



Lesson Sixteen: Discipleship

Today, we have come to the end of the 3rd G. First of all, let me say how proud I am that you are completing the beginning of your walk with God. But I want to remind you that completing this lesson is only the beginning of what God wants you to do. Now you need to take what you have learned these last few months and put it into practice by investing in the lives of others. That's what discipleship is all about. Let's learn about it together.

No Self-Made Men

None of us have gotten to where we are on our own. We have all had different people pouring their lives into ours in different areas. Who has invested the most into your life, and in what area? _____

In the area of ministry, Pastor Pleiness has invested in me and taught me a lot about what it means to be a loving pastor.

In the area of generosity, Pastor Ryan Livingston has shown me what it means to give joyfully and sacrificially.

Relationally, my wife has taught me a lot. I am a horrible person, but I used to be a lot worse. Any progress that I have made in socially appropriate behavior comes from her.

Spiritually, Dave Tindal has invested in my life and showed me what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. In fact, he is my spiritual coach. Encouraging me to read my Bible, pray, and walk with God.

God wants all of us to invest in each other.

Observation Is The Goal

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gave us the mission of making disciples of Jesus, "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

What does Jesus say is given unto Him? _____

All authority belongs to Jesus. He has the right to tell each of us what to do. And it is on the basis of His authority that He leaves us with the command to reach the world for Him and explains what we are to do to complete that mission.

Now look at what He has commanded us to do.

1. Make disciples.
2. Make sure they get baptized.
3. Teach them to observe everything else.

The goal isn't gaining information, it is the observation of that information. The goal is the doing of the information.

Don't Be Deceived

James talked about this in his letter. Notice what he says in James 1:22 "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

How does James say that we have deceived ourselves? _____
Some of us have deceived ourselves. We think that just because we know the Bible that that makes us mature Christians. It doesn't. Doing what Jesus tells us to do makes us mature Christians.

It's like some people that I know that are so concerned about verse-by-verse Bible teaching. Now I believe that we ought to teach the whole counsel of God. I enjoy teaching verse by verse through the books of the Bible. In fact, I counted up the other day and I have personally taught word for word through 44 books of the Bible. 22 of the Old Testament books and 22 of the New Testament books.

Some of these people believe that because they sit through so many Bible teaching classes a week that that makes them something. Even though they never invite anybody to church. They never tell anybody about Jesus. If this is you, then you have deceived yourself!!!!

Just because you know information about Jesus, doesn't make you like Jesus. Take the parable of the talents for instance. A master gave his servants money and wanted them to invest it while he was gone. One servant chose to bury it in the ground instead.

When asked about it, the servant gave a list of things that he knew about the master, but the master told him, "You knew this information about me, but you didn't use the information. You are a wicked servant!"

Spiritual Mentoring

Discipleship isn't just about learning information. It's about becoming like Jesus. That's why I prefer the term mentoring versus discipleship. Because the word discipleship has become synonymous with learning information or completing a course. But just because you have learned some information or completed a course doesn't mean that you are a mature Christian, and it doesn't mean that you have become like Jesus.

Notice how Jesus made disciples in Matthew 4:19, "And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.'" What did Jesus invite these men to do? _____

Jesus made disciples through mentorship. He said, "Follow me!" It was a call to be with Him. To spend time with Him. And as you spend time with Jesus then you become like Him. The whole point was to become like Jesus. And that is a life-long process.

From Mentee To Mentor

Now that we understand the point of discipleship, and that it is to become something, not learn something. Let's take a look at Paul's method for making disciples. He records it for us in 2 Timothy 2:1-2, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

Paul starts with himself. You have to start with yourself. Don't blame anyone else that you aren't becoming what you are supposed to become. You have started with yourself by going through this mentoring process. Great job! People want to blame the church, or blame the pastor, some want to blame their parents. NO! Blame yourself. And then do something about it.

Paul starts with himself and then makes a point to go and find someone who needs to be spiritually mentored. He finds Timothy. Notice that he calls him son. Verse 2 says, "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses...". Paul took the time to invest in Timothy and teach him what he needed to know. Who do you know that you can spiritually invest in? _____

Paul invested spiritually in Timothy. Helped him to know how to do everything that he needed to do. He shared with him the information that he needed to become like Jesus. But it was not supposed to stop with Timothy. Paul told him, "entrust to faithful men,". In other words, take the things that I have taught you and you go teach someone else.

Your mentor has spent the last 16 weeks investing in your spiritual growth. Don't let their investment stop with you. You need to take the things that you have been taught and go and teach someone else. Just as they have taken you through the 3G, you need to take someone else through the Gather, Grow, Go. Paul invested in Timothy, so that Timothy could then spiritually mentor and disciple someone else. And now it is your turn to do that same! But don't worry, you won't have to do it alone. The Holy Spirit will be with you and your mentor will be standing by for questions and advice. You will now take the next four meetings with your mentor and lead them through any four of the sixteen lessons that you have just gone through so that you can practice mentoring someone else in the faith.

And it shouldn't stop with the person that you mentor either. Paul tells Timothy that the people that he teaches should "be able to teach others also". You need to encourage the people that you mentor to go and mentor someone else. Our jobs are not complete until our mentees become mentors.

If you have trusted in Jesus, this is exactly what Jesus wants you to become. He wants you to become a disciple who makes disciples. Now we can look and see the effect that Paul had, and how his spiritual investment is multiplied. Paul has spiritual great grandchildren because he taught Timothy how to spiritually mentor and disciple others. Now Paul's job is not done once he sends Timothy out to disciple someone. Paul would then start over and spiritually mentor someone else. Spiritual mentorship is not a one-time commitment, it is a way of life. A life of investing in those who are around us. There is nothing more rewarding than this!

Conclusion

Who are you investing in? Will you make a commitment to take the investment of your mentor and invest in someone else by leading them through the 3G mentorship? _____

Name one person that you will commit to spiritually mentoring in the Gather, Grow Go. _____

We should all be leading at least one person through this mentoring process at all times, but there are people all along the discipleship path that we should be investing in as well.

Who can you encouraging to Gather? Who are you bringing to church and introducing to Jesus? _____

Who are you encouraging to Grow? Who are you encouraging to take the step of baptism, to read their Bible, to pray, to fast, and to fellowship with Christians? _____

Who are you encouraging to Go? Who are you challenging to tell their friends and family about Jesus, to discover their spiritual gifts so that they can use them for service, to give so that people all over the world can experience a life-changing relationship with Jesus, and to show them how to lead someone else through the Gather, Grow, Go? _____