

Essentials of Discipleship

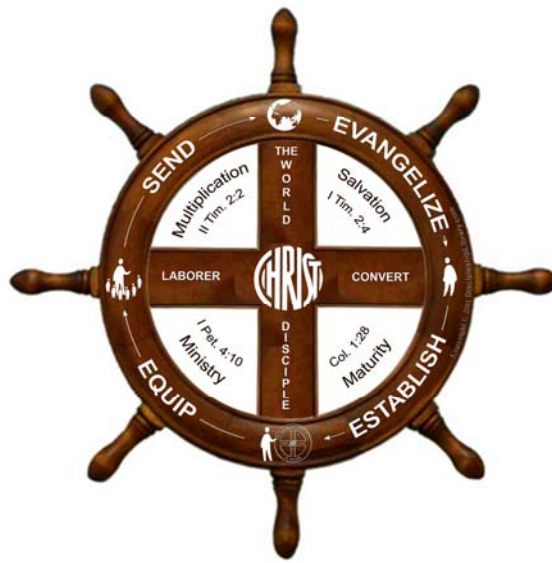
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I. Introduction.

A. The disciple is one who is a functional follower of Jesus Christ who is fulfilling his service to the body.

1. This service does not necessarily zero in on the disciple's gift.
2. The gift may not have been discovered yet.

B. We ought to learn from one another, learn from the past, and teach it to one another in the realm of discipleship.



II. Essentials of Discipleship.

A. The three essentials are *evangelism*, *establishing* and *equipping*.

1. God wants everyone to come to Christ and mature in Him. The aim of evangelism is inclusive. (1 Timothy 2:4, Colossian 1:28)
2. God wants everyone to be serving and functioning as well. (1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4)

B. Evangelism.

1. Salvation comes through Jesus Christ, the Word of God and through persuasion, the Work of the Spirit.
2. The disciple is a message bearer.

3. Evangelism is a product of sowing and reaping.
4. All Christians are to be sharers.
5. Methods of evangelism should be determined by the listeners. (1 Corinthians 9)
6. The minimum requisites.
 - a. Following Jesus.
 - 1) Look, listen and tell others what one has seen and heard. (Acts 22:14-15)
 - 2) The foremost responsibility is relationship to Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:18)
 - 3) Loving service or the Incarnation of the gospel and articulation, which is sharing the gospel, one's testimony and persuasion.
 - b. Praying for contacts, opportunities and boldness.
7. Setting goals. (Matthew 4:19)
 - a. Should this be in terms of results or following?
 - b. How is one to evaluate progress?

C. Establishing.

1. The process of bringing to spiritual maturity.
2. God wants every believer to move on to maturity.
3. There are identifiable marks of maturity.
4. One is to be established in the truth, holiness, faith, good works and words.
5. The responsibility for establishing rests in God using the circumstances of life (Romans 16:25, 1 Peter 5:10, James 1), fellow believers, and the believer himself (Jude 20).
6. Minimum requisites for fellow believers.
 - a. Prayer.
 - b. Loving fellowship.
 - c. The Word of God.
7. Minimum requisites for the believer himself—cf. the Wheel Illustration.

8. The process is important.
 - a. It begins with us responding in faith to what God has initiated.
 - b. It includes true New Testament fellowship.
 - 1) This must be centered on Christ.
 - 2) The Word is central to it. (Colossians 3:16)
 - 3) Prayer is involved.

D. Equipping.

1. It has to do with preparing a man to do something. It is the process of making a man fully ready.
2. It has to do with skills and gifts.
3. The aim is to prepare God's people for works of service. (Ephesians 4:12, 1 Peter 4:12)
4. It is used in the context of ministry, which makes it distinct from establishing.
5. A similar word is used of God preparing the world and preparing a body for the redemption of man. (Luke 6:40, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, Hebrews 13:20-21)
6. Minimum requirements.
 - a. Every believer is expected to be a basic disciple. (Luke 9:23)
 - b. Every disciple is expected to be equipped to function through equipping for evangelism and building up the church through the discovery, use and development of the gifts.
 - c. The body is built up numerically and qualitatively.
7. Minimum requisites.
 - a. You must have an equipper.
 - b. You must have a learner.
 - c. You must have an ability to equip. The materials one uses is under this such as the Word. (1 Thessalonians 3:10)
 - d. You must have prayer.
 - e. You must have a giving of gifts by the Spirit.
8. The scope of equipping is broad.
9. Two kinds of disciples trying to be equipped—staff and non-staff.

Application questions

1. Define the three essentials of discipleship in your own words.

2. What is the difference between establishing and equipping? How is the focus different?

3. Which principle has stood out to you the most concerning discipleship? How will you apply this to your own discipleship relationships?
