

Week 4 – Discipleship and Mentoring



**Leader's Note**

A good life is a fruit-bearing tree;  
a violent life destroys souls.

*Proverbs 11:30*

The days are coming when Jacob  
shall put down roots,  
Israel blossom and grow fresh branches,  
and fill the world with its fruit.

*Isaiah 27:6*

**Fruit of the Soul**

When a grapevine is planted, the vinedresser does not expect the branch to produce fruit the first few years. The plant is only required to grow and mature. It needs time to become established in the soil and as each season passes it becomes more stable. Eventually, the fruit-producing years of the branches will begin. The first year's fruit will be fairly sparse as the plant slowly continues to grow deeper down into the soil looking for more minerals to draw from. All the grapes from that first year's production will be harvested and added in with the older branches' fruit even though the amount of the individual production is rather scarce. As the seasons pass, with each new harvest the quality of the grapes continues to increase. The quantity of the fruit increases as well as the quality. The grapes become more potent with a high sugar content and thus they become better fruit. The vinedresser knows that the branches, at about the ten-year point of the fruit producing years, will reach the point where they are as strong as they are going to be. Now the branches can be relied on. The vinedresser knows what to expect as far as the quality of the fruit from those branches. This is what he intended from the beginning. Robert Scott Stiner, Lessons from a Venetian Vinedresser

Our purpose as a church should not merely be to introduce people to Jesus; it should be to make disciples (as well as our personal objective to BE disciples). The problem is that disciples don't just happen! It takes time and care. In addition we all need to be discipled. We should all be looking to grow.



## Learning Session

Jesus is the model. Read Matt 28:18-20, Acts 18:7-11

Jesus put his money where his mouth was. He told his disciples to go and make more disciples. They were now equipped because He had spent 3 years of His life discipling them. He let them into his life and communicated and displayed the Kingdom to them. We are challenged to do the same.

You will see in Acts that Paul sometimes fled a place after preaching the Gospel (normally due to persecution), but when he could stay he did for a good period of time so that he could disciple the people that he had introduced to the Lord. You will also notice (when reading his letters) that Paul would send people (if cases when he could not make it himself) he trusted to congregations in order that they may disciple them.

So with this understanding, break into discussion groups and get people to address the following questions:

- Do you think you were discipled?
- If so, what was good about it?
- Do you make the effort to input into and encourage people who are new to the faith? If not why not?
- What can you do to be part of a discipling revolution?

Gather everyone in for some feedback time and iron out some of these points:

- Discipleship is continuous, we should always be looking to make relationships in which we disciple and are discipled.
- Relationship is the key to discipleship.
- Know where you are in you faith, so that you are aware of who can input and challenge you as well as whom you are able to encourage and disciple.
- To be part of the revolution, I need to be open to new relationship and I need to think about whom I am building relationships with.
- If I have 'clique' tendencies I need to break these.
- Remind folk that the reason we have Kinships and other interest group is so that people can build these relationships.
- Point out that generally the best discipleship and friendship relationships are built when people serve together.
- Ask the guys where they are serving in the church.

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