

THE MAKING OF A DISCIPLE

PAUL JINADU



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CHAPTER ONE

DISCIPLESHIP MAKING IS A COSTLY MINISTRY

To be used of God to make disciples, we must be willing to pay the price... and it is a costly ministry.

- **Costly in Quality of Time**

We must be constantly on call. Our time will not be our own. We must be available to those whom God has called us to help.

- **Costly in Inconvenience**

We are servants to those we intend to help. We must meet the needs of those God has chosen for us to help, even at most inconvenient times.

- **Costly in Hurts**

At times we will be hurt by those whom we are trying to help. Paul wrote,

“And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved”.
(2 Cor.12:15).

In the same letter he added,

“I pray that you will live good lives, not because that will be a feather in our cap, proving that what we teach is right; no, for we want you to do right even if we ourselves are despised” (2 Cor 13:7).

He went on,

“We are glad to be weak and despised if you are really strong. Our greatest wish and prayer is that you will become mature Christians”. (2 Cor 13:9).

Some in whom you have invested your life will turn their backs on you and walk away. Others may even become bitter towards you. Still others will go so far in the school of discipleship and no further. All of these will hurt.

We must not become discouraged in our calling, for some of those who fall by the wayside will eventually come back and want to get back on the path. Others are certainly better off for the help they have received than if they had received none at all.

- **Costly in Vulnerability to Exposure**

Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:10-11, Phillips translation),

“But you, Timothy, have known intimately both what I have taught and how I have lived. My purpose and my faith are not secrets to you. You saw my endurance and love and patience as I met all those persecutions and difficulties.”

You can't hide from the one you are helping! The one you are helping will see your feet of clay. A disciple will know your weaknesses because on an eyeball-to-eyeball basis, there is no place to hide.

In spite of all the challenges and costs involved in the ministry of making disciples there is one consolation. The entry level is very low, even though the standards are high. You don't have to be a finished product to help others become disciples. You only have to be one step ahead of others to help them down the entire length of the road of life.

Even Paul did not claim to be completely mature when he trained Timothy and others.

Training others to follow Christ as you are following Him also has an added bonus. It stretches you. The sense of responsibility for the spiritual growth of a new Christian makes you grow deeper in your own walk with the Lord.

Their questions make you search deeper into the Word, and their dependence on your guidance and support in times of doubt and weakness makes you stay strong for their sake.



CHAPTER TWO

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

When we think of the need of the hour different people will come up with different ideas, things they would love to have in order to do their work or ministry more effectively. It could be more money, as always, better equipment, more staff, more office space, larger conference facility. Some may even wish they were twenty years younger. What they could achieve with more time knowing what they know now.

According to Dawson Trotman, the founder of The Navigators, a Christian service organisation, none of the above is the real need of the hour, or the answer to the need of the hour. He believes the need of the hour is an army of soldiers, dedicated to Jesus Christ, who believe not only that He is God, but that He can fulfil every promise He has ever made, and that there isn't anything too hard for Him. It is the only way we get the gospel to every creature.

From Dawson Trotman's Perspective

In 1948 I was in Germany for six days. I invited fifty German fellows to meet with me for three days. I talked to them every evening for three hours, beginning to lay before them the Great Commission and the idea that I felt Germany not only needed to hear the Gospel, but that Germans themselves needed to obey the Great Commission by sending missionaries. I was trying to lay upon their hearts the very thing the Lord laid on the hearts of the disciples when He told them to go to every creature, make disciples of every nation, start in Jerusalem and go to the ends of the earth.

One German spoke up, "But Mr Trotman, you don't understand. Here in Germany some of us right in this room don't even have an Old Testament; we only have a New Testament."

*But I pointed out,
“When Jesus Christ gave these commandments,
they didn't have even a New Testament.”*

*Later one of them said, “But, Mr Trotman, we have very
few good evangelical books in this country.” I asked,
“How many did the disciples have?”*

*A little further on one of them asked, “Is it true that in
America you can hear the Gospel any day?” I answered,
“Yes.” He said, “If only we had that...but we can't get the
message out on any radio.” I said, “But the disciples
never had a radio.”*

*They said, “You have automobiles, we ride bicycles.”
I reminded them, “The disciples didn't have bicycles.
Jesus rode a borrowed donkey.”*

*Finally, one fellow spoke up, “In America you have
money. I work twelve hours a day for 60 cents. We don't
have much money.” I replied, “The disciples were sent
out without purse and without script.”*

*Then finally near the end one fellow, a little older than
the rest and with almost a bitter expression on his face,
got up and said, “Mr Trotman, you in America have
never had an occupation force in your land. You don't
know what it is to have soldiers of another country
roaming your streets.*

*Our souls are not our own.” I responded, “The disciples
lived at the time Jesus lived and their souls weren't their
own. The Roman soldiers were in charge.”*

Consider this

When the Lord Jesus sent out the Eleven, He let a situation exist which was so bad that there could never be a worse one.

No printing press, no cars, no radios, no tv, no phones, no buildings, not one single church, no uniforms, nothing for the vestry. He left them only a job to do, but he said, *“All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go you therefore.”*

What does the *“therefore”* mean?

It means, “I have the power to give you the order and I have the power to back you to the hilt.” Jesus has all power, not part of the power, but all power, which means power over all spiritual and human authorities.

Earlier Jesus had said to the same little group' *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in me, the works I do shall he do.”* Question is' *“Do you believe it?”*

I believe the reason so many wonderful Christians don't accomplish more in their lives is they don't believe Jesus meant what He said. They have never come to the place where they believe that the all-powerful One who commissioned them could enable them to do these greater works.

We have no advantage over the Early Church

Now we think it is going to be a tough job, even with the printing press, the radio, the airplane, and the internet. What do you think the early disciples thought about it?

- * When Paul wrote to the Romans he said, *“I thank my God that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world”* (Rom 1:8).

- * When he wrote to the Thessalonian church he said, *“For our gospel came not unto you in words only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance.”* (1 Thes 1:5)

How did the message go?

Not by telephone, not by television, but by tell-a-person. That was the only method they had. It was as simple as that. Everyone was to tell someone else. *“I cannot help but speak the things which I have seen and heard”* was the impelling force. That's how it spread, and it did spread. They didn't need the printing press and they didn't need materials.

The answer to our question: *“What is the need of the hour”* is, the man, not material. We must believe that God is Almighty. He can help us fulfil His mandate irrespective of our circumstances. If He gave the order He is capable of helping us do it. Our thoughts should constantly be, *“God, I'll never come to a place where I am going to let the lack of anything persuade me that You are being hindered.”*

The need of the hour is men who want what Jesus Christ wants and believe He wants to give them the power to do what He has asked. Nothing in the world can stop those men.



CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Phil 4:9

Christian character is a most necessary trait that a believer in Jesus Christ is expected to possess. Not only is the Christian to be different and distinct from the average unbeliever, but he is also to stand head and shoulders above anyone who is known as a person of character.

The follower of Christ must be that different from anyone else in the world. In Hebrews 1:3, Jesus “*is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.*” The idea here, of course, is that when people saw Jesus, they saw God.

In the same way, when people see Christians, they ought to see Jesus in them. So, when we speak of Christians character, we are saying that when we see each other and when others see us, the person of Christ should be obvious and visible in us. What we are, therefore, is more important than what we do.

Therefore, when we work with the people we disciple we must help them develop Christian character in their lives. We must focus on building conviction, perspective, excellence, and depth of character in our Timothies, and we do so through our own personal examples and careful training.

The qualities we need to help our Timothies develop:

* **Conviction**

In the initial stages of follow-up, your Timothy has developed your convictions. He has learned why you memorise the Bible, study it, and pray, but this will not sustain him over the long haul. He needs to develop convictions of his own.

Convictions are built in two ways: his own study of the Scriptures and by me answering his “*why*” questions. Another way of developing convictions in addition to a personal study of the Word is to have the person jot down all the reasons why he should be doing what he is being taught.

Why have a quiet time?

Why pray?

Why study the Bible?

This can be a real eye-opener. Once he has thought through these things, he no longer sails along on what you have told him. He now has a set of convictions of his own. Convictions are deeper than just beliefs. He holds his beliefs, but his convictions hold him.

* **Perspective**

When a person comes to Christ, he still remains pretty much a self-centred individual. As he begins growing in the Lord, he gets his sights raised a bit. He begins to be aware of the needs of others in the church fellowship. Then a missionary comes to his church and he is made aware of some different needs; he begins to see the world from a different perspective.

His vision is enlarged. His concerns begin reaching beyond himself. He lives his life on a different plane now. He is developing a new perspective. Gradually he should get to the point in his life where self is fading into the background and the focal point of his vision is the Lord Himself, the will of God, the work of God, and the needs of others.

* **Excellence**

The trainee must become proficient in his ministry to others and do it well. His witness, his service, his involvement should reflect the testimony of Jesus Himself, who *“has done everything well”*

Mark 7:37.

If we are to be equipped with everything good to do God's will, it must be through Jesus Christ. After all, He is the only One who has ever done all things well. So, if you would develop a spirit of excellence in those whom you are training, you must bring them to the place where they turn themselves over to Jesus and let Him live His life through them.



CHAPTER FOUR

DEPTH OF CHARACTER

The next focus is a continued emphasis on depth in the trainee's walk with God and a deepening of his Christian character. Paul stated,

“For the kingdom of God consists of and is based on not talk but power - moral power and excellence of soul”
(1 Corinthians 4:20, Amplified).

This is a lifelong emphasis. Such qualities as faith, purity of life, honesty, and humility are never mastered in this life. We continue to grow and mature.

What are some of these qualities of Christian character that must be deepened in our lives, and in the lives of our trainees?

Here is a list (by no means exhaustive)

a) **Outward witness**

What we look like and what we say also reflect what we are. Christlikeness in appearance and in the use of our tongue must also be developed in us and in our trainees. So, lead your Timothy to consider his appearance and what he says as part of his Christian witness.

In working on the matter of personal appearance, you might need to include such things as stopping biting fingernails and avoiding immodest dress as commitments to excellence. You and your Timothy should consider together various ways in which such things as exaggeration, lying, boasting, gossip, slander and cursing can be addressed. Then make specific plans to commit the needy areas to Christ and start working on them practically.

b) **Purity of Life**

Christians must constantly guard themselves in regard to purity in thought, word and deed. So, guard yourself and help your Timothy cope with the temptations to impurity. Be practical in the help you give. If he continues to yield to immoral thoughts, find out what sort of literature or movies he is exposing himself to. Show him some good verses to memorise concerning his point of weakness; and check whether he is “*fleeing*” from situations mightily aggravate his temptation.

The battle for purity is going to be tough, but it is one of the most worthwhile battles we can win through the power of God. This is the victory that strengthens us spiritually and deepens our Christian character.

c) **Servanthood**

Another character that needs deepening is that of being a servant to others. All too often we want to rule or have positions of prominence rather than unselfishly and unstintingly serving others with no thought of reward or recompense in mind.

(Mark 10:42-45; John 13:14-15) When we practise servanthood, it reflects to others the reality of the life of Jesus being lived through us. This willingness to be a servant is based on having the same attitude that Jesus had, which was one of servanthood.

(Philippians 2:3-6).

Practically, you can work on yourself and help your trainee develop this character quality by being willing to do menial tasks (Acts 28:1-3),

being available to others when they need you, being observant of the needs of others, and doing more than you are asked (or paid) to do. Furthermore, through practicing servanthood, the quality of humility is deepened in our lives.

d) **Giving**

Because Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, we are to give ourselves to Him. Yet we are to give not only ourselves, but of our resources as well. God wants all aspects of our lives to bring Him glory, including the use of the finances entrusted to us. (Proverbs 3:9-10)

Blessing accompanies giving. God Himself said through His prophet, *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test Me in this...and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it”* (Malachi 3:10).

Jesus reaffirms this when He said, *“Give and it shall be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you”* (Luke 6:38).

You must make sure that you are a Biblical giver yourself, then lead your trainee in developing his own convictions and practices in giving. Work on the conviction through Bible study, then develop a workable plan. If your trainee does not have a plan, help him establish one.

If necessary, go over his personal expenditures and help him evaluate whether or not his use of money is glorifying to God.

Then you may help him establish a personal budget, which includes regular giving to the Lord.

These and other character qualities mentioned in the Scriptures do not become ours automatically, but they must be carefully developed through study of the Word of God, prayer, and hard work.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.

2 Peter 1:3-11

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being

ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is short-sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

At the same time, we can be confident that God will enable us to build these qualities in our lives, for we can depend on Paul's testimony, "*being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*"
(Phil 1:6)



**CHAPTER
FIVE**

TRANSMISSION BY EXAMPLE

One of the ways in which you can help build these qualities in the life of your trainee is through personal example. Paul was an example to the Thessalonians.

“For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.”

1 Thes 1:4-5.

Think of what the apostles must have learned about their own racial prejudices when they observed Jesus with the woman of Samaria. Think of what they must have learned about concern for the needy as they saw Jesus minister to the sinners, the blind, and the lepers. Think of what they must have learned about the dedication and faithfulness as they saw Jesus *“resolutely set out for Jerusalem”* (Luke 9:51) to go to the cross to die for the sins of men.

Jesus' message was personalised in the everyday affairs of life. His classrooms were the events of the day. He was what He taught. He transmitted His message by His life. For your life to transmit effectively, two things are required: availability and transparency.

* **Availability**

Availability is a two-way street. You cannot train people who are not available, and by the same token, you cannot carry on a meaningful training programme if you limit yourself to the formality of the classroom. Jesus and His men were immersed in life together.

John, in reflecting on that incredible experience, spoke of Jesus as the one whom the apostles had looked at and their hands had touched (1 John 1:1).

If your objective is to communicate clearly the insight God has given you on discipleship and making disciples so that your trainee might become a spiritually qualified worker, then you must be available to your Timothy constantly. You must be deep in your own fellowship with the Lord so that your life might be a focal point for the energizing power of the Holy Spirit to use as a means of being an example to him.

* **Transparency**

We should exercise great caution in being transparent with others. It may be dangerous to take off the masks, demolish the barriers, and tear down the walls. People can then see us as we are, and often some are disappointed. They expected us to be near perfect, but there we stand, ordinary sinners saved by grace. Still disciples can learn from our mistakes and failures as well as from our successes.

Too much transparency too soon in the development of a Timothy may cause harm. Jesus knew that and so told his disciples, *“I have much to say to you, more than you can now bear”* (John 16:12). On another occasion earlier in His ministry it was recorded of Him, *“with many similar parables Jesus spoke the Word to them, as much as they could understand”* (Mark 4:33).

So, open your life to those who can handle what they see. Share your heart with that inner core as Jesus did.

Often the seventy and even the Twelve were not exposed to certain events in the life of Jesus. Nevertheless, the fact remains that no one can really know you unless you open yourself to him. So, we need balance in being transparent with others.

At first, being transparent may take the form of sharing with your trainee some of the things you have experienced in your fellowship with the Lord. It may involve your sharing with him some of the victories and defeats, successes and struggles involved in Scripture memory.

As you become more involved in his life and he in yours, you will be able to share deeper things, such as the temptations you face, how you handle them, and your battles with the world, the flesh and the devil.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to help your Timothy effectively unless you are transparent with him. Spiritually qualified workers emerge from the life and ministry of a transparent trainer.

* **Training on a One-to-one Basis**

Building character qualities in people and equipping teams of trained workers in the church is to give each person individual and personal attention wherever possible.

You must discipline yourself to think in terms of training, to look on the various facets of your ministry as opportunities to build in depth into the lives of your trainees.

This will enable you to keep your priorities straight, and you will be able to gauge what you do by how much it contributes to your prime objective of developing spiritually qualified workers. Your ministry will have meaning only as it contributes to the maturing of these men.

What was the ministry of the apostle Paul? Evangelist, theologian, missionary strategist, church planter, teacher, and apostle. But always there were a few key men around him. On one occasion, *“he was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristachus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and from the province of Asia Tychicus and Trophimus”* (Acts 20:4). He used his broad ministry to concentrate on a few.

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul reminded them that he was their spiritual father and challenged them to imitate him. He then informed them that he was sending Timothy to minister to them (1 Corinthians 4:15-17).

Now the question is, if Paul wanted them to imitate him, what good would it do to send Timothy? As we read Paul's explanation for sending Timothy, we discover a startling truth. When Timothy came to Corinth, it would be exactly the same as though Paul had come to them. Timothy was more than an *“instructor”*; he was actually an extension of the life and ministry of Paul.

Paul could do that because he had confidence in the men he had trained. He later told the Philippians, *“I hope I the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me”* (Phil 2:19-23).

Likeminded, trustworthy, competent men are not made on a production line like automobiles in an assembly plant. They are carefully and prayerfully developed under the loving guidance of a wise trainer who spends much time on his knees praying for them. In an age of instant everything, we must discipline ourselves to think in terms of quality.

It takes time. It takes effort. It means times of joy and times of tears. It means your life, but it also means success in carrying out the Great Commission.



CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP

How to develop a meaningful relationship with the individuals who we will be training, and into whose lives we will be pouring our own.

A friend loves at all times (Proverbs 17:17).

Developing a close friendship with a new believer is a basic ingredient in effective following up a new Christian. It involves a nurturing that goes beyond merely the teaching of rules. It also involves a loving communication of those rules and a loving communication of a life.

Very often you will be working with someone with whom you have very little in common. It will take concerted efforts to build an effective relationship. In the end you will discover a variety of “*tools*” for building relationships. You will no longer be limited to certain types of people for effectiveness in your ministry.

Spiritual parenthood has many of the same characteristics as physical parenthood. How many of us could be content merely to be rule-giver and enforcer with our children? In addition to being an authority figure, a good parent is constantly seeking to know his children better and develop a meaningful relationship with them. This is also true when following up a new Christian. We do need to be authority figures, i.e., spiritual leaders who communicate the how-to's of growing in Christ. At the same time, however, we must also be developing meaningful relationships with the new Christians.

Developing an Atmosphere of Loving Concern

- One of the first ways to begin developing a meaningful relationship with a new Christian is by being honestly concerned for him, really wanting to be his friend.

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity”
(Prov. 17:17)

Do you genuinely want to help the new Christian grow in Christ? Do you honestly care about people? If you feel you need more love and concern to answer in the affirmative, you can pray and specifically ask God to develop that kind of attitude in your life. Through prayer God will give you this type of burden. There is something about interceding for a person that increases your burden for him.

Pray for specific things. If over a period of time you keep praying for him in a disciplined way, God will develop that burden within your heart. You probably won't notice it grow, yet soon you will find yourself sincerely caring for that individual.

You can feel a burden for, and so build a relationship with, someone you would not naturally choose for a friend. Someone said, *“Before you became a Christian you picked out your friends. After you become a Christian, God began to pick out your friends and often He picks out people you never would.”* When you are forced into relationships with Christians whom you would never choose to be your friends, it forces you to turn to God for the strength and love you need to develop the relationships. In personal follow-up you can't pick and choose who is going to respond to Christ.

Sooner or later you are going to find yourself in personal follow-up relationships with people you would not normally choose to spend time with. God can give you the attitude you need to develop a friendship with those people.

*** An accepting kind of love.**

When seeking to build friendship with new Christians it is important to have an accepting kind of love. You must be willing to create an environment or atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and love for a person. This does not mean overlooking their sinfulness, but rather, it means accepting them in the face of their failings and showing them how to deal with any problems they have. You can help them discover God's way out of it. It is possible to accept the person and at the same time not accept the sinful shortcomings in his life. As you work with people, do you create that kind of acceptance atmosphere?

A good way to test yourself is to check out why the new Christian does what you assign him. Is it the result of his motivation to grow in Christ or is he afraid that if he slips up, you will reject him? Is he performing for your sake or the Lord's? When pleasing you is the exclusive motivation in a new believer's life, there is something seriously wrong. It's going to be extremely difficult to develop in that person the proper kind of motivation. Are you creating the kind of an atmosphere of love which is helping to motivate the new Christian to grow?

*** Develop your relationship around Christ**

This will take real effort, because the natural thing is to try to develop a relationship around something else. This could be common interest in sport, art, etc. However good these things may be in aiding developing a relationship, you must not lose sight of the focus of your relationship.

So, whether you have somethings in common with the new Christian or not should not prevent you from having a meaning relationship and friendship if Christ is at the centre.

How do you make Christ the focus? From the very beginning of follow-up with a new Christian, spend the bulk of your time on spiritual things.

This does not mean lecturing the person, but it does mean devoting most of your time to spiritual communication, creating an atmosphere of spiritual sharing. Make it a natural thing to share what God is doing and what is teaching you through His Word. This develops naturally only when it is the way you act in the initial stages of that relationship.

You can make it a habit to always have something fresh to share with the new Christian or the disciple. If you are in the Word, the Lord will always give you something constructive every time, either a new idea or a reinforce old one. This is the best way to get the new Christian to the point where he will begin to share with you, too.

A question at this point might be how to motivate a new Christian to study the Word. The best way is to use the Bible when you deal with his problems and share how you use it when you are using it when you are solving your own problems. Jesus quoted the Old Testament 160 times in the presence of His disciples. That is how you too motivate men to use the Word.

*** Patience**

It takes time to build relationships. The new Christian's relationship with God is going to take time to develop, and it is also going to take time with you as well. Sometimes a new Christian might not seem to be responding at all, yet you need to stick with him.

The fact that a person isn't growing at a certain rate or always being victorious over sin should not discourage you. A person may stumble one week and the next week be renewed from the Word, getting back on the right track once more. Although discouraging, these periods of defeat are not disastrous for one's overall Christian life.

Do not take it personally when the new Christian stumbles. You will sometimes be tempted to take the new Christians stumbling as a reflection on your follow-up expertise. However, it is better to ignore your own feeling of being let down and concentrate on helping the new Christian deal with his problems.

Patience is also required to discern the new Christian's attitude in the midst of the failure. Is he repentant, wanting to learn from his mistake, or is he rebellious? It is important to have discernment at this point. Attitudes at times are not clearly reflected by actions. It takes patience and discernment to discover the inner attitude of the new Christian.

Another important element of patience is being willing to reprove the new Christian when he needs reproof. Whenever he stumbles, it is important that he deals with his problem. In other words, confront him with his sin and then show him how to solve the problem and back into a right relationship with God. Use the corrective and rebuking aspects of the Word of God as they are revealed in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

*** Remember what he tells you**

Another factor in developing relationships is to remember what the new Christian shares with you. If you have a habit of forgetting important things about them, or what they do for a living, or what they are studying at College, they will begin to think you don't really care.

So often some people phone and only their number shows on my phone. Their name is missing because they are not in my address book. They carry on talking expecting me to recall who they were. Or may be remember an important situation or problem they told me about nine months prior.

I avoid this embarrassing situation by writing down some information about people I am counselling or mentoring. Fortunately for me, I also have photographic memory. So, by association of ideas, I am often able to recall something specific about the person.

*** Be a Leader As Well As a Friend**

Strike the right balance between being a spiritual leader and a friend. In the midst of all this emphasis on friendship and relationship, it is easy to sidestep being a leader. None of us really want the responsibility of being a leader. We would rather avoid having to help a new Christian grow in Christ. We prefer to sidestep our responsibility to confront a new believer in a sin; we try to put all the responsibility on the Lord to reprove and convict him. This takes the pressure away from us. It is much easier, but much less effective, to remain nonauthoritative in our relationship.

This is one side of the coin. It is also important to realise that it is possible to become too authoritative or problem orientated. It is best to deal with one problem at a time, which is quite enough to keep a person busy. Be careful not to make your whole relationship one of constantly telling the new Christian what he is doing wrong.

It is better to have a healthy balance in your relationship of mutual encouragement, sharing of spiritual truths, and counselling. If you keep it balanced, you won't create a negative atmosphere of defeat and legalism.

You won't always get positive response from the new Christian as you attempt to be his spiritual leader. There will be negative reactions to deal with as well. You must show him that the negative reactions are sinful. If you have been presenting the Word of God to him to point out a particular problem, and he rebels against it, his rebellion is not against you but against God's will. If, however, you have tried to push too many things on him at one time, then his reaction is your fault. Achieving a good balance is essential.

Another important element is to deal with problems as they arise and in the order of their priority. There may be more than one obvious problem at a particular time. Deal with the one most crucial to his spiritual growth. If you deal with problems when they first arrive, you keep them from becoming major. This honest dealing with problems helps the new Christian develop good habits of Christian living.



CHAPTER SEVEN

DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP

Discipleship is God's method of making every believer conform to the image of Christ, which is why He saved us. Anyone who runs away from being a disciple is an illegitimate child who will never inherit anything in the kingdom of God.

As we have seen discipleship is a life-long process by which God makes His children become like Jesus. The process is unique for every believer and is relationship based. God's method of raising disciples can be both direct and indirect

(Gen 12:1-3).

The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

²'I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'

In other words, God can disciple a believer directly as well as indirectly through a human trainer.

Abraham is an example of a man directly disciplined by God. Enoch and Noah were other examples, where no human vessels were available. When God cannot find a mature hand to bring up a man for Him in discipleship, He could do it by Himself alone, although that is not His normal way.

Abraham in Discipleship Relationship with God

Abraham was the first born of aged parents, and loaded with many responsibilities.

Yet he left it all to walk with God. He faced many personal issues. He and Sarah were childless, and he had the responsibility of bringing up his nephew, Lot, the son of his younger brother, Haran (who had died). If Abraham could answer the call to discipleship with all these challenges, and go through it, we have no excuse.

For Abraham discipleship meant denying himself. That self was embodied in his love for his country and his father's house. He was to take up His 'cross', and he did. He bore the reproach of following an invisible God to an unknown destination, with a promise that was in the natural unrealistic. But he did obey, and by so doing entered a disciple relationship with God. We cannot do less if we want to satisfy God's desire.

Discipleship is not without trials.

- Discuss the trials Abraham faced when he went down to Egypt in Gen 12:8-20

Discipleship is like a master-apprentice or teacher-pupil relationship. As students have to take exams before promotion to the next level of training so it is with disciples. God sometimes allows certain trials to come our way in order to prove us and approve us for the next stage of our training. If we don't pass the test, we repeat class. Many of us have found ourselves repeating the same lesson over and over again and receiving heavenly rebukes each time. That will definitely hinder one's progress in his walk with the Lord, and the reason why some who were first became last.

Abraham was faced with the trial of famine though he was in the will of God, in the land of promise. We too may be in the perfect will of God and still face 'famine'.

How did Abraham handle the crisis?

When Abraham found himself in a challenging situation, he did not call on the Lord. Instead, he went down to Egypt and sold his wife for food and told lies. But his lies were exposed and rebuked by the Egyptian king. The devil also planted an Egyptian maidservant into his family, who later became an alternative to Sarah and God's promise for him (Gen16:1).

How did God deliver him from this trial?

(Gen 12:17,20)

God saw the submission and innocence of Sarah and probably her trust in God, and so plagued Pharaoh's household. God then provided a way of escape for Abraham. God prompted Pharaoh to send Abraham out of Egypt, and get back into His plan for his future. In times of temptation God will always provide a way of escape.

What did Abraham do after this in order to restore his relationship with God? (Gen 13:1-4)

When a righteous man, who has been righteous all his life, falls into sin, all his righteousness will be forgotten. That is the principle in the Bible. You go back to zero level and begin again. Abraham had to return to Bethel where he had made an altar to God at the beginning, and start afresh. Even with that the way back to Bethel from Egypt was not straightforward. He had to go from Egypt to the Negev and then to Bethel. Whereas from the land of promise to Egypt was an expressway. (It went straight down to Egypt).

The way unto restoration is always more difficult than the way unto backsliding. Nevertheless, it is better to pass through it and get restored as Abraham did than to continue in backsliding and lose all.

Discussion Point

Discuss the role played by Lot in Abraham's life and relationship with God (Gen 12:4-5, 13:1,5-11).

God called Abraham and Lot went with him.

That was an opportunity for Lot to learn the life and relationship of Abraham with God and partake in the blessing of Abraham. But he would not. He lifted up his eyes in pride (against his uncle), choosing his land before his uncle chose, and ending up making the wrong choice. Abraham, on the other hand, grew in conformity to God's character. He chose the path of meekness in dealing with Lot, who decided to go his separate way.

Discipleship involves spiritual growth.

As we walk with the Lord and with our disciplers we must use the challenges we face there to develop our character into conformity to the image of Christ. We must grow both in service as well as character.

Question you need to ask yourself: *“Have you been following Jesus and your character has not changed from that of the old self?”* Then you are not growing and your inheritance (the purpose of God for your life) may be delayed from getting into your hands.



CHAPTER EIGHT

THERE IS ROOM FOR GROWTH IN DISCIPLESHIP

Discussion Point

Discuss Abraham's growth in his relationship with God and consequently in his vision (Gen 13:7-9, 14:8-14).

Discover his growth in vision as you compare Gen 12:2,3 with Gen 13:14-18. We can see Abraham's growth in character from the way he related to Lot. He was humble, meek, peaceable and kind.

He showed kindness by the way he went with his soldiers to deliver Lot, instead of taking revenge. He consequently grew in vision. When you grow in conformity to the character and lifestyle of the Lord Jesus God enlarges your scope and adds to His promises for your life. His blessings increase over your life. However, if you keep marking time around the same wrong habit or behaviour that God has been warning you about, you won't also progress in vision.

God does not release his promises and anointing on a man at once. He does so in stages, depending on his growth in life and character.

Discussion Point

Discuss how Abraham handled the trial of barrenness that confronted him (Gen 15:1-4).

His problem of barrenness dominated his thoughts so much that he took his eyes off the promise that God Himself will become his exceeding great reward). Instead, he complained.

In our life's journey we will keep facing one trial or other but our attitude must be: *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”* ⁶ And ⁷

the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”.
(Phil 4:6,7)

Complaining will only bring us into more trouble. Instead of worrying and complaining one should rather learn to pray and give thanks.

How did Hagar come into Abraham's life?

(Gen 12:16, 16:1,2)

She was one of the items given as a bride price to Abraham by Pharaoh in exchange for Sarah his wife. However, when his wife was restored to him, instead of making restitution by giving back the bride price, he went away with everything. He went away with trouble that has become the trouble of the whole world today: the Ishmaelites that came from Hagar the Egyptian.

Are there things you did against another person while an unbeliever or a backslider?

You must make restitutions where possible both now and in the future to keep your records clean with God. It is part of the Christian life. One of the first signs of repentance in Zacchaeus was his readiness to make restitutions of his past wrong doings.

Discussion Point

Discuss the effect of Hagar's life on Abraham's home and his discipleship relationship with God (Gen 16:1-16, 15,16; 17:1,15-19).

How was he restored?

What lessons can we learn from here?

Hagar became an alternative to Sarah, a stumbling block to the man of God, Abraham. He went into her, and so went into the devil's trap. Hagar conceived and quarrels started in the house of the man of God. He became a polygamous man, and the presence of God departed from him for 13 years. No prayer, no building of any altar; he was in darkness.

In Gen 17:1 God came back and had to introduce Himself to Abraham afresh, as if he was an unbeliever who never knew God. Abraham had to start afresh to learn how to walk with God. Because of the stubbornness of his flesh, causing him to fall into sin often, he had to be wounded, through circumcision. He had to bleed. God had to renew His covenant with Abram and change his name to Abraham.

Despite this Abraham's passion and tenacity to having a child was so much that he argued with God and pleaded for Ishmael to live. Maybe God would have finished with Ishmael forever, but he pleaded for Ishmael, the fruit of his sinful nature, to live.

That is a great lesson for us who desire to follow Jesus. Don't pray for your Ishmael to live. Let God deal with him as he wills. We must watch our lives, our steps and be surrendered to the will of God at all costs.

After 13 years of backsliding, Abraham was restored

Though with pains, Abraham grew in his relationship with God (Gen 18:1-8, 18:17-19, 23-25).

He grew in his character. He grew in hospitality. God had a good testimony about him. He also knew God's character in a deeper way (Gen 18:23-25). In discipleship relationship the disciple and his discipler get to know each other better.

A son for Abraham after 25 years wait

God is ever faithful to His promises. It is painful to note that Abraham waited 13 years of the 25 because of his carelessness, and not because of God's delays.

Abraham was faced with yet another trial (Gen 22:1-3; Heb 11:17-19).

Discuss the implication of this trial and Abraham's attitude to the trial this time around.

Isaac was becoming an idol in Abraham's heart, and God does not tolerate rivals. So, Abraham faced another trial when God asked him to go and sacrifice Isaac, the one he loved. That meant he would become childless again. It was a great trial. This time round Abraham had learnt his lesson. He believed that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead. He obeyed God and proved his unequalled love for the Lord.

What is your Isaac that is creeping into your heart and trying to become an idol in your heart? For God to commit Himself to you in a greater dimension, you must prove your unrivalled love for Him. You must be willing to sacrifice that "Isaac" to the Lord. You will notice that God did not provide a way of escape for Abraham until he actually took a knife to slaughter Isaac. In his heart Isaac was already dead. Every Isaac in our hearts must be sacrificed to the Lord.

Discuss the reward of Abraham's obedience in this scripture (Gen 22:15-18; Gal 6:6-9) Abraham received a greater blessing for his obedience. He sowed to the Spirit and reaped life. Where do you throw your allegiance? Whom do you obey? The Spirit or your human nature?

Abraham stayed, lived and died in the land of promise. He stayed within the promise of God for his life, without looking back or returning to the land he came from. God, on His part, fulfilled His promises, which never fail.

Personal Assessment Questions

Each one of us ought to be in direct discipleship relationship with the Lord Jesus (even as Abraham walked with God). We still need to relate to a human discippler.

Give an outline of your discipleship relationship with the Lord since you met Him. Indicate the how, when, where and specific instances of each step or segment of your walk with the Lord.

- a) What conditions would you say you fulfilled at the onset?
- b) What are the trials in your own walk with the Lord?
- c) Discuss your own 'ups' and 'downs'. Your 'blackouts' and what caused them. How long did each last? How did you get restored?
- d) What personal lessons did you learn from God directly?
- e) What effects have these had on your life?



CHAPTER NINE

MANAGING SUCCESS IN DISCIPLESHIP

If you follow these or similar guidelines you will most likely succeed in making disciples, because they are time-tested methods going back to the apostolic times.

Success, however, creates its own set of problems. Unlike teaching or training, where you ultimately 'graduate', being a disciple is an endless journey. Unless one stops growing in grace and ceases to function in any kind of ministry. In my experience and observation, it's when one is a successful minister of God that the need to be in a discipleship relationship is most crucial.

No 1: Reason you will always need to be a disciple

Accountability

It is very dangerous to be in any kind of ministry and not be accountable to someone. We are not talking about someone to report to, or whose permission you need before making any move, like a line manager. We are talking about someone who has your permission to watch your back.

Spiritual pride and reckless behaviour can creep on a minister of God almost without detection. It is like the boiling frog syndrome. It is alleged that if you put a frog in a bowl of boiling water it will immediately jump out. On the other hand, if you put the frog in a bowl of cold water it will stay put. However, as you increase the heat under the bowl, the frog will not jump out because as the temperature of the water increases, the frog adapts. It will stay put until it is cooked.

There are certain changes we go through that we may not be aware of. It may take an outsider, even if he is less spiritual or gifted than we are, to see it. It is then very important that they feel free to bring it to our attention, and we respect them enough not to dismiss it.

No 2: Reason you will always need to be a disciple

Prophetic gift

Good as it is to have prophetic insight, and claims of always hearing from God, there will always be need for caution. The five-fold ministry gives us a model to follow because only the gift of an evangelist can stand alone. The other four gifts work in pairs.

- a) Apostles and prophets are twins.
The church is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Both gifts are complementary. The prophet needs the authentication of the apostle, while the apostle needs the insight of the prophet.

- b) The same collaboration applies at a lower level in the gift of prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:29, Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. (NIV)

²⁹Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

(NKJV)

It is clear from these two Scripture references that it is safer to get confirmation of any prophetic insight before acting upon it. One could be right and still get the timing wrong. More often something else needs to happen before you can see the fulfilment of the prophecy.

So let others judge, or as NIV puts it: “and the others should weigh carefully what is said.”

You can see that unless one is in a very trusting and loving mentorship or discipleship relationship it is highly unlikely a “man of God” will ever listen to a third party’s opinion before going ahead to follow the prophecy or revelation. The trouble with spiritual landslide is that it can take years between the first sign of a crack and the eventual collapse.

No 3: Reason you will always need to be a disciple:

God’s preferred method is to use men of experience to show us the way.

Take the case of Moses and his father-in-law:
Exodus 18:17-23,

¹⁷Moses’ father-in-law replied, ‘What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. ¹⁹Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. ²⁰Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. ²¹But select capable men from all the people – men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain – and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²²Let them serve as judges for the people at all times, but let them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

²³If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.'

Moses was overworking, and unable to cope with the volume of work. All his father-in-law advised was that Moses should only address difficult issues and delegate the rest. He kept bringing “God-willing” proviso into his suggestions because he knew how difficult it will be for Moses to take advice from a human being, especially one who was a Gentile. So, he adds phrases like: *“and may God be with you”, and “If you do this and God so commands,”*.

Here lies my question: If Moses was busy all day, every day talking to God on behalf of the people, and God was giving him instructions on each case, how come God doesn't warn Moses he was overworking, and likely to crash?

The simple, but not so obvious, answer is: there are certain things God expects us to learn from men of experience. You simply can never outgrow a discipler or a confidant.

No 4: Reason you will always need to be a disciple

If you can't learn from my achievements, you can learn from my mistakes.

I remember when I turned 40, having spent the bulk of it away from home, especially in the UK, my mother was giving me certain safety instructions. I reminded her that I was much older now, and capable of taking care of myself. She replied: *“You may be old now, but I am still older than you”*.

One of the benefits of getting old is that you have made a lot more mistakes than a younger person. It is alright to make mistakes, as long as they are your own. Why repeat the mistakes of others when you can learn from them.

No 5: Reason you will always need to be a disciple:

What do you prefer? The rock or the hard place. If you don't have a human discipler, it is likely God will send you one.

Take the case of apostle Paul:

2 Corinthians 12:5-7,

⁵ I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. ⁶ Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, ⁷ or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

Paul had a lot to boast about, even if he didn't want to. He surpassed everyone else in the abundance of his revelations. He knew so much of New Testament doctrines that he could rebuke even Peter for being a hypocrite at Antioch. Peter, on the other hand, confessed in admiration that some of Paul's teachings were hard to understand.

You can imagine how difficult it was for Paul to maintain a discipleship relation for himself. He probably also outgrew Barnabas. Nevertheless, he still needed a mentor. Besides most of the other apostles before him were ministering primarily to the Jewish believers.

He was a pioneer into new territories among the Gentiles. He had to get all his inspiration and structures directly from God.

Paul told the Corinthians he was more than a teacher, to them he was a spiritual father. So, who was a father to a father? Apparently not many were available. So, God had to give him a tormentor, instead of a mentor.

How many of us can afford to have a messenger of Satan follow us everywhere, dogging our footsteps with shipwrecks and floggings and betrayal from the brethren. The best of us would crack and look for easier paths.

So maybe a human discipler is the easier option after all.



**CHAPTER
TEN**

ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE COVERED?

You may be thinking you are covered, because you have a discipler. Perhaps your 'father' in the Lord is a famous, world renown minister of God. The trouble in most such cases is that for many the discipleship is only on paper, and it is definitely often one-sided.

Some are in the habit of attaching themselves to a minister they admire or respect, and thereafter claim him as an authority figure in their lives.

Attending someone's annual camp meeting, or being registered on their mailing list, or even taking pictures with them do not amount to a discipleship relationship.

I am a man under authority; therefore, I too can have authority.

Jesus claimed God as His Father, even in the face of fierce opposition from the Jewish establishment who could not come to terms with such a claim. However, the relationship was not one sided, because at His baptism God Himself affirmed Jesus: *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”*.

Jesus always gave his disciples something to do. He showed the way by example. Jesus said: *“What My Father tells Me to do that I do.”* Therefore, He called His disciples so they might be with Him and then so He can send them out. There can be no relationship without responsibility and obligation to obey orders.

These two scriptures prove there is no way around it: if I have authority, I too must be under authority. The Bible believes in a chain of command, and not a solo minister who is accountable to no one.

John 20:21, *'Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'* This text demonstrates the basic tennent of discipleship: Only the sent can send.

Matthew 8:7, 'The centurion replied, 'Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.' For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, "Go," and he goes; and that one, "Come," and he comes. I say to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.' The principle is further endorsed by this text. The centurion could only have men under him because he himself was a man under authority.

Don't be like a renowned Evangelist with an annual budget of \$500m and over 600 members of staff who got himself into the mess of a public scandal.

He did the right thing by submitting himself to the counsel of his denomination, who wisely demanded that he took a break from ministry for six months. Though he claimed he had confessed and repented before the Lord, they felt it will take at least six months of counselling and prayer support to fully restore him.

Initially he agreed to follow their counsel, but it was not going to be easy to follow it through. He was under pressure to pay his staff, and without him being on the road and on tv there was no way the organisation could continue to raise funds. So, for practical reasons he could not afford to submit, when the crunch came.

Less than a month under suspension he 'restored' himself, claiming that God had forgiven him, and that was all he needed. So, he returned to his full schedule.

As it happened his public and faithful supporters also forgave him and accepted his reasoning behind the quick return to normal. All this goes to show that some submit to discipleship accountability only when it is convenient. For this mega televangelist, when his denomination suspended him, he too suspended them.

He forgot one big, received wisdom in matters like this. A man fails before he falls. You don't just fall because you couldn't resist a temptation. You fall because over a period of time you had been failing. For this reason, a man should never walk alone.

Unfortunately, within a year or two this dear brother fell flat on his face again in the same area of his weakness. This time, however, his reputation was tarnished beyond repair.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: ¹⁰ if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

It is a lot more convenient to go it alone in ministry. Just walk alone with God like Enoch. Remember, however, there are two sides to a coin. Let's look again into the life choices of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Luke 2:49-52,

⁴⁹ 'Why were you searching for me?' he asked. 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?' ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them.

But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.⁵²
And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with
God and man.

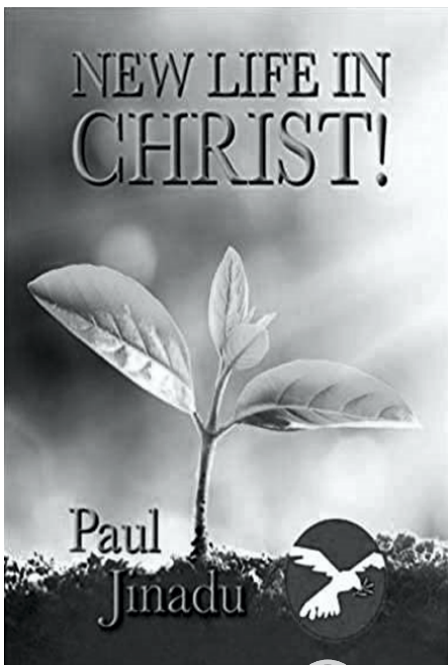
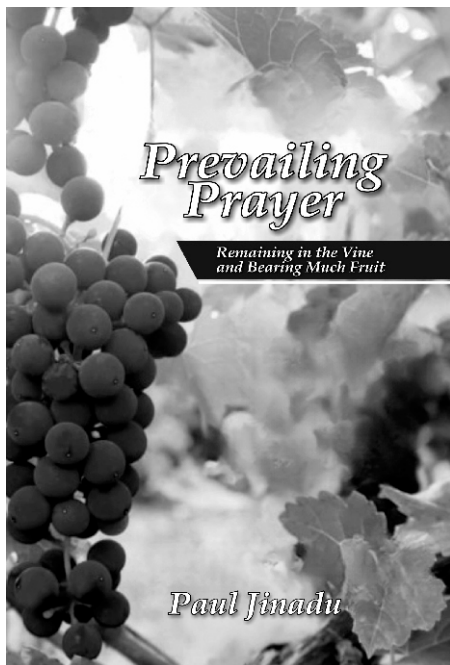
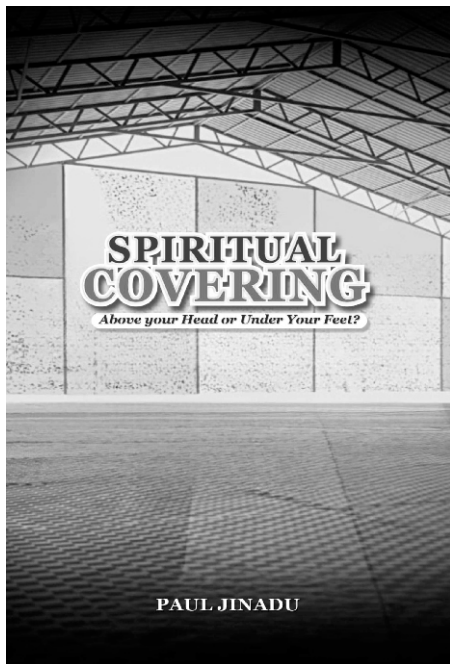
Jesus walked with God and with men and in favour with both. I am, of course, talking about a meaningful, heartfelt relationship, where you are open and free with one another. It is not a controlling environment based on church hierarchy. This is the way to keep bearing fruits even till old age.

At the end of it all what matters most is for both the disciple and the discipler to win the race and get the crown . The apostle started his life's journey with a question: "What will you have me do, Lord?" He returned later in life to give us a report:

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

May we all finish on a high note.

Also by Paul Jinadu:



AUTHOR

Rev. Dr. Paul Jinadu was born a Muslim in Lagos, Nigeria. He became a Christian after Jesus appeared to him and abandoned his pursuit of a medical education in the UK.



He graduated from The Bible College of Wales and The London Bible College. He married Kate who he met in Bible College, and both returned to Nigeria as Missionaries in 1966.

In 1985 Paul started the New Covenant Church in Nigeria and a year later in the UK. He now oversees hundreds of churches in around 50 nations. He is an apostle, spiritual father, and mentor to many pastors across the globe.

THE MAKING OF A DISCIPLE

Christian character is a most necessary trait that a believer in Jesus Christ is expected to possess.

Not only is the Christian to be different and distinct from the average unbeliever, but he is also to stand head and shoulders above anyone who is known as a person of character.

The follower of Christ must be that different from anyone else in the world.

