

“...EMPOWERING PASTORS & LEADERS OF CHURCHES WITH MOSTLY NEW AMERICANS, WHO ARE REACHING THE WORLD!”

NEW ROOTS MINISTRY

DISCIPLESHIP IS OFTEN THAT MISSING PIECE.

My fellow pastors and Christian leaders, how are you doing? I care much about you and I appreciate your Gospel efforts!

Today, I am writing about discipleship, which I think may be the most important piece for growing God’s family, but which often is lacking. Part of the reason is that people think "disciple-ship" is difficult and takes much time. I don’t think it needs to be difficult, and while it may take some time, usually it can fit into the normal schedule and natural flow of a Jesus-follower's life.

What is disciple-ship? A disciple is a student or

follower of a teacher. A goal is that the student/follower will be able to spread and teach what his teacher teaches him. Our best example is Jesus and his twelve disciples. The original twelve were Jesus’ followers. They believed in him, and learned enough from him that they could teach others about Jesus. They did that some in the books of



*I recently co-hosted a six-hour Gospel Conversation Training event for people of the four Nepali churches. 35 people came for fun, learning, and food, and for then sharing our faith in the community. It was a great experience! **If you are interested in learning more, including if we could do this for you and your people, please ask.***

We continue to offer Driver Training for new American adults. If somebody needs this, please inform them.

We offer “Strategic Planning for Achieving Goals.” If young adults in your church need this, let them know.

We continually offer Timothy Leadership Training. If you or others in your church may be interested in this good program, let me know.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. After Jesus died and resurrected, his disciples continued to teach about him in the book of Acts.

Discipleship today is similar to the times in the Bible. As a Jesus-follower knows and loves God, he is called by Jesus to → →



“go and make disciples (other followers) of all nations, baptizing them...”

I like to see discipleship happen for three kinds of people--- 1) Believers like us can be encouraged, loved, and held accountable by other believers. This helps us to grow spiritually. 2) I find that new believers in Jesus often need encouragement, and extra times of checking-in by others who are caring sisters and brothers in Christ. It does not have to include a Bible study, though it can if that's wanted. Rather, if someone calls them each week, or briefly visits at their home, and prays with them, that is probably enough. If the church is serving in the community, maybe inviting that new believer to serve along with you would be good. 3) Some people have not yet committed their life to God, but they are interested and open. As well, they might have spiritual questions or be interested in prayer. Just like for a new believer, discipleship for a person who has not yet given his life to

God, in similar ways as listed for a new believer, can work very well.

It is not complicated. We just need to be thoughtful and watchful for opportunities.

Here are a few examples of my discipleship, or of helping others to be disciple leaders: A friend who plays on a worship team gave me his old guitar. It was a good guitar so he asked me to give it to somebody who would be specially blessed by it. A family with whom I am friends are Hindu, but they have shown interest in Jesus. Their 15-year old son is interested in music and I have prayed much with the family over the son's illness last year, so I decided to give the guitar to him. With the help of a 25-year old worship band member who plays guitar, and who is of his culture, we gave the 15-year old the guitar. He was very happy. My goal is that the 25- year old worship band member will practice some with the 15-year old, even then welcoming him sometime to play with the worship band. This could be

excellent discipleship.

Another friend who is an alcoholic with many problems, has some faith in Jesus, even having allowed me and Christian friends of his culture and language to pray with him to receive Jesus. He occasionally goes to their church. I and others knock on his door and/or call him to check on him, to pray with him, and to read small pieces of the Bible which may be helpful to him.

If we do not offer discipleship to people, as life gets busy, or as there is trouble, and as there are temptations, people can easily slip away to the hurt and brokenness of their past.

Let's not allow **“discipleship to be that missing piece.”** Again, it is vital for growth of God's family, it is not difficult and complicated, it can fit well into a life-schedule, and **it can be fulfilling to be part of changed lives.**

---Fred Wilgenburg

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