

# **THE GREAT COMMISSION**

## **A Missions Equipping Strategy for Church Planting Movements**

*Dr. Billie Hanks, Jr.*

“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 will be with you always, to the very end of the age.” (*Matthew 28:19&20*)



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# INTRODUCTION

It is with deep appreciation that we join you for this specialized course on discipleship training. Since there are no experts in the field of discipleship, we can simply enjoy learning together. For my part, I will be passing on what I have received from my Pauls and Timothys.

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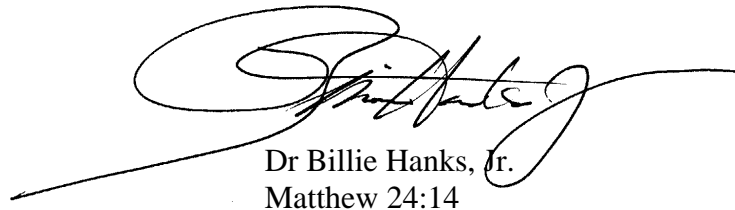
*“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”* (Matthew 24:14)

The guiding principles for all discipleship training belong to the Old and New Testaments, so they are God's gift to every Christian. Our united mission is to apply these principles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This scriptural challenge has remained in force since the Great Commission was first given and became the church's missionary mandate.

Multiplying Christians ultimately produce multiplying churches, so the timeless objective of any missions' strategy is to win and train as many people as possible who in turn will evangelize and disciple others. The principles presented in this course are not new, however, they are transcultural, eternally relevant, and do not depend on literacy. They are also powerful enough to revitalize any life, church, or denomination that faithfully applies them!

If Moses had not trained Joshua; if Elijah had not trained Elisha, and if Barnabas had not trained Paul, stop to consider the great good the entire world would have lost. Now it's our turn to invest in the lives of others. We can adopt new Christians like Paul did Timothy, or lead them to Christ ourselves, but disciple-making requires an intentional commitment to spend quality time equipping new and growing believers. May that high privilege be yours and mine as we *“...press toward the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:14)

In That Prayer,



Dr Billie Hanks, Jr.  
Matthew 24:14









# THE GREAT COMMISSION IS OUR MISSION

*“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 will be with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19&20)*

At the outset of this course, it must immediately be observed that there is little or no emphasis in the gospels placed on discipleship through literacy. When Jesus trained the twelve, He simply invited them (Matthew 4:19) to follow Him and learn from His example.

For generations, many Christian educators have seriously neglected the Lord’s relational methodology, even though it proved to be highly successful and revealed His plan for carrying out The Great Commission. The searching question we are left to ask is, *why?*

Could it be that His ministry of example:

- (a) Calls us to go beyond our cultural comfort zones
- (b) Mistakenly appears to be too slow to be effective
- (c) Demands a conscious choice to re-think our priorities
- (d) Is being neglected because of our low spiritual self-esteem

Whatever the reason, re-discovering this timeless and deeply rewarding approach to ministry requires an understanding of a basic New Testament principle. Paul explained it in 1 Corinthians 11:1 when he wrote, *“Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.”* In essence, his clear challenge reminds us that our daily lives are to become the vehicles for modeling His message. As the Lord’s disciples, we are commissioned to share what we know, and more importantly, seek to communicate what we believe by becoming usable vessels of honor.

*“In a large house there are articles not only of gold and of silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.” (2 Timothy 2:20&21)*

## Reflection and Discussion –

A ministry of example requires a sincere commitment to transparent openness! It fully exposes both our strengths and our weaknesses to the new and growing believers whom we train. The sacred and secular can no longer be compartmentalized, and the Lord’s strong words, *“Be holy for I am holy”* (1 Peter 1:16b) must find practical expression in our every day circumstances. His holy life should find us feeling totally unworthy and personally inadequate, but willing to take the next step by faith.

As you consider the challenge of discipleship training, you may honestly feel safer preaching to a crowd or teaching a small group. Opening yourself up to a spiritual trainee may at first seem strange. The object of this methodology is to simply allow the new Christian to freely observe and learn from whatever *God* is doing in your life!

*“...for it is God who works in you to will and act according to His good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)*

## Reflection and Discussion –

In this classic Biblical approach to discipleship training, all of life’s experiences become teaching opportunities. For example, our hardest times and our richest experiences automatically teach us

valuable lessons which can be shared. For this reason, it is good to remember that Peter, James, and John were with the Lord when He was on both mounts – transfiguration (Matthew 17:1) and olives (Matthew 26:36-38). They each remained close to Him for months of training before He sent them out to minister to others.

*“He appointed twelve – designating them apostles -- that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach.” (Mark 3:14)*

The words *with Him* embodied His method of training. His love, abiding sense of peace, and divine purpose flowed naturally into the disciples. He told them this is how our ministries are to function.

*“Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” (John 7:38)*

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

Just as the Lord explained the truth to the first generation of spiritual trainees, we can now read the Bible and teach those of our generation. Ordinary things like gates (Matthew 7:13 & 14), grapevines (John 15:1), lilies (Matthew 6:28), livestock (John 10:27-29), pets (Matthew 7:6), fruit (Matthew 7:16-20), and all of nature, furnished the unforgettable illustrations used in His teaching.

Salt (Matthew 5:13) and light were two of the Lord’s transcultural teaching symbols and they can be ours as well. They remain up to date because salt still preserves, and light always drives away the darkness. This is true worldwide!

*“You are the light of the world...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14a & 16)*

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

Those who were literate like Peter, Paul, James, and John not only explained the truth verbally, but also presented it in a written form. Their epistles became a life-changing blessing to all who wanted spiritual instruction. However, the primary ministry of this transforming process has always belonged to the Holy Spirit. In every generation since Pentecost, He has actually done this miraculous work. As Christians, we have never been alone when seeking to train or encourage new believers. This is *why* no one can take or deserve the credit for what happens in a disciple-making ministry.

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)*

The profound simplicity of modeling our message is very much like being a good father, mother, older brother, or sister. This peer influence takes place naturally as we *pray* for guidance and intentionally open ourselves up to God’s leadership.

*“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” (Psalm 32:8)*

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

In many ways, the epistles teach us just as much about the practical aspects of discipleship as we learn from the gospels. This should not be a surprise because the gospels (John 1:16-17) were primarily written to show us God’s grace and eternal plan of salvation. However, the epistles were



written to teach us how to live by faith in a sinful world, without becoming like it (John 17:15-18). We, like our first century forefathers, have been called to be the Lord's disciples in a secular, post-resurrection era. This means that today's new believers can be trained to grow and share their faith victoriously with the same vitality as those who walked this path before us.

Let's consider Paul's words in Philippians 4:9;

*"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."*

His two-fold emphasis includes both *hearing* and *seeing*, which corresponds to *teaching* and *training*. Today however, many church ministries neglect training and rely solely on teaching. In terms of the Great Commission, this single oversight may well explain evangelism's serious failure to keep up with and surpass the human birthrate. The Bible's emphasis on personal evangelism and leadership development is clearly dependant on *modeling* – "...all that you've seen me do..." This lifestyle approach to discipleship is highly effective, but it cannot be accomplished in an appointed hour of corporate worship or in a weekly small group Bible study.

New Testament discipleship requires patience and balance! Both *teaching* and *training* must be practiced simultaneously as equally important aspects of the same equipping process. As this takes place, it is so natural that it passes by almost unnoticed. This is one reason why personal training can appear to be unimportant. As an example, it is doubtful that the quiet unassuming ministry of a humble Cyprian farmer like Barnabas would have received much attention. Yet time has proven the great worth of his spiritual investment in the life of young Saul of Tarsus. His training ministry has now positively impacted 21 centuries of believers. This is many times more than the number of people affected by any secular, military, or political event during the last two millennium!

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

Simply stated, no ministry principle is more powerful, timeless, or seriously needed than spiritual multiplication. It holds the evangelistic key to fulfilling the Great Commission. However, it is relational ministry that gives birth to evangelistic multiplication so one depends on the other. It is the process that in turn produces highly effective church planting and global missions!

Explosive multi-national outreach stands waiting at our door, but before that door can be opened, the church must first rediscover and implement the ministry of training by example. This exciting approach to ministry will inspire us to new heights of dedication and bring spiritual vitality into the lives of those we train. Without exception, as Christians, we are all called to exercise this caring lifestyle.

Our continual challenge is to love God enough to intentionally choose to put others *first* (Philippians 2:4&5). In Titus chapter two, ladies are admonished to give themselves to the training of younger women. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul's understudy is instructed to set a godly example in spite of his youth, and throughout the epistles, the apostles model this same caring emphasis. Once this New Testament practice is clearly seen and internalized, the decision to move ahead becomes easy. The Bible is our guide, and it contains a wealth of practical instructions on how to effectively train new and growing believers.

# THE LORD JESUS' MINISTRY OF EXAMPLE

*"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than the master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (John 13:15-17)*

**Step One** – Our ministry begins by laying a solid spiritual foundation in the life of the new believer being trained (1 Corinthians 3:11).

*"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Christ Jesus."*

**Step Two** – Next, we move ahead slowly, building on that solid foundation (1 Corinthians 3:12-13).

*"Now if any man builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."*

The Bible's caution "...let each [person] be careful how he builds..." (1 Corinthians 3:10) shows us God's concern about effective discipleship training. It is sobering to realize that only gold, silver, and precious stones will pass the test of His judgment! Even more alarming is the discovery that the true value of our ministry will be measured by the quality of each trainee's character, faithfulness, and love for God. Their ministries, in effect, become the lasting fruit of ours. They, like our beloved physical children, become a great source of joy across a lifetime.

*"...I have no greater joy than to see my children walking in the truth." (2 John 1:4)*

When teaching on this subject, it is vitally important to separate – *salvation* from spiritual *rewards*. Paul consistently makes this distinction. Each new believer should be helped to realize that only a lifestyle of love and spiritual investment in the lives of others will result in heavenly rewards. Beyond this, it is also valuable for your trainee to know *why* his or her salvation is not a reward. If it were a reward, it could never be God's gift!

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8&9)*

Personal faith in Jesus Christ brings the current and future blessing of salvation. However, a lifestyle of faithful obedience brings the blessing of heavenly rewards!

*"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."*  
(1 Corinthians 3:14-15)

**Reflection and Discussion** –

## Ministry Insights:

In designing your personal steps toward starting a relational ministry, it is important to prayerfully consider the potential needs of your trainee.

1. The less spiritually mature he or she is, the more structured your instruction will need to be.

In practical terms, this means that the first 6 - 12 months of a new believer's care usually requires some special planning. After that, their personal growth can be encouraged through friendship and being allowed to observe your life and the lives of others at close range. Paul said, "...*you have us as an example...*" (Philippians 3:17b) During your fellowship, you can discuss new joys and challenges in the context of being ambassadors for Christ. Spending this kind of quality time together will be essential if your ministry of example is to be a solid success.

*"...he who walks with wise men will become wise...."*  
(Proverbs 13:20a)

## Reflection and Discussion –

2. Literature was not available during the first century, however, in contemporary cultures where printed material is a normal part of church life, selected books can be extremely helpful. This is especially true in assisting more mature church members who are personally willing to disciple new believers, but feel the need of a curriculum to guide them.

Since discipleship material has traditionally been written for small group instruction rather than personalized training, we recommend the international language versions of "Operation Multiplication." This specialized series of materials anticipates a new believer's specific needs. It is uniquely designed to assist with the first 6 - 12 months of basic discipleship instruction. The authors affirm a balanced approach for guiding new believers toward spiritual growth through – corporate *worship*, small group *teaching*, and personal *training*.

## Reflection and Discussion –

3. Prayer is universal – it functions naturally without reference to literacy, so all new believers should be encouraged to participate in a prayer group.
4. Many of today's prayer groups primarily focus on petition and intercession, and this is good, but it is also important to personally teach and model *adoration*, *thanksgiving*, and *confession*. This can take place naturally during your personal times of prayer with your trainee. Through periodic review, you can also lead him or her to memorize the following brief definitions describing the five Biblical forms of prayer.

(A) **Adoration** (Praising God for who He is)

*"I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth."*  
(Psalm 34:1)

(B) **Confession** (Agreeing with God about your sin)

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

- (C) **Intercession** (Praying for the needs of others)

*“Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you....” (1 Samuel 23:9)*

- (D) **Petition** (Praying about your personal needs)

*“Hither to have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” (John 16:24)*

- (E) **Thanksgiving** (Expressing gratitude to God)

*“In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)*

*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)*

Prayer is a life long *joy* that can best be learned through personal experience, so be sure to teach Paul’s emphasis on praying, “...*without ceasing*.” Seek to model transparent honesty by always being real when you express your personal needs to God. Help your trainee understand that child-like *faith* is what actually pleases the Lord. Explain that rote repetition, loud praying, and one’s physical posture while praying will not influence His answer because He “... *looks at the heart*...” (1 Samuel 16:7). This would also be an ideal time to discuss the importance of one’s heart attitude toward God’s will. Point out that the reason *why* we pray is to discover and agree with God about what He already wants and has promised – then we can sincerely do His will by faith!

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

5. Because prayer is easy to understand and flows naturally from God’s people, it is logical to make it an essential part of your early training plan.

- (A) Suggest that prayer is as basic as breathing and can be enjoyed at the beginning of each new day!

*“O satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.” (Psalms 90:14)*

- (B) It is helpful for each new believer to see a clear Biblical pattern for prayer:

The Lord Jesus –

*“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (Mark 1:35)*

The Psalmist –

*“Morning by morning, O Lord, You hear my voice; morning by morning I lay my requests before You and wait in expectation. (Psalm 5:3)*

*“Let the morning bring me word of Your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul.” (Psalm 143:8)*

The Apostle Paul –

*“For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.” (Ephesians 1:15-19a)*

*“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love which surpasses knowledge – that you might be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to Him that is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work in us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (Ephesians 3:14-21)*

- (C) For emphasis, you can focus on what God has specifically said in first person. This will allow each new believer to better understand what he or she can expect from prayer. To do this, you can draw on the many rich Biblical examples that God has given us.

**Reflection and Discussion –**

**Teaching Examples --**

**His Invitation –**

*“Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” (Jeremiah 33:3)*

**His Condition –**

*“If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

## His Promise –

*“I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” (Matthew 21:21&22)*

- (D) Once new Christians experience the wonderful privilege of fellowship with God through prayer – they will begin agreeing with Him about His revealed will. If they learn to do this early, then close fellowship with Him will become a life pattern. As their spiritual growth progresses, they will begin looking for opportunities to pass this pattern on to those whom they disciple.

*“As you freely receive, freely give...” (Matthew 10:8)*

## Reflection and Discussion -

- (E) If you faithfully model prayers of *petition*, asking God for the daily opportunity to *witness*, your example will produce a rich spiritual harvest! Your prayer life will not only bless your trainee, but all those who know you. Discipleship is above all else a lifestyle, so it is important (Acts 1:8) to patiently help your trainee understand and claim God’s exciting *promise* found in (1 John 5:14&15). This passage explains how prevailing prayer actually works.

*“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us: and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”*

Assure your trainee that it is clearly God’s will that “...*none should perish...*” (1 Timothy 2:4) and that He willingly came, and gave His life for our salvation. We can therefore be assured that He will be pleased when we ask to do His will each morning.

*“No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father’s side, has made Him known.” (John 1:18)*

*“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for His sheep. My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.” (John 10:11&27)*

Carefully explain that when we offer requests that please God, He has the power to bring them to pass! The key is to learn what He wants, so we can seek it with our whole heart. You can refer back to (1 John 5:14&15) to make this point perfectly clear.

*“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” (Mark 11:24)*

**Note:** Teaching Biblical theology and sound doctrine is a slow process, and the most effective time to do it is when it relates to a felt need. For this reason, prayerfully anticipate your God given opportunities to teach in the context of a real life situation.

The Lord did this repeatedly as He traveled. What the disciples saw and experienced became the spontaneous curriculum for their instruction on a wide range of subjects.

- (F) By consistently re-emphasizing (1 John 5:14 & 15), you will slowly but surely associate prayer with personal evangelism in your trainee's thinking and personal experience. (Example)

### Questions –

- (1) Do you believe it is God's will that we become faithful witnesses wherever we live and travel? Acts 1:8 says, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*
- (2) Since Pentecost has already taken place, can we begin asking for empowered opportunities to witness and expect to receive a "yes" from God?

These basic questions will offer the opportunity to explain:

- (a) How conviction takes place. *"When The Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment."* (John 16:8)
- (b) How challenges and the need for patience develop Christian character. *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."* (James 1:2-4)

(Illustrations) Tell one of your favorite stories about asking God to use you, and then explain how He answered your prayer. Take time to slowly recount the events that prepared the way for your witness. If possible, share two or three different types of experiences, so he or she will understand that we are sometimes led to "plant" and sometimes led to "water" but *"...God gives the increase."* (1 Corinthians 3:6)

Explain that the on-going challenge with the harvest is not primarily with the soil. Nor is it with the seed. It is with our own prayerlessness as His witnesses! If any Christian has been fruitless in personal evangelism for an extended period of time, then genuinely comprehending that *"...we have not because we ask not..."* (James 4:2c) will set the stage for a new lifestyle of spiritual effectiveness.

### Reflection and Discussion –

# MEETING FELT NEEDS

Just as prayer is the natural beginning place for relational ministry, assurance and lessons on how to deal with temptation rank high on the list of anticipated needs for discipleship training.

*“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”* (1 Corinthians 10:13)

New believers typically face several basic challenges:

- (1) They need to know who their enemy is (1 Peter 5:8) and how to resist him (Ephesians 6:10-12).

*“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”* (James 4:7 & 8)

Take some time to personally illustrate how to recognize and resist temptation. This will help your trainee with a universal need. Be prepared to model what you teach on this subject. Explain how and why the Lord Jesus humanly relied on Scripture memory when He fought against the enemy. Note – this discussion can easily initiate a joint commitment to memorize Scripture. Once the new believer sees the Lord’s clear example (John 4:1-11) and hears the psalmist’s advice (Psalm 119:11) he or she will understand the spiritual benefits of this deeply rewarding discipline.

All new believers will greatly profit from Joseph’s victorious example of purity and Sampson’s tragic example of defeat. David’s heart-felt repentance coupled with an explanation of 1 John 1:9 will provide the opportunity for personal contextualization. When your trainees are ready, encourage them to talk with you individually and privately about their foremost spiritual challenges. Be sure to treat these discussions with great respect and confidentiality.

## Examples:

greed	profanity
untruthfulness	substance abuse
prejudice	love of money
slander	lust
impurity	procrastination

*“For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world.”* (1 John 2:16)

## Reflection and Discussion –

Once you understand your trainee’s spiritual battlegrounds, you can be more specific in seeking to help. Ever increasingly, subtle worldly influences like spiritism, new age, universalism, and the teachings of pseudo-Christian sects and cults have made deeper and



more immediate follow-up a necessity. This reality underscores the importance of establishing the authority of Scripture early in the experience of a new Christian.

Make it a high priority to tell each new believer why *disbelief* in the divinity of Christ is at the central “core” of Satan’s attack against God. Point out that the enemy’s tactics have never changed – he simply puts on new and alluring faces.

As always, the natural process of discipleship training moves from felt needs to inspired Biblical answers. Since *good* and *evil* have co-existed long before the creation of man, it will come as no surprise to your trainee that God is “good” and can be trusted, but Satan is “evil” and cannot be trusted. It will be very encouraging for the new believer to learn that “...*the one who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*” (1 John 4:4b)

It will also be reassuring for your trainees to discover the depth of God’s great faithfulness. In Hebrews 13:5b, He says, “...*never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.*” In Ephesians 1:13 & 14, He gives us His guarantee of salvation, once we have personally received Christ and been marked as His – by the Holy Spirit!

*“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession – to the praise of His glory.”* (Ephesians 1:13&14)

God’s wonderful love is expressed throughout the Scriptures, but it is essential that all new believers come to understand that it is actually God – the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* who loves them and made them in His image. The Holy Spirit will enable them to understand this beautiful mystery, once you explain it. Like all other truths in Christianity, understanding God’s nature has to be accepted by faith.

*“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them.”* (Genesis 1:26 & 27)

To illustrate this eternal reality, you might use three names for *one* individual. When Billie Hanks, Jr. enters a room, one individual walks through the door, but he has three equally significant names. Based on John 14:23 seen below and several other verses like John 14:17 and 17:26, the same thing happens when God’s Spirit enters a new Christian’s heart. In love He makes His home in them, and they become His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16). He is *one* (Isaiah 43:10-11) yet He has revealed Himself to us as three – a Trinity.

*“...I anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make our home with him.”* (John 14:23)

Because *Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Father* are each identified as God in the Bible, to willfully deny the divinity of any of the three makes - Him a liar. This is the essence of the sin of disbelief.

*“See to it brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.”* (Hebrews 3:12)

## **Reflection and Discussion -**

## **Recommended Discussion Topics:**

**Note** – over meals, while walking, traveling, or in relaxed settings, you can follow the Lord's example by discussing spiritual subjects with your trainee.

### **Heaven –**

Jesus taught, “*Father, I want those you have given Me to be with Me where I am and see My glory, the glory you have given Me before the creation of the world.*” (John 17:24)

Jesus' promise, “*In My Father's house there are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place I am going.*” (John 14:2-4)

### **Assurance –**

Jesus' teaching, “*My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.*” (John 10:27-30)

God's Word says, “*...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.*” (Philippians 1:6)

His promise to us, “*And this is the assurance we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us – whatever we ask -- we know that we have what we asked of Him.*” (1 John 5:14&15)

### **Facing Trials –**

The Lord Jesus said, “*...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*” (John 16:33b)

The Apostle Peter wrote, “*...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*” (2 Peter 2:9b)

The Apostle Paul said – “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*” (Philippians 4:13)

### **Authority of Scripture –**

“*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For a prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*” (2 Peter 1:20-21)

*“All Scripture is God – breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

### **End Times –**

*“The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.” (1 Timothy 4:1-2)*

*“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, but the elements will melt in the heat.” (1 Timothy 3:10-12)*

*“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.” (1 Timothy 3:1-5)*

### **Thought Life –**

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)*

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praise worthy – think about such things.” (Philippians 4:8)*

### **New Attitudes –**

**Positive** – *“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” (Romans 12:11-13)*

**Relationships** – *“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” (Romans 12:14-16)*

**Vengeance** – *“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:17&18)*

## **Personal Purity –**

*“Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they must see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.” (1 Peter 2:11 & 12)*

*It is God’s will that you should be holy; that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you must learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you His Holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)*

## **Priorities –**

*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)*

## **Christian Marriage –**

**Lost husbands** – *“Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without talk by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” (1 Peter 3:1-4)*

**Saved husbands** – *“Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” (1 Peter 3:7)*

**Wives** – *“Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.” (Ephesians 5:22-24)*

## **Sin Nature –**

*“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.” (Galatians 5:16-17)*

*“The acts of sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21)*

### **Spiritual Fruits –**

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:22-25)*

### **Conversation –**

*“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29)*

*“Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.” (Ephesians 5:4)*

### **Forgiveness –**

*“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 5:5-7)*

### **Giving –**

*“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)*

*“Anyone who receives instruction in the Word must share all good things with his instructor.” (Galatians 6:6)*

### **Reflection and Discussion –**

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several men emerged as global Christian pioneers in the interdenominational re-emphasis on New Testament discipleship.

- **Dawson Trotman** emphasized the Biblical role of modeling Christ's message, and this resulted in a lay missions movement which is known as The Navigators. Their work first started in North America among the military and then spread rapidly into many countries.
- **Bill Bright's** transferable concepts broadened into a massive missions effort. Campus Crusade for Christ positively impacted a generation of college students, lay leaders, and thousands of churches worldwide.
- **Robert Coleman** presented the Biblical principles behind all current and future discipleship movements. He did this in a nomenclature and theological context, which made the concepts fully understandable to academicians, pastors, and the laity. As a result, entire denominations of Christians were positively affected.

Many denominations and countries now have their own indigenous pioneers who have excelled in applying the Biblical principles being taught. Most of these leaders have gravitated towards small groups offering discipleship teaching. However, some have responded to the challenge of following the admonition of 1 Corinthians 11:1 and carried out one-to-one ministries of example. This has resulted in highly effective discipleship training.

After several decades of implementation and field testing, it has become obvious that:

- (A) Both *teaching* and *training* are to be normative in the life of the church.
- (B) Both of these spiritual disciplines need to be experienced and enjoyed as a normal part of every new believers basic instruction.
- (C) Churches, seminaries, and mission organizations need to re-think their strategy for leadership instruction and include discipleship training!

**Reflection and Discussion –**

## **PRACTICAL INSIGHTS**

Today we know that by telling Bible stories and using simple illustrations, the gospel and disciplines of discipleship can be transferred from life to life. Three indispensable components for this to take place are Christian love, an intentional commitment of time, and a deep desire to make a lasting difference in a new believer's life.

In effect, the modern discipleship movement is intentionally positioned to recapture the spirit and vitality of the early church! Wherever practiced, it is enjoying a member driven dynamic that functions through Christ centered friendship. The strategy of each one *reach* one, and each one *disciple* one, is emerging as the standard of excellence for equipping spiritually healthy new believers. This is the Biblical starting place, planting spiritually healthy churches throughout the world!

The international language of "spiritual friendship" is being identified as the primary vehicle for training future generations of new believers. Because of this, the 21<sup>st</sup> century Christian church could realistically function more like the first century church than at any time since the reformation. History appears to be making a full cycle and lifestyle evangelism is moving back toward its place of former prominence.

**Reflection and Discussion –**

# SPIRITUAL HARVEST

*“Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest?’ I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” (John 4:35)*

With the help of literature when possible, and without when impossible, the powerful force of spiritual multiplication can quietly take the message of the gospel to entire people groups. Imagine thousands, and then millions of new, and highly dedicated Christians praying each morning for the opportunity to share their witness. Visualize them trusting God enough to expect His “yes” to their petition. Through the eyes of faith observe them becoming sensitive to each new opportunity to share “...*the truth in love.*” (Ephesians 4:15a) Through discipleship training, imagine that they have learned to follow their prayers with kindness and strength until the seed of their witness has germinated and grown. Then, after the harvest, you can enjoy watching them encourage and train each new believer.

This amazingly simple process is how evangelistic multiplication takes place. Conversion is never separated from follow up, and discipleship training advances naturally through the example of a committed fellow believer. Rebirth is simply seen as the first step in the *three* phases of salvation: the event, (rebirth), changed life, (discipleship), and future eternity with Christ, (glorification). As you teach, you can explain what these Biblical tenses actually mean – I *have* been saved (My Spirit), I *am* being saved (My Soul), I *will* be saved (My Body).

As Christian workers, we have been highly focused on the salvation event, (the rebirth of man’s spirit), but have we overlooked and neglected the process of salvation - the sanctification of man’s soul? This second phase of redemption (Philippians 2:12c) is totally dependent on the first. It proceeds slowly and requires the daily decision to be conformed to the image of our Lord.

*“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.” (Philippians 3:12)*

*“All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.” (Philippians 3:15-17)*

The third and final phase of salvation begins automatically once we die. This great joy is the completion of our salvation, the fulfillment of God’s promise. The Bible teaches that our citizenship is already in heaven, and our body is simply waiting to be transformed to be like His!

*“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.” (Philippians 3:20&21)*

**Reflection and Discussion –**



# SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION

*“ And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2)*

The spiritual passion of every missionary and dedicated Christian is to love God and finish The Great Commission. This is *why* multiplication is the ministry principle which the enemy fights the hardest. He knows its power and evangelistic potential, so he fears it the most. If the churches we plant simply *add*, our enemy realizes that multitudes will remain lost. However, in the decades ahead, as Christ’s disciples and churches begin to multiply, the “tide” will turn worldwide. The great awakening we have all prayed and waited for will become a virtual reality!

As we each do our individual part, the entire world will hear the gospel and millions will be saved and equipped for service. Through anointed *preaching* (Matthew 24:14), *teaching* (2 Timothy 2:2), and *training* (1 Corinthians 11:1), the Great Commission will at last be completed. Ironically this date, known only to God, is waiting on our response. It remains our highest privilege to *prayerfully* (Luke 10:2) recruit and personally train all those who are needed to serve as workers in the global harvest.

As you study the Spiritual Multiplication Principle in Appendix 3, notice how easy it will be to demonstrate the potential growth of a disciple making ministry. Over 10 years, *if* only one trainee *prays* daily, asking God to be a witness, and *if* only one person each year is reached and discipled – over 1000 will come to know the Savior through multiplication! In 10 short years, this number will increase dramatically to over one million! This is the amazing power of spiritual multiplication. Ask your trainees if they were 50% successful and only reached 500,000 if they would still *pray* daily for the chance to witness and personally disciple each person who responds?

Explain that if only a small percentage of the Christians in every church, old and new, would adopt this New Testament lifestyle, we could tell *all* our friends, neighbors and loved ones about God’s love in one generation.

May a strong sense of spiritual destiny become your reality - as you experience this *vision*, accept the challenge of change, and make the needed sacrifices to successfully complete the mission!

*“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘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 will be with you always, to the very end of the age.’”*  
(Matthew 28:18-20)

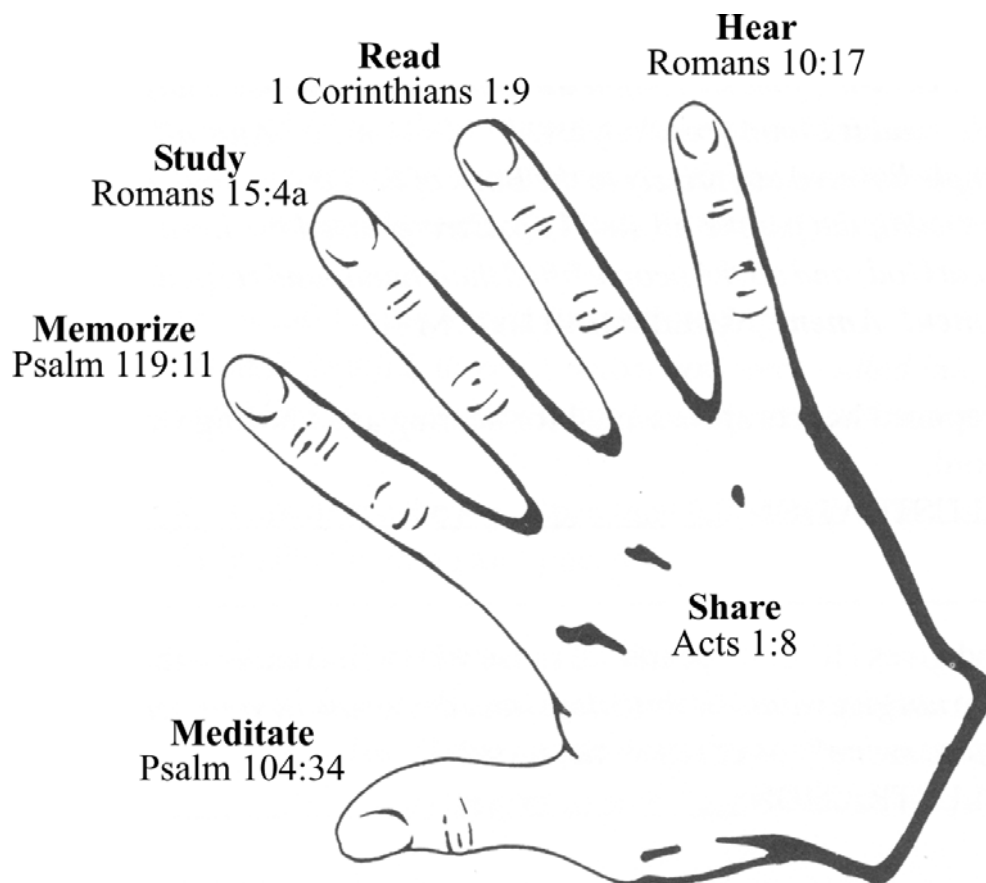
**The Great Commission is our Mission!**

## Appendix I

### The Hand Illustration

To show your trainee the disciplines of personal spiritual growth, you can use the hand illustration developed by Dawson Trotman. It is a continual reminder of how we mature as Christians.

This illustration can be taught by simply drawing with a stick in the sand or tracing an outline of your trainee's hand on a sheet of paper. Review and discussion can help reinforce each point. Asking them to actually hold something with one finger, then two, three, four, and five will graphically demonstrate the progressive strength of adding each new discipline to their life. After several months of personal application, your trainee will be ready to give this illustration to another new believer.



To visually strengthen this illustration, it is helpful to ask your trainee to imagine that he or she is holding a sword, and preparing to fight the enemy. To do this he or she needs a five-finger grip on the hilt.

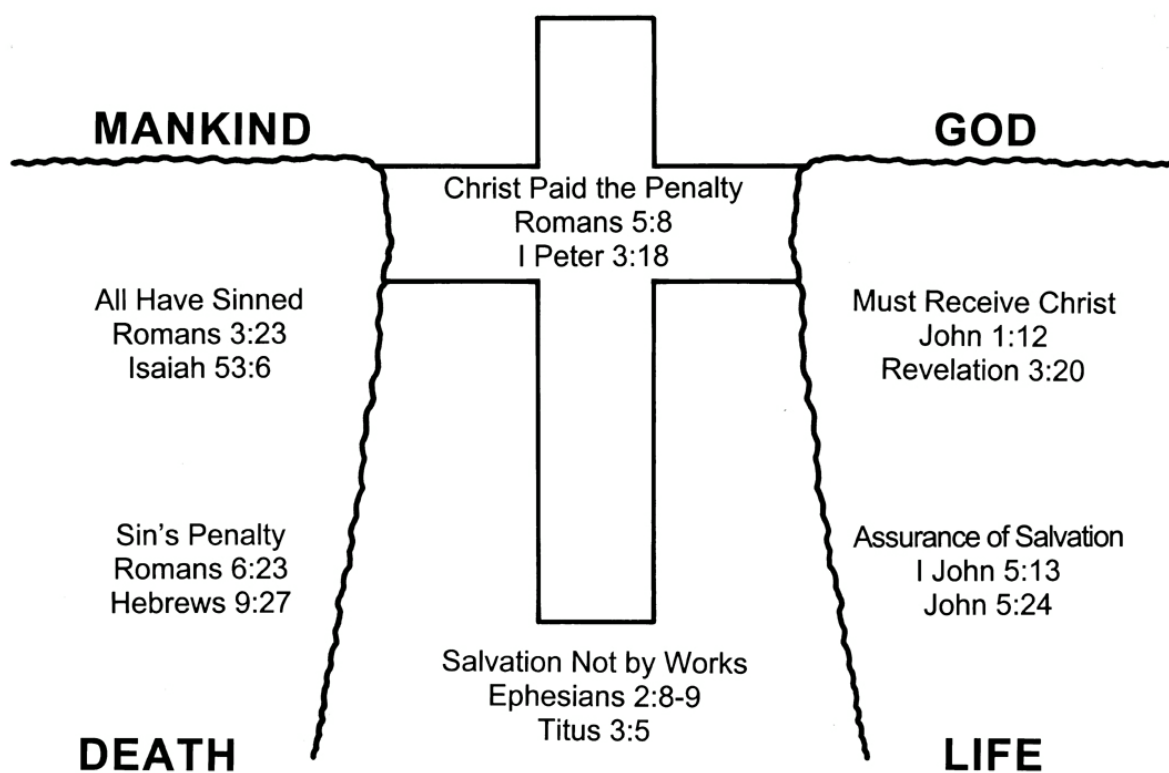
*“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any two-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”  
(Hebrews 4:12)*

## Appendix II

### The Bridge Illustration

This illustration can be drawn on paper or in the sand. The verses used can be quoted from memory, written, or summarized. The illustration is transcultural and can be easily remembered. It basically teaches six selected verses that will effectively help a person to understand how to be born again. If literature is available, each verse can be taught, step-by-step using Chapter Seven of *A Call to Growth* in the “Operation Multiplication” training series.

If personally reading aloud together and enjoying discussion is a possibility, we highly recommend slowly covering the subjects included in *A Call to Joy* and *A Call to Growth*. However, if your trainee does not read, then you can read to him or her and simply summarize the main points.



By reading the Bible and other Christian literature with or to your trainee, you can lay the foundation for a better understanding of any subject which you are led to teach. From week *one*, be sure to emphasize that the Lord wants us to pass on all we know so truth will flow from one spiritual generation to the next.

## Appendix III

### The Spiritual Multiplication Principle

Be sure to explain the fact that multiplication was the natural means by which the early church grew so rapidly. Remind your trainee that this was long before the days of satellites, computers, printing presses, telephones, and rapid transportation. Early believers were verbal communicators who filled with joy over their forgiveness. Because of this relational ministry becomes their lifestyle. They multiplied naturally – through discipleship training!

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION

- If you witness for six months and reach only one person, and then disciple him/her for the next six months, at the end of the first year there will be *two* of you.
- Then, if both of you reach one person each and disciple them, at the end of the second year there will be *four* growing, reproducing Christians. If the *four* of you each prayerfully continue this lifestyle of witness and follow-up, in only 20 years, you will impact thousands for Christ!

Year	People reached and trained
First year =	2
2 years =	4
4 years =	16
6 years =	64
8 years =	256
10 years =	1024
12 years =	4,096
13 years =	8,192
20 years =	1,048,576

*“...and you will be My witnesses...” Acts 1:8*