

Lesson 1: Make Disciples!

Introduction Welcome to the fourth and last module of this discipleship course. Just as the title of this module implies (“Leaders for Jesus”), this set of lessons has to do with leading others. Of course you may wonder where we want to lead people to. The answer becomes clear when we realize how extensive Jesus’ command to make *disciples* is. When we understand what a *disciple* is, the entirety of Jesus’ command is obvious.



Please read the following Bible texts and find out what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20: _____

John 8:31-32: _____

John 13:35: _____

John 15:1-8: _____

Acts 6:7: _____

Definition of “Disciple” To summarize: A disciple is a person, who...

- Has made a clear and binding decision to follow Jesus.
- Has experienced salvation through Jesus Christ and has thus become a child of God.
- Has a living relationship with Jesus.
- Lives with and according to God’s Word.
- Lives in fellowship with other disciples.
- Let’s God change his character.
- Shares his faith and makes disciples of other people.

When we look at discipleship from this perspective, we realize that Jesus’ command to disciple others is a lot more than explaining the 28 fundamental beliefs to someone before they are baptized. Discipleship means leading people to a living and redemptive relationship with Jesus Christ, helping them to grow in their faith, and training them so that they can lead other people to Jesus. But a disciple of Jesus isn’t someone who has reached perfection in all these areas. Being Jesus’ disciple means being Jesus’ student.

- Justification / Sanctification
- Personal salvation and assurance of salvation
- Fundamental teachings of the Bible

Phase 2 Establish

After conversion it is necessary to **firm up** the new believer’s faith and help them grow in their relationship with Jesus. The goal is for them to become responsible and **growing Christians**.



How does Paul describe this process?

Ephesians 3:14-21: _____

Colossians 2:6-8: _____

**Focal Points
of Module 2**

The lessons from module 2 (“With Jesus Ahead”) deal with this growth. The focal points are:

- Filled with the Holy Ghost
- Bible study
- Prayer
- Recognizing God’s will
- Power to change
- Immersion in biblical teachings

The focus of Module 2 isn’t just about imparting *knowledge*; it is about teaching *skills*. Every Adventist knows that personal prayer and Bible knowledge are important. But very few have had a spiritual mentor, who has practically shown them how it works. That is why it is so important to cover its importance in this phase. The book “Evangelism” from Ellen White devotes a whole section to this important topic. (Section 10: “Establishing and Holding New Converts”, p. 334-381). Let’s read the following quote:

Quote #1

“And the new converts will need to be instructed by faithful teachers of God’s Word,

that they may increase in a knowledge and love of the truth, and may grow to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. They must now be surrounded by the influences most favorable to spiritual growth.” (*Evangelism*, p. 337)

Phase 3 Equip

Discipleship includes more than conversion and spiritual growth. As we saw earlier, Jesus’ disciples are always called to lead people to Jesus. That is why it is important to train church members as **workers and missionaries**, who actively share their faith and support the church with their talents. They can and should be leading people to step 2. During New Testament times it was completely normal for every believer to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, to share his faith, and to support the church according to his spiritual talents.



How does Paul describe these thoughts in his letter to the Ephesians?

Ephesians 4:11-14: _____

It is important that we clearly communicate Jesus’ commission to all the church members. We need to stress that they are **commissioned** and **expected** to do something! Moreover, we need to **teach them how** they can work and **give them opportunities to develop** their abilities. This is worthy of repeating: the point is to acquire skills that put knowledge into action. Effective training always combines theory with practice. We lose acquired knowledge when we don’t use it. Thus, training church members is one of the most important duties of church leaders.

Quote #2 “In every church there is talent, which, with the right kind of labor, might be developed to become a great help in this work. That which is needed now for the upbuilding of our churches is the nice work of wise laborers to discern and develop talent in the church—talent that can be educated for the Master’s use. There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the upbuilding of the church and also for unbelievers. It is training, education, that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work.” (*Testimonies for the Church vol. 9, p. 117*)

Quote #3 “God expects His church to discipline and fit its members for the work of enlightening the world. An education should be given that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers valuable talents. By the use of these talents, men would be developed who would be prepared to fill positions of trust and influence, and to maintain pure, uncorrupted principles. Thus great good would be accomplished for the Master.” (*Christian Service, p. 58*)

Quote #4 “The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and

to depend on Him, not on the ministers. Let them learn to work as Christ worked. Let them join His army of workers and do faithful service for Him." (*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 19*)

Quote #5 "Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received." (*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 20*)

Quote #6 "Every church member should be engaged in some line of service for the Master. Some cannot do so much as others, but everyone should do his utmost to roll back the tide of disease and distress that is sweeping over our world. Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath-school classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health, cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people, and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts." (*Ministry of Healing, p. 149*)

Focal Points of Module 3 The lessons from module 3 ("My Life for Jesus") deal with training for mission work. The focal points are:

- Basic principles of evangelization
- Personal call to service
- Friendship evangelism
- CARE Groups
- Personal Bible studies

Phase 4 Empower

It wasn't enough for Jesus to lead His disciples to God, to strengthen their faith, and to make them co-workers. He took them a step further. He **empowered** them and made them **leaders and trainers**. After His ascension into heaven, He wanted them to be able to build up a church and to lead and train others. In other words, they were to lead people through all 4 phases of discipleship. Only in this way could there be a multiplication of leaders and trainers.

The book of Acts shows us how well the apostles learned their lesson from Jesus. The number of disciples increased so drastically that they obviously couldn't carry the load alone. These believers met in small house churches, which each needed their own leader. These leaders were equipped by the apostles for their work. Later we also see that workers were chosen, trained, and empowered in order to continue this process with others. The result was a multiplication of co-workers and missionaries, as well as leaders and trainers.

- Barnabas took Saul in and made him a co-worker.
- Paul surrounded himself with co-workers like Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Aquila, and Priscilla.
- Aquila and Priscilla took in Apollos and trained him.
- Timothy and Titus later became leaders themselves.



How does Paul express the principle of multiplication to Timothy in this verse?

2 Timothy 2:2: _____

Quote #7

“For the carrying on of His work, Christ did not choose the learning or eloquence of the Jewish Sanhedrin or the power of Rome. Passing by the self-righteous Jewish teachers, the Master Worker chose humble, unlearned men to proclaim the truths that were to move the world. These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God.” (*Acts of the Apostles, p. 17.1*)

Focal Points of Module 4

In module 4 (“Leaders for Jesus”), we are mainly trying to answer the question “how can we become leaders and trainers and how we can help others reach this goal.” More specifically it has to do with the ability to establish and lead CARE groups.

Where do we stand?

When we think about the 4 steps on the path of discipleship, we have to ask the question: Where do we stand? We could count how many members we have on the list or how many people come to church. But the real question is: How many disciples do we have? To be more specific how many of our church members...

- have experienced a personal conversion and rejoice in the assurance of salvation,
- are filled with the Holy Spirit,
- experience growth in their faith,
- have regular worship and prayer time,
- share their faith,
- work actively in the church and
- train others?

These questions make it clear that the work has just begun when people are converted and baptized.

Discipleship doesn't happen by chance.

Jesus and the apostles didn't leave discipleship growth up to chance. On the contrary, they intentionally, that is deliberately and purposely, nurtured others in their growth. We also can't leave discipleship to chance, hoping that the believers will somehow grow. In the next lesson we will see that Jesus not only said *that* we should make disciples, but that He also showed *how* it was done.

Challenge

1. Consider the path of discipleship again and think where you stand and where you would personally like to grow.
2. Pray for people with whom you could establish a discipleship group.



Bible Study

Please study **Acts 11:19-30** carefully and take notes on the content, meaning, and life applications of these verses. Be sure to write down good questions for each.

What does the Bible say?

(content, meaning, application)

How can I ask questions about this?

(Questions on content, meaning, and application)

