

(W.O.R.S.H.I.P) - Instruct Others

(* Review previous lesson ***)**

“You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.”

2 Timothy 2:2

The Word of God has several passages admonishing believers to teach other believers so that they in turn can teach others and so on. In the above verse Paul tells young Timothy to do just that. Note that the only requirement for people to teach others is that they be “trustworthy” people - not people that are “perfect,” in the Church for many years, with degrees from Bible schools, who are “good speakers”, charismatic, extroverts, introverts, theologians, etc., etc. None of that.

The process of instructing others, who will instruct others, who will in turn instruct others is called: discipling. Amazingly, a simple understanding of context and culture and how people used and understood the word “disciple” in biblical times will further prove that ALL Christians, not just a chosen few, are expected to teach others that will in turn teach others, and this teaching needs to happen regularly. God never intended for the teachings of Jesus and the Bible to completely lay on the shoulders of one man who teaches weekly from a pulpit as it has become in the Church today.

Wikipedia actually provides a good description of what the word “disciple” meant to its hearers at the time of Jesus:

In the ancient world, a disciple is a follower or adherent of a teacher. Discipleship is not the same as being a student in the modern sense. A disciple in the ancient biblical world actively imitated both the life and teaching of the master. It was a deliberate apprenticeship which made the fully formed disciple a living copy of the master.

Wow, a living copy of the master! In reading the New Testament, one will note that all the disciples Jesus made, beyond just the 12, were indeed copies of Him. If you think about it, this means you and I are supposed to be copies of Jesus: discipling others, loving them, helping them, suffering hardships for them, taking them to victory and going to victory with them..... miracles and all. This understanding of the meaning of the word disciple should shed some light into this passage:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.”

John 14:12

Imagine if we walked with the understanding that we are supposed to be copies of Jesus. Do you think that would make a difference in our lives?

Of course, there are many examples of discipler/disciple relationships in the Bible: Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Naomi and Ruth, Jesus and the 12 which expanded to 70 and beyond, Paul and Timothy, etc.

A study of these disciples would reveal that they were copies of the discipler – or better! How? In some instances, the disciple did “greater works” than the discipler. Example: Elijah (discipler) and Elisha (disciple). Elisha received double the power of Elijah, and Elisha has twice as many miracles recorded in the Bible as Elijah. Of course, there is also Moses and Joshua, and it is Joshua who actually led the children of Israel into and divided the promised land amongst the 12 tribes of Israel.

At the time of Jesus, people knew that a rabbi would teach his disciples a particular instruction which was called a yoke. The rabbi’s disciples knew that they were expected not only to take the rabbi’s yoke (the teachings) and learn them, but to observe the rabbi and his lifestyle in order to perpetuate everything learned by passing them on to others. Hence, when Jesus came and said in Matthew 11:29-30 “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,” His audience knew exactly what He meant: they were to become copies of Jesus and perpetuate His teachings and lifestyle.

In the same way, when Jesus gave the Daily Commission below, His audience knew what and how He wanted them to do it:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you ^{to}always, even to the end of the age.”
Matthew 28:19-20

In light of what you have just learned, how do you think the disciples were to carry out disciple making? (Hint: becoming a copy of Jesus; learning teaching and lifestyle; perpetuating those.)

In conclusion, are you ready to start on the exciting journey of hurling the net and then discipling the catch yourself? THIS is what Jesus meant when He said: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Matthew 4:19

DISCUSSION:

How do YOU feel about discipling others using these same lessons you are being taught now? Remember that if need be, all you have to do is read it to someone else and just have a discussion.