

DISCIPLESHIP DEMANDS SHARING (#7)

By Bob Young

Introduction

This phrase is ambiguous. I know it, I recognize it. Bear with me. Share what? With whom?

Authentic disciples have a vertical relationship, sharing time with the Teacher. That is not the subject of this study.

As we noted in the previous point, disciples share horizontal relationships and are connected with other disciples.

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What is meant by the phrase, “discipleship demands sharing”?

A primary characteristic of disciples—a disciple makes other disciples. If I am not actively involved in making other disciples, I must ask myself whether I am an authentic disciple.

Disciples develop more disciples. Discipleship is the DNA of the church, it is the work of the church corporately, it is the reality of life.

Discipleship is not self-centered, it is not only for personal advantage.

Discipleship inevitably leads to sharing. A primary characteristic of disciples—a learner recruits other learners. I share what I have learned, what makes my life richer, better, more meaningful. I cannot keep quiet!

I am excited about what I have found. It is like a new product, I want to tell everyone. “You should try....” How many times have you heard that? A positive experience shared, a value passed on, a good idea multiplied.

Why does this not characterize modern Christianity? Because we are focused on developing Christians and not disciples. Being a biblical disciple is much harder than being a Christian. Contemporary definitions of Christianity have been watered down. The expectations of a biblical disciple are far beyond the expectations for Christians in most churches. Being a disciple is much harder than being a church member.

If we are serious about being disciples, let us get back to Bible ideas, definitions, concepts.

As we close, I share a brief summary of where we have been--

Discipleship Requirements: Choose, Listen, Obey, Imitate, Commit, Connect, Share.

→**BE SELECTIVE. CHOOSE, MAKE A DECISION.** Who will be your teacher?

→**BE ATTENTIVE.** Once you have chosen your teacher, it is time for **LISTENING and LEARNING.** These concepts are the essence of discipleship. A disciple is a learner. Pay attention, listen, drink in all you can from the teacher.

→**BE OBEDIENT.** Listening and learning are preparation for training. Knowledge must be turned into action. It is now time for **OBEDYING.** In choosing Jesus as a teacher, yielding and submitting are also strong biblical words.

→**BE CHRIST-LIKE.** I am putting the blocks in place, I recognize my teacher, I am listening and learning, drinking it all in, accepting his training, trying to put knowledge into action. Isn't there an easier way? Yes. The easiest way to reflect the teachings of the teacher is **by IMITATING.** Thinking, words, actions, goals.

→**BE COMMITTED.** It should be getting easier, less thinking required. If you are traveling the path toward discipleship, the next one will be easy, if not it will be very hard. Time for **COMMITTING.** By definition, disciples are “all in.” No half-hearted disciples!

→**BE CONNECTED.** Discipleship is a lot easier when we are “in class”—around the teacher and other learners, which leads us to **CONNECTING.** Students who enjoy the same teacher spend time together—camaraderie, talking about the teachings, focused on our common choices, learning, actions, commitments.

→**BE DISCIPLED / BE A DISCIPLER.** One thing remains, discipleship is not self-centered, only for personal advantage. It is time for **SHARING.** A primary characteristic of disciples—a disciple recruits other disciples. I share what I have learned, what makes my life richer, better, more meaningful. I cannot keep quiet!