

PRINCIPLES AND BASIC PROCEDURES OF DISCIPLE- MAKING IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF PAUL

Rudolf Weindra Sagala

Abstrak

Pemuridan adalah merupakan tugas yang harus dilakukan oleh semua pengikut Kristus seperti yang diperintahkan-Nya kepada para murid-Nya dalam Matius 28:19-20 sebelum Dia naik ke Surga. Pekerjaan untuk menjadikan orang menjadi murid Kristus atau pemuridan adalah merupakan suatu keharusan, sebab hal ini adalah merupakan cara terbaik untuk mengabarkan injil ke seluruh dunia, agar dengan demikian Kristus boleh datang ke dunia seperti yang disebutkan dalam Matius 24:14. Selain Kristus, rasul Paulus adalah merupakan teladan yang baik dan yang perlu diikuti dalam melakukan pemuridan. Prinsip-prinsip dan dasar-dasar pemuridan Paulus perlu dipahami agar para pemimpin gereja dapat melakukan pemuridan dengan baik. Agar setiap umat Tuhan dapat melakukan penginjilan dan menjadikan orang menjadi murid Kristus, prinsip-prinsip dan prosedur pemuridan Paulus perlu diketahui.

Kata Kunci: Murid, Pemuridan, Prinsip-prinsip, Amanat Agung, Prosedur, Pelayanan,

Introduction

Before Christ ascension to heaven, He gave special instruction to His disciples saying, “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.”¹ For the Christian, this instruction is known as the Great Commission. Christians, which means the disciples of Christ must respond to this Great Commission, that is disciple making by spreading the gospel to every part of the world.² The primary task of

¹ All the scriptural references quoted or cited in this writing are from the New International Version, unless otherwise indicated.

² Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946), 15.

a church is to obey the Great Commission. Ellen G. White, one of the founder of the SDA Church, clearly states that “the church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.”³

Green says that the special instruction of Christ to His disciples, the last injunction to them before He left this earth, as a secret trust and must be carry out by every one who loves Christ and seek to obey Him.⁴ A devoted Christian understands that the main imperative of Jesus’ Great Commission is “disciple-making,” or “discipling.” Keith Drury says that “Discipleship is Christian helping each other become more like Christ.”⁵ While Larry Moore says that it is “the process of forming spiritual habits or disciplines which produce Godly character.”⁶

As modern disciples and as a member of the church it is our responsibility to follow Christ instruction in order to advanced His kingdom. Paul, the great apostle of the New Testament time knew that it is his role as a follower of Christ to respond to Christ final instruction.

Paul, not only did his responsibility to make other to be disciples of Christ, but he is also a disciple maker. He is a great leader and disciple maker in the New Testament (NT) times. He is known as an “Apostle to the Gentiles,”⁷ “the World’s First Missionary,”⁸ “the evangelist,”⁹ and also as “a rabbi and an

³ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 15.

⁴ Michael Green, *Evangelism Through The Local Church A Comprehensive Guide to All Aspects of Evangelism* (Nashville: Oliver Nelson, 1992), 18.

⁵ Quotes by Larry Moore in *Growing Disciples: A Handbook for Discipleship*. <http://www.indwes.edu/courses/ced371/moore.htm>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jurgen Becker, *Paul Apostle to the Gentile* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster, 1993). The Bible also agrees with this title. See Acts 9:15 “But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.”

⁸ Alberth Nathaniel Williams, *Paul, The World’s First Missionary: A Biography of the Apostle Paul* (New York: Association Press, 1954). The NT clearly described him as a missionary. He journeyed on three missionary trips.

apostle.”¹⁰ White calls him “the greatest of human teachers.”¹¹ These titles indicate that Paul is a real disciple maker.

In this writing we will examine two passages which picture Paul’s principles and basic procedures of disciple-making.

The Principle of Entrusting (2 Tim. 2:2)

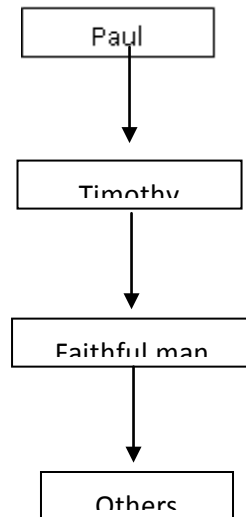
Many Christian leaders who are expert in discipleship today illustrate the discipling process in the Paul-Timothy relationship.”¹² Paul writes, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:22). In this passage Paul stresses the idea as a disciple of Christ, believers are responsible for entrusting to others what they have found in Christ. A disciple should become a conduit for others to become disciples of Christ. The concept is summarized in the figure below:

⁹ John Flower, *Adventist Pastoral Ministry* (Boise: ID: Pacific Press, 1990), 107-08.

¹⁰ Pichas Lapide and Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul Rabbi and Apostle* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984).

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View: CA Pacific Press, 1903), 66.

¹² Alfredo Saure, Shelby Castlen, and Nardito Manalang, *Discipleship Manual* (Makati City, Manila: Church Strengthening Ministry, 1999), 122-46. These authors purpose Paul as a disciple. These authors also give some important pointers on how to be a Paul, and how to be a Timothy, how to motivate your Timothy (disciples), and other practical things to remember in personal discipling. In order to be a successful discipler (Paul), this study also recommends to the pastor who will run the discipleship program, especially in terms of evangelism, to use Robert Coleman’s book, which explains the biblical principles of discipleship. See Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ: Power Books, 1983), 9-29.



The Principle of Imitation (1 Thess. 1:6-8)

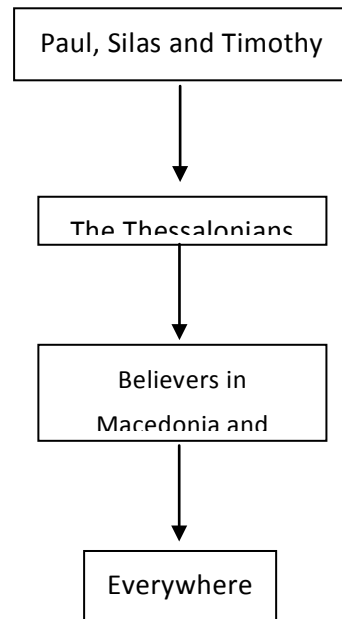
The second principle related to the first one mentioned above is the principle of imitation. Paul implicitly equates discipleship with imitation.”¹³

In 1 Thess 1:6-8, He says, “You become imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcome the message with spite of severe suffering, you welcome the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you become a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia – your faith in God has become known every where.” A disciple should be an imitator of his teacher or leader. Paul called the Christian in Thessalonians to be imitators of the apostles and of Christ, in all aspects of their spiritual journey. He reminds the Thessalonians Christians to be duplicates of him, as he himself is endeavoring to duplicate Jesus in his life.

A committed disciple should become a model to other people, so that through his or her life and witnessing he or she becomes an instrument of God. As a model, he or she should realize that his/her goal is to reproduce other disciples.

¹³ Charles C. Bing, “Coming to Terms with Discipleship,” *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society*, 4 (Autumn 1991):2 [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.faithalone.org/journal1992i/Bing.html>; Internet; accessed 20 October 2000.

Principle of imitation. Paul's concept of disciple-making:



From the passage 1 Thess 1:6-8 it can be seen that the basic discipling concept of Paul involves multiplication. For Paul, a disciple should multiply.”¹⁴ Jesus and Paul are one in the concept that disciple-making means every disciple must become a disciple-maker.

The Basic Steps of Disciple-Making in the Life and Ministry of Paul

The Bible gives some insight on the procedures of disciple making in the ministry of Paul. Paul understood that the first step was “evangelism.” He preached the gospel in many places. Many believed, and when they received the gospel message into their lives they became disciples (Acts 14:21). The second procedure was “edifying.” Acts 14:21-22 records, that after they (Paul and Barnabas) had “made disciples” in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, they went to those cities, strengthening the believers there and encouraging them to continue

¹⁴ The multiplication is God’s plan to populate the world, both physically and spiritually. His first command given to man was to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28). Jesus, Paul, and other apostles knew that only through multiplication could the Gospel be proclaimed to every creature. See Waylon B. Moore, *New Testament Follow-Up* (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: OMF Literature, 1979), 59-60.

in the faith. So, like Jesus, Paul and Barnabas also realized the importance of this “edifying” step. They did not stop in the evangelism step.

Another step of Paul’s disciple-making process was the “production” of committed disciples. After Paul and his co-workers evangelized and many of the people were baptized, Paul always helped them to experience spiritual growth. He edified and equipped them directly or indirectly. He did so that the converted people could become committed disciples or reproducers.

The book of Acts records the result of their training, edifying and equipping works. Because of the faithfulness of the lay members and the apostles in Jerusalem, and because of their ministry both inside and outside the church “the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). Paul’s disciple-making process involves four basic steps, evangelizing, establishing, equipping, and reproducing. The steps result in producing converts, disciples, workers and leaders.” A model for disciple-making which is biblical should consist of the following steps:

1. The first is “evangelizing.” Jesus says, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15). The result of this process is a converted people.
2. The second step is “establishing.” “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus ... having been firmly rooted and now being built up in His and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude” (Col. 2:6-7, NASB). Follow up is the important thing in this process. There should be an effort to build into the converted the characteristics of a true disciple. This is second step will produce a disciple who is able to witness or evangelize.
3. The third step is “equipping.” Says Paul, “and He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-12 NASB). This step should produce a worker who is able both to evangelize and establish or equip another convert or disciple.
4. The fourth step is “reproducing.” The goal of this step is to produce committed disciples. A committed disciple should be able to produce another disciple. It is our main goal as a Christian to bring men to Christ and to make them as a responsible church member that is to respond to Christ mandate in making disciples.

The whole process will be achieved if principles in disciple-making are followed. These principles include: selection, association, instruction, sharing, and multiplication. The principle of entrusting and imitation should also be noted.

Conclusion

The model of disciple-making should follow Paul's steps namely: (1) evangelism; (2) teaching, nurturing, equipping; (3) edifying and (reproducing). This model of disciple-making is reinforced theologically through the fact that the church exist for the purpose of glorifying God. It becomes an instrument by which the members can grow spiritually and enjoy the fellowship with other members, and carry the gospel to the world.

Paul's principles and basic procedures of disciple-making if followed carefully will help every devoted Christian do his/her task as a disciple of Christ in making other to be disciple of Christ. If it is have been brought much success in the time of Paul or in the New Testament era, it will work also in our time. May the Lord bless every one of us abundantly so that each one of us will do the work of making disciple as our main activity as a follower of Christ.

Bibliography

- Becker, Jurgen. *Paul Apostle to the Gentile*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster, 1993.
- Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. Old Tappan, NJ: Power Books, 1983.
- Flower, John. *Adventist Pastoral Ministry*. Boise: ID: Pacific Press, 1990.
- Green, Michael. *Evangelism Through The Local Church A Comprehensive Guide to All Aspects of Evangelism*. Nashville: Oliver Nelson, 1992.
- Lapide, Pichas and Peter Stuhlmacher. *Paul Rabbi and Apostle*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984.
- Moore, Waylon B. *New Testament Follow-Up*. Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: OMF Literature, 1979.
- Nathaniel, Alberth Williams. *Paul, the World's First Missionary: A Biography of the Apostle Paul*. New York: Association Press, 1954.
- Saure, Alfredo, Shelby Castlen, and Nardito Manalang. *Discipleship Manual*. Makati City, Manila: Church Strengthening Ministry, 1999.
- White, Ellen G. *Education*. Mountain View, CA Pacific Press, 1903.
- _____. *Evangelism*. Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946.
- _____. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911.

Internet

- Bing, Charles C. Bing. *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society*, 4 (Autumn 1991):2[journal on-line]; available from <http://www.faithalone.org/journal1992i/Bing.html>; Internet; accessed 20 October 2000.
- Larry Moore. *Growing Disciples: A Handbook for Discipleship*. <http://www.indwes.edu/courses/ced371/moore.htm>
- Larry Moore. *Growing Disciples: A Handbook for Discipleship*. <http://www.indwes.edu/courses/ced371/moore.htm>