your own outline for the students to use as you teach. They could fill in blanks or write in phrases. Your outline would help them organize the teaching in their minds and remember it more easily. It appears that most people are visual learners, so anything you can use as a teaching tool could be beneficial.

(18) Can a teacher lead more than one group at a time? Yes, if he or she has adequate time to give to preparation, prayer, and pastoral care of those in the groups. We have had seasons where we each led three groups at a time (but we were not holding down other jobs or raising children at the same time). To do a quality job of leading a group under the Holy Spirit's guidance, make sure you do not take on more than you can handle. However, if this is a ministry that the Lord has called you to and you can give quality time to it, disciple as many people as you can!