

# RISE BEYOND ORDINARY

UNLOCK A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION;  
BECOME A DISCIPLE THAT MAKES HISTORY!



PETE ROBERTSON

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# Introduction

## **Rise Beyond Ordinary and Unlock a Spiritual Revolution**

When we Rise Beyond Ordinary, we unlock a spiritual revolution— a transformative movement within us that unleashes untapped potential and brings forth a powerful change. This is a shift in your calling that elevates you beyond the average, surpassing common expectations. As you step out of routines that produce minimal fruit, you break free from limitations and embrace a higher calling, achieving more in your thinking and living.

As Jesus calls us to live differently, we begin to rise above mediocrity and reach for something extraordinary. Influenced by His truth, your life becomes a testament to a higher level of purpose and impact. Matthew 28:19-20 commissions us to make disciples of all nations, and in doing so, we see our own lives transformed and elevated to fulfill God's greater plan.

Being a disciple of Jesus empowers us to pursue greatness, striving to become more than the world expects, with the Holy Spirit as our guide. A true disciple by God's grace seeks God's will and embraces a higher calling—one that leads to

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deeper spiritual growth, greater impact, and a life of fulfillment beyond our wildest dreams. Our awakening begins when we start discipling others, who, in turn, disciple others. In doing so, we become part of a movement that changes the world and makes history, one disciple at a time. *2 Timothy 2:2* reminds us, “*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*” This is how we rise beyond the ordinary—by embracing our divine calling and sharing it with others who long for the same transformative lifestyle.

There are countless books on discipleship, and while this one shares some of the same principles as others, it offers something uniquely powerful. This book reveals a proven strategy established by Jesus with His disciples—a strategy that saw His message spread rapidly across the world in a short time. You will learn how to apply this same approach in your own life and ministry. You will discover why His movement exploded and hear inspiring stories of others who are living out Jesus’ teachings, seeing their ministries flourish globally. This book is for disciples who are ready to take their ministries to the next level and are committed to making history. Jesus did not call us to be weak, but strong and courageous, with a mission to advance His Kingdom, one disciple at a time.

There is an interactive workbook to complement this book, designed for individual, small group study, and one-on-one discipleship. The workbook follows along with the first eight chapters and is structured as an 8-week study. It is recom-

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mended that you complete this study as it will help you fully absorb the teachings in the book.

The book consists of 12 chapters, with the first eight laying a strong foundation for discipleship. The remaining four chapters go even deeper, unveiling profound spiritual truths that will challenge and strengthen your faith. These chapters also provide advanced discipleship training, equipping you with the tools to not only grow personally but also lead and disciple others effectively.

At the end of each chapter, you will find a QR code that links to a YouTube video featuring worship songs that have been written, inspired by the chapter you just read. The hope and prayer is that these songs bring you encouragement and blessing, and that you feel moved to share them with your friends and family.

By the time you finish, you will have a deeper understanding of God's calling and be better equipped to live as a disciple, just like the early church believers who faithfully followed Christ and multiplied His mission of advancing God's Kingdom, one disciple at a time.

For those who prefer a PDF study guide, the interactive workbook is free at [www.risebeyondordinary.com](http://www.risebeyondordinary.com), go to the FAQ section, and there will be a link in one of the questions. You also have access to an 8-week video series located at [www.risebeyondordinary.com](http://www.risebeyondordinary.com). The workbook is designed to guide your personal study or serve as a weekly resource for small-group and one-on-one discussions. If you are interested in purchasing the book and workbook together for

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personal study, small group, or one-on-one discipleship, discounted bundle pricing is available on the Rise Beyond Ordinary website.

Each chapter of the book takes about 20 to 25 minutes to read. You will be deeply blessed and challenged—and if you put into practice what you learn, you will experience a transformed life, filled with God’s love and empowered by a personal ministry that can truly turn the world upside down.

Do not make this just another religious exercise you rush through to check off your list. This study is different—it is life-changing. Slow down. Begin each day in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to open your heart and reveal what He wants you to see. As you work through the chapters, approach them with honesty, vulnerability, and humility. Let the Holy Spirit lead you, shape you, and bring lasting transformation throughout your journey.

# Characteristics of a Disciple

## Chapter 1

# Casting Clear Vision

This chapter serves as an introduction to the upcoming chapters of the book, laying the groundwork for your journey ahead. Many people value understanding the destination before embarking on a journey, allowing them to envision the end from the very beginning. A disciple casts a clear vision for those they disciple. Without a sense of purpose and a vision of the end goal, we cannot expect disciples to fulfill their mission effectively. Jesus was a vision caster, and so must we.

What is the ultimate end goal? That we as disciples have intimacy with Jesus, love the world as He did, and provide a road map for multiplying disciples who disciple others! We will address the most significant question that every disciple will eventually ask: Why did Jesus come to this world and die on a cross for humanity? The answer is simple and memorable: Love (John 3:16). Jesus loved His disciples, and that love was passed on to others.

This book is an expression of that love, designed to help disciples see people the way Jesus sees them. If you approach this journey with humility and an open heart, it will lead to a fruitful discipleship ministry that far exceeds your expectations.

The coming chapters will challenge you while addressing your questions on how to effectively disciple someone and where to begin. We will explore various materials and tools that can aid you in this journey. By the end of the book, you will be well-equipped to establish and nurture a thriving, multiplying discipleship ministry.

To support you on your journey, an 8-week personal study guide that aligns with the first 8 chapters of this book. The guide also includes small group discussion points, making it perfect for group study as well. You can purchase the study guide or download the PDF version for free on the Rise Beyond Ordinary website (details can be found at the back of this book). Additionally, included a video series for the first 8 chapters on the website, designed to deepen and reinforce what you will learn throughout the book.

In the first few chapters, our focus will be to help disciples identify and remove obstacles that hinder their intimacy with Jesus, while equipping them to build a thriving ministry capable of rapidly producing nine generations of disciples.

What does nine generations of disciples mean? It refers to a model of discipleship where your direct disciple goes on to disciple someone else, and their disciple discipled another

person, and so on, extending up to nine generations or more deep. Each generation builds upon the previous one, creating a chain of discipleship that multiplies themselves. This is how the early church exploded across the known world, and we will train you in all of this in the multiplication chapter.

The insights you will gain in this book are firmly rooted in the Word of God and reflect the practices of disciples already trained in these principles.

You will receive training that ignites movements of God across the globe. Consider the story of a servant leader named Gatungo. He embraced these principles, and in his own words, "they transformed not only his life but also the ministry God was calling him to." He learned to identify and eliminate the religious barriers that held him back, shifting his focus to the essential principle of drawing nearer to Jesus. This change ultimately led him to make disciples who, in turn, disciple others.

Within just two years of applying what he learned from the training, Gatungo has built an incredible network of disciples spanning four countries, with many of them forming five to nine generations of disciples.

## **Cost of Discipleship**

To cast a clear vision for this book, we must first understand what it truly means to be a disciple. Our first aim is to uncover the real cost of following Christ and to define disci-

pleshship as Jesus intended it. Jesus leaves no ambiguity about this cost. In Luke 14:27, He says, "*Whoever does not carry their cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple.*" As we examine this passage together, we begin to grasp the depth of commitment required to genuinely walk in His footsteps. Discipleship is not casual, convenient, or partial; it is a wholehearted surrender of life to Christ.

In Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book "*The Cost of Discipleship*", he emphasizes the paramount importance of obedience to the call of Christ. He said, "*When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.*" The cross means sharing the suffering of Christ to the last and to the fullest. He asserts that Jesus invites us to follow Him not merely as a teacher or a model for living a good life, but as the Christ, the Son of God. When Jesus calls us, there is an expectation that we approach Him with a clear understanding of His divine identity.

Bonhoeffer further explains that accepting this call requires us to leave behind our former lives in obedience to Christ. This relinquishment signifies a profound surrender, leading us into a new life filled with uncertainty, where we are no longer in control. It is in this space of submission that we begin to place our complete trust in God. Only a man who is totally committed to discipleship can experience the meaning of the cross. Suffering, then, is the badge of true discipleship. Living for Christ in a sin-filled world that often opposes righteousness will lead us to suffering. However, this suffering can serve to awaken our souls, allowing us to see Jesus in all His glory.

Discipleship, therefore, is about steadfast adherence to Christ. Since He is the focus of our commitment, our obedience in following Him closely must be manifested in our lives as a true disciple. This relationship goes beyond the mere distinction between law and gospel; it underscores that Christianity without a living Christ is inevitably devoid of discipleship, and a faith without discipleship cannot fully embody Christ.

The call of Christ liberates us from earthly entanglements and binds us exclusively to Him. A true disciple is one who willingly relinquishes their old life, embracing an experience of profound insecurity to fully understand the demands and gifts presented by Christ. The journey of faith begins with obedience to His call.

Each day, as disciples of Christ, we are confronted with two paths: one that leads toward the **Tree of Life** and another that draws us back to the **Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil** (Genesis 2:9–17). These paths are not merely theological ideas; they represent two fundamentally different ways of living. One is rooted in **relationship and trust**, while the other is rooted in **control and self-reliance**. The choices we make between these paths shape our spiritual journey and directly affect our intimacy with God.

Jesus makes this distinction clear in John 17:16 when He says, *“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”* Although we live in this world, we are no longer meant to live according to the **world system**, which operates from the

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, constantly evaluating, managing outcomes, assigning blame, and striving for control. Our ultimate allegiance now belongs to the **Kingdom of God**, which is lived from the Tree of Life and is sustained through relationship, surrender, and trust in Christ. Our old way of life has passed away; we now live for the Kingdom of God alone.

This new life requires that our eyes remain fixed firmly on Jesus. When we do this, we are able to move through the world without being entangled by it. The world system continually pressures us to fix, manage, and control every circumstance, but disciples of Jesus learn to release that burden. Jesus is our Savior and our sustainer; it is no longer our responsibility to control outcomes or solve life apart from Him.

A disciple who continues to operate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will always struggle with anxiety, striving, and self-protection. That way of living cannot coexist with true discipleship. A disciple who lives from the Tree of Life, however, chooses relationship over control and surrender over self-reliance. In each moment, they yield every area of their life to God, trusting Him fully and allowing His life to flow through them.

If our lives do not reflect a genuine commitment to obedience and true discipleship, we must ask ourselves: How can we truly enter into communion with Christ? Can we even call ourselves disciples? Our actions—or lack thereof—may reveal a deeper disbelief in our calling. Without a complete

surrender to His will at our conversion, our faith will remain weak, hindering our ability to become effective disciple makers.

A man once claimed to follow a master builder who was known for constructing strong, enduring homes. He listened carefully to the instructions, admired the blueprints, and spoke often about the beauty of the finished house. Yet when it came time to build, he never picked up the tools or laid a foundation. When the storms came and the structure collapsed, he was confused and frustrated. He knew the plans, but he never submitted to the process.

In the same way, discipleship cannot exist in name alone. Communion with Christ is not formed by agreement alone; it requires obedience. If there is no surrender to His will, there can be no lasting transformation. True discipleship requires more than belief it requires a life yielded to Christ. Without that surrender, faith remains fragile, and the ability to make disciples is weakened.

Viewing our journey through this lens reveals that true discipleship is rooted in our willingness to answer His call wholeheartedly. As we embrace our identity as followers of Christ, let us strive to bear the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) that lead us to the Tree of Life, reinforcing our commitment to live in accordance with His teachings and to reflect His love in a world in need of hope.

## **Religious influence**

As we will learn, many Christians like Gatungo have often hesitated to engage fully in discipleship, largely because of the influence of **religion**, which functions as the **spiritual twin of the world system**. While the world system seeks control through power, success, and self-reliance, religion seeks control through rules, performance, and works-based righteousness. Both operate from the **Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**, prioritizing behavior management over authentic relationship with Christ.

This religious mindset subtly shifts the focus from intimacy with Jesus to external compliance, creating barriers that hinder our ability to disciple others effectively. When discipleship is reduced to information transfer, duty, or obligation, the life-giving power of relationship is lost. As we examine the role of religion more closely, we will uncover how it often obstructs our path to fulfilling the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28:19–20), replacing Spirit-led multiplication with human effort and control.

What makes religion especially deceptive is that Christians frequently struggle to recognize its influence in their own lives. Many claim to have a relationship with God and strongly reject the label of being “religious.” Yet when we look closely at the lives of many sincere believers, a disconnect often emerges. There is little spiritual fruit, limited transformation, and few disciples who go on to make disciples. Some may even lead large and seemingly successful ministries; however, deeper examination often reveals great effort without the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit.

True discipleship does not flow from the world system or its religious counterpart. It flows from the **Tree of Life**, where obedience is born out of love, surrender replaces control, and the Holy Spirit produces lasting fruit through relationship with Jesus. Yet the greatest threat to this way of living is often subtle and internal rather than obvious and external.

When we slow down and look honestly at our own lives, we often discover how tightly we hold onto certain areas in an effort to maintain control. If those closest to you were asked whether you tend to be controlling, what might they say? Many believers operate from control without even realizing it. In the end, it is revealed in how we respond to life's circumstances: do we fully surrender them to God, or do we instinctively try to fix the problem ourselves?

For those who recognize their need for control, do you justify it, or do you embrace a lifestyle characterized by peace and surrender? It is important to understand that a controlling mindset is fundamentally at odds with true discipleship. To genuinely follow Christ, one must adopt a lifestyle of surrender, starting with a willingness to repent and let go of the need for control.

Attending church weekly, reading the Bible daily, participating in Bible studies, going on mission trips, and tithing—all these actions, while commendable, can become mere religious activities aimed at filling a void in our lives. We can observe this principle in action: when we examine their ministry—or the lack thereof—we often find that it lacks the

fruitful multiplication of disciples who go on to make more disciples. A true disciple inherently embodies the spirit of multiplication, continually discipling others to become multiplying disciples themselves.

Lifestyles that do not align with God's call to make disciples often operate from a place of religious obligation rather than heartfelt obedience. Such lifestyles fail to produce true fruit and, upon closer examination, are often characterized by worry, anxiety, and fear stemming from the cares of this world. Those who find themselves in this mindset may also judge others and adopt a legalistic attitude, showcasing a superficial understanding of genuine faith.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer characterizes this misguided lifestyle as "cheap grace," a condition marked by legalism that results in significant effort yet yields few, if any, disciples. Learning to identify this dynamic in a disciple's life is crucial for those whose hearts genuinely seek to be surrendered followers of Jesus. It is only through recognizing and addressing these issues that we can cultivate a fruitful and vibrant discipleship experience.

### **New Covenant of Grace**

None of us could ever come to Jesus apart from His grace. As Ephesians 2:8–9 reminds us, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast."* Grace places us firmly in the **Tree of Life**, where salvation and transfor-

mation flow from relationship rather than effort. Religion, on the other hand, operates from the **Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**, constantly pushing us to prove ourselves, measure our performance, and compare our righteousness with others. This feeds the flesh and fuels boasting, even when it appears spiritual.

God's free gift of grace removes all grounds for control, self-reliance, and religious striving unless one remains trapped in a religious mindset. A disciple who lives under grace no longer needs to manage outcomes or earn God's approval. Grace dismantles the world system's obsession with performance and replaces it with trust, surrender, and dependence on God.

A disciple who operates in God's grace can approach the throne of God with boldness and confidence (Hebrews 4:16), not because of personal merit, but because of Christ's finished work. This is a privilege that religion cannot offer. Grace does not excuse sin; it empowers obedience. It provides the tools we need to live righteously while remaining deeply connected to God.

Whenever we encounter circumstances beyond our control, grace invites us to stop striving and start surrendering. God's grace is released when we humble ourselves in His presence, when we step out of control and into a relationship. As Scripture teaches, we must decrease so that He may increase. This is the way of the **Tree of Life**, and it is the pathway to true freedom.

As Paul reminds us in *2 Corinthians 12:9*, "God said, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'" A disciple of God does not try to fix their problems alone; instead, as *1 Peter 5:7* teaches, "we cast all our anxiety on Him because He cares for us." Grace enables us to do all of this. If you need peace, God's grace provides it through the Holy Spirit. If you require strength, wisdom, or knowledge, everything is made available to us so that we can bring glory to God.

Many religious individuals believe in these principles but lack the true power that accompanies God's fruit. God's grace calls us to relinquish control and embrace obedience, whereas religion often emphasizes control in our efforts to look good and feel justified.

Operating in God's grace is the only way to have an effective nine-generation discipleship ministry. If religion is your primary source of power, you will not have a multiplying discipleship ministry. We will unpack this in the coming chapters.

## **Spiritual Gifts**

We will learn that another vital component of discipleship is recognizing and using our spiritual gifts for the benefit of others, not as a means of performance, but as an overflow of our relationship with God. When we identify and let go of religious tendencies rooted in control and self-effort, we make room for God's supernatural life to flow through us freely.

This transformation is not driven by striving, but by daily intimacy with Jesus. As our relationship with Him deepens, we learn to hear His voice, remain grounded in His Word, and respond in obedience from a place of trust rather than obligation. Spiritual gifts then become expressions of God's love at work through us, not tools for validation or recognition.

As we continue to walk in relationship and cultivate obedience, we will begin to witness God accomplishing extraordinary things in and through our lives, far beyond what human effort or religious systems could ever produce.

Every follower of Christ has been given spiritual gifts meant to be used for God's glory. Can you imagine what the ministry of the early church would have looked like if the disciples had not used their gifts God created them for? Without their commitment and obedience, they would not have been able to turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6), and we would not have the gospel today.

The gifts God gives us are not given to fulfill our own purposes or desires; rather, they are intended to help us make disciples who, in turn, make more disciples. As Scripture reminds us in *1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)*, "*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*" If we fail to use our gifts for His glory, we risk losing them, as indicated in *Matthew 25:29 (NIV)*, "*For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.*"

When used for God's glory, these gifts can be instrumental in advancing His Kingdom through the work of Jesus. Just as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed the hungry multitude (John 6:1-14), we too can take our seemingly modest resources and invite God to multiply our efforts in ministry. Through this perspective, we will explore how each disciple can discover their unique gifts and actively contribute to the discipleship process, fostering a community that thrives on mutual encouragement and spiritual growth.

### **A simple life that leads to God moments**

We will learn that for a disciple, surrendering to Jesus in daily life is meant to be simple. Living from the **Tree of Life** means trusting that Jesus goes before us, carrying the weight and responsibility that we once tried to manage through control and self-effort. The world system teaches us to fix, strive, and protect ourselves, but discipleship invites us into relationship, where we follow His lead rather than forcing outcomes on our own.

As we gain a clearer understanding of what it truly means to be a disciple and the personal surrender this requires, we begin to see how much simpler life becomes. When control is released and relationship is embraced, anxiety gives way to trust, and striving gives way to obedience. God then cultivates a vibrant, life-giving discipleship ministry through us, not through human strength, but through faithful surrender and daily dependence on Him.

This is the freedom found in walking in the life Jesus designed for His disciples.

This simpler way of living involves learning to have eyes that see and ears that hear. As we engage with the world around us, we will start to create “God moments” in our conversations, inspired by what we observe Jesus doing in our midst. It is within these transformative encounters that His presence and power are unmistakably revealed in our lives.

A true disciple does not wake up in the morning focused on themselves or how best to serve their interests. Instead, a disciple rises each day praising and thanking God for another opportunity to serve Him. They have embraced the call to die to themselves and allow God’s perspective to shape how they view the world, as described in Luke 9:23.

Disciples are obedient and aware that God is constantly at work around them. They understand that life is not centered on their desires but on glorifying God. With a solid conviction that God is in control of all things, they approach each new day as a precious gift in Christ Jesus.

Their primary mission for the day is to love the Lord their God with all their heart, mind, and soul, and to love their neighbor as themselves, as instructed in Matthew 22:37-39.

By loving our neighbors, God empowers us to use our gifts to speak life into their hearts, ultimately leading them to become disciple makers themselves. With our eyes firmly fixed

on Jesus, we will begin to recognize God moments throughout our lives. These divine moments are opportunities for growth and transformation, and God expects His disciples to respond with obedience, ensuring that He is glorified and new disciples are formed.

As stated in *2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)*, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” Let us wholeheartedly commit to this calling and witness the incredible ways God can work through us as He weaves ministry into our lives. Developing the ability to see with spiritual eyes and hear with attentive ears is essential for cultivating an effective discipleship ministry.

### **Becoming a F.A.T. Christian**

We will learn that one of the most essential components of building a healthy, multiplying discipleship ministry can be summarized with a simple acronym: F.A.T. This is not a program or a personality type, it’s a way of living. F.A.T. disciples are Faithful, Available, and Teachable people who have chosen relationship over religion and surrender over control. They are men and women who don’t just attend church, but actively follow Jesus in everyday life.

As we cultivate this posture of discipleship, we begin to recognize others who carry the same hunger—to walk closely with Jesus and invite others into that same relationship. Discipleship begins to move organically, not through pressure or structure, but through shared life, trust, and obedience to the

Spirit. This is how a discipleship culture grows naturally, relationally, and reproducibly.

### **So what exactly is a F.A.T. disciple?**

To answer that, we must look beyond labels and define what it truly means to be Faithful in hope and obedience, Available to God and to people, and Teachable in heart willing to be shaped, corrected, and led by the Lord.

### **Faithful**

What does it mean to be faithful? Imagine a servant that is assigned to tend a small vineyard on the edge of his master's land. No one else saw his work, and the fruit took years to grow. Some days he wondered if it mattered, if anyone noticed the pruning, the watering, the quiet perseverance. Still, each morning he showed up, trusting the master's promise that the harvest would come in its proper time.

Years later, when the master returned, he didn't ask how impressive the vineyard looked compared to others. He simply asked, "Were you faithful with what I placed in your care?" The servant nodded, hands worn but heart steady. The vineyard was alive, bearing fruit. In the same way, a faithful disciple does not chase recognition or immediate results. They hold firmly to hope, walk in obedience, and remain trustworthy with what God has entrusted to them, confident that the One who called them is faithful to bring the harvest.

## **Available**

What does it mean to be available? Imagine a disciple who planned his days carefully. His calendar was full, his routines were efficient, and his life felt productive. One afternoon, as he was heading somewhere important, he noticed a friend sitting alone, burdened, exhausted, and clearly in need. He hesitated. Helping would cost him time, comfort, and control.

In that pause, he sensed the gentle nudge of the Lord, not a command, just an invitation.

He stopped.

What began as a brief conversation turned into shared tears, prayer, and the carrying of a weight that had been too heavy for one person to bear alone. His schedule changed, but his heart felt lighter. Later, he realized that moment wasn't an interruption, it was the assignment.

Availability, he learned, isn't about having free time; it's about a surrendered heart. It's the quiet willingness to say, "Here I am," not only when God speaks loudly, but when He whispers through the needs of others.

## **Teachable**

What does it mean to be teachable? Imagine a disciple who had walked with Jesus for many years. He knew the Scriptures well, had taught others faithfully, and was re-

spected for his wisdom. One day, during a simple conversation, a new believer asked a question so honest and unpolished that it stopped him. The question exposed something he had never considered.

Instead of correcting or dismissing it, he listened.

Later, in prayer, the Lord used that moment to reshape his understanding, not through a sermon or a scholar, but through the humility of someone still learning to walk by faith. The disciple realized that God had not finished teaching him, and He never intended to.

A teachable heart, he learned, does not ask, “Who is qualified to speak?” but instead asks, “Lord, what are You trying to show me?” When truth is received, lived out, and passed on, God is glorified and the disciple continues to grow.

## **Setting the Bar High**

We will learn that another key ingredient for cultivating a thriving discipleship ministry is to follow Jesus’ example in setting a high standard for His disciples. He established an unwavering benchmark, clearly indicating that He sought followers who were committed wholeheartedly, not just part-time. Jesus challenged them to embrace a radical lifestyle, urging them to leave behind their nets and everything that defined their past (Matthew 4:19-20). There was never any suggestion from Jesus that they could straddle two worlds; His call required total devotion and singular focus.

In Revelation 3:16, Jesus makes it clear that we are either for Him or against Him; living in both worlds only makes Him want to vomit us out of His mouth. Sadly, in our modern culture, amplified by Satan's lies, we often feel compelled to prioritize self-sufficiency for survival. Living according to worldly standards has become the norm, often without our awareness of how it actually dictates our choices.

Our instinctive responses lead us to try to control our lives to achieve success, convincing us that nothing will happen unless we make it happen. This mindset stands in direct contradiction to the message of faith and dependence on God. Such lies create barriers that hinder us from setting lofty expectations in our discipleship journey.

We will frequently explore the theme of "singular focus living" throughout these pages. The goal is to help us understand that when challenges arise, we have only one choice: Jesus. As mentioned previously in this chapter, the world's systems are no longer viable options for us. By surrendering our lives to Christ, we have entrusted our well-being to Him, who assures us that He will supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19). Our responsibility is to follow Him wholeheartedly, trusting that He will guide us in every aspect of our lives. This transformative perspective liberates us from the burdens of trying to manage everything on our own.

Setting a high bar in discipleship is essential as we work to cultivate a culture of multiplication, where disciples not only grow in their relationship with Christ but are also empowered

to make more disciples themselves. Paul's words in *2 Timothy 2:2* remind us of this calling: "*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*" This process of raising the bar encourages accountability, growth, and a deeper commitment to the mission of Christ.

We will explore what it truly means to set high expectations in our lives and the lives of those we disciple, recognizing that it is rooted in our complete trust in Jesus and His ability to transform us and those we influence.

### **Building a Leadership Team**

We will learn that cultivating a thriving discipleship ministry is emulating Jesus' example of building a strong leadership team. Jesus modeled the essence of effective leadership by building a team that turned the world upside down. Through His ministry, He taught us the fundamental principles and importance of assembling our own leadership team. However, not just anyone can be part of this team; we must seek out F.A.T. Christians—those who are Faithful, Available, and Teachable—who embody a lifestyle of surrender to Christ.

It is important to recognize that Jesus did not disciple everyone. He intentionally invested in those the Father revealed were ready to follow, learn, and be shaped. As Robert E. Coleman insightfully wrote, "*Jesus' concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitudes would follow.*" This intentional and selective approach

reminds us that building a thriving discipleship leadership team requires discernment in how we invest our time and energy. When we embrace Jesus' style of discipleship, even something as simple as meeting for coffee becomes a sacred space for transformation and multiplication.

Building a solid leadership team is not just beneficial; it is critical. Jesus demonstrated the incredible power of teamwork among His disciples, showcasing how collaboration and mutual support can amplify ministry impact. As we study His example, we will explore how to apply these principles in our own lives and communities.

In *Matthew 18:20*, Jesus assures us, "*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*" This verse reinforces the importance of gathering in fellowship and intentionality. By following Jesus' model, we will learn how to cultivate a leadership team that reflects His values and commitment, turning our ministries into powerful movements that can change lives and transform communities.

## **Spiritual Movement**

We will learn that ultimately, these principles will shape our vision for achieving the ultimate goal of discipleship: to have a powerful ministry used by God, where a spiritual movement takes place that transcends boundaries and spreads the message of Christ throughout the world. *Matthew 9:37-38*, where Jesus says, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.*" Together, we can be-

come those workers, ready to embrace the call of discipleship and transform lives.

Every disciple should envision fostering a spiritual movement within their personal discipleship ministry. Across the globe, countless individuals are applying these principles and sharing testimonies of the extraordinary work God is doing; work that has transcended their immediate influences. They are hearing stories of those they have discipled, who in turn are becoming empowered to create their own movements of God. The reach of God's work in these ministries has expanded to levels that are truly beyond tracking.

One key factor behind the success of these movements is the simple yet transferable tools that disciples receive through training, which empower them to engage in an effective discipleship ministry. By maintaining simplicity, just as Jesus did, we will equip you with these tools. With the help of the Holy Spirit, these crucial first steps in discipling others can spark a movement within your own ministry.

Casting a clear vision for your disciples is essential for fulfilling the mission that God has entrusted to each of us.

### **Wrap Up**

As we move through this book, we are learning to shift from **religion to relationship**, and from **control to trust**. Discipleship was never meant to be a system we manage, but a life we surrender. God's desire has always been that we would **know Him and be known by Him**, and that

intimacy with the Father would naturally overflow into how we love others and see people the way He does.

From that place of relationship, discipleship becomes organic. As we grow closer to Jesus, we don't have to force multiplication; we simply begin to **make disciples who make disciples**. This chapter, like the rest of the book, is meant to cast vision every time we sit across the table from someone, helping them see the pathway forward. We want every disciple to understand that as they walk in deeper fellowship with Jesus, multiplication becomes a natural fruit of their life.

Our mission is clear: to raise up disciples who make disciples, generation after generation, believing God for multiplication that can reach **nine generations of disciples spreading throughout the world**. In concluding this chapter, our vision remains simple yet powerful: that disciples would **know God intimately, love others deeply, and disciple others faithfully**, trusting God to do what only He can do.

With each meeting, it is essential to cast this vision and remind those we walk with where God is leading them. This clarity of direction is vital for every servant leader who desires to build an effective, Spirit-led discipleship ministry, one that God can use to ignite spiritual movements and, once again, turn the world upside down

Frequently ask yourself and your disciples: Do you want a personal discipleship ministry that loves Jesus intimately,

loves people deeply, and can produce nine generations of disciples that lead to movements of God stretching across the globe? If your answers are yes, then let us learn how that can happen.

*Romans 8:31* reminds us, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” Each day, we must remind ourselves—and those we disciple—of this powerful promise. When we are about our Father’s business, there is truly nothing we cannot accomplish. God desires to bless our efforts far beyond what we can imagine. As stated in *Ephesians 3:20*, He wants to do “*exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.*” Instead of focusing on the negative, let us keep our eyes fixed on God’s promises and continue to cast a vision grounded in this truth.

A disciple of Jesus understands their purpose and direction; they are confident in their calling and can effectively cast vision to those they are discipling.

As you move into the next chapters, you will discover why vision casting is a crucial element of a successful discipleship ministry. We will kick off your training by locking in on your mission and purpose. This is not just a step—it is the launchpad for everything that follows. When you clearly understand the why behind discipleship, everything changes. You will gain fresh focus, unstoppable momentum, and the clarity needed to lead others with confidence.

By defining your God-given purpose and locking onto the mission, you will lay a rock-solid foundation—one that will

help you build a discipleship legacy that transforms lives and expands God's Kingdom.

This is your moment. Let us rise beyond ordinary, starting now!

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 1 Casting Clear Vision - Song

### ***Song Title: Walking in His Vision***

There comes a moment in every disciple's journey when we stop chasing our own plans and begin walking in the vision Jesus has for us. This song is a declaration of surrender—stepping out of the ordinary and into God's purpose.

As we walk in His vision, we're also called to cast vision for those we lead, helping them discover their own calling in Christ.

### **Bible Verse:**

*"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you." —Psalm 32:8 (NIV)*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and be reminded: your steps—and theirs—have eternal purpose.**



[https://youtu.be/\\_c\\_baAGrf2E8](https://youtu.be/_c_baAGrf2E8)

## Chapter 2

# Define Your Mission (Purpose)

When Christians are asked about their purpose and why they believe they were created, the answers often reveal what truly shapes their lives. Responses vary widely. Some offer broad statements like, “I want to make the world a better place,” while others say, “My purpose is to glorify God in all I do.” Many define their purpose through roles and responsibilities, being a successful leader, a faithful employee, a devoted parent, or a supportive spouse.

Interestingly, the themes behind these answers are often very similar to those expressed by people outside the faith. Purpose is frequently framed around personal ambition, achievement, or self-definition, even when spiritual language is used.

It is not uncommon to encounter statements that emphasize self-determination, vision, and personal drive, ideas that encourage creating one’s own opportunities, shaping one’s own future, and becoming the architect of one’s destiny.

These perspectives reflect a broader cultural narrative, especially prevalent in business and leadership environments, that urges individuals to look inward and strive for personal greatness through effort, perseverance, and self-confidence.

This contrast highlights two fundamentally different views of purpose. The world system teaches that meaning is found through control, self-direction, and personal success. Jesus, however, invites us into something radically different, not a purpose built around self, but a life rooted in relationship, trust, and surrender. True purpose begins not with looking inward, but with knowing God, being known by Him, and allowing that relationship to reshape how we love others and live out our calling.

True wisdom begins not with self-direction, but with reverence for God. Proverbs 9:10 reminds us that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Purpose, then, is not found in striving to create opportunities through personal effort alone, but in aligning one’s life with God’s will and learning to recognize and step into the opportunities He provides.

When purpose is viewed primarily through worldly influences, whether cultural, professional, or self-driven our understanding of life becomes shaped by human perspective rather than God’s Word. As a result, circumstances are interpreted through the lens of control rather than trust, ambition rather than surrender. Jesus speaks to this contrast when He says in Matthew 13:16, “But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.” Seeing clearly requires learning to see life the way Jesus sees it.

If our eyes are not fixed on Christ, our purpose will naturally reflect the world's values. Jesus makes this clear in John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." A life rooted in relationship with God learns to listen, trust, and follow, allowing purpose to flow not from self-definition, but from fellowship with the One who leads.

Ultimately, failing to see the world through Jesus' eyes can lead us to a life purpose centered on self-promotion, dedication, and hard work—an inward focus. In contrast, cultivating an intimate relationship with God and serving others aligns our purpose with His desires for our lives. While it may sound commendable when friends say, "My purpose is to glorify God in all I do," such a statement can feel vague and may not fully encompass the depth of our calling. It is crucial to explore what glorifying God looks like in our daily lives and how we can embody it through specific actions and interactions with those around us.

### **Old Habits, New Life**

God's grace is the foundation of true discipleship. Grace is not merely God's unmerited favor; it is His empowering presence that invites us out of the world system and into relationship with Him. Through grace, we are not only forgiven we are **reoriented**. When we step into grace, we accept that life is no longer centered on self-control or self-definition, but on trusting God and walking in fellowship with Him. Our lives move from being about *us* to being about *Him*.

So why do so many Christians struggle with this shift? Often, grace is misunderstood as permission to remain unchanged rather than the power to live differently. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6:20, “You were bought at a price; therefore, honor God with your bodies.” This truth points to a transfer of ownership, our lives no longer belong to us. As Paul declares in Galatians 2:20, it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us.

Many believers know these verses intellectually, yet have not allowed them to reshape how they live. Moving from the life we once lived into the life we are now called to requires more than agreement, it requires surrender. Our focus shifts from pursuing our own desires to abiding in Christ, trusting His leadership, and aligning our lives with His purposes. This is the Tree of Life way of living, rooted in relationship, sustained by grace, and expressed through obedience that flows naturally from love.

When we surrender our lives to God, we are essentially giving up control and choosing to follow His purposes, directions, and commandments for our lives. By relinquishing our personal rights, in surrender to God’s grace we gain the rewards and benefits of a new life in Christ. At first, we may struggle to fully comprehend how this new life in Christ will transform us. Our old habits and ways of living linger, leading to confusion for many Christians regarding their true purpose. This clash between the old and new can create uncertainty as we seek to understand what it means to live in alignment with God’s calling.

Because we still carry patterns shaped by our old way of living, Paul's words in Romans 7:15 resonate deeply: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." This tension reflects the inner struggle that often surfaces as we transition from the world system, where self-effort and control dominate into a life rooted in relationship with God. The struggle itself is not a sign of failure, but evidence that transformation is underway.

Learning to navigate this new life requires more than willpower; it requires truth that reshapes how we think, see, and respond. This is why daily time in God's Word is essential not as a religious obligation, but as a relational practice where we learn to abide in the Tree of Life. Through Scripture, God renews our minds, exposes old patterns, and trains us to live His way. As 2 Timothy 3:16–17 reminds us, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." God's Word does not merely inform us; it forms us, equipping us to walk in freedom as we learn to trust Him day by day.

Over time, as obedience becomes a way of life, old habits begin to lose their grip and are replaced by new ones shaped by truth. Understanding God's grace gives us eyes to see more clearly and hearts that are willing to change. This journey of transformation is not a sprint, but a marathon one that requires patience as we unlearn the patterns formed by the world system and learn to live God's way. As Colossians

3:10 reminds us, we are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of our Creator.

Discipleship is a process of ongoing renewal. Even as growth takes place, unlearning old habits and mindsets remains part of the journey. God's patience and grace sustain us as we learn to trust Him more deeply and surrender control. The goal is not perfection, but faithful obedience walking in step with the Spirit and pressing forward toward the calling God has placed before us, confident that He is faithfully at work in us, even as He continues to shape and transform our lives.

Dallas Willard once observed, "*Grace is not opposed to effort; it is opposed to earning.*" This truth helps us understand the kind of disciplined life Scripture calls us to live, one rooted not in striving for approval, but in responding to the grace we have already received. Paul captures this perspective in *1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (ESV)*, Paul writes: "*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So, I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*"

To overcome our old habits, we must cultivate new ones according to God's word, which requires a disciplined lifestyle. Picture your newfound life purpose as a daily commitment—an ongoing duty to report for action each day.

For transformation to take place and for us to walk effectively in the mission and purpose for which God created us, we must understand that being disciplined is not optional. Without our disciplines, real change cannot occur. Discipleship is not formed through intention alone, but through daily surrender. If we desire to be shaped, renewed, and aligned with God's purposes, we must intentionally place ourselves in rhythms that keep us rooted in relationship with Him.

Begin each morning by defining your mission through praise, acknowledging God's sovereignty, and reaffirming your dependence on Him. This posture shifts us from self-reliance to trust and from control to surrender. As Lamentations 3:22–23 reminds us, "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Each day becomes a fresh invitation to live differently.

As we lay aside our personal agendas and seek His will, we learn to align our lives with His heart through time spent in His Word (Psalm 119:105). This is not about maintaining a religious routine that leaves us unchanged, but about cultivating a relational devotion that leads to obedience. God's Word becomes the place where old patterns are unlearned, truth reshapes our thinking, and trust in Him grows.

Through this daily surrender, God's love begins to form us from the inside out. We discover who we are in Christ, embrace how He uniquely created us, and find contentment in the good works He prepared for us to walk in (Ephesians 2:10). This is how transformation happens and how disciples

naturally begin to live on mission, making disciples who make disciples.

This is where many disciples often become stalled not because of a lack of desire, but because devotion subtly shifts into routine. Time in God's Word can easily become a religious habit rather than a relational posture of surrender. When this happens, Scripture is approached for information rather than transformation, and intimacy with God is replaced by familiarity.

Yet true time in God's presence always leads to change. His love is not passive, and His presence is never neutral. When we genuinely abide with Him, transformation naturally follows. No one encounters the living God and walks away unchanged. When disciples struggle to cultivate meaningful, unhurried time with the Lord, faith often drifts toward religious activity instead of spiritual fruitfulness.

This is why many believers appear busy yet untransformed, engaged in Christian practices, but disconnected from the relational depth that produces lasting change and multiplication.

Understand that you are a small yet significant part of His grand plan. However, God cannot share His mission with you if you do not make Him your number one priority. Each day, He has a 'mission report' for you, delivered during your time of prayer and reading His Word. Through His guidance and your obedience, you begin to fulfill what He has laid out for you each day (Jeremiah 29:11). In His presence, you are con-

tinually humbled, He is glorified, and you gain the ability to see and love the world through His eyes. This daily practice of surrender requires discipline, but it also aligns you with His purpose, preparing you to fulfill your role in being and making disciples.

Remember, this journey with Christ requires perseverance and dedication. By continually renewing our minds and not conforming to the ways of this world, we allow God to transform us more and more into His likeness. This transformation, although sometimes challenging and slow, is a testament to the enduring work God is doing in each of us. *Philippians 1:6* reassures us that “*He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*”

In this new life, despite its challenges, find peace and fulfillment in being part of something far greater than yourself. Be continually amazed at how God uses ordinary people like yourself to accomplish His extraordinary purposes. And so, with each new day, report in for duty, be disciplined, and be ready to serve your Commander with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30).

## **Define our Mission**

Let us better define our purpose and mission as disciples of Christ. A mission is often described as a clear and specific purpose or goal that directs actions and decisions. It typically involves a broader, long-term objective that guides individuals or organizations.

On a personal level, a mission refers to one's core purpose or calling in life. It is what motivates and gives meaning to one's actions. For instance, someone might feel their mission is to support others through counseling or to advance scientific research. In a business context, a mission statement outlines the company's primary purpose, goals, and values, guiding decision-making and strategy. For example, a non-profit may have a mission to eradicate poverty, while a business might focus on providing innovative technology solutions. In the military, a mission refers to a specific assignment or operation with strategic objectives.

Overall, a mission provides a clear, purposeful direction that steers actions and decisions towards achieving specific goals or fulfilling a higher calling.

As disciples of Christ, we also have our own mission, which involves our divine purpose and calling. Every day, we receive a new mission report from God. He shares His desires for our life and instructs us to live it out loud and share what He has taught us with our friends. He wants us to be the person He created us to be. His desire is for us to align our lives with His plans, rather than choosing our own path. As disciples, we must reflect the characteristics of a disciple and not something else.

As **Geoffrey Harris** once illustrated with an analogy, if an assembly line is designed to produce mobile phones but consistently produces something else, it becomes clear that the company is not actually in the mobile phone business.

In the same way, if we identify ourselves as disciples of Jesus but are not making disciples, then we are not living out the mission Jesus entrusted to us. Discipleship that does not reproduce is not functioning according to its intended purpose.

To center your purpose around personal desires, such as striving to be a great boss, an exceptional mom, or, as my friend puts it, a wise woman who creates her own opportunities, misses the mark of what God intends for our lives. Ultimately, a true disciple focuses on loving God, loving people deeply, and producing other disciples of Jesus, rather than on their profession, hobby, or elevating themselves for their own purposes. Our calling goes beyond our individual aspirations; it encompasses a commitment to serve others and focuses on expanding God's kingdom.

One reason many disciples struggle to produce other disciples is the lack of proper training in disciple-making. While many of us have the desire to disciple others, we often lack the direction and understanding needed to do so effectively. This is precisely why books like this are written—to equip individuals on how to become true disciples of God.

Although there are numerous excellent resources available for discipleship, few focus on cultivating a multi-generational movement that spans nine to ten generations of disciples. The goal of this book is to fill that gap, providing practical guidance on expanding your discipleship mission in the way God has always intended, as modeled in the training of His own disciples.

We all recognize that without God's presence at the center of everything we do, our efforts are ultimately in vain. Without His guidance, we will not produce true disciples; rather, we may create something entirely different, hindering our mission's success. In fact, there is nothing in life worth pursuing without God's anointing in our lives. We are continually learning and growing in the Lord, and we will not fully arrive until we are in heaven. Operating our ministry without God's anointing will yield no fruit, both in our ministry efforts and in the disciples we seek to cultivate.

If your life is not loving God, loving people deeply, and producing disciples, then can you truly call yourself a disciple? To grasp how to make multiplying disciples, we must first challenge ourselves daily with the question: Are we anointed by God to fulfill the mission He has set before us? As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, spending quality time in God's presence daily is where we receive His anointing.

### **My Personal Story**

When I first began to ask myself these challenging questions, I struggled to understand my mission. Despite being active in church, attending services, leading Bible study groups, and going on mission trips, I did not fully grasp God's calling or purpose for my life. While I professed my commitment to God's work, I found myself more preoccupied with financial gain and often living in sin. Honestly, I cannot say that I had the anointing of God upon my life; there was lit-

the fruit being produced, and disciple-making was not taking place.

In the past, if someone were to ask me about my purpose, I would have answered that it was to live for God and make a difference in the world around me. While I often spoke about these ideals and presented myself as if I were walking closely with God, deep down, I still struggled to grasp the essence of my true purpose.

It was in that moment, God posed two profound questions: “How can you claim to be My disciple if you do not love others as I do?” and “How can you be My disciple if you do not follow My teachings and trust Me completely with your life?” These questions humbled me deeply, it was as if for the first time in my life, I was able to hear God speak to me. In His mercy, God led me to *Galatians 5:16-26*, which speaks to the heart of discipleship.

*“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

*Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."*

After reflecting on these verses, I turned to God and asked what it truly meant to walk in the Spirit. Despite being a Christian for most of my life, I realized for the first time that I had no clear understanding of how to do so. God revealed to me that to grasp walking in the Spirit, I would need to undergo various trials and tribulations to unlearn many of my detrimental habits. He explained that these habits had obstructed my ability to know Him fully. Now that I was ready to embrace His ways, He could begin the process of teaching me how to walk in the Spirit through sanctification. This process started to bear fruit in my life, allowing me to recognize God's anointing working within me.

Letting go of my own identity and allowing God to mold and shape me through these trials has been one of the most liberating experiences of my life. If you would like to learn more about what God taught me during this journey, I talk about these experiences in my books, *"Conquer Through Surrender"* and *"Keys to Being Set Free."*

This question I proposed to God is crucial for every reader: How can we genuinely be disciples if we are not walking in the Spirit and embracing the purpose and calling that God has placed on our lives?

God reset my purpose and revealed that intimacy with Him is what matters most. Jesus commands us to *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind”* (Matthew 22:37), and to *“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matthew 22:39). My journey began with learning to empty myself and understanding that everything in life begins and ends with Him. As Paul writes, *“For in Him we live and move and have our being”* (Acts 17:28). Knowing Him and being known by Him is of utmost importance.

Once I felt I was on solid ground, God revealed a major reason for my spiritual stagnation: I was not discipling others. I lacked an outlet to share the incredible things God was teaching me. This realization marked the beginning of understanding my mission. I came to see that the command to *“Go and make disciples of all nations”* (Matthew 28:19) was not merely a suggestion but a divine command. This understanding unlocked what was previously closed and ignited a spiritual revival within me. Discipling others became my passion, and in these moments, God spoke to me profoundly.

I have found most Christians are familiar with the command to love God with all our heart, mind, and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. However, like I once did, many of us stop there. We often fail to recognize that when we live out this command, something powerful happens naturally—we begin to disciple others. But not just one disciple, as we grow in love and obedience, we become multiplying disciple-makers, spreading God’s love and truth around the world.

As I engaged with the disciples I was spending time with, I realized that God was speaking through them into my life. Not only does God use you to speak into the lives of others, but He also uses them to speak into yours. Discipling others was the key that unlocked everything and made things clearer for me. I began to grasp that my true purpose and mission in life was simple: all I needed to focus on each day was to love God (Matthew 22:37), love others deeply (Matthew 22:39), and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). We call this the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

For many disciples, myself included, the turning point came when my attempts to control life began to collapse under their own weight. I tried to fix my problems through the world system and manage my faith through the religious system. Both approaches relied on self-effort: striving harder, knowing more, and doing better. Yet neither produced lasting transformation or true rest. Real change only began when I released control and embraced trust, when I stopped trying to manage outcomes and surrendered my circumstances to God.

In that place of surrender, I had to learn how to rest in God's presence. Instead of reacting to life through anxiety, pressure, or performance, I began to trust God to work in ways I could not see or control. It was in those surrendered moments that my purpose started to come into focus. As my allegiance shifted away from the world and religious systems and toward God's kingdom, my heart was reoriented. I

began to love people more deeply, God's Word came alive, and Scripture moved from something I studied to something I lived. Discipling others was the natural result of this shift.

Once I truly understood my purpose and mission, alignment followed. My life was no longer compartmentalized, but increasingly ordered around God's kingdom priorities. I stopped focusing on merely acquiring knowledge about God, which often led me into religion and began walking in obedience with Him, which is the essence of relationship. That shift transformed discipleship from information gathering into life formation, strengthening my intimacy with God and producing spiritual growth that could never have been achieved through effort alone.

I became a new creation in Christ, my old bad habits began to diminish, though I cannot say they have all been eliminated. Many still linger, hidden from view, but God remains patient and long-suffering with me, as reflected in *2 Peter 3:9*: "*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*" I am truly grateful that God is long-suffering and patient with us, showing us such profound kindness. It is precisely because of His goodness that I am led to repentance, as stated in Romans 2:4.

### **Mission Reflection**

As we conclude this chapter, defining your mission begins with a clear decision about *how* you will live. A disciple can-

not live on mission while remaining rooted in religion or controlled by the world system. Both pull us back toward self-effort, performance, and comfort. Scripture reminds us that we are no longer to be shaped by those patterns: *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (Romans 12:2). Kingdom living calls us into surrender, trusting God with our lives, our outcomes, and our calling.

Our mission flows from intimacy with Jesus. Each day begins not with striving, but with relationship. We wake up to love God, to spend time with Him, to listen to His voice, and to allow ourselves to be fully known by Him. Jesus Himself defined eternal life this way: *“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent”* (John 17:3). From that place of fellowship, our lives are shaped. As we abide in Him, love for others deepens and obedience becomes natural (John 15:4–5).

When our mentality is not on mission, we are still being shaped by the world system, even if our language sounds spiritual. Jesus warned of this subtle drift when He said, *“You cannot serve both God and money”* (Matthew 6:24). But when our lives are ordered around God’s kingdom, we live differently. We stand out, not because of religious behavior, but because our lives reflect trust, surrender, and love. As Jesus said, *“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another”* (John 13:35).

This is the mission we are invited into: to know God deeply, love people genuinely, and make disciples who make

disciples. Jesus made this clear when He said, “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations*” (Matthew 28:19). As intimacy becomes the foundation, multiplication becomes the fruit. Paul captured this generational vision when he wrote, “*The things you have heard me say... entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others*” (2 Timothy 2:2). A life lived this way does more than change an individual; it creates a pathway for lasting, generational impact.

As we step into the next chapter, we will begin to explore something essential to living this mission well, learning how to truly see. Scripture reminds us that without spiritual sight, we can miss what God is doing: “*Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear*” (Matthew 13:13). Learning to have **eyes to see** is critical if we are to walk faithfully in our mission and respond to God’s invitations with obedience.

## Chapter 2 Define your Mission (Purpose)

### Song Title: Surrendered Eyes

Surrendered Eyes is a call to obedience—to follow Jesus with vision fully aligned to His mission. When our eyes are surrendered, we no longer chase what’s temporary. We focus on what matters most: making disciples and living for eternity.

This kind of vision requires daily surrender. As we follow Jesus, we must train those we lead to fix their eyes on Him—and walk in bold obedience to His call.

### Bible Verse:

*“Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Hebrews 12:1b-2a (NIV)*

♪ ♪ **Scan the QR code to listen and renew your focus: surrendered eyes lead to obedient lives.**



[https://youtu.be/  
itsxU\\_G4GLo](https://youtu.be/itsxU_G4GLo)

## Chapter 3

# Eyes to See

As you read in chapter two through my personal story, one of my greatest struggles was learning how to truly love people. I often viewed others through a critical lens, measuring, comparing, and at times elevating myself above them. I was living with a world-system mindset even while pursuing God, trying to manage people and circumstances rather than seeing them through the heart of Jesus. It was difficult for me to see people the way Christ sees them.

Over time, God began to show me that a true disciple must learn to see differently. Discipleship is not just about learning truth, but about having our vision healed. I began to understand that seeing people and life through God's perspective requires surrender, releasing control and trusting that God is at work in every moment. Whether circumstances felt favorable or uncomfortable, I learned to receive them as divine parables, opportunities where God was revealing His character, His truth, and His purposes.

As I learned to rest in God's presence, my awareness of His nearness grew. I began to recognize that God is always

at work around us, just as He promises: “*I will never leave you nor forsake you*” (Hebrews 13:5). This truth became an anchor, teaching me to trust Him even when I could not immediately understand what He was doing.

This journey also raised a sobering question, one I had to confront personally: why do so many disciples, myself included at one time, struggle to see people and circumstances the way God does? Why is it so easy to mirror the attitudes, values, and reactions of the world system rather than embodying the transforming love of Christ? At the heart of this struggle is spiritual blindness. When disciples do not learn to see and hear God clearly, they naturally drift back into worldly patterns, even while using spiritual language.

Jesus reminds us in John 17:14–16 that although we live in the world, we are not to belong to it. Yet many believers unknowingly allow the world system to shape their responses, priorities, and perceptions. When this happens, divine opportunities are missed, people are overlooked, and God’s invitations go unnoticed. Learning to see as Jesus sees is not optional, it is essential to living on mission and loving others the way He loves us.

There are many reasons disciples struggle to see life the way God sees it, and this book will walk patiently through those reasons. The heart of this chapter is not to correct or condemn, but to invite. God is gently drawing His people into a deeper way of seeing, one rooted in trust, relationship, and rest. When we begin to view our lives through His eyes, the noise of the world quiets and the pace of our hearts slows.

God never rushes us, yet He faithfully leads us. His desire is that we would learn to walk with Him at His pace, living from a place of contentment rather than striving. But that kind of life becomes possible only as our vision is healed. When we see as God sees, we begin to recognize His presence in everyday moments, His guidance in uncertain seasons, and His love at work in the people around us.

This is the invitation before us, to learn to see our lives through God's eyes, and in doing so, to experience the peace, clarity, and purpose that flow from walking closely with Him.

In *Matthew 13:9*, Jesus emphasizes, "*Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.*" Here, He conveys to His disciples that without drawing near to Him, a true understanding of His words is elusive. The disciples had yet to learn how to perceive circumstances or parables through God's eyes; they consistently struggled to grasp the spiritual dimensions of their experiences.

In an effort to help them, Jesus employed parables. However, even then, they questioned His method. In verse 10 of *Matthew 13*, they asked, "*Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?*" Jesus replied in verse 11, "*You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not.*" This distinction illustrates that those who do not follow God are unable to comprehend spiritual truths. Consequently, when faced with life's challenges or parables that mirror them, they struggle to find meaning or guidance, often resorting to responses shaped by their cultural norms and habitual behaviors.

Jesus exhibits patience with His disciples. In *Matthew 13:12*, He clarifies why many are left in confusion: “*To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.*” Essentially, the closer we draw near to Jesus, the clearer our vision becomes regarding life’s circumstances; conversely, distancing ourselves from Him leads to confusion and bewilderment.

In verse 13, Jesus elaborates, stating, “*This is why I use these parables: for they look, but they do not really see. They hear, but they do not truly listen or understand.*” This notion is not novel; it echoes the prophetic message given to Isaiah in *Isaiah 6:9-10*: “*When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend.*”

The followers of God possess a supernatural ability to discern spiritual truths; those who do not belong to Him cannot access this understanding. Recognizing that God controls the overarching narrative of life allows us to trust in Him rather than being overwhelmed by the cares of this world.

Despite their questions, the disciples sought more clarity. In *Mathew 13:15*, Jesus explains that the issue lies in the hardness of people’s hearts: He said, “*Their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes—so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand; they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.*”

Jesus emphasizes the importance of surrendering our lives to God in order to receive His truth for spiritual healing and understanding. When there is an imbalance in our relationship with God, when He is not our main priority and other things in life take precedence, we will struggle to hear and see Him as He intended us to.

When God looks at people, He sees lost sheep in need of a shepherd. Rather than condemning or belittling them, He speaks words of life and longs for a loving relationship with each one of us. As we respond in obedience and embrace His truth as active doers of His Word, our eyes are opened to see others through His perspective.

When our habits are shaped primarily by the world system, our hearts can slowly become dulled not because we intend it, but because our focus drifts. When life centers on self-fulfillment or self-protection, it becomes harder to see people the way God sees them and easier to miss the gentle invitations He places before us each day. In those moments, our ability to hear His voice and respond with love is quietly diminished.

Yet God, in His kindness, continually invites us back. As we step into this journey of transformation, we discover that true fulfillment is not found in turning inward, but in surrendering our lives to God and loving others as He loves us. When we choose to reflect the heart of Christ toward all His sheep, our mission begins to align with God's purposes. From that place of alignment, new habits are formed, habits that slow us down, soften our hearts, and open our eyes.

As we walk with Jesus in intimacy, learning to trust Him more fully, He gently reshapes how we see the world. We begin to notice what He notices, love who He loves, and respond as He leads. In this way, our lives become an offering of worship, honoring God not just in what we believe, but in how we live, love, and follow Him each day.

### **Shift our perspective on Relationships**

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen by trade. Their days were shaped by nets, boats, markets, and margins, catching fish to provide for their families and secure their future. Naturally, their conversations revolved around their work, and they surrounded themselves with others who shared the same worldview. Their profession shaped not only their schedule, but their habits, assumptions, and the way they evaluated success. Without realizing it, they learned to see life and people through a practical, transactional lens.

When Jesus called them, He met them right there. He understood how deeply their work and culture had shaped them. They were accustomed to viewing others as either helpful or hindering, beneficial or burdensome. Yet Jesus saw more. He did not shame them for their perspective; He invited them into a new one.

These men were not only fishermen, they were also faithful Jewish men. They attended synagogue, observed the feasts, and honored the rhythms of their religious life. They knew the stories of Yahweh and believed the Scriptures they

had been taught since childhood. Passover, Shabbat, circumcision, and Yom Kippur were woven into the fabric of their identity. To the outside world, they looked like model believers, faithful, disciplined, and obedient to what was expected of them.

And yet, despite their religious devotion, their understanding of God's purpose was still limited. Their faith had largely been shaped by duty rather than intimacy. Their mission was often filtered through personal gain, national expectation, or self-preservation. Time and again, the disciples tried to take control when situations did not align with their expectations. Peter's reaction in John 18:10, when he cut off the ear of Malchus, reveals this tension clearly. In that moment, Peter did not see Malchus as someone loved by God, but as an obstacle to be removed. His response was instinctive formed by habit, culture, and a worldview that had not yet been fully surrendered.

Peter reacted the way he had been trained to react. His response made sense in his world. But Jesus was patiently inviting him into a different way of living a way shaped not by fear, control, or religious obligation, but by relationship and trust. That invitation would take time. It would require unlearning deeply ingrained habits and allowing Jesus to reshape how he saw people, power, and purpose.

The disciples were profoundly shaped by both their profession and their religion. To see as Jesus saw, they had to relearn what it meant to follow God not through rule-keeping or cultural identity, but through intimacy. Religion had

given them structure, but relationship would give them sight. Religion shaped their behavior; relationship would transform their hearts.

At its core, religion is a system of beliefs, practices, and values designed to bring order, meaning, and direction to life. It can shape culture, influence morality, and provide a sense of purpose. But without relationship, religion alone cannot produce transformation. Jesus did not come to refine their religious system; He came to invite them into life with God. And it was only through that relationship that their mission, their love for people, and their understanding of God's kingdom would finally come into focus.

Belief systems take many forms, and at their core, they shape how we see ourselves, others, and the world around us. At times, we can even end up worshiping our own self-interest, much like Peter did, creating personal ecosystems built around our desires, assumptions, and sense of control. It is also possible to blend these personal belief systems with organized religion, attempting to strike a balance that still allows us to remain in charge of our lives. In these moments, religion can become a tool to help us stay focused on *our* goals rather than surrendering to God's purposes. When our beliefs are challenged, we often react defensively, protecting what we've built instead of listening. As a result, we begin to filter relationships through our belief system, categorizing people as allies or outsiders based on how closely they align with our values and worldview.

The way people viewed life in the days of Jesus is not much different from how many see life today. Every person, created by God, lives according to some belief system shaped by habits, culture, and the stories they trust to be true. These systems are reinforced by the world around us, giving us a framework for belonging and identity. Over time, people often become what they desire most, devoting themselves sometimes unknowingly to those desires. When those desires are disconnected from a living relationship with God, they slowly lead us away from life. James warns us of this progression when he writes, *“Desire gives birth to sin; and sin, when fully grown, gives birth to death”* (James 1:15). The world system promises fulfillment, but it cannot deliver life.

Within both the world system and religious systems, relationships can begin to feel contractual rather than relational. People are viewed not as image-bearers, but as means to an end, useful if they help us achieve our goals, expendable if they do not. Relationships are formed primarily around shared beliefs or mutual benefit, and when agreement disappears, connection often fades. This mindset can easily spill into our workplaces, communities, and even churches, where people are subconsciously evaluated as assets or obstacles rather than neighbors to love.

When life is lived through a contractual lens, expectations become central. With every contract comes an unspoken demand for performance, and when others fail to meet those expectations, frustration follows. This can lead to grumbling, comparison, judgment, or condemnation. Our habits and beliefs shape what we expect from others: if we value achieve-

ment, we expect achievement; if we found peace through certain choices, we assume others should follow the same path. Over time, this rigid framework leaves little room for grace, patience, or compassion, ignoring the complexity of people's stories and the unique work God is doing in their lives.

In Christian language, this posture is often described as **legalism**, a way of relating to God and others that treats faith as a system of rules to manage rather than a relationship to enter. Legalism emphasizes compliance over transformation and control over trust. It values conformity more than love and correctness more than compassion. Jesus did not come to reinforce this way of living. He came to invite us out of contracts and into covenant, out of religion and into relationship, where grace reshapes our vision, love redefines our priorities, and trust replaces control.

## **Beyond the Surface**

Like us, Peter, Andrew, James, and John were shaped by a culture that taught them to see life and people through a legalistic and transactional lens. Their world trained them to evaluate worth through productivity, usefulness, and alignment with their beliefs. Jesus stepped directly into that worldview and lovingly disrupted it. In Matthew 4:18–19, as He walked along the shores of Galilee, He called out to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” His invitation was not merely a call to a new task, but an invitation into a completely different way of seeing and living.

Their immediate response is striking. Matthew 4:20 tells us that *“at once they left their nets and followed him.”* They likely did not fully understand what Jesus meant, but they trusted the One who was calling them. In that moment, they released control and stepped out of the systems that had shaped them, their livelihood, their identity, and their sense of security, and began a journey rooted in relationship rather than certainty.

Looking back, it becomes clear that the disciples were slow to unlearn old patterns. Jesus had to continually remind them of their purpose, correct their assumptions, and redirect their hearts. They had been formed by a culture and religious system that deeply influenced how they saw people and power. Learning to see others the way Jesus sees them did not come naturally; it required time, surrender, and transformation. In many ways, their journey mirrors ours. Seeing people through God’s eyes is foreign to us until we surrender our lives to Christ.

When Jesus calls someone to follow Him, He is not simply inviting them into a community or a belief system. He is calling them to die to themselves and take up their cross (Luke 9:23). This call confronts our need for control and invites us into trust. It requires letting go of our own perspective and embracing God’s way of seeing, loving, and living. Jesus does not ask His disciples to manage people; He invites them into relationships just as He first entered into relationship with them.

Instead of viewing people through a transactional lens, asking what they can offer or how they fit into our plans, disciples are called to see people relationally. Jesus teaches us to notice the lost, the searching, and the hurting, not as problems to solve, but as people to love. This shift loosens our grip on identities rooted in performance, roles, or accomplishments, identities shaped by contracts rather than covenant.

In the kingdom of God, our jobs, education, and gifts are no longer the source of our worth; they become expressions of a life anchored in relationship with God. Jesus makes this clear in Matthew 6:33: *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* The focus is not on securing the next contract, position, or relationship, but on seeking God above all else. From that foundation, our vision is healed, our priorities are reordered, and we begin to see people, purpose, and ourselves through the lens of relationship with Him.

### **Fisher of Men**

Being a “fisher of men” does not necessarily mean we abandon our jobs and drop our nets, as the disciples did, unless God specifically calls us into full-time ministry. For some, this may indeed be the path God has for them, but the deeper lesson Jesus was imparting to His disciples goes beyond their means of making a living. He was revealing that life with Him transforms our entire worldview and approach to challenges.

Consider the story of Peter, who, after a night of unsuccessful fishing, received a directive from Jesus to cast his nets once more. "Simon answered, *'Master, we have worked hard all night and have not caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.'*" (Luke 5:5 NIV). This illustrates the concept of surrendering our plans and our understandings to God's wisdom above what we perceive to be true. *Proverbs 3:5-6* tells us to "*Trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding; and in all our ways to acknowledge Him, and He will make our paths straight.*"

Once we give our lives to Jesus, our past ways of doing things become irrelevant. As *Isaiah 55:8-9* states, "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways.*". He sees things not through the lens of our culture, but with a perspective that is far greater than our own. Without an intimate relationship with Jesus, we cannot hear His guidance or perceive the world through His eyes. As we draw closer to Him, we start to understand His direction and see life as He sees it.

Now imagine you are a successful real estate broker who has not sold a home in over eight months. Historically, you average at least one sale a month often more so this extended drought feels alarming. Almost instinctively, your mind goes into problem-solving mode. You analyze the market. Interest rates are high. Inventory is tight. Inflation is slowing everything down. You reassure yourself that it's not just you others in the industry are struggling too.

Yet beneath that reasoning, anxiety begins to grow. Bills still need to be paid. Responsibilities haven't paused. So, you lean harder into what the world system has trained you to do: fix the problem. You adjust your marketing strategy, refine your messaging, and search for new angles to stand out. You reconnect with past clients, chase old leads, and push yourself to be more creative, more driven, more relentless. If effort produces results, then surely *more* effort will solve this.

At some point, you also pray. You read your Bible. You ask God for a breakthrough but often with an unspoken expectation that He will bless the plan you've already put in place. Even spiritual practices can quietly become tools for control rather than spaces of surrender. And still, the months pass. Nothing changes.

That's when the deeper question surfaces, not just *What do I do now?* but *Who am I trusting?*

This moment exposes how naturally we default to the world system problem-focused, outcome-driven, and rooted in self-reliance. We are trained to manage circumstances rather than abide in relationship, to strive for solutions rather than rest in Jesus. Yet Jesus does not first invite us to fix the situation; He invites us to trust Him within it. Often, the greatest work God wants to do is not in changing our circumstances, but in shifting our hearts from control to trust, from performance to intimacy, and from anxiety to dependence on Him.

This scenario is quite common and reflects a typical reaction to challenging circumstances. However, it illustrates what being a fisherman looks like, not what being a fisher of men entails. The real estate broker is viewing the situation strictly through a contractual lens, missing the divine perspective.

In God's economy, there is no competition or slow market; He operates beyond human limitations.

God never approaches life as transactional; rather, He sees it as relational. In every moment of our lives, He is near, always at work around us. He desires for us to have eyes to see and ears to hear what He is saying in these moments—what He truly wants for us. Our focus should shift from “How can I make the sale?” to “How can I enter God's presence, rest in Him, and align my life with what He is doing?”

Consider how many people God can bring into our lives to love during these so-called down times. Think about the fellowship we can enjoy with Him as we draw near, resting in the assurance that He is in control. God has never asked us to figure out our problems on our own; instead, He invites us to cast our cares and burdens upon Him and find rest in Him. As *Psalm 46:10* says, “*Be still, and know that I am God.*”

Reflect on the moment when Peter cut off Malchus's ear. At that time, Peter was not perceiving the narrative through God's eyes. God loved Malchus and was headed to the cross for him. While God understood the bigger picture, Peter was stuck in his limited perspective, focused on him-

self. He failed to see Malchus as God did because his vision was clouded by his own circumstances.

To be a true fisher of men, we must recognize that once we accept the call of God, we are called to die to our previous ways of thinking and let go of the habits that have caused our troubles leading up to our point of conversion. As disciples of Christ, if we fail to develop the ability to see people and circumstances from God's perspective, we cannot fully embrace the obedience to which He calls us. Our lives are no longer solely about us; they are about God and His work in the world.

If God wants you to sell a house, there is nothing in this world that can prevent that from happening. What He desires from us is a willingness to let Him take the lead every day. Instead of viewing our circumstances as setbacks, we should see them as opportunities to glorify God. We must stop trying to control the outcomes and instead draw close to Jesus to hear and see His divine plan.

He loves you deeply and cares for others just as profoundly. Ultimately, all He desires is an intimate relationship based on trusting Him in all things. Once you begin to perceive people and circumstances through His lens, you will be better equipped to disciple others effectively, and your life will transition from chaos to one filled with peace and joy.

Remember again *Matthew 6:33*, which states, "*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*" When our priorities align with God's pur-

pose, we can confidently navigate life's challenges, trusting that He will provide for our needs and guide us in every step we take. God knows all things and sees the big picture. He is the one who does the hard work; our role is simply to let Him lead.

### **The Need for Laborers in God's Field**

Jesus tells us plainly, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few*" (Matthew 9:37). One of the primary reasons this remains true is not because people are unreachable, but because many followers of Christ have not learned how to truly see. When our eyes are shaped by the world system or dulled by religion, we often miss the people right in front of us who are longing to be seen, known, and loved.

Many are searching for relief in all the wrong places. Some numb their pain through substances or destructive choices. Others escape through entertainment, achievement, or endless distraction. Different paths, same ache. What they are really looking for is not another solution, argument, or lecture but someone who sees them the way God sees them. They are not searching for judgment; they are desperate for love without conditions.

For many, past encounters with religion have only deepened their wounds. Instead of healing, they experienced rejection. Instead of grace, they encountered performance. Sadly, some have been hurt just as deeply by those inside the church as by anyone else in their lives. Having known

only transactional relationships where love must be earned or maintained, they have yet to experience the freedom of relationship rooted in grace.

The truth is, hurt people often hurt people. Most of us carry pain in some form, and when that pain goes unresolved, it finds expression in unhealthy ways. Some bury themselves in work, turning success into their savior. Others quietly battle anxiety and depression, longing for answers and relief, yet unsure where to turn. Beneath it all is a deep hunger for hope, belonging, and restoration.

God's response to this brokenness is not another system; it is a people. He raises up disciples who see with His eyes and love with His heart. His compassion is unwavering, and His love is costly. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son"* (John 3:16). There is no length He would not go to reach the lost, and He now invites us to reflect that same love to others.

As followers of Jesus, we no longer have to live bound by our own wounds or past pain. God invites us to release what we carry and trust Him fully: *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:7). In Christ, we are given a new life, a new identity, and a new purpose. As Paul declares, *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me"* (Galatians 2:20).

When we live from that place of surrender, our vision changes. We begin to see our circumstances and the people within them through God's eyes. Trust replaces fear. Love

replaces judgment. And we rest in the promise that “*in all things God works for the good of those who love him*” (Romans 8:28). From that place of peace, joy, and alignment with God’s will, we become His ambassadors, quietly, faithfully bringing hope and healing to a world desperately in need of His love.

### **Transforming Perspectives**

The next time you encounter a situation like Peter with Malchus or the real estate broker, remember that God is at work. He sees the bigger picture and is continuously active around you. Amid your circumstances, ask Him to give you eyes to see His presence. God is focused on building relationships, and our attention should not be on things beyond our control.

You are in your current situation because He has entrusted you with a greater responsibility. As His child and a saint of God, you have been placed there to bring Him glory. Reflect on your upbringing and cultural influences in light of God’s Word, always asking yourself, “How does God see this?”

Scripture serves as your greatest weapon against cultural bias. As *Hebrews 4:12* reminds us, “*For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints, and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*” Memorize it, and let go of religious rituals that might distract you from listening to God.

Turn to Him first in everything; listen for His guidance rather than relying on YouTube experts or the well-meaning advice of friends with experience. Seek to understand what God is saying and what He wants you to do.

Begin practicing what you have learned in this chapter with your family. Choose to stop viewing them through a contractual lens, judging their faults, or condemning them for not meeting your expectations or ideas of what is best. Let go of operating solely from your own will and understanding.

Instead, slow down, be patient with them, and simplify your approach. Start loving them as Jesus loves us. Trust their struggles to God, allowing Him to take control of their lives while you elevate them above yourself. If you can embrace this perspective with your family, you will be well on your way to seeing others in the world through God's eyes.

Choose today to act according to what God reveals to you through His Word and through prayer. With Jesus, it is always about relationships. Remember, your past darkness is behind you, and the pathway to your future shines brighter than ever when you begin to see people as Jesus sees them. Making disciples becomes a natural byproduct of our relationship with God. As He opens our eyes, we start to recognize the potential in others to become disciples who will, in turn, make more disciples.

## **Get ready to level up!**

In the next chapter, we are diving into what it means to be equipped and prepared—because let us be honest, we cannot be effective in anything if we are not willing to train and show up ready. The same is true in our spiritual walk.

Jesus did not just wing it—He knew the Word. He lived it. And when Satan came at Him with every fiery dart, Jesus was ready. Why? Because He was equipped and prepared for battle.

This next chapter will challenge and inspire you to do the same—to sharpen your spiritual tools, strengthen your foundation, and open your eyes to a whole new way of seeing and living. It is time to gear up for what God has in store!

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 3 Eyes to See - Song

### Song Title: Eyes to See

Eyes To See is a song of perspective—learning to see through the lens of heaven. When our eyes are fully surrendered, we no longer view people, purpose, or pain the same. We begin to see with compassion, clarity, and conviction.

As disciples, we're not just called to follow Jesus, we're called to see like Him. And as we lead others, we must teach them to fix their eyes not on the world, but on the One who leads us all.

### Bible Verse:

*"Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways." —Psalm 119:37 (ESV)*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and ask the Lord to give you surrendered eyes that see as He sees.**



[https://youtu.be/  
igKcnQ4gJbk](https://youtu.be/igKcnQ4gJbk)

## Chapter 4

# Be Still and Equipped

To truly know Jesus, we must be willing to pursue relationship with Him intentionally. As this book has already emphasized, relationships do not flourish by accident. Without time, attention, and surrender, intimacy never develops. The question, then, is not whether God desires relationship with us, but what prevents disciples from experiencing it fully and why so many lives fail to reflect the mission and calling of Christ.

Two obstacles consistently surface. First, many disciples lack a consistent, unhurried rhythm of daily time with God. Second, many have never been equipped to engage the Word of God at the depth discipleship requires. Jesus does not call His followers to surface-level familiarity, but to lifelong formation, learning Him deeply, not merely knowing about Him. While no one can ever fully comprehend the infinite glory of God, Scripture assures us that we can know Him at the level He desires to be known. *“Draw near to God, and He will draw*

*near to you*" (James 4:8). The invitation is relational, not academic.

There are many reasons these obstacles persist. Life becomes crowded and hurried. Disappointment sets in. Comfort dulls hunger. Pain from past church experiences builds walls. Sometimes everything feels "fine," so pursuit feels unnecessary. In each case, the result is the same: distance replaces intimacy, and faith slowly shifts from relationship to routine.

A helpful way to understand this is through the lens of human relationships. Any meaningful relationship requires intentional investment. When time, listening, and presence are neglected, connection suffers even when commitment still exists. Many relationships fail not because of a lack of love, but because of misplaced priorities and divided attention. What was once relational becomes transactional.

For some, this pattern extends into their relationship with God. Faith becomes something managed rather than lived. Scripture is studied, but obedience is selective. Prayer is practiced, but surrender is resisted. God is consulted, yet control remains firmly in human hands. In those moments, religion replaces relationship, not because God moved away, but because trust was withheld.

Often, it is a crisis that exposes this imbalance. When self-effort no longer produces stability and control begins to unravel, disciples are confronted with a question they can no longer avoid: *Will I continue to live my way, or will I finally trust*

*God with everything?* That question marks the beginning of transformation.

When control is released, God often calls disciples into stillness before He calls them into clarity. He invites them to stop striving, stop managing outcomes, and stop leaning on systems that once defined success. Instead, He draws them into deeper trust, learning to depend on Him daily, listening before acting, and allowing identity to be reshaped by intimacy rather than achievement.

As disciples respond in obedience, vision begins to clear. Scripture comes alive. God's character becomes personal rather than theoretical. Discernment grows through practice, as Hebrews reminds us: "*Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil*" (Hebrews 5:14). Growth is no longer measured by information gained, but by transformation lived.

Many disciples discover, often humbly, that they were once well-versed in religious knowledge yet unfamiliar with relational obedience. Jesus' warning in Matthew 7:21–23 becomes sobering not as condemnation, but as invitation. Knowing Scripture without knowing God leads to activity without intimacy. Obedience, however, restores relationship.

When ambition, work, family, or even ministry begins to define direction more than listening to prayer, faith quietly drifts back into the world system. Proverbs 16:3 reminds us, "*Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.*" That commitment is not made through busyness, but

through stillness. God's guidance is revealed in quiet surrender, not relentless motion.

This is why learning to be still and equipped matters so deeply. When knowing Jesus becomes the highest priority, everything else finds its proper place. Relationships deepen. Purpose clarifies. Mission aligns. Life becomes ordered not around control, but around trust.

This way of living is not about retreating from responsibility it is about re-centering it. When intimacy with Jesus becomes the foundation, discipleship becomes sustainable, obedience becomes joyful, and mission becomes natural. Relationship does what religion never could: it transforms from the inside out.

In the next section, we will begin to explore the importance of being still and fully equipped. If the principles outlined in this chapter are neglected, even well-intentioned efforts to build a discipleship ministry will struggle to produce lasting fruit. Activity may increase, but transformation will remain limited. Ministry can quietly drift into religious effort, busy, sincere, and well-meaning yet lacking the life and multiplication God desires.

This is why making Jesus the highest priority is essential. When intimacy with Him is replaced by activity for Him, ministries lose their vitality. But when disciples learn to be still, to listen, and to abide in His presence, everything begins to align. Fruitfulness flows not from striving, but from remaining rooted in relationship. It is in the stillness before

God that disciples are formed, vision is clarified, and ministries are sustained for the long haul.

## **Be Still**

There comes a moment in many disciples' journeys when God gently draws attention to a missing rhythm: stillness. Scripture invites us into this posture with the simple yet profound call, "*Be still, and know that I am God*" (Psalm 46:10). Stillness is more than physical quiet; it is a surrendered posture of the heart and mind. Many followers of Jesus remain busy in activity for God while rarely resting in the presence of God. Without stillness, relationship struggles to deepen.

True communion with God requires space, unhurried moments free from distraction. Just as meaningful human relationships cannot flourish amid constant noise and neglect, intimacy with God cannot be sustained when life never slows down. Being still before Him creates room for listening, awareness, and trust. It is in these quiet places that relationship is strengthened and stability is formed.

For many, questions naturally arise around stillness: *What does quiet time look like? How long should it last? Will it feel unproductive or uncomfortable?* These questions reflect a sincere desire to understand God rather than manage Him. Scripture reassures us that stillness trains the heart to respond differently to life. "*Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him*" (Psalm 37:7). Waiting teaches patience, reshapes reactions,

and softens the impulse to control outcomes shaped by the world system.

As disciples learn to be still, something begins to shift. Perspective changes. People and circumstances are no longer viewed through fear, frustration, or performance, but through God's eyes. His truth speaks directly into real situations, offering wisdom, correction, and peace. *"The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him"* (Lamentations 3:25–26). Quiet waiting produces inner transformation that striving never can.

Stillness also deepens awareness of God's holiness. Scripture calls us, *"Be holy, because I am holy"* (1 Peter 1:16). Holiness is not achieved through effort alone, but through proximity. When time with God becomes consistent and relational, sensitivity to sin increases and resistance to temptation strengthens. God's faithfulness becomes more apparent, as promised: *"When you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it"* (1 Corinthians 10:13). In stillness, those escape routes become visible.

As trust replaces control, habits begin to change. Complaining softens. Gossip loses its grip. Anxiety gives way to rest. When God is trusted as sovereign, there is less need to grumble or manage others. Scripture gently reminds us, *"Do not grumble against one another"* (James 5:9). Stillness trains the heart to speak life, extend grace, and rest in God's leadership rather than reacting to circumstances.

Being still is not a withdrawal from life; it is alignment with God. We cannot be equipped for God's work if we are not first aligned with His heart, and that alignment is formed in stillness, when we slow down, listen, and learn to trust Him. Before disciples are sent, they must be shaped. Before they act, they must hear.

It is in this quiet place that disciples are equipped to live differently. Stillness trains us to listen before acting, trust before striving, and love before correcting. Here, God reshapes our hearts, restores clarity, and forms us for the work He has prepared. When relationship becomes the foundation, religion loses its grip. From this place of alignment, disciples are not only called they are equipped to live on mission with Him.

### **Rising Early**

One practice that has proven helpful for many disciples is beginning the day by intentionally spending time with God. Early morning stillness creates space to listen before the demands of the day take over, helping hearts remain aligned and attentive to Him. This rhythm sets the tone not only for the day ahead, but for how we respond to people, pressure, and responsibilities.

Martin Luther once remarked that on especially busy days, he felt compelled to spend even more time in prayer in order to remain grounded and effective. Scripture affirms this pattern in the life of Jesus Himself. *"Very early in the morning,*

*while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed*" (Mark 1:35). Before teaching, healing, or leading, Jesus withdrew to be with the Father.

This practice reminds us that effectiveness in God's kingdom flows from intimacy, not urgency. Being equipped begins with being still allowing God to shape our hearts before we step into the work He has prepared for us.

Jesus demonstrated that getting up early to spend time with God is of utmost importance. Like Martin Luther, when we find ourselves very busy, we may need to dedicate ample time early in the morning to cast all our burdens onto God while also creating space to simply listen to Him.

Find a quiet place in your home or somewhere free from distractions. As it states in *Luke 5:16*, "*Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.*" Whether it is your closet, garage, or back patio, establishing this habit of being still will radically change your life. A disciple follows Jesus' example, and this was His daily practice, so it should be ours as well.

Just like us, Jesus faced opposition from the enemy, and He recognized the need for the Father to fight for Him. He understood the message of *Exodus 14:14*, which says, "*The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.*" We cannot win our battles without God fighting for us, and the Bible makes it clear that for the Lord to fight for us, we must first be still.

Never engage in battles that are outside of your control. First and foremost, recognize them as spiritual conflicts.

As *Ephesians 6:12 (NIV)* states, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Our victory is found daily on our knees in prayer, as each day brings new challenges. We must consistently cast all our anxieties onto God, for He cares for us, as expressed in 1 Peter 5:7. Being consistently still in God’s presence is essential if we are to become fruitful disciples.

Furthermore, the Bible teaches us that the strength to endure comes from resting and finding quietness before the Lord. As *Isaiah 30:15* says, “For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: ‘In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be your strength.’”

I can personally testify that everything in my life changed for the better when I made it a priority to be still in God’s presence each day. A disciple of God can do nothing without remaining in the vine, as John 15:5 tells us; that connection begins in stillness. We cannot be disciple-makers if we do not have this kind of relationship with Jesus.

You can always recognize a true disciple of God because they possess a distinctiveness that sets them apart. One consistent truth among all of them is that they prioritize quality quiet time with God.

## Equipped

There was once a young man who excelled in athletics but had little interest in academics. His world revolved around performance, competition, and recognition. Studying felt unnecessary and exhausting something to endure only when absolutely required. He learned just enough to get by, relying on natural ability rather than discipline. Learning, especially reading, held no appeal. Knowledge was a means to an end, not something to pursue for its own sake.

For a long time, that approach worked. Success reinforced confidence, and confidence quietly grew into pride. After one particularly strong performance, the applause and affirmation fed a sense of self-sufficiency. In that moment, the illusion of control was complete. Life felt mastered.

Then, unexpectedly, everything changed.

Almost overnight, the desire that once drove him disappeared. What had defined his identity no longer held power over his heart. It wasn't burnout or injury it was an internal shift that could not be explained by logic alone. What followed was not a new ambition, but a new invitation. The call was not toward achievement, but toward surrender.

As life responsibilities increased, something else awakened: a hunger to know God. Where resistance to studying once lived, desire took its place. Scripture was no longer a chore; it became nourishment. Sermons were not background noise, but lifelines. Learning was no longer about

proving intelligence it was about understanding truth. Being equipped suddenly mattered, not for recognition, but for obedience.

Yet even in this growth, something was still missing.

Knowledge increased rapidly, but love lagged behind. Scripture was mastered, but self was not surrendered. Faith began to look impressive on the outside, disciplined, articulate, informed but internally, control still ruled. Ambition quietly coexisted with belief. Obedience was selective. Religion was practiced diligently, but relationship remained shallow.

This is a subtle trap many disciples fall into. Scripture warns us plainly: *“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up”* (1 Corinthians 8:1). Knowledge without surrender creates distance, not intimacy. Being equipped with information is not the same as being formed in Christ.

Outwardly, everything appeared fine. Words were kind, theology was sound, and behavior was acceptable. But when challenged, insecurity surfaced. Knowledge became a weapon rather than a bridge. Conversations turned into debates. Teaching replaced listening. Being right mattered more than being loving.

It was only later that the deeper truth became clear: true equipping does not begin with information it begins with surrender. God is not looking for disciples who know a lot about Him, but for disciples who walk with Him. Being

equipped is not about accumulating knowledge to elevate self, but about being shaped by truth to love others well.

When knowledge is grounded in relationship, it produces humility. When learning flows from intimacy, it equips disciples not just to speak truth, but to live it. This is the difference between religion that performs and relationship that transforms.

In Matthew 16:26, Jesus asks a sobering question: *“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* This warning speaks not only to material success, but also to the danger of accumulating knowledge for the wrong reasons. It is possible to grow in information while living divided, appearing faithful on the outside, yet remaining self-focused and unchanged within. When learning is driven by image, approval, or control, it quietly disconnects us from the very life Jesus offers.

Over time, God reveals the true purpose of being equipped. Learning is never meant to elevate self, but to cultivate obedience and reverence for Him. True discipleship requires a posture of humility one that embraces decreasing so that Christ may increase. In quiet, surrendered moments before God, hearts are softened and motives are refined. Knowledge is no longer gathered for personal gain, but received as a gift to be stewarded for God’s purposes and glory.

As this shift takes place, a deeper desire emerges not merely to know more, but to be prepared. Being equipped becomes less about mastering content and more about being

formed for daily faithfulness. Scripture becomes both nourishment and guidance for the battles disciples face each day, shaping how they think, respond, and live.

This is why quiet time with God and meditation on His Word are inseparable. A defining mark of a true disciple is not just familiarity with Scripture, but obedience to it. When God speaks, a fruit-bearing disciple listens, responds, and adjusts their life accordingly. Knowledge that does not lead to obedience remains incomplete, but when truth is lived out, it produces transformation, fruit, and lasting impact.

Each preceding chapter of this book has led us to this crucial point: a disciple stands out from the world in a beautiful and unique way. Their thoughts and approaches to life are fundamentally different, clearly marking them as disciples. They inspire others and produce noticeable fruit in their lives. Ultimately, this transformation is only possible through the discipline of preparing and equipping ourselves for spiritual battles in Jesus' name.

As we read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."* This verse reinforces that disciples are equipped to carry out every good work to which God calls them.

## Study, Reflect, Apply

To be adequately equipped, one must be a dedicated student of Scripture, possessing a deep hunger to know everything about God. Studying should become as instinctive as breathing. A transformed life is always ready to share the reason for its hope, as 1 *Peter 3:15* states: *“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”*

This verse has inspired many Christian apologists to prepare thoughtful defenses of their faith. However, it is important to note that Peter is not addressing only those with the gift of apologetics. He speaks to believers who are facing persecution for their faith, emphasizing that all Christians should be ready to articulate what they believe and why.

Some disciples who take this calling to heart may develop a sense of superiority, mistakenly believing that their extensive knowledge of the Bible and God elevates them above others, as I once did. This attitude can lead to legalism and self-righteousness in their demeanor. Yet, Peter reminds us that our defense should be rooted in gentleness and respect, accompanied by a clear conscience.

In Ephesians 4:15, Paul echoes this sentiment, urging believers to embody Christ’s teachings by “speaking the truth in love.” Peter also shares that the reason why we speak the truth in love is because for those who speak maliciously

against our good behavior in Christ may ultimately feel ashamed of their slander (1 Peter 3:16).

To have an intimate relationship with God, one must internalize His words, as David expressed in *Psalms 119:11*: “*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*” We are called to be doers of the Word, not merely hearers (James 1:22). A true disciple memorizes God’s Word through study and actively implements what they learn; without this practice, one cannot truly call themselves a disciple.

What about those who struggle with reading or simply don’t enjoy it? This is a common concern, and it’s one worth bringing honestly before the Lord. Rather than forcing ourselves through frustration, we are invited to ask God how He wants to meet us there. Learning in the kingdom is not about performance; it is about formation. Scripture consistently points us toward a lifelong posture of learning and obedience. “*To acquire wisdom is to love oneself; people who cherish understanding will prosper*” (Proverbs 19:8). Likewise, Proverbs 4:13 urges us, “*Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.*” These words remind us that learning is not optional, it is essential to becoming who God is shaping us to be.

If reading feels difficult, God is not distant from that struggle. He is patient and personal, often inviting us into growth one step at a time. While tools like audio books can be helpful, engaging directly with Scripture remains vital. Reading the Word slowly, marking it, sitting with it, and re-

turning to it trains our hearts to listen rather than rush. Jesus Himself said, *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me”* (Matthew 11:29). Learning from Jesus is not hurried; it is relational.

Consider this simple story.

A disciple once believed that learning was never meant for them. Reading felt exhausting, confusing, and unproductive. So, they avoided it, telling themselves that love for God didn't require understanding. One day, they decided to stop avoiding the issue and instead brought it before the Lord. There was no instant transformation, no sudden enjoyment but there was an invitation. Each day, they opened the Word for just a few minutes, not to master it, but to sit with God. Over time, something changed. The pages no longer felt distant. What once felt like obligation slowly became connection. Learning was no longer about acquiring information it became a space of relationship.

This is how God often equips His disciples. Not through pressure, but through persistence. Not through obligation, but through invitation. As we surrender our resistance and trust Him with our growth, He reshapes our desires. Learning becomes less about what we can accomplish and more about who we are becoming. And in that process, God equips us not just with knowledge, but with discernment, humility, and a heart ready to obey.

Being equipped begins when we are willing to learn not perfectly, but faithfully allowing God to meet us in our weakness and form us through His Word.

Jesus set the example for us to be still in God's presence daily and to know His Word intimately. He consistently reminded people of what Scripture says, even confronting Satan directly during His confrontation with him as we find in (Mathew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13). Jesus taught us that having God's Word etched in your heart, you can wield a defense against the devil's schemes.

Each day in Christ presents a fresh opportunity to bring Him glory. We achieve this by intentionally spending time in His presence and immersing ourselves in His Word, allowing it to guide and transform us.

The knowledge we gain through our studies is meant to help others overcome obstacles that may be hindering them from coming to Jesus. It is not intended to condemn, but to build up and guide people into a loving relationship with Him. As *Romans 15:4* reminds us, "*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide, we might have hope.*" Being equipped and obedient to God's word not only strengthens our own faith but also provides hope for those we disciple.

## **Get ready to take action!**

In the next chapter, “Setting the Bar High,” we launch into the exciting application portion of your journey, where vision meets real-world strategy. This is where things get practical and powerful. You will gain proven tools and insights to build a thriving discipleship ministry that multiplies.

But here is the key: these strategies only unlock their full potential when they are backed by a life that reflects the heart of a true disciple. It is not just about what you do—it is about who you are. When your lifestyle aligns with Jesus’ call, the impact becomes unstoppable.

So, gear up! We are about to raise the bar and step into all that God has designed you to lead with boldness and clarity.

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 4 Be Still and Equipped - Song

### **Song Title: All of Me, All for You**

There is a sacred moment when we finally stop striving and simply surrender—all that we are, for all that He is. All of Me, All for You is a prayer of stillness and devotion, laying down distractions to be fully present with God. It's in that stillness that we're reshaped, renewed, and equipped for the mission ahead.

### **Bible Verse:**

*“Be still, and know that I am God...”—Psalm 46:10a (NIV)*

♪ ♪ **Scan the QR code to listen and offer your whole heart, quiet, surrendered, and ready.**



[https://youtu.be/  
ENgOjgTvFmA](https://youtu.be/ENgOjgTvFmA)

# Disciple-Making Strategies

## Chapter 5

# Setting the Bar High

**T** In the first chapter, we quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who said, “When God calls a man, He calls him to come and die.” This death signifies a departure from living according to worldly systems or standards. As disciples of God, we are called to a different way of life; continuing to live by the world’s values is no longer acceptable. To embrace this new life, we must cultivate new habits and establish systems that reflect God’s truth.

To pursue God is to pursue the very best that life has to offer. Everything about God is good and perfect. Once we experience His deep love for us in this way, dying to our old way of life becomes a natural choice—why would we ever settle for anything less than His best?

I know the enemy often tries to make us feel condemned, as if we are not good enough. After reading through some of the previous chapters, it is easy to feel like we are not doing enough, and now we come to a chapter that challenges us to

set the bar even higher. But the truth is, God is not condemning you. He simply wants your heart and a sincere desire to live a life of purpose for His glory. As it says in Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Every day is a new opportunity to walk in His grace, to bask in His glory, and to live life to the fullest, in alignment with His will.

Do not read these chapters and allow the enemy to depress you. Instead, draw strength from Jesus and rely on His grace. With the Holy Spirit’s help, you can overcome any lies Satan tries to throw at you. As Philippians 4:13 reminds us, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” When you feel overwhelmed, turn to Christ for strength and encouragement, knowing that He is with you every step of the way. Keep your eyes on Him, and let His love empower you to live a life that reflects His glory.

## **Living with Purpose**

One of the things that makes competition compelling is watching disciplined, prepared people give themselves fully to what they’ve been called to do. When athletes train well, commit deeply, and compete with purpose, it shows. But imagine how empty competition would feel if no one trained, no one sacrificed, and no one took their calling seriously. At some point, you would have to ask whether they truly wanted to be there at all.

Life is not much different. Some people drift through it, doing just enough to get by, never pressing into purpose or allowing themselves to be shaped. Without vision or discipline, they become frustrated, critical, and resigned to a status quo that requires little sacrifice. Often, they've never been challenged to live differently or shown that there *is* a different way to live.

On the other end of the spectrum are those who are productive and impactful, yet driven primarily by self-effort. They have skill, opportunity, and momentum, but their motivation is rooted in self-reliance rather than surrender. When challenged, they can become defensive, leaning on accomplishments and results as proof of worth. Both approaches passivity and pride are shaped by the world system, not the kingdom of God.

God loves people in both places, yet discipleship requires something more. Jesus does not call people to simply be busy or comfortable; He calls them to die to themselves and live for God's purposes. Until someone reaches the end of self-dependence and surrenders fully to God's way, true discipleship cannot take root. Purpose is discovered not through striving or settling, but through surrender.

This truth can be difficult to accept. Many participate in church life while still living according to the world's standards, assuming that this mixture represents normal Christian living. Without intimacy with God, religion becomes routine and powerless full of activity, but lacking transforma-

tion. When relationship is replaced with performance, faith loses its vitality, and discipleship stalls.

God's invitation is clear: half-hearted living is not the goal. Scripture reminds us that lukewarm faith is not sustainable (Revelation 3:16). This is not said to condemn, but to awaken. Discipleship requires intention, hunger, and humility. These are the qualities we must first pursue in our own lives and then look for in others.

This is why we are called to set the bar high and invest wisely. Faithful, Available, and Teachable people are not perfect, but they are surrendered. They desire to know God deeply and are willing to be shaped. That is where multiplication begins. Discipleship thrives when time and energy are invested in those God is preparing for leadership and growth.

This does not mean withdrawing from relationships or avoiding others. God is always at work, and hearts can change. But discernment matters. Just as Jesus was intentional in choosing the twelve, we are called to be prayerful and wise in who we invest in deeply. In a later chapter ahead, we will explore why building a personal discipleship leadership team is essential and how God uses it to bring lasting fruit.

## **Setting the Bar High**

Word experts suggest that the idiom "set the bar high" began to be used around the turn of the twentieth century. It

originates from the sport of track and field, specifically in events like the high jump and pole vault. In these competitions, the bar is raised incrementally, allowing athletes to see how high they can jump or vault.

This concept applies equally to our spiritual lives. Once we were lost, but now we are found (Luke 15:24). We do not remain in that lost state; instead, through our obedience to God, we gradually raise the bar incrementally in our spiritual journey. Each week, we uncover new truths about God and learn how to align our lives with His perfect will. As *Philippians 3:14* reminds us, “*I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*”

We remain steadfast, determined to finish the race strong. Our lives reflect high moral standards built on a foundation of excellence, as we strive to give our very best effort in all that we do. A notable company called Credera, which is a consulting firm with a 96% customer retention rate, actively seeks individuals who are overachievers, strive for growth, embrace challenges, and help others do the same. One of the hiring managers at the firm expressed that they are continually impressed by the brilliant, innovative, diligent, and highly skilled professionals they have the privilege of working alongside. They have made a commitment to set the bar high in whom they hire: they want only the best, and the results speak for themselves.

How much more should we aspire to set the bar high in our relationship with God? Shouldn't we strive to give our best effort and live in obedience to the standards and call-

ing He has placed on our lives? I believe we should. When we have an intimate relationship with God, it naturally empowers us to live this way for His glory. Our lives reflect His goodness, becoming a source of inspiration for others. Many will catch the fire we emit and will be drawn to follow the path God is leading us on.

When seeking disciples to invest time with, we should focus on individuals who are genuinely pursuing God. We are not looking for perfect people; in fact, it is often the opposite. We will primarily find those who are broken and struggling with sin, just like we do. In our culture, unfortunately, we have redefined what it means to be called a Christian. We have lowered the bar so much!

*In Luke 14:25-33, we read, "Now great crowds were traveling with Jesus. So, He turned and said to them: 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers, and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.'"*

Here, Jesus is not setting an easily attainable standard; rather, He emphasizes that nothing in this world should take precedence over following Him. He calls us to eliminate distractions that could hinder our relationship with Him. The implication is clear: if we allow anything to stand in the way, we cannot truly be His disciples. The bar that Jesus sets for our lives is high, and lowering those standards is not something we should ever do for ourselves or for the disciples we are discipling.

In *Luke 14:28-33*, Jesus speaks to His disciples, saying, “*For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn’t first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, after laying the foundation, he may be unable to finish, and all the onlookers will begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man started to build and wasn’t able to finish.’ Or what king, going to war against another king, will not first sit down and decide whether he can withstand the one coming against him with 20,000 men if he only has 10,000? If not, while the other is still far off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. In the same way, every one of you who does not give up all his possessions cannot be My disciple.*”

Jesus is not playing games here; He makes it clear that adhering to worldly standards of wealth, fame, and materialism is incompatible with being His disciple. You cannot pursue both and expect to be part of God’s family. If we are discipling someone who is not embodying a FAT lifestyle—Faithful, Available, and Teachable—and they are not consistently raising the bar in their lives to produce noticeable fruit, we may need to step back from the discipleship process until there are signs of fruit in their life.

We might say, “Given what you are going through, discipleship may not be the best course for you at this time. Once things improve, I encourage you to reach out to continue our journey together.” This should be done in love and grace, but it is also crucial to recognize when it is time to pause our efforts. Our purpose is to make disciples who make disciples, and if we engage with individuals who are not yet disciples, we limit the potential for multiplication.

From the start, we need to clearly communicate the cost of discipleship. Cast a vision for where you will go together and ensure they understand the commitment required to follow Jesus. Our desire should align with Jesus' desire: in His grace, we cultivate disciples who are deeply in love with Him, who bear fruit, love others as He loves them, and ultimately make more disciples. If they choose to move forward with you, we must maintain high standards and live a holy life before God.

Do not view raising the bar as an excuse for legalism. We all fall short, and we should always lean on the side of grace. Avoid becoming rigid or harsh; instead, show compassion, understanding that we are just as imperfect as anyone else. The key difference between a F.A.T. Christian pursuing a relationship with Jesus and a religious person is that a F.A.T. Christian is humble, willing to be broken, and consistently takes steps toward walking in obedience, whereas a religious person lacks these characteristics. If our disciples show humility and a genuine desire to grow spiritually, continue giving them chances. You can discern whether their progress is authentic or not—some of us simply have more bad habits to overcome, and we are all works in progress.

### **Beyond Church and Bible Reading**

Why would Jesus set the bar so high for His disciples if being a disciple only involved going to church and reading

your Bible? Jesus sets the bar so high because He knows what He is calling us into.

Jesus came to build His kingdom and battle for the hearts of mankind. That is His mission! His method is to use us as His disciples to fulfill that mission here on earth! This is why the bar is set so high. He is looking for builders and battlers, workers, and warriors. A person is not a disciple because they go to church and read their Bible. Jesus would not say what He says in Luke 14:26-27 if that were the case. To be a disciple is to join Jesus in His mission to build His Kingdom and battle for the hearts of mankind. That is why the bar is set so high.

Giving our lives to a project of this size is costly. We must set aside our personal dreams, goals, and ambitions. We find ourselves in a spiritual war against the world systems that have held humanity captive since the dawn of time. Satan's forces will relentlessly fight to maintain their dominion, refusing to yield ground without a fierce battle. As Scripture reminds us in *Ephesians 6:12*, "*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*"

Going to war is risky and sacrificial. We could lose everything in the physical world! Jesus does not want half-hearted followers. If we quit halfway through the building, what does that accomplish? If we retreat at the first sign of danger, what good is that?

As warriors, we press on, determined to finish the race strong. We lay down our rights in humble submission to God's army, rejecting the standards of the world and choosing instead to abide in Jesus as our guiding light. Scripture reminds us in *Hebrews 12:1-2*: "*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.*" In this way, we embrace our calling with courage and conviction.

Orrin Woodward once remarked that average leaders raise the bar for themselves, good leaders raise the bar for others, but great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar. This principle should be the standard for every follower of Jesus; we are warriors called to inspire others just as He inspires us.

Dick Costolo further emphasized this point by saying, "Once in a rare while, somebody comes along who doesn't just raise the bar; they create an entirely new standard of measurement." This new standard is God's grace, transforming lives and altering everything about a person.

A warrior of Christ stands out from the rest; they think and act like Jesus. By setting our bar high according to God's standards, we become beacons of light in the darkness, distinguishing ourselves from the crowd. This is a standard we should all aspire to achieve.

Jesus desires to use us to accomplish extraordinary things in remarkable ways. Yet, if we have not raised the bar in our

own lives to align with God's standards, we cannot effectively dream or cast vision into the lives of others.

As John Quincy Adams once said, "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader."

This leadership is not measured by worldly standards but by God's criteria; it reflects the heart of a bond servant, one who embraces humility and service to others.

In *Matthew 20:26-28*, Jesus teaches us that "*whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.*" This calling encourages us to elevate our own lives to God's standards so that we can inspire and empower others to do the same. A warrior of Jesus is strong in the Spirit and weak in the flesh.

### **How do we choose who we will disciple?**

The earlier chapters of this book have been laying a foundation for understanding what it truly means to be a disciple. Each section is designed to invite reflection not just on what is being learned, but on what God may be asking to be adjusted. Discipleship always involves alignment. As we grow in awareness of God's heart, we are invited to examine whether our lives are moving in step with Him or resisting His leading.

When the characteristics described in these chapters begin to take root, the process of identifying the next disciple

becomes natural rather than forced. While intentionality and availability are essential, discipleship is not something we manufacture. God is the One who draws people together. As disciples learn to walk closely with Jesus, listening, obeying, and seeing through His eyes they begin to recognize what God is already doing around them.

A disciple who sees as God sees will naturally identify those who are **Faithful, Available, and Teachable**. These qualities stand out not because they are rare, but because they reflect hearts that are already responsive to God. As we remain surrendered and attentive to His leading, like-minded people are often drawn into our lives not by strategy, but by shared hunger for relationship, growth, and obedience.

This is how discipleship moves forward not through pressure or programs, but through walking in step with Jesus and responding to the people He places along the way.

Let us explore two biblical stories and then share two personal experiences that illustrate how God is the one who selects our next disciples.

In Acts 8:26-40, we read about Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. An angel of the Lord appeared to Philip, instructing him to travel south on the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, a desert area. In obedience, Philip listened. *Verses 29-32 tell us that the Spirit prompted him to approach a chariot. Philip ran to the chariot and heard the eunuch reading from the book of Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"*

*The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?"* Philip was available to God's leading and responded obediently to the Spirit's call. This moment was far from coincidental; Philip had to actively adjust his life to be receptive to the promptings of the Spirit. He had to physically change his location in order to fulfill God's call in that moment. When we walk closely with Jesus, we become attuned to these divine nudges. Sometimes, we encounter potential disciples in unfamiliar circumstances or inconvenient situations, but when we follow God's lead, the results can be remarkably powerful.

Another powerful story is Peter's vision and his encounter with Cornelius, found in Acts 10. In verses 9-16, while Peter was praying on a rooftop, he received a vision from God, revealing that it was permissible to eat what was considered common or unclean. God reassured him that whatever He has made is clean, and we should not call it common. Like many of us at times, Peter felt confused by this message. However, the wonderful aspect of God is that He does not leave us in confusion.

Meanwhile, in verses 1-8, Cornelius, a centurion, was given a vision instructing him to send for Peter in Joppa. Cornelius acted on this instruction without hesitation. In verses 17-33, as Peter contemplated his vision, he heard Cornelius' men at his door, recounting the vision that had directed them to seek him. Recognizing the hand of God at work, Peter went with them to Cornelius' house. Initially apprehensive, Peter encountered the Holy Spirit, gradually revealing the true meaning of his vision: that in Jesus, there

is no partiality and that anyone who fears God and believes in Jesus is a child of God. Gentiles are no longer unclean, for what God creates is inherently clean, and we are called to accept this without bias. Both Peter and Cornelius were available and obedient to God's calling, leading to a significant breakthrough in understanding and acceptance within the early Church.

Every day, as we draw closer to Jesus, He works around us and desires to involve us in His mission. Though He does not need us, He chooses to use us. We may not always realize what God is doing in someone else's life, but if He prompts you to speak or act, respond without hesitation. Just like Cornelius, individuals may be prepared for a divine connection before you can even meet with them. When we set the bar high and walk in holiness before God, these encounters with the Lord and with others happen naturally and frequently.

I would like to share a personal story about a divine appointment that unfolded during a small group study at our church. I remember attending this gathering, which included about ten different leaders, each leading their own ministries. However, I quickly realized that not all of them reflected the qualities of being Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

During our gatherings, I felt a natural outpouring of God's spirit flowing through me, urging me to speak life into those around me. As our conversations deepened, one particular pastor stood out. We connected on a spiritual level and felt

a mutual call to spend more time together, encouraging one another over coffee in the weeks to come.

Through these initial meetings, it became clear that God wanted me to lead this pastor through my discipleship book, “Keys to Being Set Free.” I felt compelled to share the strategies I have been learning, with the hope that this pastor could develop a personal discipleship ministry producing nine generations of disciples, just as God has done in my ministry.

I did not need to question whether this pastor was FAT; the Holy Spirit inspired both of us to learn from each other in a beautiful, organic way. Our time together yielded remarkable results, allowing God to produce fruit in both of us as we became increasingly like-minded. Through God’s leading, we have become close friends and co-laborers in Christ. Together, we have come to understand the vital importance of surrounding ourselves with like-minded disciples who are dedicated to making disciples that make disciples. This pastor has started to implement the discipleship strategies within his church, and in a later chapter, I will explore additional approaches for how other churches can begin integrating these strategies into their own ministries.

Another memorable encounter happened one day at a local restaurant where I was studying. As I was quietly reading my Bible, a gentleman I had never met before sat down at my table without any invitation. It was clear to me that God was moving in his heart, so I introduced myself. I had not sought

him out; rather, I was simply available, creating a God moment where the Holy Spirit could naturally lead him my way.

As disciples, our task is to be intentional about placing ourselves in situations where God can bring someone into our lives, if He so chooses. I must be ready and open to the opportunities He provides.

The man glanced at my Bible and asked if it was indeed a Bible I was reading, using a few colorful words to express his skepticism. Despite his vulgarity, I sensed a deeper struggle within him; this man was clearly searching and in pain.

I answered his questions genuinely and extended an invitation to meet with him again the following week so that we could get to know each other better. He eagerly accepted. Over the course of a month, I could see God working in his life as he began to embody the qualities of being Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

As we continued to meet, I initiated the opportunity for us to begin a discipleship relationship. Building a genuine connection with the people God brings into our lives is vital for cultivating a thriving discipleship ministry. Always move at the pace God is working; never force discipleship onto someone. Instead, allow the Holy Spirit to open the door naturally.

After God opened the door and before we dove in, I cast a vision and made sure he understood the cost of discipleship. It is essential to establish that understanding up front.

When working with new or “baby” Christians, patience and compassion are crucial. We should always have high expectations, but we must never demand anything that is not built on love.

Patience is key because these individuals are often in the process of unlearning old, destructive habits—something that takes time. Our focus should be on recognizing the baby steps they take: Are they beginning to adjust their habits? Have they stopped listening to certain types of music? Are they aligning their lives with God’s ways? Are they engaging with the Bible and taking steps to know Jesus?

We should not expect them to know God like we do or be at the same spiritual level as we are. As Paul said in *1 Corinthians 9:22* “*To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.*” The Holy Spirit will guide you in determining whether someone is Faithful, Available, and Teachable. As Scripture reminds us, “*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds*” (*Hebrews 10:24, NIV*). This journey of discipleship requires nurturing and encouragement, reflecting God’s love every step of the way.

While this gentleman initially demonstrated evident fruit from his surrendered life to Jesus, he eventually stopped pursuing that path after a few months. Like many of us, he encountered trials and circumstances that made it difficult for him to let go and trust God fully. Gradually, he began to withdraw and revert to his old ways. Does this indicate that he was not Faithful, Available, and Teachable (FAT) from the

start? No; it simply means that God is still at work in his life, and what he needs now is patience and long-suffering.

Though we may no longer meet with individuals consistently, it does not mean our love and care for them should diminish. Just recently, I had another disciple who went through a similar experience reach out and express a desire to start meeting again. It is important not to take it personally or to think that something is wrong with you if a disciple decides to stop meeting. If there was fruit in their lives in the beginning, God is still working in them. In *Hebrews 13:5*, God's word tells us, "*He will never leave us nor forsake us.*" As God leads, we must follow. He never gives up, nor should we.

Continue to pray for those you disciple, maintain open communication, and always strive to be a light in their lives.

### **Be Available. Be Obedient. Be Excellent**

God's timing is always perfect, and the journey of discipleship is ongoing, it is not confined to scheduled meetings or formal moments. For some, the cost of discipleship can feel overwhelming, especially for those who have lived for a long time shaped by the world system or patterns of rebellion. The adjustments required to embrace a surrendered life one marked by obedience and excellence can seem daunting at first.

This is why grace and patience are essential. Discipleship is a process of unlearning old habits while learning to walk

God's way. As God patiently works in us, we are called to extend that same patience to others. We are not quick to judge, nor do we lower the standard. Instead, we practice longsuffering while holding firmly to God's call to excellence. God never compromises His standards or conforms to our ways. He lovingly invites us upward, calling us to live differently. Scripture is clear: "*Be holy, for I am holy*" (1 Peter 1:16).

God's standard is high not to burden us, but to free us. As we pursue holiness and excellence through relationship with Him, our lives begin to reflect Christ more clearly. The fruit of this way of living is beautiful and lasting, producing a depth of fulfillment and wholeness that the world system can never offer.

Ultimately, God is the One who brings disciples into our lives. Our role is not to control the process, but to remain available, attentive, and obedient to what He is doing around us. As we walk in step with Him, aligned with His work, our mission becomes clear and uncomplicated: to make disciples who make disciples trusting God to do the drawing, the shaping, and the multiplying through lives fully surrendered to Him.

Avoid the temptation to make this life all about yourself; continually surrender that mentality and remember that you are calling to disciple others never ceases. God's work is never finished as long as we are on this earth. We live for Christ, and to die is gain. But until that day comes, let us press on, set the bar high, and be intentional in our daily lives. Be available to answer the call, love people as Jesus

loves them, and never give up on anyone. Stay engaged in the fight and finish strong.

Follow Paul's example and be bold in your faith. He stated in *1 Corinthians 11:1*, "*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*" Paul set a high standard for himself and expected those around him to strive for the same. Such a bold proclamation can only be made when one is truly at peace with God and living a life of obedience to Jesus, guided by a clean conscience.

### **Get ready—this next chapter is a game changer!**

We are diving into one of the most exciting truths in all of discipleship: multiplication. This is the very principle that shook the world through the early church. In fact, in *Acts 17:6*, the people said of the disciples, "*These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also!*" That is the power of multiplying faith!

Every lesson so far has been building to this moment, because real discipleship does not stop with us. It grows, expands, and impacts generation after generation. And in this next chapter, you will discover a mind-blowing formula that shows just how powerful and effective multiplication truly is.

This is not just information—it is a revelation that can spark a movement in your life and ministry. Get ready to see your role in God's bigger plan like never before!

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 5 Set the Bar High - Song

### Song Title: Bar Is High

Bar Is High is a bold anthem of commitment. As disciples of Jesus, we're not called to settle for average—we're called to pursue holiness, integrity, and purpose at the highest level. Setting the bar high isn't about perfection; it's about living in a way that reflects His glory and inspires those we lead to do the same.

When we raise the standard in our lives, we show the world what it means to be set apart—fully surrendered and deeply devoted.

### Bible Verse:

*"Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." —1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and be challenged: raise the bar, reflect His glory, and lead with excellence.**



[https://youtu.be/  
dX315gqpd4g](https://youtu.be/dX315gqpd4g)

## Chapter 6

# Multiplication

Disciples of Jesus reflect a beauty that goes far deeper than outward appearance. Their lives carry the quiet evidence of God's work within them. Kindness, patience, and long-suffering mark their relationships. Wisdom and self-control guide their decisions. They live with purpose not driven by self-interest, but by a surrendered commitment to love the people God places around them.

These disciples are not known for grumbling or complaining. Instead, they walk in humility and meekness, paired with a quiet strength that comes from trust in God rather than control. They are neither legalistic nor condemning. Rather than pointing out failure, they choose to speak life, encourage growth, and lift others up. Just as Jesus' heart was to help people know the Father, His disciples carry that same desire to invite others into relationship, not pressure them into performance.

Because of this, people are naturally drawn to true disciples, much like they were drawn to Jesus. There is something disarming about their love and something compelling about

their presence. Those who encounter them often walk away encouraged, seen, and changed not because of clever words, but because they have experienced Christ reflected through a surrendered life.

At the core, disciples of Jesus are disciple-makers. They live out the invitation Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 11:1, calling others to follow them as they follow Christ. Their mission is clear, and their obedience is visible. These characteristics are not reserved for a select few; they are meant to be evident in the life of every disciple.

In this chapter, the focus is placed on one essential trait: a disciple multiplies themselves. Multiplication is not an optional add-on to discipleship it is a natural outcome of a life rooted in intimacy with Jesus. Yet many within the church are not experiencing this reality. Together, we will explore why multiplication often stalls, why it matters deeply to God's heart, and what it can look like within a disciple's personal discipleship ministry. As we look ahead, we will also begin to envision the long-term impact of faithful multiplication and the generational fruit that can grow from a simple commitment to disciple others.

### **Why do we not multiply?**

Why do we not multiply? Beyond a lack of intimacy with Jesus, another reason multiplication so often stalls is a misunderstanding of calling. Many disciples have unknowingly embraced a narrative that limits what God intends to do

through their lives. The belief has taken root that figures like Paul, Peter, James, and John were exceptions, men uniquely chosen for a specific moment in history, while the rest of God's people are called to something far less demanding. This way of thinking quietly removes responsibility and dulls expectancy.

This mindset suggests that disciple-making is reserved for a gifted few, for pastors or missionaries, rather than being the normal expression of following Jesus. As a result, many justify disengagement by labeling discipleship as “not my gift” or “not my calling.” But Scripture presents a very different picture. Following Jesus is not a part-time identity or a limited role, it is a surrendered life. Discipleship is not a ministry track; it is the natural overflow of walking closely with Christ.

The kingdom of God does not divide life into sacred and secular or call some to full obedience while excusing others. Every disciple is invited into a life on mission. From the moment of conversion, we are called to follow Jesus fully and to participate in what He is doing loving people, sharing life, and making disciples who make disciples. This is not about titles or positions; it is about identity and obedience.

When disciples begin to see themselves as active participants in God's mission rather than spectators, multiplication becomes possible. As intimacy with Jesus deepens and false limitations fall away, disciples rediscover the simple truth that God's call has always been the same: to walk with Him, to reflect His love, and to reproduce the life of Christ in others.

Paul expressed it best when he wrote that at our conversion, we become a new creation in Christ: *“The old has passed away; behold, the new has come”* (2 Corinthians 5:17). When we walk according to the world’s systems, we do not disciple because those systems control us. However, in Christ, we disciple because it is Christ’s systems that guide us. Multiplying disciples is tangible evidence of the fruit of our intimate walk with God.

Paul instructs Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:2 to *“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”* This calls us to be prepared disciples, regardless of whether our lives are going well or facing challenges. Too often, we create silos or separate compartments in our lives; we may behave one way at work, another at home, a different way when we are alone, and yet another at church. The Bible warns us about this in James 1:8, describing such a person as *“double-minded”* and *“unstable in all his ways.”*

God reminds us that there should be no distinction in how we live as disciples. We are always representatives of Jesus, ready to be used by Him. As Colossians 3:23-24 states: *“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”* This encourages us to consistently strive for excellence in our work, as everything we do in life is ultimately an act of service to the Lord.

The Bible clearly teaches that every disciple is called to engage in full-time ministry, regardless of their specific role or context.

When Jesus commanded His disciples to go and make disciples, He established this as a fundamental prerequisite for following Him. The early church embraced this call, but when we ask Christians today whether they are actively discipling others, 7 out of 10 say they are not. Among those who do disciple, 2 out of 3 are not doing so consistently. If making disciples is a divine command and Christians are failing to obey, can we genuinely claim that they believe Jesus is their Lord and Savior?

Mahatma Gandhi once remarked, “I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.” This statement highlights a troubling reality: many within the church seem to lack the consistent time spent in God’s presence to experience His pure, undefiled love. Such love has the power to transform us, revealing the truth and dispelling Satan’s lies. This clarity helps awaken our calling and ignites revival in our hearts, drawing us closer to the original disciples who were willing to risk everything for Him.

There are two types of Christians: those who seek God’s hand for what He can give them and those who seek His face for an authentic relationship with Him.

Few take the time to sit in His presence and simply behold His beauty. Most are preoccupied with seeking something from God. As *Psalms 27:8* says, “*When You said, ‘Seek My*

*face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek.'*" Gandhi did not encounter Christians who sought God's face, where His love flowed abundantly; instead, he met those who primarily sought His hands and what God could give them.

A disciple who seeks God's face daily rises filled with joy and ready for the challenges ahead, fully equipped for the tasks God places before them. Their love for others becomes contagious, radiating joy and purpose to those around them. The days of boredom and depression fade away, replaced by a thrilling adventure each moment brings. Their dreams shift from planning the next vacation to discovering new ways to build God's Kingdom.

Disciples are not sinless, but they are surrendered. They do not ignore their flesh or excuse it; instead, they intentionally bring it into the light each day by running toward God's presence rather than away from it. Over time, sin becomes uncomfortable not because of fear or shame, but because it disrupts intimacy. The heart of a disciple longs for closeness with God more than anything the world system can offer.

Rather than managing sin through rules or religious performance, disciples learn to abide with Jesus. They choose relationship over rebellion, trust over control, and presence over pleasure. The nearness of God becomes the safest and most satisfying place, shaping desires and transforming behavior from the inside out.

His presence transforms their lives into a lifestyle that turns the world upside down, bringing a fulfillment they have never known.

Life bursts with vibrant new colors as they witness God's Kingdom advancing through their ministry, changing lives across the globe. Their discipleship sparks a movement of God, resulting in thousands of transformed lives in a short time. They remain in awe of what God is doing, unable to believe that He has chosen to use them to make such a significant impact.

Ultimately, they become disciple-makers—much like Paul to Timothy—encouraging those they disciple to share what they have learned with other faithful men and women. They begin to witness the fulfillment of Acts 8:4-8 and Acts 11:19-21 as their trained disciples travel to various regions, preaching the Gospel and leading many to conversion.

Disciples reject the lies of Satan that they are not called into full-time ministry and learn to see the world through Christ's eyes. They cast a vision for themselves and for those they disciple, recognizing the impact of nine generations of disciples before them, and envisioning how their own nine generations of disciples can foster even more. This aligns with the truth of God's Word, and we must believe that this is the calling God has placed upon us, rather than the lies that Satan has tried to instill in our hearts.

It is not rocket science; it is quite simple. As followers of Christ, we are called to love God with all our hearts, love

our neighbors as ourselves, and make disciples who, in turn, make disciples.

## **Multiplication versus Addition**

In the opening chapter, we explored the importance of casting vision and why it is foundational to discipleship. Vision gives direction, purpose, and clarity. Without it, discipleship easily drifts into routine rather than movement. When vision is consistently cast, disciples begin to see beyond themselves and understand how their obedience today connects to God's larger kingdom work.

Casting vision is not about hype or pressure; it is about speaking life and helping disciples see the pathway God has set before them. The vision of discipleship is simple yet powerful: a disciple walks with Jesus, disciples another, and that disciple goes on to disciple someone else. Over time, this relational process multiplies, spreading across generations of disciples as far as God allows. Each generation builds on the one before it, creating a living chain of obedience that advances God's kingdom far beyond what one person could ever accomplish alone.

This vision has been clearly articulated through the framework of a ministry called Natural Discipleship, which highlights a crucial distinction between addition and multiplication. Understanding this distinction reshapes how disciples view ministry, success, and faithfulness.

The addition model focuses on steady growth, adding people, developing leaders, and expanding programs over time. While this model can be fruitful, it often depends heavily on a few individuals. The multiplication model, however, is relational and exponential. It equips disciple-makers who reproduce disciples, who then reproduce others. The result is not just numerical growth, but deep spiritual formation and sustained kingdom impact.

Grasping the difference between addition and multiplication is essential for disciples who desire to live on mission. Jesus did not call His followers to simply gather people, but to make disciples who make disciples. When this vision takes root, discipleship becomes a lifestyle rather than an event.

To help clarify this difference, the next section will illustrate what a discipleship ministry can look like over a ten-year period using both the addition and multiplication models revealing the extraordinary impact that faithful, relational multiplication can produce when disciples walk in step with Jesus.

### **Addition Model Example**

Imagine a gifted evangelist who leads **100,000 people to Christ each year** for **10 consecutive years**. Over that decade, **1 million people** respond to the Gospel. By any standard, this is extraordinary and clearly demonstrates how God can use the **addition model** to reach people.

A **national study on church discipleship culture** reveals a sobering reality: only a small minority of believers are actively engaged in reproducing disciples. The study found that **fewer than one-third of Christians** are both being disciplined *and* discipling others, and only about **one-third are identified as active disciple-makers in any form**. Even more striking, **less than 5% of churches** demonstrate evidence of a truly multiplying disciple-making culture. These findings expose a significant gap between conversion and multiplication in the Church today.

When these realities are applied to evangelism, the implications become clear. Conversion, while essential, is not the same as discipleship. If **1 million people** respond to the Gospel over a ten-year period, and only about **one-third** of believers ever engage in any form of discipling others, that would suggest roughly **330,000** might attempt to help someone grow in faith. However, the same national study indicates that only a small fraction of churches actually foster *multiplying* disciples, those who make disciples who then make more disciples.

When the multiplying culture rate (less than **5%**) is applied, the number narrows dramatically. Out of **1 million converts**, fewer than **50,000** would realistically be disciplined within an environment capable of sustained multiplication. This does not diminish the power of evangelism, but it clearly demonstrates an important truth: **addition alone does not naturally lead to multiplication**.

Without intentional discipleship rooted in relationship, obedience, and vision, the majority of converts remain disconnected from the process of making disciples themselves. The result is growth without reproduction, movement without momentum. This is precisely why Jesus' command was not simply to gather converts, but to *make disciples who make disciples*.

The truth is, very few people, ministries or individuals will ever lead **100,000 people** to Christ each year. Outside of a small number of large organizations, most believers lead only a handful of people to Jesus, if any, over the course of a year. When the addition model is scaled down to everyday disciples, its limitations become even more apparent.

Another challenge emerges when vision is not consistently cast. Without a clear picture of multiplication, many disciples stop at conversion or basic growth. Even among those who lead people to Christ, only a small number continue on to disciple those people into becoming disciple-makers themselves. When vision is absent, discipleship often stalls.

Much of the modern church structure reinforces this pattern. Believers are often encouraged to invite friends so that a pastor or ministry leader can share the Gospel. This approach has produced fruit, Elmer Towns' research shows that **86% of people who come to church or to faith do so because someone invited them**. While this is encouraging, it also reveals a gap: very few believers

personally lead others to Christ, and even fewer walk with them in discipleship afterward.

Over time, the addition model has become the dominant approach. It tends to produce attendees and leaders, but rarely results in disciples who actively make more disciples. Many believers unintentionally shift from seeking God's presence to seeking God's help, focusing on what He can do for them rather than walking closely with Him. As a result, they bring others to church hoping someone else will provide care, teaching, and transformation, rather than stepping into that role themselves.

Even where discipleship classes and small groups exist, valuable as they may be they often function more as spiritual disciplines than as environments of multiplication. These gatherings can strengthen faith and knowledge, but they frequently fall short of producing disciples who reproduce themselves in everyday life and relationships.

This is why the difference between **addition and multiplication** matters so deeply. The addition model can grow churches, but it struggles to create movements. It develops leaders, but often stops short of forming disciple-makers.

The early church operated differently. They embraced a **multiplication model**, where disciples made disciples who made disciples. The result was not slow, centralized growth, but rapid, relational expansion that quite literally **turned the world upside down**. This has always

been God's vision not simply to add people, but to multiply surrendered lives through relationship, obedience, and trust.

In the section ahead, we will explore how the Church can recover this vision and build discipleship ministries that move beyond addition and into true multiplication.

## **Multiplication Model**

Now, let us shift from theory to a practical vision that mirrors the way the early church lived and grew, a way that has often been overlooked in modern discipleship. This is the foundation of multiplying discipleship. It is not complex, reserved for a few, or dependent on extraordinary gifting. It is rooted in relationship, obedience, and faithfulness, and it is accessible to every disciple who is willing to live on mission.

To keep this simple, imagine being entrusted with discipling just **three people in one year**. This is not an overwhelming commitment; it is an attainable and realistic goal for most disciples. Now consider the multiplying effect. If those **three disciples** are also equipped and encouraged to disciple **three others** within that same year, the number of disciples at the end of year one grows to **twelve**.

The process is straightforward: one disciple invests in three, those three invest in three more, and the original disciple continues walking with them all. This relational chain is how multiplication begins. In the next section, we will break down how this works in everyday life. For now, let us carry

this same multiplying model forward and extend it over the next **ten years**, just as we did when examining the addition model earlier, and observe the difference it makes.

### **Year 1:**

The initial disciple trains 3 people.

Those 3 people each train 3 people as well.

So,  $(3 + (3 \times 3) = 3 + 9 = 12)$  total for Year 1.

### **Year 2:**

Each of the 9 new disciples trains 3:

$(9 \times 3 = 27)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 2 =  $(12 + 27 = 39)$ .

### **Year 3:**

Each of the 27 new disciples trains 3:

$(27 \times 3 = 81)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 3 =  $(39 + 81 = 120)$ .

### **Year 4:**

Each of the 81 new disciples trains 3:

$(81 \times 3 = 243)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 4 =  $(120 + 243 = 363)$ .

### **Year 5:**

Each of the 243 new disciples trains 3:

$(243 \times 3 = 729)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 5 =  $(363 + 729 = 1,092)$ .

### **Year 6:**

Each of the 729 new disciples trains 3:

$(729 \times 3 = 2,187)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 6 =  $(1,092 + 2,187 = 3,279)$ .

**Year 7:**

Each of the 2,187 new disciples trains 3:

$(2,187 \times 3 = 6,561)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 7 =  $(3,279 + 6,561 = 9,840)$ .

**Year 8:**

Each of the 6,561 new disciples trains 3:

$(6,561 \times 3 = 19,683)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 8 =  $(9,840 + 19,683 = 29,523)$ .

**Year 9:**

Each of the 19,683 new disciples trains 3:

$(19,683 \times 3 = 59,049)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 9 =  $(29,523 + 59,049 = 88,572)$ .

**Year 10:**

Each of the 59,049 new disciples trains 3:

$(59,049 \times 3 = 177,147)$  new disciples.

Total for Year 10 =  $(88,572 + 177,147 = 265,719)$ .

If you commit to discipling just 3 people each year and train your disciples to do the same your ministry would grow to an astonishing 265,719 individuals after 10 years. Now, consider the impact if you maintained this lifestyle for 50 years. The mathematical progression reveals rapid multiplication, resulting in a total that could easily exceed billions.

The discipleship process of multiplying by 3 every year leads to exponential growth, and by Year 50, the numbers become so vast that conventional counting becomes impractical without computational tools. This model illustrates how deeply the impact of discipleship can expand over time, reaching staggering levels of influence through continuous multiplication.

Unlike the addition model, which produces leaders capable of leading others, the multiplication model far outperforms the addition model by producing disciples who make more disciples. This approach is how the early church expanded so rapidly across the world, and it is also what I have experienced in my own discipleship ministry: remarkable growth.

However, it is important to remember that this kind of expansion is not possible without prioritizing the essential principles outlined in the previous chapters.

## **Review of the Essentials**

Let us review the essential steps for cultivating a personal discipleship ministry that can multiply across **nine generations of disciples** in a relatively short period of time. This kind of fruit does not come from programs or position, but from a life rooted in relationship with Jesus and surrendered to His purposes.

The starting point is wholehearted surrender. Discipleship multiplication flows out of a life that belongs fully to God not partially, not compartmentalized, but entirely. This is what it means to live in full-time ministry. Full-time ministry is not defined by leaving a job or stepping into a church role, though God may call some to do that. Rather, it is a mindset and a lifestyle. It is waking up each day with the understanding that life itself is the ministry and that Jesus is Lord over every space we occupy.

Living in full-time faith means being all in. It means carrying an ongoing awareness that God is at work around us and remaining attentive to the people and opportunities He places in our path. Our schedules, conversations, and relationships are no longer accidental; they become intentional spaces where God's kingdom can advance through love, truth, and obedience.

When life is lived this way, the fruit is evident. The soul finds rest and joy. Life becomes simpler and uncluttered, marked by a clean conscience and growing trust in God. People are no longer seen as interruptions or projects, but through the eyes of Jesus, deeply loved and full of potential. Obedience becomes a natural response rather than a religious obligation, and discipleship flows from who we are, not just from what we do.

This is the foundation for a multiplying discipleship ministry: a life fully surrendered, fully present, and fully aligned with Jesus, where relationship, not religion, shapes everything

Second, it is vital to become an avid student of God's Word and to explore any other areas He opens for you to study. This preparation will equip you for the daily spiritual battles you will face.

Third, set the bar high, just as Christ has done for us. A lifestyle of holiness is our calling, and we achieve this by surrounding ourselves with people who share similar goals and aspirations. Look for faithful, available, and teachable individuals who are eager to grow with you to disciple. We are selective about whom we disciple.

Fourth, cast vision every time you meet with your disciples. **From the outset, let them know that as they are being disciplined, they also need to be discipling someone else.** Establish this as a prerequisite for meeting with potential disciples: if they are not willing to disciple someone while being disciplined themselves, then refrain from pursuing their discipleship. Teach them about the principle of multiplication and emphasize that this is what God desires for their ministry.

Fifth, build a leadership team just as Jesus did. (We will elaborate on this in the next chapter.)

Lastly, continue to cultivate and share your vision with your leadership team as the years go by. With God's help, this will set the stage for a movement of His power to unfold, allowing for nine generations of disciples to be formed in your

ministry. (We will provide further details on this process in a later chapter.)

## **Foundation**

The foundation of a thriving discipleship ministry always begins with wholehearted surrender to Jesus. Nothing of lasting significance happens apart from God's anointing on our lives and our obedience to His leading. Discipleship that multiplies is not built on clever strategies alone, but is formed in stillness where lives are aligned with God's heart and direction is received through relationship.

When discipleship bears fruit across multiple generations, it is not the result of human achievement or gifting. It is the work of a great God responding to surrendered lives. As truth is lived out and shared faithfully, it is passed from one disciple to another, creating a relational chain that God Himself sustains and multiplies.

A multiplying discipleship culture holds a clear and high vision not rooted in pressure, but in purpose. Disciples are called to more than personal growth; they are invited into the joy and responsibility of becoming disciple-makers who walk with others and help them do the same. Vision is consistently cast so that each disciple understands both the calling and the pathway forward.

Discipleship is not a short-term assignment but a lifelong journey. There is always more to learn, more to surrender,

and more room for God to work. As lives remain available and obedient, there is great anticipation for all that God will continue to accomplish through a people fully committed to walking with Jesus and multiplying His life in others.

Get ready to ignite your growth!

In the next chapter, “Building a Leadership Team,” we will uncover one of Jesus’ most powerful strategies—the power of the few. While Jesus had hundreds of disciples, He chose to pour deeply into just twelve. Why? Because He knew something we often forget: multiplication starts with a strong inner circle.

Throughout your life, you may influence many people, but true impact comes when you intentionally invest in a few. Jesus did not chase crowds or focus on flashy numbers. He focused on faithful people who would carry the mission forward, one disciple at a time.

Let us be real—by today’s standards, Jesus would not have the biggest budget, platform, or social media following. But He fulfilled His mission perfectly by equipping twelve world-changers who sparked a global movement.

In this next chapter, we will challenge the world’s definition of “success” and explore how you can begin building your own leadership team—your twelve, —just like Jesus did. This is how movements start. This is how legacies are built.

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 6 Multiplication - Song

### Song Title: Multiply in Me

Multiply in Me is a heartfelt cry to be used by God to make disciples who make disciples. It's more than a mission—it's the heartbeat of Jesus. This song captures the surrender and passion required to live a life that multiplies His love, truth, and transformation through others.

As we pour into others, we're not just passing on knowledge—we're passing on a lifestyle of obedience and spiritual reproduction that advances God's Kingdom one soul at a time.

### Bible Verse:

*"Go and make disciples of all nations..." —Matthew 28:19 (NIV)*

♪ ♪ **Scan the QR code to listen and make it your prayer: "Lord, let Your Kingdom multiply in me."**



[https://youtu.be/  
2F5k\\_yPT9wg](https://youtu.be/2F5k_yPT9wg)

## Chapter 7

# Building a Leadership Team

Studies exploring friendship consistently show that most people maintain a relatively small inner circle. Research from Pew indicates that many adults typically have **one to four close friends**, relationships marked by trust, emotional support, and shared life. While social networks may include many acquaintances, the number of people with whom someone can sustain deep, meaningful connection is naturally limited. These numbers vary based on season of life, personality, and circumstances, reminding us that depth, not breadth, is what shapes real relationship.

This reality has important implications for discipleship. Time, energy, and emotional capacity are finite. A lifestyle centered on relationship requires intentionality, choosing where to invest deeply and where to remain connected more broadly. Following Jesus invites us to be thoughtful about how we steward our relational lives, not isolating ourselves, but also not stretching ourselves so thin that intimacy and growth are compromised.

Jesus Himself modeled this kind of relational focus. While He loved the crowds, He invested deeply in a few. His relationships were not random; they were purposeful and rooted in calling. In the same way, disciples are invited to regularly examine their relationships who they walk closely with, who influences them, and how those relationships align with living on mission.

Living in relationship with Jesus reshapes how friendships are formed and maintained. It calls for discernment, intentional presence, and a willingness to prioritize depth over convenience. When relationships are aligned with God's purposes, they become spaces where love is practiced, faith is strengthened, and discipleship naturally takes root.

Jesus associated with a diverse range of people, from tax collectors to religious leaders, and His interactions were guided by His relationship with the Father. As *John 5:19* tells us, "*I only do what I see my Father doing,*" emphasizing that His actions were a response to God's leading. Similarly, in *John 12:49*, He clarifies that His teachings come directly from the Father. Jesus prioritized intimacy with God, and His closest friends were those who understood His mission and purpose. In *John 15:15*, He reveals that His friends are those who know the Master's business and share in His teachings.

In our relationships, we should adopt a similar perspective, recognizing that our friends have been placed in our lives for a reason. It is essential to view them through God's eyes and to love them as Christ instructed. Additionally, God may call us to distance ourselves from certain friendships

that hinder our closeness with Him. As we grow in our relationship with Jesus, He will clarify who we should and should not be spending time with.

So, how many friends did Jesus have? When we consider His disciples, it becomes clear that while He had a multitude of followers, the ones who were deeply connected to Him shared common goals and purpose. The Bible mentions that Jesus appointed seventy-two others to go ahead of Him into towns and places He intended to visit (Luke 10:1), indicating that He had a considerable network of friendships. Ultimately, the quality of these relationships, rather than their quantity, defines their significance.

In *Acts 1:15*, it tells us that "*Peter stood up among the brothers, numbering about 120.*" This suggests that many more individuals were drawn to Jesus, listening to His every word. I like to refer to these individuals as your church family; they can often be closer to you than your own blood relatives. Together, you navigate life, share vacations, and work toward the common goal of spreading the love of Jesus to those around you.

As a follower of Christ, much of your time is spent engaging with this community, whether through small group studies, mid-week Bible studies, special events, or Sunday morning services. However, amidst these friendships, it is important to ask: How many of these individuals are actively multiplying disciples who, in turn, make more disciples? How many do you influence directly? How many are on mission

with you in advancing the Kingdom of God, one disciple at a time?

According to the definition Jesus provides in John 15:15, a true friend is someone who participates in the Father's business and shares in His teachings. We can meet these friends anywhere, as directed by the Father—whether at church, a bar, a restaurant, a store, or even a barber shop. The key is that these are friends you influence to walk closely with Jesus, who in turn make disciples that make disciples, fulfilling the Father's business.

This does not mean that every friend you have is a direct disciple, but it does mean that they are disciple-makers who influence you as you influence them. For instance, I have pastor friends whom I have not directly disciplined, yet we are close because we share a common mission and mutually influence each other.

There are also friends in our lives who may not share a mission-minded focus, such as co-workers or non-Christians we encounter and socialize with. If God is leading you to spend time with them, it is not necessarily for personal gain, although He may use those relationships in that way. More importantly, this is an opportunity for you to view those friendships as a mission field. You have the potential to be an influence in their lives, with the ultimate goal of guiding them toward Jesus, leading them to become disciples who make more disciples.

Every relationship we cultivate should ultimately point others back to Jesus. We are all uniquely called by God to fulfill His mission, and where He leads us to make friends reflects the gifts and abilities He has given us. Trust that He knows the best crowd for you to associate with in this journey.

### **Building a Leadership Team**

So, how does this relate to building a discipleship leadership team? It is crucial. Our friends become disciples through the influence we have in their lives. When we walk closely with Jesus, we gain the vision to see what He is doing around us, allowing us to discern His will and adjust our lives accordingly. These connections grow into friendships, which then evolve into discipleship, as they, in turn, make more disciples.

Forming a leadership team comprised of friends is a natural progression that God guides us toward, mirroring the model Jesus established with His 12 disciples. A colleague Geoffrey Harris developed a curriculum titled “Keys to Building a Leadership Team,” in which he emphasizes that a thriving discipleship ministry cannot exist without a strong leadership team.

A crucial element of a one-to-one disciple-making strategy is the vision to eventually multiply your personal ministry by developing a leadership team, much like Jesus did. This approach can pave the way for a disciple-making movement that reflects the impact of Jesus’ own ministry.

Building a personal ministry and multiplying oneself is a powerful concept in discipleship. Jesus serves as the perfect example of this principle in action. In Luke 6:12-16, we see Jesus spending time alone with God on a mountainside, praying fervently throughout the night. When morning came, He called His disciples to Him and carefully selected twelve of them to become His apostles. Among them were Simon (later called Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (called the Zealot), Judas (son of James), and Judas Iscariot, who tragically became a traitor.

This passage shows us that Jesus understood the importance of investing in others and multiplying His ministry. By selecting and pouring into a specific group of individuals, He was able to equip and develop them into influential leaders who would continue His work long after He was gone. This intentional approach is the essence of discipleship and sets the groundwork for creating a disciple-making movement.

As we have discussed throughout this book, Jesus did not choose His disciples without spending time with the Father alone to pray. As Jesus has taught us throughout the gospels, spending dedicated time alone with God allows us to align our heart, mind, and purpose with His will. Through prayer, we can discern the individuals whom God is calling us to invest in, just as Jesus did with his twelve disciples, who later became His 12 Apostles.

After spending time with Jesus, an important question naturally arises: **who should be invited into your in-**

**ner circle of disciples?** Just as Jesus was intentional with the twelve, disciples today must also exercise prayerful discernment when forming their closest discipleship relationships.

One helpful way to think about this inner circle is as a **special forces team** not in a prideful or exclusive sense, but in terms of readiness and responsibility. This group is small by design. They are individuals who are deeply surrendered, faithful in obedience, available to be poured into, and teachable in spirit. They are equipped not merely with knowledge, but with character, humility, and trust in God.

This inner circle is not formed around popularity or convenience, but around calling and capacity. These disciples are willing to walk closely, train intentionally, and step into spiritual battles with confidence not in their own strength, but in dependence on God. Their lives reflect consistency, integrity, and a hunger to grow, making them ready to be sent and to lead others well.

Building this kind of inner circle requires time with Jesus, clarity of vision, and courage to choose depth over breadth. When discipleship is rooted in relationship and obedience, this small, focused group becomes a powerful force for multiplication advancing God's kingdom far beyond what one person could ever accomplish alone.

Jesus called His elite group of 12 Apostles, personally training them as His first generation of disciples. A disciple

is someone who is a learner of God's ways and follows Jesus, while an apostle is uniquely sent out with the authority to preach and to make disciples who, in turn, make more disciples. The goal of this book is to cultivate apostles or special force-qualified soldiers of Jesus,—who are on a mission to advance God's Kingdom globally.

While all disciples have the potential to become part of an elite special force team, not all choose to pursue that path. The lie of Satan convinces many that they are not meant to be elite, leading to a corresponding lack of power within the church.

To determine who these disciples are takes discernment and happens gradually over time. Start by building up to discipling 12 individuals first, and from that group, you will begin to identify those who are meant to be in your inner circle. Just as Jesus had Peter, James, and John, you will discover individuals who share your passion for multiplying disciples and are dedicated to growing and equipping others with enthusiasm.

Your goal is not only to influence those directly under your guidance but also to empower them to lead and disciple others. By cultivating a culture of multiplication within your personal discipleship ministry, you can create a ripple effect that extends far beyond your own efforts, ultimately leading to a powerful disciple-making movement.

Another crucial aspect of building a personal leadership team involves identifying individuals who demonstrate relia-

bility and qualification to teach others. In 2 Timothy 2:2, the apostle Paul instructs his disciple Timothy to entrust what he has learned to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

The primary quality that Paul asks Timothy to look for in a disciple is reliability. It is essential to find individuals who can be trusted to faithfully pass on the teachings and values of the ministry. While reliability is crucial, there are other qualities that are also critically important in choosing the disciples who are to be a part of your leadership team.

These qualities include a teachable and humble spirit, a strong commitment to their own personal growth and development, a genuine love for others, a passion for serving and reaching out to people, and a solid understanding of the core principles of discipleship. These qualities are important because they contribute to the disciple's ability to effectively impact others and continue the ministry's work.

This approach to ministry, focused on discipleship and building a personal ministry, differs from a purely evangelistic approach in that it emphasizes not just reaching people with the gospel but also investing in their growth and development as followers of Jesus. While evangelism involves spreading the message of salvation, discipleship goes further by equipping and empowering individuals to become leaders and replicate their ministry.

In the verse from 2 Timothy 2:2, we can see multiple generations represented. Paul is the first generation, Timothy

represents the second generation as Paul's disciple, the "reliable people" mentioned would represent the third generation, and "the others they will teach" represent subsequent generations.

This verse emphasizes the importance of multiplication and the ongoing passing on of knowledge and faith from one generation to another.

Jesus was very intentional about multiplying through His Disciples. His leadership team fulfilled His Purpose of bringing the love of His Father to all of mankind, The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40), and fulfilling His mission of having us join Him in The Great Commission, Go make Disciples of all nations. (Matthew 38:19,20) and (Acts 1:8.)

The only hope of fulfilling the Great Commission is for individual disciples to make disciples and build multiplying leadership teams by following Jesus' model.

When we consider the impact Jesus' team of disciples had on the world, it becomes evident how influential they were. As mentioned above, Acts 17:6 recounts how the disciples were described as individuals who had "*turned the world upside down.*"

It is remarkable to think about how just 12 men were able to make such a dramatic impact on a global scale. In our previous chapter, we discussed the power of multiplication and how quickly we can see God using our team to advance His Kingdom. By multiplying disciples, an individual's personal

ministry can have a wider and deeper impact on society as a whole.

## **Four Reasons Why Multiplying is Significant**

In Geoffrey Harris's curriculum "Keys to building a Leadership team," he outlines 4 reasons why multiplying disciples is significant:

- 1. Perpetuating knowledge:** Multiplying disciples ensures that valuable knowledge and teachings are passed down from one generation to the next. As God leads you, you lead your disciples. By replicating your disciple-making process, you can preserve the teachings of Jesus long after you are gone, leaving a lasting legacy.
  
- 1. Building a sustainable movement:** When disciples multiply, they can form a network of like-minded God-fearing individuals who share a common purpose or values. This network can grow and evolve into a sustainable Spiritual movement, working towards a shared goal or vision even after the original leader is no longer present.
- 2. Addressing large-scale challenges:** Multiplied disciples can work together to tackle complex challenges and make a greater impact. By empowering others to become leaders and change agents,

the Holy Spirit can lead your team to address societal issues on a larger scale, bringing about meaningful and lasting change.

- 3. Personal growth and development:** As a leader or mentor, multiplying disciples can enhance your own personal growth and development. Through the process of guiding and nurturing others, the Holy Spirit can refine your own knowledge, skills, and leadership abilities. It's important to note that multiplying disciples goes beyond simply increasing the number of followers. It involves investing time, effort, and resources into equipping and empowering individuals to become leaders and influencers for Jesus in their own right.

We all have different gifts and skill sets; we are not all built the same. Our likes and dislikes can vary, our habits and approaches to situations may differ, but what remains constant is our shared foundation in the Word of God and our relationship with Jesus. As disciples of Christ, we learn to see people through His eyes. He looks beyond our quirks and differences, meeting us right where we are.

In Christ, we experience unity, as He is one with the Father (John 17:20-21). Geoffrey's four points emphasize this; in Christ, we share His truth and perpetuate knowledge of Him to our disciples, fostering a like-minded community (Philippians 2:2). By building a leadership team of aligned disciples, we create a sustainable movement of God. Together,

we can face life's complex challenges and support one another through difficult times (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

One of the greatest joys in discipleship is witnessing how Jesus Himself actively teaches and forms those who walk closely with Him. In healthy discipleship relationships, learning is not one-directional; growth happens on every side. This is why intimacy with Jesus is essential for any discipleship ministry that bears lasting fruit. As Jesus reminds us, "*Apart from me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5). Remaining connected to Him is what produces fruit and keeps the mission aligned with God's heart.

Yet beyond immediate circles, few prioritize the intentional development of a discipleship leadership team within their personal ministries. This focus has often been overlooked, even though it has been central to Jesus' own method from the beginning. What has been hidden in plain sight for generations is now being rediscovered: discipleship flourishes when life is shared deeply and leadership is multiplied intentionally.

As **Geoffrey** illustrated earlier, the long-term impact of cultivating a discipleship leadership team far outweighs the effort required. When disciples are formed in relationship, equipped in truth, and released in obedience, the result is not just growth but multiplication that sustains the mission far beyond one person or one generation.

## Global Movement

One of the most exciting realities of discipleship today is the opportunity to build leadership teams that extend far beyond local boundaries. The kingdom of God is not limited by geography, and in this season, God is using simple tools to connect surrendered hearts across the world.

Consider this story. A disciple felt prompted to be open about their calling, to simply identify themselves as someone committed to discipleship and multiplication. There was no elaborate strategy, no marketing plan, just obedience. A small step of faith was taken, and soon people from different countries began reaching out, hungry for guidance, relationship, and a clearer understanding of what it means to follow Jesus fully. These connections were not forced or manufactured; they were divinely arranged. God did the drawing. The disciple simply responded.

We live in a time where technology can serve the mission rather than distract from it. Social media, messaging apps, and video calls are not the goal but they can become bridges. Used with discernment and humility, they allow disciples to share life, cast vision, and walk with others across cultures and continents. What once required years of travel can now happen in moments, creating opportunities for multiplication at a pace previous generations could scarcely imagine.

Still, the foundation never changes. Every discipleship journey begins and ends with time spent with Jesus. Relationship with Him is the source of clarity, direction, and

fruitfulness. As disciples seek His face daily, He faithfully brings people into their lives sometimes nearby, sometimes far away. When obedience meets availability, doors open that no one could plan or predict.

Often, it starts small. A conversation. A message. A simple yes. And then something shifts. The possibilities expand, and what once felt limited becomes wide open. Not because of technology itself, but because God delights in using willing disciples who live on mission. When life is surrendered and vision is clear, God multiplies relationships, leadership, and impact far beyond what one person could ever accomplish alone.

However, it is important to remember that we do not disciple just anyone. Like in any other endeavor, we set the bar high. We ensure that these individuals share our vision and possess the qualities of being Faithful, Available, and Teachable. Trust that the Holy Spirit will lead you to those who can develop strong relationships with you, enabling you to guide them spiritually in the long term.

The goal is to multiply through these individuals and their teams, just as Jesus did through His disciples two thousand years ago. By embracing these modern communication tools, you have the potential to nurture and multiply a movement that can reach the ends of the earth, just as Jesus commanded.

## **What happens after we get our Twelve Disciples?**

Building toward an inner circle of twelve disciples often takes time especially when the goal is to walk with those who are **Faithful, Available, and Teachable**. For some, this group forms more quickly; for others, it unfolds slowly. The pace is not the point. What matters is attentiveness to how God is leading and an honest assessment of availability in each season of life.

Every disciple carries real responsibilities work, family, rest, and community. Because of this, the number of people someone meets with regularly will vary. Some seasons allow for deeper investment in a few; other seasons may allow for more. Both are valid. The priority is not volume, but faithfulness. A healthy discipleship ministry always flows out of a healthy walk with God and a balanced life at home.

Personal discipleship is never meant to compete with family or replace it. God does not ask His disciples to neglect those closest to them in order to serve Him. Ministry that costs intimacy at home is out of alignment. This is why it is essential to set the bar high while remaining Spirit-led allowing God to shape the pace, the people, and the priorities, rather than being driven by ambition or comparison.

As a discipleship leadership group begins to form, the focus naturally shifts. The work is no longer only about personal growth, but about equipping others to develop their own leadership teams. Relationships deepen, trust grows,

and shared mission becomes clearer. Gathering together whether in person or virtually creates space for collective learning, prayer, encouragement, and accountability.

These gatherings are not rigid or formulaic. They are guided by the Holy Spirit and shaped by real life. Scripture is explored together, stories of God's work are shared, victories are celebrated, burdens are carried, and hearts are aligned. Over time, this kind of community begins to feel less like a meeting and more like family.

As seasons change, some disciples may step away while others are invited in. This movement is natural and Spirit-led. The goal remains constant: growing closer to Jesus and helping others do the same. When relationship stays central and obedience remains the aim, God continues to multiply disciples who make disciples one life, one relationship, one generation at a time.

Within your team, you will likely find at least three individuals who become part of your inner circle, much like Jesus had. These are the individuals you rely on more frequently and who join you for ministry activities outside your core twelve.

What if you have more than twelve disciples who qualify for your leadership team? Depending on your available time, keeping in mind that many of us have families to prioritize, you can create sub-committees of special forces teams. While these groups consist of highly trained disciples, they operate under the umbrella of your Alpha team and might be

designated as Bravo Team, Charlie Team, Delta Team, Echo Team, and so on, each with twelve members.

You can choose to meet with these sub-teams yourself or train one of your Alpha team members to oversee them, essentially replicating what you do during your Alpha team meetings. All these groups will share the same mission: to advance the Kingdom of God, one disciple at a time.

Feel free to get creative in structuring these teams based on regions, skill sets, or other factors. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you in this process.

The goal of discipleship is not to create something of our own, but to be positioned so God can use us as part of the movement He is already advancing. True kingdom movements are not built around individuals; they are sustained by obedience, relationship, and shared mission. When disciples live this way, the fruit of their lives continues long after they are no longer at the center.

As seasons change and capacity shifts, it may become necessary to slow the pace of directly coaching new disciples. This does not mean stepping away from discipleship, but rather adjusting focus. Continued investment in a core leadership team remains essential, even as availability for new relationships changes. Depth begins to take priority over expansion.

In time, responsibility and authority are entrusted to those within the team who consistently demonstrate faith-

fulness, availability, and a teachable spirit. Leadership is not transferred all at once, but relationally and prayerfully, as God makes it clear who is ready. Discipleship continues, but it becomes increasingly shared rather than centralized.

New people will still enter the journey, but instead of being disciplined by one individual alone, they are often introduced into the broader leadership community. This allows the mission to move forward without being dependent on one person's capacity. As leadership is multiplied, so is impact.

When disciples are empowered to disciple others, the movement becomes sustainable. Growth no longer hinges on a single voice or personality, but on a collective obedience to Jesus. In this way, God's work continues to advance faithfully, relationally, and generationally far beyond what any one life could accomplish alone.

Professor Howard Hendricks said, "If God gave me ten people to (lead), I would accept them with fear and trembling, because that is ten more people than I want to be responsible for at the judgment." He said, "I would pour my life into those ten people and train them to become multiplying disciples of Christ, and we would change the world."

One of the key benefits of having a team is encapsulated in Professor Howard Hendricks' assertion: "I don't want to be responsible at judgment." When you find yourself needing to slow down or feeling overwhelmed by ministry opportunities, a trusted team member can step in and handle things

just as you would. This ensures that no one gets left behind. In contrast, if you are trying to manage everything on your own, there is no support system in place, and people are more likely to slip through the cracks. A strong team provides the backup needed to maintain a thriving ministry.

Jesus said in *Matthew 9:35-38*, He wanted His disciples "to go throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction." And that when they saw the crowds, they were to "have compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Then He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Our leadership teams, are the laborers Jesus speaks of; we are His mighty warriors of God. Like special forces, we report in daily, prepared for battle. Building a leadership team is foundational to Jesus' ministry, and His disciples followed this model, resulting in transformative change that affected the world as we know it.

Do not underestimate the importance of making leadership team building a priority in a personal discipleship ministry. Discipleship is not meant to be shallow or transactional, but relational and intentional. Over a lifetime, it is realistic to walk with **hundreds of people** in friendship and faith. From those relationships, deeper investment naturally forms with **twelve**, and even greater intimacy develops with **three to five**. This pattern reflects how Jesus Himself lived

loving many, investing deeply in a few, and shaping those few to carry the mission forward.

When discipleship and team building are taken seriously, life and ministry take on a depth that cannot be replicated elsewhere. While many find satisfaction in careers, accomplishments, or social circles, there is a deeper joy found in advancing God's kingdom one life at a time. This fulfillment is not fleeting or dependent on circumstances; it flows from alignment with God's heart and participation in what He is doing.

As lives are aligned with God's will through obedience, disciples experience the richness of relationship with Jesus. *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments"* (John 14:15). In this place of surrender and trust, God's blessing overflows *"exceedingly and abundantly more than all we ask or imagine"* (Ephesians 3:20). This is not prosperity measured by the world's standards, but fullness of life rooted in intimacy with Christ.

Because of this, casting vision must be ongoing. Leadership team building should be woven into the culture of discipleship, not treated as an optional add-on. When this vision is consistently reinforced, discipleship becomes sustainable, generational, and expansive twelve wide and many generations deep.

As **Geoffrey Harris** often says, *"As you are going, make disciples."* This captures the heart of multiplying discipleship. When disciples live on mission in everyday life, team build-

ing becomes natural, movements begin to form, and God brings exponential growth far beyond what human effort could ever produce.

Do not ask God to bless your plan; join Him in His. *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* Matthew 28:18-20.

In the next chapter, “Disciplers' Toolkit,” we are diving into the power of having the right tools for the job! Imagine trying to fix something without the proper tools—it is frustrating and slow. But when you are equipped with the right tools, everything changes. You get the job done faster, more effectively, and with far greater impact! That is exactly what we will be focusing on in this chapter: helping you identify the best discipleship curriculum that centers on conversation, not just presentation.

Get ready to discover how to disciple in a way that is dynamic, meaningful, and life-changing! Let us unlock the tools that will transform your discipleship ministry and empower you to lead with confidence!

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be

the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 7 Building a Leadership Team

### Song Title: All In for You

All In for You is a rally cry for commitment and unity. Just as Jesus handpicked and invested deeply in a few, this song calls us to build a discipleship leadership team marked by surrender, trust, and shared mission.

True impact begins when a few go all in—not for themselves, but for the glory of God. This is how Jesus started a movement—and it’s how we carry it forward.

### Bible Verse:

*“He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.” —Mark 3:14 (NIV)*

♪♪ **Scan the QR code to listen and be reminded: the mission multiplies when we go all in—together.**



[https://youtu.be/  
nUvzo041Xh0](https://youtu.be/nUvzo041Xh0)

## Chapter 8

# Disciplers' Toolkit

For many, the desire to be a disciple-maker begins with sincere passion. There is a genuine longing to meet with others, share faith, and walk alongside people as they grow in their relationship with Jesus. Coffee conversations happen. Encouragement is given. Truth is shared. The heart is sincere, and the mission feels clear.

But over time, a deeper question surfaces: is multiplication actually happening? Are these relationships producing real fruit? And when we speak of fruit, we are not merely referring to attendance, knowledge, or spiritual language we are asking whether people are drawing into deeper intimacy with Jesus. Are they moving from religion into relationship? Are they learning to trust Him, hear His voice, and obey Him? And are they helping others do the same?

Good intentions and consistent meetings do not automatically produce multiplying disciples. Without clarity of vision and alignment with God's heart, activity can quietly replace effectiveness. We can begin to measure success by how often we meet rather than by whether lives are being trans-

formed. Religion can creep in, outward engagement without inward surrender.

This realization can be sobering. Not everything done in the name of discipleship is wrong, but sometimes something essential is missing. When fruit is absent, when people are not growing closer to Jesus and not multiplying that closeness into others it becomes an invitation to pause and realign. In His kindness, God exposes subtle drift and calls us back to relationship over routine, obedience over performance, and vision over busyness.

This is why this chapter will focus on something extremely practical: the importance of selecting the right discipleship curriculum and approach if multiplication is the goal. Not all teaching environments are designed to reproduce disciple-makers. We will explore why conversation often leads to transformation more effectively than presentation, and why small group teaching, while valuable does not always result in multiplication. Information transfer alone does not produce movement. Relationship, intentional dialogue, and Spirit-led obedience do.

True discipleship is not measured by the number of conversations we have, but by whether those conversations lead to transformation. When alignment with Jesus is restored, fruit becomes evident: hearts soften, trust deepens, obedience increases, and disciples begin to multiply naturally. Multiplication flows not from pressure, but from intimacy a life rooted in relationship rather than religious effort.

## Conversation versus Presentation

A common misalignment in discipleship happens in posture. Without realizing it, discipleship can drift into a presentation model where one person positions themselves as the expert, well studied, prepared, and responsible for delivering truth while others primarily listen. It becomes structured, controlled, and information-driven. Knowledge increases, but relationship may not.

When this happens, discipleship can subtly lean toward religion. The focus shifts from walking together with Jesus to managing material and outcomes. Even with sincere motives, the tone can feel elevated rather than equal. Dialogue becomes limited. Listening becomes secondary. The emphasis moves from shared transformation to transferred information.

But Jesus models something different.

Healthy discipleship is relational. It begins with humility, the recognition that every disciple stands equally in need of grace. No one has fully arrived. We are all being formed. In this posture, conversations replace presentations. Listening becomes just as important as speaking. Space is created for the Holy Spirit to guide the moment rather than rigidly controlling it.

When discipleship centers on Christ instead of expertise, something shifts. The goal is no longer to prove knowledge but to build one another up. This reflects Philippians 2:3–4,

valuing others above ourselves and looking to their interests. In this environment, disciples feel safe to be honest. Vulnerability replaces image. Growth replaces performance.

A presentation follows an outline. A conversation follows the Spirit.

Presentation says, "Here is what I know."

Conversation says, "Let's seek Jesus together."

Multiplying discipleship grows best in conversations marked by humility, equality, and shared dependence on Christ. When relationship replaces religion, fruit begins to multiply naturally.

Jesus treated His disciples with respect and often engaged with them as equals, even though He was their teacher and held divine authority. His approach was characterized by teaching, guidance, and mentorship rather than condescension.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus asked questions, encouraged discussion, and listened to His disciples, which fostered an environment of learning and growth. For example, in Matthew 16:13-16, Jesus asks His disciples who they think He is, prompting Peter to declare His identity as the Messiah. This exchange demonstrates Jesus' willingness to engage in dialogue and draw out their thoughts and beliefs.

In Matthew 16:17, Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven." A conversational ap-

proach allows the Holy Spirit to speak, enabling both sides of the conversation to be blessed by God.

Additionally, Jesus had authority and knowledge beyond their understanding, His teaching style was relational and marked by love, encouragement, and empowerment, treating His disciples with dignity as fellow workers in the Kingdom of God.

### **Small Group versus One-on-One**

Another area where discipleship can become misaligned is in understanding the distinct roles of small groups and one-on-one discipleship within a multiplying movement. Both matter. Both serve God's purposes. But they are not the same.

Small groups are a beautiful and necessary part of church life. They create fellowship, community, and shared growth. When a group is centered on Jesus and helps people walk more intimately with Him, it absolutely functions as discipleship. People learn Scripture, experience accountability, and grow together in faith. There is real value there.

However, small groups alone rarely produce multiplying disciples. While many grow spiritually in that setting, not everyone will move from learning about Jesus to intentionally discipling others. Without clear vision and personal investment, small group discipleship often strengthens believers without equipping them to reproduce.

Many churches also offer focused training environments, classes on leadership, stewardship, marriage, spiritual disciplines, or evangelism. These are important and can deepen understanding. Yet even these environments do not automatically result in disciples who make disciples. Knowledge can increase without multiplication taking place.

The difference often lies in relational depth.

One-on-one discipleship creates space for intentional investment, vulnerability, and tailored growth. It is in these close relationships that vision is cast clearly, character is shaped, and multiplication is expected. Walking closely with a few allows discipleship to move from information to formation, from attendance to obedience.

Small groups build community. One-on-one discipleship builds multiplication.

Rather than choosing one over the other, a healthy discipleship ministry embraces both. Small groups become places of fellowship and spiritual growth, while also serving as environments where Faithful, Available, and Teachable individuals can be recognized. From there, deeper relational investment can take place.

When both settings are aligned with clear vision, discipleship becomes more than gathering it becomes movement. Personal discipleship ministries begin to form, not just nurturing individual growth, but cultivating disciple-makers who go on to multiply the life of Christ in others.

God has called each of us to be disciple makers, and this is best achieved through one-on-one or one-on-two interactions, while also emphasizing the need to build a leadership team, just as Jesus demonstrated.

It is crucial to remember that the church is not the only place to identify F.A.T. individuals. As you grow closer to Jesus, He will open your eyes to opportunities and connections in various places, leading you to more F.A.T. people. Being intentional and available are two primary characteristics found in multiplying disciple-makers. While small groups play a vital role within the body of Christ, true transformation in the world occurs most often through one-on-one discipleship. That is where the real impact on advancing God's Kingdom happens.

Both small group and one-on-one discipleship have vital roles within the body of Christ, helping individuals draw closer to Jesus. If you are a small group leader or teach a class at church, you are indeed a disciple maker. However, it is equally important to engage in one-on-one discipleship and develop a leadership team that fosters a spiritual movement.

To fulfill our calling to advance the Kingdom of God—in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)—the most effective approach is to cultivate multiplying disciples through personal one-on-one interactions. But we are not just looking to create any disciples; as mentioned above, we aim to identify F.A.T. individuals—Faithful, Available, and Teachable. We set high expectations for our disciples, encouraging them not only to grow closer to Jesus

but also to disciple others even as we are in the process of discipling them. Additionally, we cast vision for our disciples and train them to build their own leadership teams, furthering the movement of discipleship.

### **What Curriculum do I use?**

I want to share a personal story here, because learning to select the right curriculum was not automatic. It was something God had to teach me over time.

For years, I wrestled with what to use when discipling someone especially a new believer. The desire to disciple was there, but the starting point often felt unclear. Personal discipleship can feel intimidating, particularly for someone who is early in their faith. Many believers quietly think, *I don't know enough yet*. That insecurity alone has stopped countless potential disciple-makers before they ever begin.

I tried different approaches. Sometimes I used structured curriculums. Other times, I simply opened the Bible and walked through passages together. Personally, I still believe that opening the Word together is one of the most powerful forms of discipleship. Sitting side by side, reading Scripture, asking questions, listening to the Spirit that is relationship. That is formation.

But I began to notice something troubling.

Even though meaningful conversations were happening, most of those I disciplined were not going on to disciple others.

Something was missing. It wasn't just about content. It was about clarity and confidence.

Part of the issue was vision; I had not clearly cast the expectation of multiplication. But there was another layer. Many believers subconsciously assume that serious Bible study belongs to pastors, lay leaders, or "professionals." Even when they grow personally, they hesitate to lead someone else through Scripture. They feel unqualified. They doubt their ability. They default to thinking discipleship requires expertise rather than obedience.

That hesitation keeps multiplication from happening.

What became clear is that if disciples are going to multiply, they must feel both equipped and empowered. A well-written, simple, conversation-based curriculum can remove fear and build confidence. It creates a pathway that feels accessible. It says, "You can do this." It shifts discipleship from a presentation model to a relational journey where questions are welcomed and obedience is the goal.

Over time, I have encountered several ministries that have provided helpful tools, organizations like Navigators, CRU, and Young Life. Each offers resources that strengthen discipleship. I still carry some of those tools with me. But the key lesson God taught me was this: curriculum must support multiplication, not replace relationship.

The right curriculum does not create dependence on a teacher. It empowers disciples to walk with Jesus themselves and then help others do the same.

That is the difference between religious instruction and relational reproduction.

Even after gathering tools from several discipleship ministries, something still felt incomplete. I had good material. I had solid theology. I had passion. But I struggled with one critical issue: transferability.

What I was doing with others did not always feel easily reproducible. It worked when I led it but would it work if they led it? That question exposed a deeper issue. If a method cannot be confidently handed off, multiplication stalls. And when disciples quietly doubt whether they can do what was done for them, fear creeps in. That fear becomes one of the enemy's greatest tools to keep disciple-makers from ever multiplying.

It was during this season that I was introduced to Natural Discipleship.

The curriculum was created by Steve Harris and introduced to me through Geoffrey Harris. At first glance, it seemed almost too simple. And if I am honest, my pride surfaced. I had years of ministry experience. I had led, taught, preached, and discipled. Part of me questioned whether something so straightforward could really produce multiply-

ing disciples. It did not look flashy. It did not feel sophisticated. It was simple, clear, and relational.

But God has a way of confronting pride gently yet firmly.

Over time, the Lord began to show me that simplicity was not weakness, it was strength. What I had been missing was not depth of knowledge, but clarity of pathway. I needed something that removed fear from new believers. Something that made discipleship feel accessible rather than intimidating. Something that emphasized conversation over presentation and obedience over information.

Eventually, I agreed to be discipled through the curriculum myself. That decision changed everything.

As we met consistently, my eyes began to open. The structure was clear. The questions were conversational. The focus was relational. It did not position one person as the expert and the other as the student; it guided both toward Jesus. Most importantly, it was easily transferable. A new believer could walk through it and then confidently walk someone else through it.

That was the missing piece.

This is also where the concept of being FAT, Faithful, Available, and Teachable became more than an acronym. It became a lifestyle filter. Discipleship was no longer about convincing everyone to participate; it was about investing in those who were ready to walk in surrender and obedience.

As I began discipling others using this approach while still being disciplined myself, I saw something I had long desired: multiplication that felt natural rather than forced. The focus was not on creating impressive meetings but on forming obedient disciples who would reproduce.

Over time, that simple, relational framework helped shape what would become a growing global movement, generations of disciples multiplying beyond what I had previously imagined. What started as humility in learning became clarity in vision.

From that foundation, additional tools were developed to address specific needs within the body of Christ, resources designed not merely to inform, but to equip for multiplication. Among them are:

- **The 9-Step Curriculum**
- *Keys to Being Set Free*

Each one was built with the same heartbeat: relationship over religion, conversation over presentation, surrender over control, and multiplication as the expected fruit of intimacy with Jesus.

Looking back, the lesson was simple but profound: the right curriculum does not create dependence on the leader. It equips disciples to trust Jesus, obey Him, and confidently help others do the same.

## **9-Step Curriculum**

Natural Discipleship offers a 9-step curriculum designed to equip believers for multiplying discipleship. Let's break that down a little further to bring clarity.

The 9-step curriculum has been translated into multiple languages and is intentionally written in a clear, accessible format. It provides disciples with a strong biblical foundation while guiding them in practical obedience. It teaches them how to pray intentionally for new disciples who may already be in their lives, how to study Scripture in a way that leads to transformation, and how to prepare for ministry with confidence. Most importantly, it is built to be transferable, simple enough that even a newer believer can guide someone else through it.

All of the Natural Discipleship curriculums follow the same relational structure. They are designed to foster conversation rather than presentation. The goal is not to create experts who lecture, but disciples who walk side by side in dialogue, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead.

The format is straightforward: the coach reads their portion, and the disciple reads theirs. Each section includes guided discussion questions, which naturally invite reflection, application, and prayer. The material itself anticipates common questions, reducing the pressure many feel about "not having all the answers." This removes one of the greatest fears that keeps believers from discipling others.

In addition, disciples are encouraged to function within a supportive team environment. No one is expected to walk alone. If questions arise that a disciple cannot answer, there is a leadership structure available for support. The curriculums provide clear expectations and built-in training components, and they are available free of charge through the Natural Discipleship app. For those who prefer a physical copy, the books can also be purchased online through Amazon and other major retailers. It is important to emphasize that multiplication is not tied exclusively to one curriculum. Natural Discipleship is simply one example of a tool that has proven effective. God can use any curriculum He places in someone's path to cultivate multiplying disciples.

As explored throughout this book, multiplication is not driven by curriculum alone. It flows from intimacy with Jesus, clarity of vision, conversation over presentation, obedience over performance, and a commitment to relationship rather than religion. When those strategies are in place, and the Holy Spirit is leading, any curriculum built on biblical truth can become a catalyst for a multiplying discipleship movement beyond what anyone could imagine

### **Keys to Being Set Free Curriculum**

**“Keys to Being Set Free”** curriculum was created to address the hidden areas of the heart, the places where self-protection, control, shame, and unresolved wounds often take root. Every person carries internal struggles shaped by the world system and reinforced by religious habits. These

buried patterns quietly influence how people relate to God and others.

This curriculum helps disciples confront the deeper “why” questions many wrestle with:

Why do painful things happen?

Why do certain sins keep resurfacing?

Why is forgiveness so difficult?

Why do addictive or destructive behaviors persist?

Rather than focusing on surface behavior, *Keys to Being Set Free* guides believers from religion into genuine relationship. It helps them see life through God’s perspective instead of through fear, pride, or performance. The process invites honest reflection and surrender, uncovering hidden sin and replacing it with truth and obedience.

The aim is not condemnation, but clarity and freedom. As Jesus said in John 8:32, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” When sin is brought into the light, intimacy with Jesus deepens. Many who have gone through this curriculum testify that God revealed blind spots they did not even realize were shaping their lives.

This curriculum is for all believers, not just those with visible struggles. Even mature disciples discover new areas of surrender as they guide others through it. One of its most powerful aspects is this: as disciples lead others into freedom, the Holy Spirit continues refining and freeing them as well. Multiplication begins with personal transformation.

*Keys to Being Set Free* is available free of charge through the Natural Discipleship app and can also be purchased in book form through Amazon and other major retailers.

## **How often should I meet with my Disciples?**

Another important part of a discipler's toolkit alongside vision, curriculum, and relationship is knowing **how often to meet and how long those meetings should last**. Structure matters, because consistency builds trust, and trust builds multiplication.

A common question is: *How often should disciples meet?*

There is not a rigid formula, but a healthy rhythm is typically once a week for about an hour to an hour and a half. In some seasons, meeting every other week may be more realistic. The key is consistency and Spirit-led intentionality. Discipleship is not squeezed into leftover time; it is prioritized. At the same time, it is not driven by pressure, but by obedience to the Holy Spirit's leading.

The pace should reflect relationship, not religion.

During meetings, the goal is not to rush through curriculum or "complete material." The goal is transformation. Vision should be cast regularly, reminding disciples where they are headed and why multiplication matters. Conversations should follow the Spirit's direction, not the clock.

For example, when walking through Keys to Being set Free curriculum, emotions may surface. Hidden areas of the heart may need prayer, processing, and time. Those moments should not be hurried. However, discipleship also should not drift aimlessly. There must be forward movement. It is a balance sensitivity to the Spirit without losing clarity of direction.

Clear expectations help remove confusion. When beginning a curriculum, it is wise to communicate the likely time commitment. Many curriculums may take four to six months to complete, depending on pace and depth of discussion. If multiple curriculums are part of the pathway, that vision should be communicated early so disciples understand the journey ahead.

High expectations are healthy when they are rooted in relationship. Disciples are encouraged to be engaged, prepared, and available not out of pressure, but out of shared mission. Time together should be protected. Distraction-free environments communicate value and seriousness about the calling.

In the end, discipleship meetings are not merely appointments; they are sacred spaces where God shapes hearts. When rhythm, relationship, and vision align, meetings become catalysts for multiplication rather than routine religious gatherings.

## Embracing the Mission

This book has painted a clear picture of what it means to **Rise Beyond Ordinary** to step out of the world system, out of religious performance, and into a life rooted in relationship, surrender, and mission. God invites each of us to **know Him and be known by Him**, to love Him deeply, to love people the way He does, and to live as disciples who naturally make disciples.

When we align with His will, life becomes simpler. Not easier but clearer. We stop trying to control outcomes and start trusting the One who holds them. God does the heavy lifting; we follow in obedience. Storms may still come. The enemy still opposes. But disciples who walk closely with Jesus remain steady and anchored in peace because their allegiance has shifted. They no longer depend on the world system or lean on religious performance for stability. Instead, they live from a surrendered relationship with God one marked by obedience and a commitment to multiply disciples.

As intimacy grows, something changes inside. A clean conscience forms. A happy soul emerges. We begin seeing people through His eyes rather than through judgment, irritation, or self-protection. Love becomes practical. Obedience becomes natural. Courage replaces fear. This is how disciples become change agents not by striving harder, but by living from relationship instead of religion.

We have also learned that discipleship requires tools. The discipler's toolkit is not complicated, but it is intentional:

- **A clear, compelling vision for multiplication**
- **Conversation over presentation**
- **The right curriculum, transferable and Spirit-led**
- **Consistent meeting rhythms**
- **Building leadership teams of Faithful, Available, and Teachable disciples**
- **A commitment to multiplication, not mere addition**

These tools are not strategies for control; they are structures that support movement. When vision, relationship, obedience, and multiplication come together, discipleship becomes more than meetings it becomes a generational impact.

We have learned that full-time ministry is not a job description it is a lifestyle. Our life is Jesus. Our mission is clear. We wake up to love Him, walk with Him, listen to Him, and make disciples who make disciples. When we build leadership teams and cultivate spiritual movement, we take back ground from darkness and advance God's Kingdom one disciple at a time.

There are no excuses left. God is not calling for more religious activity; He is calling for surrendered disciples who live on mission. Set the bar high, not with pride, but with purpose. As Hebrews 12:1–2 reminds us, we throw off what hin-

ders and run with perseverance, fixing our eyes on Jesus. And like Paul in Philippians 3:13–14, we press on toward the goal. We do not drift. We do not retreat. We finish strong.

The next chapter shifts toward **Lifestyle Change**, because *Rising Beyond Ordinary* is not just about understanding mission; it is about embodying it. The following three chapters are bonus chapters designed to strengthen and reinforce what it truly means to live beyond the ordinary patterns of the world and step fully into Kingdom living.

But before turning the page, pause.

What stirred your heart?

What needs to move from religion into relationship?

Where is God asking you to trust instead of control?

Who is He placing in front of you to disciple?

Do not rush this moment. Let it take root. This could be the spark that reshapes how you live, lead, love, and multiply.

## Chapter 8 Disciplers' Toolkit - Song

### Song Title: Send Me to the Ones

Send Me to the Ones is a heartfelt surrender to be used by God to reach those He's already working on. It's a prayer of availability—to see with His eyes, move with His compassion, and disciple the people He brings into your path.

Discipleship doesn't start with a platform; it starts with one willing heart, ready to pour into another. This song reminds us that the best tool a discipler has is obedience to go where the Spirit leads.

### Bible Verse:

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest... to send out workers into his harvest field." —Luke 10:2 (NIV)*

🎵 🎵 **Scan the QR code to listen and make this your prayer: "Send me to the ones who are ready, Lord—I'm all in."**



[https://youtu.be/  
l4d6fs6tUMw](https://youtu.be/l4d6fs6tUMw)

Transformational  
Discipleship  
Impact

## Chapter 9

# Lifestyle Change

The previous chapters have laid a strong foundation for what it truly means to be a disciple of Jesus. A disciple does not simply adopt new beliefs they experience a transferred allegiance. Their life shifts from the world system to the Kingdom of God. As Paul said in Galatians 2:20, “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.” That is not religious language; that is relational surrender.

A disciple’s mentality is different. Their source is different. Their motivation is different. Yet many struggle to understand what that shift actually looks like in daily life. The intentions are often sincere. The desire to follow Jesus is real. Effort is applied. Activity increases. But fruit, multiplying disciples who make disciples does not always follow.

Spiritual gifts may be present, but power feels absent. Leadership roles may be held, but alignment may be missing. Being active in church does not automatically mean the mindset has shifted from control to trust, from religion to relationship, from performance to obedience. Multiplication flows from alignment, not position.

Albert Einstein famously described insanity as doing the same thing repeatedly while expecting different results. For many in the body of Christ, this pattern quietly persists. Slight adjustments are made. New programs are launched. Fresh strategies are tried. Yet the underlying mentality remains unchanged. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, when Christ calls a person, He calls them to die. That means the old lifestyle rooted in self-dependence must end. But often the old way quietly survives beneath religious activity.

It is possible to appear spiritually mature while still holding on to self-protection. Masks can be worn. On the outside, faith looks strong. But underneath, obedience may be selective. The heart may still be divided one foot in the Kingdom, one foot in the world. Trust in God is professed, yet backup plans are carefully maintained. Control remains subtly intact. A door is left open to manage outcomes personally when God's timing feels slow.

Finances often reveal this tension clearly. Many profess trust in God while making decisions rooted in fear, fear of lack, fear of insecurity, fear of losing control. Giving may happen. Service may happen. Leadership may happen. But deep surrender where God is trusted fully may still be resisted. The lifestyle can mirror the world while religious activity continues.

This is the difference between religion and relationship.

Religion allows control with spiritual language.  
Relationship requires surrender with obedient trust.

When disciples move fully into relationship where even security, identity, and provision are placed in God's hands, a happy soul begins to form. Peace replaces anxiety. Generosity replaces fear. Obedience replaces self-protection. And from that place of alignment, multiplication begins to flow naturally.

The shift is not cosmetic. It is foundational. And without it, discipleship remains activity rather than a movement.

### **Surrendering What Was Never Ours**

Learning to trust God with finances and truly live in the present with Him requires more than agreement with Scripture. It requires a transfer of allegiance. It means moving from control to trust, from fear to contentment, from managing outcomes to resting in relationship.

Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:25–34 not to worry about tomorrow, but to seek first the Kingdom and trust the Father to provide. Many believe those words. Many can quote them. But belief and obedience are not always the same. When faith remains theoretical, religion is still at work. When faith becomes practiced through obedience, relationship begins to deepen.

The shift happens when God's Word moves from intellectual agreement to lived surrender.

In religion, Scripture is read and affirmed, yet often selectively applied especially in areas that feel vulnerable, like money. In relationship, Scripture is read with the posture of obedience. Imperfect obedience, yes but real obedience. And obedience produces something powerful: contentment, clarity, peace, and a clean conscience.

When disciples fully surrender finances to God, a simple but profound truth becomes real: nothing belongs to us. Everything belongs to Him. This truth may have always been acknowledged mentally, but surrendering it practically changes everything. Spending, saving, giving each decision becomes an act of trust rather than an act of control.

That is where mentality shifts.

Control over money often reveals deeper control issues in the heart. Fear of lack. Fear of instability. Fear of losing independence. These fears quietly shape decisions. But when surrender replaces control, vision becomes clearer. Disciples begin to see that God was never asking for financial management alone He was asking for full trust.

Freedom comes when control is released.

And once that control is lifted, God begins revealing other areas misaligned with His will not to condemn, but to refine. The difference now is responsiveness. Obedience becomes quicker. Surrender becomes easier. Trust becomes normal.

This kind of freedom does not stay contained. It multiplies. Disciples who experience freedom from control begin discipling others into the same freedom. Mentality shifts ripple outward into generosity, into mission, into multiplication.

When trust replaces control, disciples stop living reactively and begin living from relationship. Instead of managing outcomes, they walk in surrender. And from that place, everything shifts old patterns fade, and a new lifestyle emerges, rooted in peace, obedience, and intimacy with God.

### **From Religion to Relationship**

At one time, lifestyle change was often misunderstood as something external changing jobs, moving cities, or altering visible circumstances. While God may lead someone into a new vocation or location, that is not the core of what He means by transformation. A true **lifestyle change**, according to Scripture, begins with a new mindset that produces a new way of living. It is not about rearranging the outside; it is about surrendering the inside.

In our language, it is the shift from religion to relationship.

Lifestyle change happens when faith moves from agreement to obedience. When the world system no longer defines identity, security, or success. When control is replaced with trust. When disciples stop performing for God and start walking with Him. That internal shift leads to an entirely dif-

ferent way of living one marked by intimacy, surrender, and multiplication.

As discussed earlier, disciples are called to see life through God's eyes. That means their lifestyle will look different. Their decisions will reflect trust rather than fear. Their priorities will reflect Kingdom mission rather than personal advancement. The contrast between the old life and the new life becomes visible not in loud declarations, but in consistent obedience.

And here is where lifestyle change becomes measurable: multiplication.

Many genuinely desire to disciple others, yet struggle to see lasting fruit. Often, the issue is not effort, but surrender. If lifestyle has not fully shifted from self-dependence to Spirit-dependence, multiplication will remain limited. This becomes a spiritual barometer. Are actions flowing from relationship, or are they still rooted in religious habit?

It is possible to stay busy in church life, teaching classes, giving generously, supporting ministries yet never personally multiply disciples. God can certainly use those efforts, but lifestyle change goes deeper. It calls each disciple into personal responsibility for making disciples who make disciples.

Without surrender, patterns repeat. Activity increases. Results stagnate. But once allegiance transfers fully to God's Kingdom, impact multiplies. Lifestyle change means embracing the calling to influence others intentionally. Each person

carries unique gifts, entrusted by God for His glory and for advancing His Kingdom one disciple at a time.

When those gifts are surrendered and aligned with God's mission, something beautiful happens. Influence becomes relational. Obedience becomes consistent. Multiplication becomes natural. Lifestyle change is not cosmetic; it is generational.

And when lifestyle truly changes, disciples do not simply believe differently; they live differently, love differently, and multiply differently.

### **Cultural Influence**

Many of us were shaped by Western culture long before we understood what it meant to follow Jesus. From a young age, we were taught that nothing happens unless we make it happen. Believe in yourself. Work harder. Outperform everyone else. Success belongs to the strong, the disciplined, the ambitious. Weakness was something to avoid. Dependence was something to outgrow. Achievement was everything.

That mindset forms lenses through which we see the world.

We are encouraged to dream big and define ourselves by what we accomplish. As children, we are asked what we want to be when we grow up, and our identity begins forming around future titles and status. Life becomes a pursuit to be the best, rise to the top, eliminate whatever stands in the way.

Hard work, education, and perseverance are presented as the ultimate path to greatness.

The world system measures value by performance.

When meeting someone new, one of the first questions often asked is, “What do you do?” Identity becomes linked to profession. Titles elevate status. Degrees increase perceived worth. The successful are admired. The unnoticed are overlooked. Without realizing it, culture trains us to evaluate ourselves and others based on achievement and visibility.

That performance-based mentality quietly seeps into faith as well.

It becomes easy to approach Christianity the same way achieve more, serve more, know more, perform better. Religion can thrive in that environment because it still allows self-dependence. But relationship calls for something radically different.

Scripture reminds us that identity is not rooted in accomplishment but in belonging. Galatians 3:26–28 declares that in Christ we are children of God. Our worth is not defined by title, wealth, education, or social standing. It is defined by being His.

Before surrendering to Christ, the world system feels normal. After surrender, allegiance shifts. Philippians 3:20 reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven. Jesus Himself said in John 18:36 that His Kingdom is not of this world. Colos-

sians 1:13 tells us we have been rescued from darkness and transferred into His Kingdom. And Romans 12:2 calls us to stop conforming to the patterns of this world and instead be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

That renewal is the heart of lifestyle change.

Disciples must learn to see people through God's eyes. Not as competitors. Not as status markers. Not as useful or disposable. But as image-bearers wounded, searching, loved. When Jesus encountered people, He saw beyond their titles and failures. He saw pain, hunger, longing, and potential.

If mentality does not shift, lifestyle will not shift. And if lifestyle does not shift, multiplication will not happen.

Remaining in the world's mindset while claiming Kingdom allegiance creates divided living, religious activity without relational transformation. But when obedience reshapes thinking, eyes begin to open. Identity detaches from performance. Security detaches from achievement. Love detaches from preference.

This shift is not cosmetic it is foundational. Without it, disciples will struggle to make disciples who make disciples. With it, everything changes.

Do not underestimate how deeply the world's cultural systems shape the way people think, decide, and live. If this influence goes unrecognized, it quietly distorts perspective.

And when perspective is distorted, it becomes difficult to see others through the eyes of Jesus.

When Jesus calls someone, He is not merely inviting them to adopt new beliefs. He is inviting them out of the world system and into a new reality rooted in relationship with Him. That invitation requires more than adjustment it requires transformation. It calls for a radical lifestyle change. Identity shifts. Values shift. Definitions of success shift. The way we see ourselves and others begins to change.

For three years, the disciples walked closely with Jesus as He patiently reshaped their worldview. They asked questions. They misunderstood. They reacted from old patterns. But Jesus did not abandon them. He understood that habits formed over a lifetime would not disappear overnight. He was teaching them to unlearn what the world had taught them and to relearn life through the lens of the Kingdom.

That unlearning is essential.

As John 8:32 reminds us, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Freedom comes as truth replaces old thinking. Immersing ourselves in God’s Word and walking daily in fellowship with Him begins dismantling the habits that once controlled us. Without that ongoing relationship, the old mindset quietly regains influence.

When Jesus called His disciples, He was calling them into a completely different way of living. The world system had trained them to operate from performance, status, and self-

preservation. Their reflexes were shaped by competition and control. But Jesus introduced something foreign to that system servanthood, humility, and sacrificial love.

They struggled at first. They argued about who would be greatest. They sought position. They misunderstood power. Yet Jesus continually redirected them. He modeled what true greatness looks like. As Mark 10:45 says, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

That is the lifestyle change He invites every disciple into.

It is a move from performance to service. From self-gain to self-giving. From religion shaped by culture to relationship shaped by Christ. When that shift takes root, disciples begin to live differently, love differently, and multiply differently.

## **Fishers of Men**

After the resurrection, the disciples did something very human they drifted back toward what was familiar. They returned to fishing. Old patterns are comfortable. Old identities feel safe. Even after walking with Jesus, seeing miracles, and hearing His teaching, their reflex was to go back to what they once knew.

Lifestyle change does not happen automatically.

Their identity was still tied to what they did for a living. They saw themselves as fishermen. But Jesus had already spoken something deeper over them. “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). He was not telling them to abandon work; He was redefining it. Their profession was no longer their identity it was a platform for mission.

That is the heart of lifestyle change.

When Jesus calls someone, He does not merely adjust their schedule He transforms their perspective. He promises provision, but He also calls for surrender. The old self must die. The old definitions of success must be laid down. A new way of living begins one that seeks to please Him above all else.

Identity shifts first. Lifestyle follows.

A disciple no longer defines themselves by career, income, or reputation. Work becomes worship. The job becomes a mission field. Every interaction becomes an opportunity to love as Jesus loves. Colossians 3:23–24 reminds us that whatever we do, we do it for the Lord, not for human approval. Promotions, influence, or advancement are no longer chased as ultimate goals; they are received if they come as tools for Kingdom purpose.

This is a radical shift from the world system.

The world says, “Climb higher.”  
The Kingdom says, “Serve deeper.”

The world says, "Build your name."  
The Kingdom says, "Glorify His."

Lifestyle change means surrendering the right to self-direction. It means laying down personal ambition and asking daily, "What is on Your heart, Lord?" It is choosing to see people through His eyes and adjusting decisions accordingly.

When this shift takes root, gifts are no longer used for self-promotion but for Kingdom multiplication. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us that we are His workmanship, created for good works prepared in advance. That means purpose was assigned long before personal plans were formed.

When Jesus commissioned His disciples in Matthew 28:19 and Acts 1:8 to go and make disciples, He was not giving them an optional ministry lane. He was defining their lifestyle. Everything work, family, leadership, influence was to orbit around that mission.

Lifestyle change does not mean abandoning excellence. It means redefining it.

Becoming a strong worker, parent, spouse, or leader becomes a byproduct of walking closely with Jesus not the primary pursuit. When disciples focus first on making disciples who make disciples, character strengthens, integrity deepens, and influence grows naturally.

But if the focus remains on climbing ladders, gaining status, or accumulating success even in religious settings, multiplication will stall.

True lifestyle change realigns ambition, reorders identity, and redirects energy toward Kingdom movement. It is not about quitting everything. It is about surrendering everything.

And from that surrendered place, disciples begin to live differently, love differently, and multiply differently.

### **Our Spiritual Gifts are Beautiful**

Over time, true lifestyle change begins to shape both mentality and behavior until the character of Jesus is reflected more clearly. That is the goal not religious performance, not outward appearance, but inward transformation that overflows into daily living.

In our language, lifestyle change is about becoming more like Jesus in how we think, love, serve, and respond.

Everything about Jesus was beautiful not in a superficial sense, but in essence. His life was perfectly aligned with the Father. His obedience was uninterrupted. His love was unconditional. When people encountered Him, something stirred inside them. It was as if they were witnessing a melody that made sense of everything else. Hearts recognized truth. Souls felt drawn.

Zechariah 9:17 declares, *“How great is His goodness, and how great His beauty.”* The beauty of Jesus was not merely in miracles, but in His character. He embodied love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and unwavering obedience. He did not live for applause or status. He lived for the Father.

That is lifestyle change.

It is moving from self-centered ambition to God-centered obedience. From reacting in the flesh to responding in the Spirit. From living for recognition to living for reverence.

Scripture tells us in Matthew 7:29 that Jesus taught with authority, not like the scribes. His authority flowed from alignment. He was completely surrendered to the Father’s will. There was no divided allegiance. No performance. No self-protection. Just obedience.

When disciples surrender fully, something similar begins to emerge. Not perfection but progression. As intimacy with the Father deepens, His character begins forming within them. The more flesh is denied, the more Spirit-led responses become natural. And when that happens, others notice not because the disciple seeks attention, but because the presence of Christ becomes evident.

Lifestyle change produces fruit.

Disciples who walk in intimacy begin to radiate hope, steadiness, and peace in a chaotic world. Their words carry weight because they are rooted in obedience. Their love feels

different because it flows from relationship, not obligation. They become living testimonies that transformation is real.

Jesus said in John 14:12 that those who believe in Him would do the works He did and even greater works because He goes to the Father. That promise is not about self-exaltation; it is about surrendered vessels empowered by the Spirit. When disciples live fully aligned, God works through them in ways that point others back to Him.

And when people see that beauty when they witness love without condition, truth without arrogance, strength without pride they glorify the Father.

Psalm 89:1 says, *“I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever.”* Lifestyle change turns a life into that song. It becomes a testimony of mercy, grace, and transformation.

This is the invitation: not simply to admire Jesus’ beauty, but to be transformed by it. To step out of religion and into relationship. To let His character shape daily life. To live in such a way that others encounter the melody of Christ through ordinary obedience.

That is lifestyle change.

## **5 Loaves and 2 Fish**

As we close out this chapter on **Lifestyle Change**, consider one moment in the Gospels that captures the shift

Jesus is always trying to produce in His disciples, the feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13–21).

In that scene, the disciples could only see the problem through a worldly lens. They looked at the crowd, looked at the lack, and immediately calculated what could not be done. Their mindset was still shaped by limits, resources, time, money, and human effort. In other words, they were thinking in the language of the world system: *If we don't have enough, we can't move forward.*

But Jesus saw something different.

Mark tells us His heart was moved because the people were *"like sheep without a shepherd"* (Mark 6:34). Jesus was not merely addressing hunger, He was revealing the Father's compassion and teaching His disciples how to see. He was shifting them from performance-based living to Kingdom-based living, from self-dependence to surrendered trust.

And then Jesus asked a question that still confronts every disciple today: **What do you have?**

Once the disciples stopped staring at what they lacked and simply offered what was in their hands, five loaves and two fish, Jesus did what only God can do. He took what was small, blessed it, and multiplied it until it became more than enough. John 6:11 says, *"Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated."* What was surrendered became multiplied.

That is a lifestyle change.

It is learning to live from relationship, not resources. It is trusting God with what is in hand today instead of panicking about what is missing tomorrow. It is moving from control to trust, from fear to faith, from “I can’t” to “God can.” And it is realizing that God loves to use ordinary gifts, ordinary people, and ordinary moments to do extraordinary Kingdom work so that people come to know Him more intimately.

This is the question that naturally follows as this chapter closes: **Does our life reflect the character of Christ?** Are people encountering His love through the way decisions are made, the way struggles are handled, the way others are treated? Is the light of Jesus shining not as a religious mask, but as a relational reality?

Lifestyle change is not about becoming impressive. It is about becoming surrendered. It is trading a performance-based mentality for a Spirit-led life one that listens, obeys, and trusts God to multiply what is offered.

That is why Scripture warns us, “*Do not quench the Spirit*” (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The Spirit is not passive within believers He is like fire, ready to refine, empower, and send. When disciples suppress the Spirit through fear, control, or religious routine, the flame dims. But when disciples yield, the Spirit’s beauty and power begin to overflow through ordinary life.

And Jesus makes the outcome clear in Matthew 5:16: *“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”* A transformed lifestyle is not for self-improvement it is for God’s glory and other people’s salvation and growth.

So, as this chapter ends, pause. Let it settle. Ask the Lord: *Where is lifestyle still being shaped by the world system? Where is religion still replacing relationship? Where is control still crowding out trust? What do I have in my hands right now that You want me to surrender?*

Don’t rush past that moment. Lean in. Let the Holy Spirit make this real. Because the call to lifestyle change is not a side message—it is the pathway to becoming the kind of disciple who lives differently, loves differently, and multiplies faithfully.

## Chapter 9 Lifestyle Change - Song

### **Song Title: Beautiful Jesus**

Beautiful Jesus is a song of transformation. As our lifestyle shifts to reflect His ways, our eyes are opened to see His beauty more clearly—not just in theory, but in daily life.

This song reminds us that the more we walk in obedience, the more we treasure Jesus. His beauty is revealed not just in His sacrifice, but in the way He shapes our hearts, changes our desires, and becomes our everything.

### **Bible Verse:**

*“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.” —Psalm 34:8 (NIV)*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and let your heart declare: “I once was blind, but now I see—You are beautiful, Jesus, to me.”**



[https://youtu.be/  
N0WeZ55D4pg](https://youtu.be/N0WeZ55D4pg)

## Chapter 10

# Happy is our Soul

Grasping the profound importance of our role as disciples of God naturally moves us toward becoming effective and fruitful disciple-makers. Discipleship is not merely about learning information or completing a study; it is about stepping into our identity as sons and daughters who walk in daily relationship with Him. Embedded within the call to follow Jesus is our purpose, and that purpose unfolds through the simple, daily sacrifices we joyfully lay before Him our time, our comfort, our pride, our plans. We do not surrender reluctantly; we surrender because we trust Him. Yet if we are going to truly thrive in this calling, one essential element must be present: a happy soul. A happy soul is not shallow positivity or pretending life is easy. It is the settled joy that flows from living in right relationship with God. It produces a clean conscience because we are no longer resisting His leadership; we are walking with Him.

Over the years, many of us have spent significant time around other believers. We worship together, serve together, and talk about spiritual things, yet it is not uncommon to sense a subtle heaviness beneath the surface. When trials

come and they always do that heaviness becomes visible. It shows up in frustration, discouragement, irritation, or anxiety. Instead of peace, there is tension. Instead of joy, there is weight.

This leads us to ask an honest question: Is this really what God desires for His disciples? Does the Father who invites us into relationship intend for us to live burdened and perpetually worn down? Clearly not. So why do so many struggle to live with joy even though we are called to freedom? Often it is because we drift from relationship into routine. We slowly shift from walking with God to managing life for God. Without realizing it, we slip back into patterns shaped by the world system trying to control outcomes, solve everything with our own understanding, and carry responsibilities that were never ours to bear. When we live from that place, joy fades and heaviness increases.

There is a direct connection between intimacy with God and the health of our soul. As our relationship with Him deepens, our joy strengthens not because circumstances suddenly improve, but because trust becomes more secure. When we are close to Him, we are not scrambling to interpret every event or control every outcome. We know who holds our lives. Spiritual growth is not simply gaining more knowledge; it is learning to trust more fully. It is moving forward in faith instead of remaining stuck in routine religion.

A stagnant believer often becomes a heavy believer, but a growing disciple develops a lighter soul not because life is easy, but because surrender is real. Joy becomes the heart-

beat of a flourishing discipleship life. It safeguards us in moments of pressure. When stress rises, whatever fills our heart will spill out. If our soul is unsettled, anxiety will lead. But if our soul is surrendered and joyful, the Holy Spirit has space to guide our response before our flesh reacts.

A happy soul is a surrendered soul. It is the grace to walk through life's challenges with steady trust. It is the quiet confidence that God is actively working through every circumstance with wisdom beyond our understanding. It is the settled belief that nothing touching our lives escapes His loving awareness.

This kind of trust gives life to our faith. We are not merely quoting promises; we are resting in them. We return again and again to intimacy with Him. In hardship, we draw near rather than withdraw. In confusion, we listen rather than panic. In disappointment, we surrender rather than grow bitter. As this pattern becomes consistent, something beautiful happens within us. Our soul becomes lighter. We forgive more quickly. We carry less offense. We respond instead of react. We speak with grace. We rest more deeply. This transformation does not happen because we have mastered life; it happens because we have yielded control.

A disciple with a happy soul becomes deeply attractive to others. People are not drawn to heavy religion; they are drawn to authentic joy. When someone walks through real hardship with steady peace and genuine trust, it causes others to pause and ask why. Joy becomes a witness. Peace becomes compelling. A clean conscience becomes contagious.

Discipleship multiplication does not grow best in pressure and performance; it flourishes in joy.

A happy soul is cultivated intentionally. It grows as we walk daily in honest relationship with God, confess quickly, surrender repeatedly, and trust His orchestration over our understanding. Joy is not the absence of trouble; it is the presence of trust. Happy is the soul that no longer strives to control outcomes. Happy is the soul that rests in surrender. Happy is the soul that knows it is deeply loved. From that kind of life, disciples are formed naturally, and ministry flows not from strain but from joy.

### **Self-Assessment**

A disciple must learn to ask a simple but powerful question every single day: Is my soul truly happy? Not surface happy. Not pretending. But deeply settled. This requires honest self-assessment before God. We have to slow down long enough to ask: Am I carrying worry or anxiety today? Is fear quietly shaping my decisions? Is anger lingering beneath my words? Am I walking in peace even in the middle of pressure, or do I feel darkness slowly creeping into my habits and attitudes? Do I complain more than I give thanks? These are not condemning questions; they are clarifying ones. They help us see whether we are living from relationship or slipping back into old patterns.

Daily honesty keeps our hearts soft. We cannot cultivate a happy soul or maintain real fellowship with God if we ignore

the shadows that try to attach themselves to us. Darkness rarely barges in loudly; it seeps in quietly through comparison, offense, control, pride, or hidden fear. Scripture reminds us that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say we are walking with Him yet choose to hide in shadows, we are not living in alignment with truth. But when we step into the light fully and honestly, we experience fellowship, freedom, and cleansing. The light is not meant to expose us for shame; it reveals us for healing.

A happy soul runs toward the light. It is not afraid to be seen. It trusts the Holy Spirit enough to stop hiding and stop managing perception. True freedom is not image control; it is transparency. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, and that freedom includes the courage to be known. How can we inspire others into discipleship if we are still curating a version of ourselves instead of walking in authenticity? Disciple-making does not flow from polished perfection. It flows from surrendered honesty.

There have been seasons where self-protection shaped my behavior more than trust did. I would exaggerate stories, inflate small moments, and subtly adjust details to appear more significant. It was like catching a small fish and describing a whale. There was no real reason for it except insecurity. It became a habit of image management a way to feel important, a way to shield weakness. But that kind of living quietly robs the soul of joy. It creates tension. You must remember what you said, protect the version of yourself you presented, and guard against being exposed. That is exhausting. And an exhausted soul cannot be a happy one.

A truly happy soul chooses humility. It is comfortable acknowledging weakness and is deeply aware of its need for a Savior. It does not perform righteousness; it receives grace. It does not pretend strength; it rests in dependence. There is joy in not having to impress anyone. There is peace in not carrying a false identity. When we walk this way, our conscience stays clean because we are no longer splitting ourselves between who we are and who we are trying to appear to be.

A happy soul also understands that sanctification is not punishment; it is transformation. Trials are not interruptions to our growth; they are the very tools God uses to shape us. Instead of resisting hardship, we learn to embrace it as refinement. Instead of resenting pressure, we allow it to expose what still needs surrender. Through every challenge, we are being formed more fully into the likeness of Christ. That process, though sometimes uncomfortable, is deeply freeing. It means we are not stuck. It means God is actively working within us.

When we stop hiding, repent quickly, walk in the light, and trust the shaping hand of God, something beautiful happens. The soul lightens. Shame loses its grip. Fear loosens. Joy returns not because life is simple, but because we are aligned. A happy soul is not one that avoids struggle; it is one that refuses to hide in it. It lives open before God, open before others, and secure in His love. And from that kind of freedom, disciples are made naturally.

## George Muller, Happy Soul

A prime example of a disciple who had a happy soul is George Müller. Born in Germany on September 27, 1805, Müller's life mission was to glorify God by encouraging others to trust deeply in His word. Müller immersed himself in the scriptures, claiming that he read the Bible five to ten times more than any other books. His goal was to see God in Jesus Christ, crucified and resurrected, and to maintain the happiness of his soul in Him.

This profound satisfaction in God liberated Müller from worldly fears and desires. George learned to embrace his true self and viewed life's circumstances as a dance with God. He famously said, "I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve or glorify the Lord, but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished... I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it."

Müller's devotion serves as an inspiration, reminding us that nurturing a happy soul in God is essential for our effectiveness and fulfillment as disciples. Many disciples overlook the importance of cultivating a happy soul. Paul underscores this in *Acts 24:16*, stating that he "*strives daily to keep his conscience clear before God and others.*" Later, in *2 Timothy 1:3*, towards the end of his life, he expresses gratitude: "*I thank God,*

*whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience,"* before encouraging Timothy with his prayers.

Both George Müller and Paul recognized that a happy soul is vital for effective ministry as disciples. Both were humble and honest about their imperfections, consistently seeking God's light each day to experience restoration and renewal. Without this inner joy and clarity, we cannot fully realize our calling.

### **The Power of Prayer and Trust**

In 1835, George Müller was called by God to start an orphan house in Bristol, England. God opened his eyes to see that there were only a dozen orphan homes in all of England and Wales, and they charged fees to care for the children. Poor children who became orphans had to move in with relatives or were sent to work in the workhouses.

There was no place for these orphans, and through prayer, God gave George a vision to start an orphan home for children who were truly orphaned, having lost both parents. None would be turned away due to poverty or race. The children would be educated and trained for a trade in Jesus' name. All of this was great, but George was very poor and had no resources to start an Orphan ministry.

Müller was a man of great conviction who believed that God alone would provide everything he needed to start an orphanage. He was determined to demonstrate to the world

and those around him that prayer alone would move God's hand to inspire others to help him fulfill the vision of establishing an orphanage. Müller was steadfast in his decision not to express his needs to anyone but God, relying entirely on prayer.

As George shared his vision with the community, he invited them to join him in prayer without ever soliciting financial support. He was confident that if the ministry was truly of God, the necessary provisions would be supplied divinely. "God will provide," he asserted. Unsurprisingly, gifts of furniture, money, and dishes began to pour in. Müller meticulously recorded every donation, from material goods to offers from people willing to teach and work at the orphanage. Eventually, he secured a place to rent for the orphanage.

Reflecting on these events, George stated that the word of God alone should be our spiritual guide, explainable only by the Holy Spirit, who remains the teacher of God's people today, just as in the past. George firmly believed that our prayer life should be based on God's word and that the Holy Spirit works miracles in and through people's lives.

Müller frequently wrote about the stewardship of money and the importance of not relying on earthly riches, believing that God would bless those who adhered to these principles. He felt that by sharing his own experiences, he could prove the truth of his claims. Beyond caring for orphans, George Müller also funded the printing of Bibles and tracts, giving away more than 250,000 Bibles in his lifetime. He financed

the tuition of hundreds of children, ensuring they could attend school.

Through prayer alone, Müller raised the equivalent of \$129,000,000, which he generously gave away. By the time of his death, he had only a small amount of money left to his name, about \$167. The trust he established continues to support missionaries worldwide and maintains the records for nearly 18,000 children cared for over the 150-year lifespan of the orphanage. Additionally, the trust supports 189 missionaries, 100 schools with 9,000 pupils, and distributes 4,000,000 tracts and tens of thousands of Bibles annually.

George Müller built five large orphan houses and cared for 10,024 orphans throughout his life. When he began in 1834, there were only enough accommodations for 3,600 orphans in all of England, with twice that many children under eight imprisoned. His ministry had a profound impact, inspiring many to act. According to biographer A.T. Pierson, “Fifty years after Mr. Müller began his work, at least one hundred thousand orphans were cared for in England alone.”

Remarkably, George prayed in millions of dollars in today’s currency for the orphans and never directly asked people for money. He did not take a salary for his 68 years of ministry, trusting that God would move people’s hearts to provide what he needed. He never took out a loan or went into debt, and neither he nor the orphans ever went hungry.

Müller was sustained by his deep convictions that God is sovereign over the human heart, life, and death, and that God

is good in His sovereignty. He believed that God withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly with a clean conscience and a happy soul. George Müller's life exemplified a deep trust in God rather than in mankind.

His early years were marked by pride and indulgence, but once God transformed his life, he began to shed the detrimental habits he had clung to for so long. Although George faced significant challenges, as God called him to a life of poverty, he often did not know how he would provide food for the orphans in his care, sometimes not even from one day to the next. Yet, through the grace of God and the power of prayer, George and the children he cared for never went without a meal or lacked any essential needs. George Müller's life teaches us that to have a truly happy soul, we must place our trust solely in God, not in man.

Chasing after money will never lead to a happy soul, nor will trying to control your future in pursuit of wealth. However, when you surrender the desire for more money and the urge to manage your future according to your own plans to God, you will cultivate a clean conscience and, ultimately, a happy soul.

### **The Path of a Happy Soul**

In *James 4:7* it says, "*submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*" George comprehended this verse as aligning his life with God's so that it would position him to be mightily used by God. His life story has profoundly

influenced millions and has led many to place their trust in God as he did. A disciple who fully relies on Jesus and possesses a happy soul is one who profoundly influences those around them for the glory of God.

A person with a happy soul can achieve incredible things, much like George Müller, often defying all reason. They possess the ability to see what others cannot, receiving visions that empower them to accomplish supernatural feats that may seem unimaginable to those around them.

This aligns with Paul's words in *Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)*: "*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*"

A disciple with a happy soul understands this promise and can be powerfully used by God to impact the world around them by simply utilizing their gifts for His glory.

George understood that if he was not in God's word daily, he would have no chance of properly aligning himself with God's will. Without this alignment, he would not know how to pray effectively and would face his circumstances without divine power. He maintained a happy soul and a clear conscience by adhering strictly to God's way, avoiding any positions of compromise, and never placing his trust in humans to meet his needs.

Living this kind of life does not imply it will be easy. George Müller encountered challenges that most of us will never face. However, his life testimony provides valuable in-

sight into viewing life as a disciple from God's perspective. Let us examine some of his statements and glean wisdom from them.

### **George Müller Statements**

George once said his life was a “visible proof to the unchangeable faithfulness of the Lord.” He always knew God was close by, and he prayed about everything and expected each prayer to be answered. Once, while crossing the Atlantic on the SS Sardinian in August 1877, his ship ran into thick fog. He explained to the captain that he needed to be in Quebec by the following afternoon, but Captain Joseph E. Dutton, said that he was slowing the ship down for safety, and Müller's appointment would have to be missed. Müller asked to use the chart-room to pray for the lifting of the fog. The captain followed him down, claiming it would be a waste of time.

After Müller prayed a very simple prayer, the captain started to pray, but Müller stopped him, partly because of the captain's unbelief, but mainly because he believed the prayer had already been answered. Müller said, “Captain, I have known my Lord for more than fifty years, and there is not one instance that I have failed to have an audience with the King. Get up, Captain, for you will find that the fog has gone.” When the two men went back to the bridge, they found the fog had indeed lifted, and Müller was able to keep his appointment. The captain became a Christian shortly afterwards and was later known as “Holy Joe.”

George's deep intimacy with God allowed him to pray with boldness, fully confident that God would answer his prayers. In any relationship, when you truly know someone deeply, you can anticipate how they will respond to questions. This boldness had a profound impact on the captain, who ultimately became a disciple of Jesus. George was simply being his authentic self, trusting in God's faithfulness to respond. As a result, the captain learned what true discipleship looks like.

If we do not have a happy soul in regards to our relationship with God, how we respond to life's circumstances will not inspire others to become disciples. George said, "We should not shrink from opportunities where our faith may be tried. The more I am in a position to be tried in faith, the more I will have the opportunity of seeing God's help and deliverance. Every fresh instance in which He helps and delivers me will increase my faith. The believer should not shrink from situations, positions, or circumstances in which his faith may be tried, but he should cheerfully embrace them as opportunities to see the hand of God stretched out in help and deliverance. Thus, his faith will be strengthened."

### **The Strength of a Happy Soul**

A strong faith is not proven when life is easy; it is revealed when life is hard. Real faith is marked by the ability to endure significant trials while keeping a clean conscience before God. A disciple who runs from pressure, blames others, or tries to fix everything in their own strength will never de-

velop spiritual weight. We cannot influence others if we flee from our refining moments. And we certainly cannot disciple others effectively if we are not honest about who we are in the middle of those moments. Authenticity is not optional in discipleship. Trying to solve our problems independently usually multiplies pain. But when we lean into our trials with surrender instead of resistance, something powerful happens: boldness begins to grow. Not boldness in ourselves, but boldness in the Lord. That kind of confidence becomes steady and unshakeable.

Many of us begin our faith journey uncertain and scattered. We pray timid prayers. We second-guess ourselves. But over time, as we watch God intervene in ways we could never orchestrate, our confidence shifts. We start praying differently. We move from hoping God might act to believing He will. That shift is transformational. A happy soul rests in God's faithfulness. It enjoys a supernatural intimacy with Him that produces spiritual authority, not hype, not performance, but quiet power that comes from relationship.

George Müller modeled this beautifully. He once said, "Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends." That statement exposes so much of our struggle. We like operating where outcomes feel manageable. We like to stay in the realm of the predictable. But a disciple learns to step beyond that line. A disciple makes it their mission not to operate in their own strength, but in God's power. If we can accomplish it alone, it is not faith, it is management.

George constantly directed people back to the Word of God. He understood that intimacy is sustained, not accidental. He said, "In order to enjoy the Word, we ought to continue to read it, and the way to obtain a spirit of prayer is to continue praying; for the less we read the Word of God, the less we desire to read it, and the less we pray, the less we desire to pray." There is a spiritual momentum to relationship. When we drift from the Word and drift from prayer, desire fades. But when we stay engaged, hunger increases. Reading fuels prayer. Prayer fuels obedience. Obedience fuels intimacy. And intimacy fuels joy.

These rhythms form the foundation of a disciple's life. Knowledge alone is not discipleship. You can know Scripture and still lack intimacy. Religious people read to accumulate information. Disciples read to align their lives. When we open the Word, the goal is not simply understanding it is adjustment. We ask, "Lord, what needs to change in me?" Prayer must accompany our reading, and obedience must follow both. Without obedience, knowledge puffs up. With obedience, knowledge transforms.

As we endure trials God's way surrendered, prayerful, obedient, our perspective begins to shift. We start seeing circumstances from His vantage point instead of our limited understanding. Our choices begin to align with His will rather than our own preferences. That is where inner transformation happens. Peace starts defining our character. Fruit begins flowing from our ministry not because we forced it, but because God supplied it.

Even George wrestled with anxiety. He understood that faith and anxiety cannot comfortably coexist. He said, “The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.” That does not mean believers never feel anxious; it means we have somewhere to take our anxiety. Philippians reminds us not to be anxious about anything, but in everything through prayer and thanksgiving to present our requests to God. When we do, peace guards our hearts and minds. Anxiety often rises when we fail to capture our thoughts and surrender them to Jesus. It grows when we replay scenarios, imagine worst outcomes, and attempt to control results that belong to God.

A crucial part of cultivating a happy soul is learning to meditate on truth rather than rehearsing fear. When our mind is filled with God’s promises, anxiety loses oxygen. But when our mind is filled with “what if,” joy evaporates. We become ineffective witnesses not because God has withdrawn His power, but because we are trying to carry what was never ours to carry.

Even when our circumstances are the result of our own mistakes, surrender is still the answer. God’s sovereignty is not fragile. He is not thrown off by our failures. When we trust Him fully, even in the mess, we position ourselves for transformation. Peace in the middle of pressure becomes our testimony. And from that place, we become steady, faithful, impactful disciples.

A happy soul is not the absence of struggle; it is the presence of surrendered trust. It is the kind of soul that has seen

God move enough times to know He will move again. And that kind of disciple carries a quiet strength that cannot be shaken.

### **Trusting in God alone**

George Müller once described a defining moment in his life when everything changed. He said, “There was a day when I died; died to self, my opinions, preferences, tastes and will; died to the world, its approval or censure; died to the approval or blame even of my brethren or friends; and since then, I have studied only to show myself approved unto God.” That statement captures the essence of a disciple with a happy soul. Such a disciple is no longer driven by the approval of the world. What others think loses its controlling power. What matters most is walking in intimacy with God and living for His approval alone. As a new creation in Christ, the old identity no longer defines the believer (2 Corinthians 5:17). Daily, a disciple learns to deny self, take up the cross, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). This daily surrender is not loss it is freedom. It is the pathway to joy.

George Müller embodied this life of surrendered trust. He worked diligently, yet refused to place confidence in his own effort. He urged believers to pray fervently for God’s blessing while laboring with patience and perseverance. His rhythm was simple: pray, then work; work, then pray, never separating dependence from diligence. Though he carried enormous responsibility, he did not carry it in his own strength. He entrusted provision, outcomes, and reputation to God.

He believed money only held value when used for the Lord's purposes and viewed trials as nourishment for faith rather than obstacles to it. His peace remained steady not because life was easy, but because his trust was anchored in a faithful God.

He consistently emphasized that intimate knowledge of God is available to every disciple. It grows as believers habitually search the Scriptures and translate what they discover into obedience. Knowledge alone does not produce intimacy. Religion gathers information; relationship brings alignment. A happy soul is formed when reading leads to prayer, prayer leads to obedience, and obedience deepens trust.

Those who live this way influence others naturally. Their peace is not shaken by abundance or lack. Their confidence is not rooted in performance but in relationship. They walk in the light, trust God's provision, and allow His Word to guide their steps. A happy soul is a foundational ingredient in an effective, multiplying discipleship life.

For those who desire to explore George Müller's life further, the following works provide valuable insight: *The Lord's Dealings with George Müller* by George Müller; *The Autobiography of George Müller* by George Müller; *George Müller of Bristol* by A.T. Pierson; and *George Müller: The Man Who Trusted God* by R.A. Torrey.

As this chapter closes, the invitation is simple: pause and reflect. What has been stirred within? Where is surrender needed? Do not rush forward without allowing these truths

to take root. A happy soul is cultivated through daily trust, daily obedience, and daily return to relationship. From that place, disciples are formed, and God's work advances naturally.

## Chapter 10 Happy is Our Soul - Song

### **Song Title: Happy Is Our Soul**

Happy Is Our Soul is a declaration of joy in the middle of life's hardships. It's not a surface-level happiness, but a deep-rooted gladness that comes from drawing near to Jesus—no matter the circumstance.

This song reminds us that the soul finds true happiness not in ease, but in intimacy with Christ. When He is near, peace reigns, and joy overflows—even in the storm.

### **Bible Verse:**

*"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy." —Psalm 16:11 (ESV).*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and be reminded: no matter what life brings, when Jesus is near—happy is our soul.**



[https://youtu.be/  
dacDhC4sC1U](https://youtu.be/dacDhC4sC1U)

## Chapter 11

# Spiritual Movement

An awakening, revival, or spiritual movement of God happens when Jesus is lifted above all else in the hearts of His people. When you and your leadership team come together in unity with this shared focus, it sets the stage for a powerful movement of God. In *Luke 19:37–38*, as Jesus approached the Mount of Olives, a multitude of His disciples—an entire movement of people—began to rejoice and praise God loudly for all the mighty works they had witnessed, declaring, “*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!*”

A true movement of God naturally stirs hearts to overflow with praise and celebration.

As we discussed in the multiplication chapter, imagine each member of your team raising up nine generations of disciples, rejoicing together in what God is doing. That is the essence of a true spiritual movement. The impact your

disciples and your team are having in tearing down Satan's strongholds is nothing short of extraordinary.

Throughout the centuries, such acts of God have been known by various names, but one thing is clear: the early church in Israel witnessed the first significant movement of God, as Peter noted in *Acts 2:17*: "*In the last days, God will pour out His Spirit on all people.*"

A key component to God's Spirit being poured out on all people is the preaching of God's word, as *Acts 2:41-42* states, "*So those who received His word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*" Moreover, *Acts 6:7* notes, "*And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.*"

Spiritual movements bring about lasting changes in people's lives; old ways pass away, and all things become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). A movement of God is unmistakable—lives are transformed when God invades their hearts. *Acts 9:31* reflects this, stating, "*So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up in Jesus. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.*"

Awakenings strengthen believers in Jesus, as individuals see themselves in the light of Christ. This revelation often brings an overwhelming sense of fear, akin to Isaiah's expe-

rience in the throne room of God. In *Isaiah 6:5*, he cries out, “*Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!*”

When God opens a disciple’s eyes to His glory, that moment irrevocably transforms their life. The love they encounter in that instant reshapes everything they have ever known. Their pursuit of knowing God becomes paramount, and their willingness to obey, even at the risk of death, becomes a way of life. Disciples of God experience revival in their own lives, and the radical changes they undergo are passed on to others. Before long, they witness the fulfillment of *Acts 13:49*, which declares, “*And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region.*”

Throughout history, we observe these movements of God, where His word is spread across regions. In each of these movements, the multiplication of disciples is at the center. From 1727 to 1739, a revival among the Moravian people in Germany sparked significant spiritual fervor. This revival reached two English brothers, John and Charles Wesley, who played a vital role in bringing revival to Great Britain from 1734 to 1791. The Wesley's emphasized discipleship and worship, profoundly impacting figures like George Whitefield. God called Whitefield to become one of the greatest evangelists of his time, making 13 trips to America and igniting revival in both countries.

From 1734 to 1760, Jonathan Edwards led a revival in the United States. A powerful preacher, he also prioritized disci-

pleship, offering theological clarity, and promoting spiritual growth. This revival lasted twenty-six years, transforming the moral character of the American people and preparing them for the miraculous birth of their nation.

The following century saw a series of revivals across America. Notable among them was the Cane Ridge Revival in Kentucky from 1801 to 1830. From 1824 to 1860, the Second Great Awakening unfolded, led by Charles Finney, a lawyer who was radically transformed by God. Under his leadership, countless individuals from all walks of life were touched by this powerful movement.

These historical revivals demonstrate how God can transform lives, communities, and entire nations through the dedicated efforts of His disciples. Numerous revivals have been recorded throughout history, extending to the present day. God is very much alive, and His presence continues to move among His people.

The reason we set the bar high when praying about whom God wants us to disciple next is because He desires to bring revival into their lives. God does not lower the standards for us; rather, He raises them each time we enter His presence. We will never fully arrive in this journey of life; we will always be pursuing the holiness of God. This pursuit shapes us and molds us into His character.

The individuals God brings into our lives for discipleship are those who share the same desire to know Him like we do. Together, you will draw closer to Jesus and witness revival

unfolding in your lives and ministries. This is why having a leadership team is essential. In the company of like-minded individuals, God can unleash a whirlwind of change. Together, your team can witness the transformation of countless lives, impacting your cities, your country, and reaching the ends of the earth.

Just like a well-coordinated sports team, your leadership team can achieve remarkable victories. However, internal conflict or a lack of commitment can hinder those outcomes. It is important to set high expectations for your team and encourage them to do the same with their personal discipleship teams.

Always cast a vision of where God is leading your team; your goal will always be to advance God's Kingdom around the world. By maintaining high standards, you help sustain momentum even when spiritual warfare seeks to slow you down. Together, you will witness a powerful movement of God transforming lives right before your eyes. Like me, you will be astounded by the incredible multiplication of disciplined individuals thriving within your ministry.

## **Spiritual Warfare**

Spiritual movements are happening all around us. God is stirring hearts, breaking chains, restoring families, raising up disciples. But no one should assume that advancing the Kingdom will be easy. When God begins moving powerfully through a life or a ministry, resistance often follows. Jesus

warned in John 10:10 that the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Anyone committed to multiplying disciples and pushing back darkness should expect opposition. The enemy is not threatened by religious routine; he is threatened by surrendered disciples walking in intimacy with Jesus.

Acts 19:15 gives a sobering reminder. The evil spirit said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?” The issue was not vocabulary. It was relationship. Ritual without intimacy carries no authority. Religion cannot overpower darkness. Church attendance, Bible knowledge, and outward activity do not equal spiritual power. The question is not how much spiritual language is spoken, but whether there is authentic fellowship with Christ. A genuine disciple can resist the devil, and he will flee (James 4:7). Authority flows from relationship, not performance.

Scripture reminds us that though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh (2 Corinthians 10:3–4). Our weapons are not human strategies but divinely empowered tools that demolish strongholds. God promises that He will crush Satan under our feet (Romans 16:20). Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). This confidence does not come from religion; it comes from abiding in Christ.

Yet every disciple has blind spots. The enemy studies weaknesses and looks for cracks in pride, isolation, offense, fatigue. That is why Scripture calls believers to remain alert and sober-minded, because the devil prowls like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8–9). Spiritual

movements do not collapse overnight; they erode when disciples drift from intimacy and stop resisting the enemy. When relationship weakens, even a single circumstance can derail momentum.

Isolation is one of the enemy's favorite tools. Ministry was never meant to be carried alone. Exodus 17 shows Moses holding up his hands in battle, and as long as they were raised, Israel prevailed. When his arms grew weary, Aaron and Hur stood beside him and held them up. Victory required shared strength. Spiritual warfare is real, and weariness is inevitable. Without trusted, vulnerable relationships, people who know the heart, who can speak truth, who can pray and hold up weary arms the risk of collapse increases.

This is not merely about serving on a team at church. It is about personal discipleship men and women who have earned the right to challenge, encourage, and correct when needed. They share the same commitment to advancing God's Kingdom and will not allow one another to drift quietly into compromise or discouragement.

Satan desires to suffocate spiritual movements before they spread. He attacks leaders, sows isolation, whispers lies, and magnifies weaknesses. That is why cultivating an intimate relationship with Jesus and building a strong discipleship leadership circle must be intentional priorities. These are not optional additions to a ministry strategy; they are relational lifelines.

Spiritual movements are fueled by surrendered disciples who walk in the light, resist the enemy, and refuse to fight alone. When intimacy is strong and community is authentic, the enemy loses ground. And when disciples stand together under the authority of Christ, momentum is not easily broken.

### **Maintaining Momentum**

In *Ephesians 6*, Paul communicates to the church in Ephesus the reality of his constant battles against demonic evil. He highlights that, in order to overcome these attacks, they must “*pray always in the Spirit, being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints*” (v. 18). Paul frequently emphasizes perseverance because he understands that Satan seeks to halt our momentum at every turn.

Praying always in the Spirit requires us to maintain a happy soul and a clean conscience, with our minds focused on pleasing the Father regardless of our circumstances. When prayer flows naturally, like breathing, it reflects a deep connection we have with God. We do not have to think about it; we simply pray continuously, especially when we are under spiritual attack.

In verse 19, Paul articulates his mission: to boldly proclaim the mystery of the gospel. He shares this while imprisoned and under significant pressure, fully aware that Satan is doing everything possible to thwart his efforts in advancing God’s kingdom. Paul aims to prepare Christians for the reality

of spiritual warfare, revealing that Satan and his evil empire are genuine threats seeking to destroy them.

Guided by the Spirit, Paul wrote *Ephesians 6:10-17*, a passage commonly referred to as the Armor of God. In verse 10, he encourages the believers to “*be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.*” Paul embodied a warrior mentality, waking each day prepared for battle, completely committed to fulfilling his mission. He recognized that success hinged on maintaining a deep, intimate relationship with Jesus; such intimacy enables clear communication with God, allowing him to call down weapons of mass destruction against the enemy whenever necessary.

As Paul moved through enemy territory, his prayers became his lifeline, empowering him to continue his mission despite opposition. Paul knew that the weapons available to him were immense, but he emphasized the necessity of putting on the full armor of God to withstand the devil’s attacks.

Anticipating questions about what these attacks might look like, he explained in verse 12 that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, and the rulers of darkness in this age, as well as spiritual wickedness in high places. Paul wanted believers to understand that the battle is not merely against visible, earthly conflicts; it is a spiritual struggle for souls, with a kingdom of darkness actively opposing God’s purposes. Jesus died to redeem souls, transitioning them from spiritual darkness into His marvelous light, as expressed in *1 Peter 2:9*: “*But you are*

*a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."*

Recognizing that two kingdoms are at war—God's Kingdom and Satan's kingdom—common sense suggests that accepting God's call will inevitably invite opposition. This struggle contributes to why the church often sees so few disciple-makers; many start on the path, but when confronted by Satan's resistance, they falter, losing the momentum they initially had.

This underscores the crucial importance of building a leadership team of disciples, particularly when the intensity of Satan's attacks increases. A supportive community is essential for resilience in the face of spiritual battles.

Paul assembled a dedicated team consisting of Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Priscilla, Aquila, Epaphroditus, and many others who continued to advance God's Kingdom even during his imprisonment. They served as his vital communication network, ensuring that his letters were distributed by his disciples.

Imagine, for a moment, you and your equipped team of warriors donning the full armor of God each day, standing together to further God's Kingdom regardless of the circumstances. You would pray for one another, encourage one another, and support each other in your mission.

All the while understanding that Satan harbors a deep hatred for Christ, and unable to crucify Him again, he aims to destroy His followers. However, with the Holy Spirit's help, you can resist the devil and maintain victory and momentum in the face of these attacks.

Paul understood that, in order to overcome daily temptations, it was essential for him—and for us—to put on the full armor of God and remain steadfast in our purpose. Without this spiritual readiness, he would face significant struggles and lose momentum in advancing the Kingdom of God.

### **Armor of God**

In the book *Conquer Through Surrender*, an entire chapter is devoted to the armor of God. Paul's words in Ephesians were written to strengthen believers with confidence and security, reminding them that they were not defenseless in spiritual battle. The enemy may attempt to intimidate or momentarily paralyze, but those who put on the full armor of God are able to stand firm even in the darkest seasons of life.

Ephesians 6:14–18 outlines how to be properly prepared for battle so that spiritual momentum is not lost. Truth, righteousness, readiness from the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and persistent prayer form the foundation of spiritual endurance. **Putting on the full armor of God** and choosing to walk in the Spirit is not a one-time decision; it is a daily commitment. Each morning

presents a renewed opportunity to clothe oneself in truth, rely on God's strength, and advance with confidence.

When Paul speaks of the **Belt of Truth**, he is not describing religious information; he is pointing to relational alignment. Truth is not merely a concept it is a Person. Jesus said, "I am the truth" (John 14:6). Every day requires a deliberate decision to anchor the mind in what God says is true rather than what the world system or religious system whispers. The Belt of Truth holds everything together. When truth is fastened around the heart, confusion loses its grip. Deception cannot easily penetrate a disciple who is abiding in Christ and meditating on His Word. Truth keeps the soul steady in a culture built on shifting narratives.

The **Breastplate of Righteousness** protects the heart. This righteousness is not self-earned morality or religious performance; it is the righteousness of Christ. The accuser loves to replay past failures and highlight present weaknesses, attempting to keep wounds open and shame alive. But those who are in relationship with Jesus stand forgiven. His blood silences accusation. Proverbs reminds us to guard the heart, because everything flows from it. Guarding the heart is not about fearfully withdrawing from the world; it is about refusing to let lies define identity. When accusation comes, the answer is not self-defense it is resting in Christ's finished work. The enemy cannot penetrate the righteousness of Jesus.

The **Shoes of Readiness**, the preparation of the gospel of peace, signal surrendered movement. This is not

marching for religious duty; it is walking in step with the Spirit. To put on these shoes is to release control over the day and follow wherever Jesus leads. It is choosing peace over panic, trust over self-management. A disciple grounded in relationship moves at God's pace, not driven by the pressure of the world system. Readiness declares, "Where You lead, I will go." Peace becomes visible in how life is carried.

The **Shield of Faith** protects against fiery darts those sudden thoughts of doubt, fear, comparison, or discouragement that attempt to set the mind ablaze. Faith is not blind optimism; it is confident trust in the character of God. When worry tries to dominate, faith reminds the heart that God is working all things for good (Romans 8:28). When darts fly unexpectedly, faith lifts quickly. Without the shield, one thought can spiral into turmoil. With it, the mind stays anchored. Faith keeps eyes fixed on Jesus rather than on circumstances. It declares belonging: "I am His." Staying the course flows from trust, not grit.

The **Helmet of Salvation** guards the mind against insecurity and deception. The enemy often attacks identity, suggesting that failure disqualifies or imperfection cancels salvation. Yet salvation is not earned through religious striving. Jesus made clear that what is impossible with man is possible with God (Matthew 19:26). Relationship secures what religion can never guarantee. In Christ, identity is settled. There is no need to repeatedly prove worth or re-earn acceptance. He chose first (John 15:16). The helmet protects against the lie that love must be re-earned.

The **Sword of the Spirit**, the Word of God, is the only offensive weapon in this armor. It is not merely studied; it is spoken and lived. Jesus modeled this in the wilderness, answering every temptation with truth. When doubt rises, truth answers. When fear whispers, Scripture declares. The Word cuts through lies and restores clarity. It must be used consistently, not occasionally. Truth spoken in faith dismantles strongholds.

**Finally, prayer saturates everything.** Paul urges continual prayer in the Spirit with perseverance. Prayer is not a religious exercise; it is ongoing communion. It keeps the heart aligned, the mind clear, and the team covered. Disciples who are advancing God's Kingdom do not rely on strategy alone they rely on intimacy. Prayer extends beyond personal needs to intercession for others and for the lost. It keeps movements relational, not mechanical.

A disciple committed to advancing the Kingdom puts on this armor daily not out of fear, but out of relationship. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Word, and prayer form a life anchored in Christ. Spiritual movements lose momentum when disciples drift into isolation, pride, or religious routine. But when believers remain rooted in intimacy with Jesus and connected to one another, the enemy cannot easily derail what God is building. Stay watchful. Stay surrendered. Stay in relationship.

In our next chapter, we are going to dream big, what would it look like if your entire church embraced and lived out the training you have just walked through? Imagine a church

alive with purpose, filled with disciples who are multiplying and making an impact in their communities and beyond. We will explore the characteristics of a thriving, disciple-making church and why understanding different church structures can help you be more effective in reaching and discipling others.

You will learn how to meet people right where they are, whether they are new to faith or seasoned believers, and help them build a firm foundation in Christ. This is not just theory; it is a vision for how your church can become a launching pad for spiritual movements that change lives forever. Get ready, because this last chapter will ignite your passion to see your church rise beyond ordinary!

But before you turn the page, pause and let this chapter sink in. What stood out? What is God stirring in your heart right now? Do not rush past this moment—lean in. Let the truth of what you have just read shape you. This could be the spark for a powerful shift in how you live, lead, and disciple. Let it take root!

## Chapter 11 Spiritual Movement - Song

### **Song Title: You Lead, I Follow**

You Lead, I Follow is a surrender anthem for every disciple who longs to be used by God to spark a spiritual movement—one heart, one life, one disciple at a time.

This song captures the rhythm of obedience. When we follow Jesus step by step, He multiplies the impact beyond what we could ever imagine. Movements don't start with crowds—they start with a willing follower.

### **Bible Verse:**

*“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.” —John 12:26 (NIV)*

**🎵 🎵 Scan the QR code to listen and commit your heart to this prayer:** *“Where You lead, I'll follow—and trust You to change the world through one disciple at a time.”*



[https://youtu.be/  
2Da5g5iGaAs](https://youtu.be/2Da5g5iGaAs)

# Church Characteristics

## Chapter 12

# We The Church

**A**cross the world, churches gather in many different expressions Pentecostal, non-denominational, Methodist, Baptist, and many others. Worship styles vary. Leadership structures differ. Emphases shift depending on the training, gifting, and background of those leading. Each congregation carries its own culture. Some are expressive and spontaneous. Others are structured and liturgical. Yet beneath those visible differences stands one central calling: to make disciples.

Christian denominations differ in theology, traditions, governance, and practice. Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and many branches within each stream hold distinct convictions about doctrine and church life. These differences matter, and they shape how communities function. However, the call of Jesus rises above denominational lines. No tradition is exempt from the Great Commission. Every church that proclaims Jesus as Lord is invited into the mission of forming disciples who multiply.

Relationship with Jesus must remain primary. When discipleship is rooted in intimacy with Christ rather than allegiance to a religious system, labels lose their power. Religion can create categories; relationship creates unity. After encountering Jesus, identity is no longer anchored in denominational background but in belonging to Him. Spiritual maturity is not measured by affiliation but by obedience and fruit.

At the same time, wisdom requires understanding the backgrounds people bring with them. Paul modeled this in 1 Corinthians 9:22 when he described becoming all things to all people in order to win some. Effective discipleship listens before it teaches. It seeks to understand what someone has been exposed to, what doctrines shaped them, what experiences influenced them, what assumptions they carry. Many individuals who are not yet walking in relationship with Jesus have still encountered church culture in some form. That context cannot be ignored.

Approaching someone from a Catholic background may require different conversations than approaching someone raised Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, or completely unchurched. The goal is not to argue denominational differences but to guide people toward authentic relationship with Christ. Discipleship is not about converting someone to a system; it is about introducing them to a Savior. The Holy Spirit transforms hearts. The disciple's role is to point consistently and clearly to Jesus.

Understanding denominational distinctions can be helpful, not to divide, but to navigate wisely. All disciples come from varied walks of life and church cultures. Recognizing those differences allows for compassion, clarity, and effective guidance. When relationship with Christ remains central, diversity of background becomes an opportunity rather than a barrier.

### **Beyond Religious Systems**

When helping disciples understand different religious cultures, the goal is not comparison or criticism it is clarity. Around the world, people are shaped by church traditions, structures, and teachings long before they encounter authentic relationship with Jesus. Those backgrounds influence how they think about authority, worship, salvation, tradition, and even how they approach God. Understanding these differences allows disciples to listen well, ask wise questions, and build relational bridges.

It must be clear: religious practices, structures, and rituals do not lead anyone into relationship with Jesus. No sacrament, no system, no structure can manufacture intimacy. Relationship is not achieved through effort; it is received through surrender. Jesus Himself said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). The early church understood this. In Acts 4:12, Peter declared, “Salvation is found in no one else.” The “Way” they followed was not a denomination; it was a Person (Acts 9:2).

Jesus stands above every religious structure and every world system. He is not confined to Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, or any cultural expression of Christianity. Colossians 1:17 reminds us that He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. Ephesians 4:5 declares there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” No matter what religious environment shaped someone whether sacramental, liturgical, charismatic, hierarchical, or congregational, Jesus bypasses those systems and invites every person into direct relationship with Him.

The distinctions between traditions are helpful to understand. Catholicism emphasizes the authority of the Pope, sacred tradition alongside Scripture, and seven sacraments, often speaking of faith expressed through works. Protestant traditions emerged from the Reformation, emphasizing Scripture as the final authority and salvation by faith apart from works. Orthodoxy treasures sacred tradition, continuity with the early Church Fathers, sacramental life, and the transformative process of theosis. Each stream carries theological convictions about worship, governance, salvation, and the role of tradition and the saints.

Worship styles also differ. Liturgical traditions follow structured forms. Non-liturgical communities emphasize preaching and participation. Charismatic movements highlight spiritual gifts and expressive worship. Governance structures vary episcopal, presbyterian, congregational each shaping how leadership functions. Views on salvation and tradition reflect deeper theological frameworks. Some emphasize faith alone. Others speak of faith expressed through

sacramental participation and transformation. Some venerate Mary and the saints; others focus exclusively on direct prayer to God through Christ.

These differences matter culturally, but none of them replace relationship. Isaiah 29:13 warns of honoring God with lips while hearts remain distant. Paul cautions against having a form of godliness but denying its power (2 Timothy 3:5). Rituals, sacraments, worship styles, and church governance are not inherently wrong. They can be beautiful expressions of faith. But when they become substitutes for intimacy, they drift into religion. The religious system focuses on performance and conformity. Relationship focuses on knowing and being known by Christ.

When discipling someone from a Catholic background, it can be helpful to affirm their reverence for sacraments while gently emphasizing that grace is received through trusting Christ, not earned through participation. When walking with someone shaped by Protestant “faith alone” language, it may be important to highlight that faith is not mere agreement but surrendered trust that produces transformation. With those from Orthodox traditions, conversations may center on transformation and communion with God while clarifying that intimacy flows from abiding in Christ, not from tradition alone. With charismatic backgrounds, grounding spiritual experiences in Scripture and daily obedience keeps relationship central rather than emotional expression. In every case, the bridge is the same: point to Jesus, not to a structure.

Religious culture can confuse people about what is “true.” Structures may compete for loyalty. But ultimate truth transcends every structure. Jesus gathers people from every tribe, language, and culture (Revelation 7:9). He unites what systems divide. He calls individuals out of the world system and even out of rigid religious systems into living fellowship with Himself. Relationship dissolves labels. Intimacy reshapes identity.

Understanding denominational backgrounds helps disciples discern why someone believes what they believe. It creates empathy instead of frustration. But the goal is never to convert someone to a denomination. The goal is to guide them into authentic relationship with Christ and trust the Holy Spirit to transform them. Works and effort do not produce intimacy. Seeing every part of life as an opportunity to know Him and be known by Him does.

When disciples truly encounter Jesus, religious culture loses its controlling power. Identity shifts from “member of a tradition” to “follower of Christ.” That is where freedom begins. That is where unity becomes real. And that is where spiritual movements rise not from rituals, but from relationship.

When this kind of transformation takes place, the church is no longer seen as a system to perform within but as a family to belong to. Fellowship becomes rich because identity is secure. A disciple who understands relationship can participate in church life without being controlled by its culture. Traditions may still be present, structures may still function,

but they no longer define worth or determine closeness to God. Relationship with Jesus rises above it all.

Jesus declared that He is the way, the truth, and the life. That truth reshapes identity. When identity is rooted in Christ rather than denomination, there is freedom to love without judgment and serve without comparison. Religious activity can be recognized for what it is sometimes sincere, sometimes routine but it no longer becomes the measuring stick. Instead of criticizing others who may still be caught in performance or pressure, a disciple begins to see them through the eyes of Christ.

This shift changes posture. Rather than correcting culture, the focus becomes cultivating love. Rather than exposing flaws, the response becomes intercession. Romans 15:7 calls believers to accept one another as Christ accepted them. First Timothy 2:1 urges prayer for all people. A relational disciple carries this heart. Conversations become opportunities to gently remove obstacles through truth. Prayer becomes a quiet labor for transformation. Love becomes the loudest witness.

Church fellowship then strengthens rather than suffocates. When intimacy with Jesus is primary, gathering with others becomes a blessing, not a burden. There is gratitude for community and patience for growth. The goal is not to win arguments about structure but to reflect Christ's character within it. Relationship fuels unity, and unity becomes a powerful testimony in a world shaped by division.

## **Church System Strategy**

Many healthy churches offer discipleship classes and faith-building courses designed to strengthen biblical understanding and spiritual maturity. Courses in apologetics, leadership, hermeneutics, and Bible study can be valuable tools. Life groups often provide meaningful spaces for fellowship, accountability, and shared growth. These environments can foster both community and learning, and they serve an important role in church life.

One-on-one discipleship also exists in many places, informal conversations, shared meals, and intentional mentoring relationships. These moments can be powerful because they are relational. They create space for vulnerability and spiritual guidance beyond the classroom setting.

What is often less common, however, is a clearly articulated vision for multiplication. Many churches excel at gathering, teaching, and serving, but fewer intentionally train disciples to reproduce themselves. Classes may strengthen knowledge, and groups may build connection, yet without a deliberate focus on helping believers both deepen intimacy with Jesus and multiply others, momentum can stall. Multiplication training is not always built into the culture.

Some churches have developed strong systems that make involvement simple and accessible. They provide clear pathways for serving, small group participation, and spiritual development. Environments like these demonstrate how structure can support engagement and belonging. When

well-designed systems are paired with intentional relational discipleship and a clear call to multiply, the result can be powerful.

The goal is not merely participation in programs, but transformation through relationship with Christ that naturally leads to reproduction. Systems can assist that process, but they cannot replace it. When vision casting emphasizes knowing Jesus deeply and helping others do the same, structures become tools rather than substitutes. Healthy discipleship cultures move beyond attendance and activity into intimacy and multiplication.

### ***Integrating Rise Beyond Ordinary into Your Church System***

The Church was never designed to be a place people attend; it was designed to be a movement people become. Programs gather crowds, but relationship multiplies disciples. If a church desires a thriving, multiplying discipleship culture, the shift must move from participation to transformation, from filling seats to forming disciple-makers.

The tools and training outlined in this book provide a complete framework. What is required now is intentional onboarding. The goal is simple: move people from the pew into relational discipleship that multiplies.

### **Start With a Foundation**

Every multiplying culture begins with a core. A pastor must first establish a discipleship leadership team, men and women who are faithful, available, and teachable. This team must already be walking in intimacy with Jesus and actively discipling others. Culture flows from leaders. If multiplication is not modeled at the top, it will not take root in the congregation.

This leadership team becomes the spiritual engine of the church. They embody the Rise Beyond Ordinary culture: relationship over religion, surrender over control, multiplication over maintenance. When that DNA is visible, it becomes reproducible.

### **Integrate, Don't Add**

Rise Beyond Ordinary culture does not replace existing systems it infuses them. Life groups, ministry teams, volunteer pathways, and membership processes can all become entry points into relational discipleship. Instead of adding another program, embed a clear invitation: "Grow in intimacy with Jesus and multiply yourself."

When this book is used in life groups or structured studies, it naturally surfaces those who are ready to step deeper. Not everyone will respond immediately. That is expected. A multiplying culture does not pressure; it invites. It identifies those who are hungry and equips them.

## **Create a Clear Next Step**

After foundational teaching, provide a simple on-ramp into disciple-making. This can be a short vision casting session led by the leadership team where expectations are clarified:

- **Your primary calling is intimacy with Jesus.**
- **Discipleship is relational, not performative.**
- **Multiplication is normal, not exceptional.**

Set the bar high. A healthy culture does not lower expectations to increase numbers. It raises vision to increase depth. A like-minded church united in purpose becomes powerful in mission (Philippians 2:2).

## **Multiply Through Relationship**

Once individuals begin being disciplined, the movement expands naturally. Those being disciplined are encouraged to disciple others while continuing to grow themselves. This creates overlapping circles of relationship, not hierarchical control. Everyone is both receiving and pouring out.

The momentum grows when leaders continually cast vision, celebrate obedience, and keep intimacy with Jesus central. Systems support the culture, but relationship fuels it.

## **Use Conversation-Based Tools**

Curriculum must be transferable and relational. It should facilitate conversation, not lectures. When disciples leave

gatherings spiritually renewed and equipped to guide others, multiplication becomes accessible even to new believers. The right tools remove intimidation and build confidence.

### **The Ripple Effect**

When a Rise Beyond Ordinary culture is embedded within a church, the ripple effect is unmistakable. Individuals grow. Families shift. Leaders multiply. The congregation moves from consumption to commission. Every faithful, available, and teachable believer becomes a potential catalyst for expansion.

This is not about building a larger institution. It is about forming disciples who form disciples.

The Church does not need more activity; it needs deeper surrender. It does not need better branding; it needs clearer vision. When pastors intentionally move people from attendance into relational disciple-making, spiritual movements begin.

The call of Christ has always been costly. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” True discipleship is surrender daily, intentional, wholehearted. It is letting go of control and stepping into obedience. That surrender awakens the soul and ignites multiplication.

Build the leadership team. Cast the vision relentlessly. Keep intimacy central. Refuse to settle for maintenance.

The Church was made for this moment.

### **Closing Thought**

Imagine standing before your congregation one Sunday and sharing a different kind of testimony. Not a building update. Not an attendance milestone. Not the launch of another campus. Instead, you begin to tell the story of your discipleship leadership team.

You share that you are now nine or ten generations deep in disciples. The men and women you first discipled have discipled others, who have discipled others, and the multiplication has continued far beyond what anyone imagined. You explain that reports are coming in from cities and nations around the world, disciples directly connected to this church are now leading others into relationship with Jesus. Some are pastoring. Some are serving in business. Some are planting movements in places you have never personally visited. Yet the thread traces back to one decision: to build a multiplying culture instead of merely growing attendance.

Imagine what that would do to your congregation.

Imagine the shift in perspective. The congregation would no longer see themselves as spectators filling seats, but as carriers of Kingdom momentum. Vision would rise. Faith would stretch. People would begin asking, “How do I become part of that?”

Too often the focus becomes increasing attendance or expanding campuses. That model may grow numbers, and large numbers can look impressive. But addition is not the same as multiplication. Thirty thousand attendees may gather weekly, but what if three hundred thousand spiritually mature, relationally anchored, multiplying disciples were being formed? What if every faithful, available, and teachable believer saw themselves as a catalyst for generations?

This is not exaggeration. It is the natural outcome of a culture built on intimacy and reproduction. When disciples are trained to walk closely with Jesus and intentionally disciple others, generational multiplication accelerates quickly. It does not require celebrity platforms or massive budgets. It requires clarity, commitment, and relationship.

When this culture takes root, the church does not merely grow numerically, it expands relationally. Leadership deepens. Community strengthens. Faith matures. Momentum compounds. What begins with a small leadership team becomes a movement that cannot be contained within one building or one city.

This vision is not theoretical. It is achievable when intimacy remains central and multiplication becomes normal. When people move from sitting to discipling, from consuming to reproducing, the atmosphere shifts. The congregation no longer gathers just to receive, they gather to be equipped and sent.

That is the vision of this book. Not a larger crowd, but a deeper movement. Not temporary excitement, but generational impact. A church alive with disciples who multiply disciples, nine, ten, and more generations deep, until the world is saturated with relational followers of Jesus.

**That is what it means to Rise Beyond Ordinary.**

## Chapter 12 We the Church - Song

### **Song Title: One Disciple at a Time**

One Disciple at a Time is a rally cry for the Church to return to the mission Jesus gave us—to make disciples. This song declares that revival doesn't come through programs or platforms, but through obedience... one life at a time.

When the Church takes a stand to disciple the world in Jesus' name, we carry the hope of the Gospel across generations. This is how God's Kingdom advances—through faithful believers multiplying His love and truth.

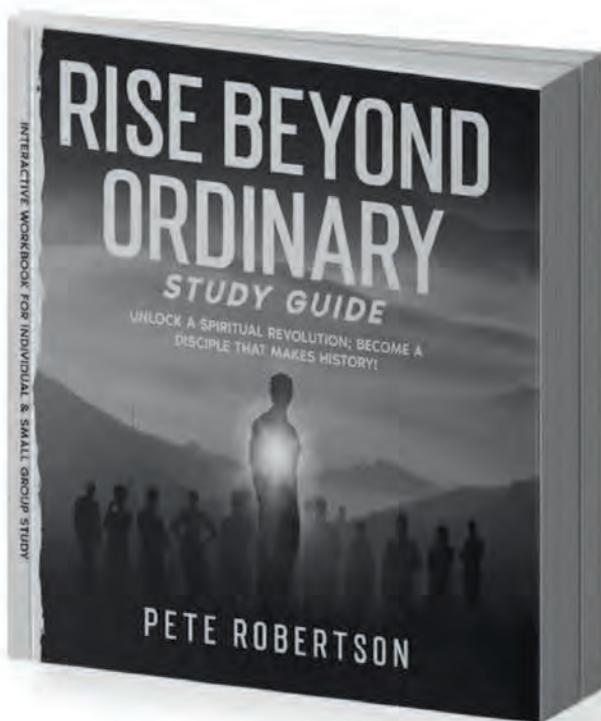
### **Bible Verse:**

*"The things you have heard me say... entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." —2 Timothy 2:2 (NIV)*

**♪ ♪ Scan the QR code to listen and be reminded:  
You don't have to change the world all at once—just start with one disciple at a time.**



[https://youtu.be/  
4Zo1Axw79Js](https://youtu.be/4Zo1Axw79Js)



*Interactive and Transformational*

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*Designed for small groups, personal growth, with real life application. Equip yourself and your group to lead movements.*

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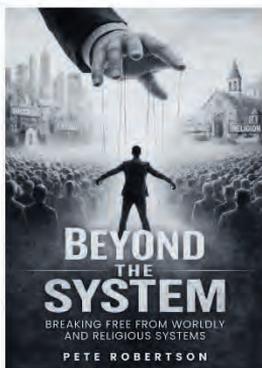
*Study guide will stretch your faith and sharpen your mission. Easy to Follow format with powerful questions and discussion prompts.*

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*Order on Amazon and at [risebeyonddordinary.com](http://risebeyonddordinary.com)*



## More from **PETE ROBERTSON**

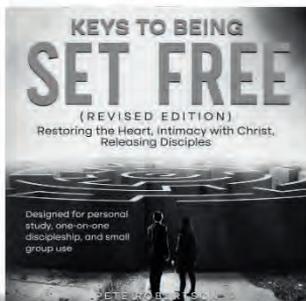


### **BEYOND THE SYSTEM**

What if the biggest obstacle to following Jesus isn't sin but unseen world and religious systems?

Beyond the System reveals how these forces shape beliefs and behavior without notice, challenges religious assumptions, and invites readers into a genuine, daily relationship with God marked by intimacy, surrender, and freedom.

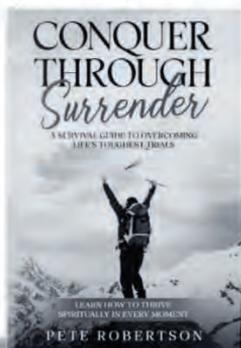
Freedom begins when control ends!



### **KEYS TO BEING SET FREE**

A personal discipleship guide designed to lead believers into deeper intimacy with Jesus and lasting spiritual freedom. Many followers of Christ still carry hidden wounds, self-protective patterns, and destructive habits shaped by the world and religious systems.

This biblically grounded curriculum gently brings those areas into the light, guiding individuals from the Tree of Knowledge mindset of control and performance into the Tree of Life.



### **CONQUER THROUGH SURRENDER**

Three Grand Rebellions will piece together a mosaic of truths that showcase how Christ's obedience achieved even more than we had previously understood by answering the following questions:

How does God's redemption thread run through the Bible?

How did Jesus reverse the curse of the Three Grand Rebellions?

Who is the assembly of the Divine Council?

Do you find yourself asking big questions about your role as a disciple of Jesus? Do you dream of a ministry that makes an impact, but feel like you do not know where to begin? Many think they are living as disciples, but what if you have been more caught up in religion than true discipleship? What if there is a radical shift waiting for you? What if, right now, you could be used by God in ways you have never imagined? What if you could advance His Kingdom in ways that make history?

The early church spread like wildfire because they did not wait for the perfect moment—they took bold steps of faith. Now it is your turn to do the same. Unleash the power of discipleship and watch your ministry grow in ways you never imagined—the world is waiting for disciples who are ready to turn it upside down.

Will you be the one to lead the way?

Embark on the Ultimate Discipleship Adventure!

- Uncover the powerful, life-changing characteristics that define a true disciple.
- Dive into the depths of your relationship with God and unlock a deeper connection.
- Master the art of disciple-making with proven, strategic training.
- Build a dynamic, world-impacting leadership team just like Jesus did.

If you are ready to see your life transformed and make an eternal impact, this book is your roadmap! Get ready for an adventure that will change everything.



PETE ROBERTSON is the CEO and President of Natural Discipleship and Co-host of The R.I.O.T Podcast

