

All Honor to the King- Discipleship

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V15.4 4/27/2022

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Introduction:

Looking back over 60 years of attending Bible-believing Evangelical Churches, despite an emphasis on teaching God's Word, the social, moral, and spiritual condition of much of the modern American Church has significantly declined.

It is proposed that the philosophy of most teaching and discipleship has been focused on **applications** (including checklists) of spending time in God's Word, prayer, ministry, and various activities. As valuable as these activities are, given the general level of spiritual maturity within the modern Church, one observation is, "We don't need applications; we need transformations!" Therefore, this discussion aims to identify critical areas of transformation for mentoring Believers. It is further proposed that the path to transformation is for Believers to embrace and be gripped by God's love, to reflect love to God by bowing to Jesus Christ as Lord, and to develop abiding relationships with Him.

The ultimate goal and prayer is to define and motivate effective discipleship. When the number of Believers who walk in the light, abide with the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk in fellowship increases, Christian communities will emerge. Similar to the early Church, the effect of such communities will usher in a new era that will help present the Church without spot or wrinkle to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix D presents further challenges for Pastors and Church leaders.

Section 1, The Importance of Effective Discipleship:

Self-sacrifice is a necessary element for actions, attitudes, and motives of love. It is submitted that love that is "programmed" or incorporated into the nature of a creature is not genuine love. Therefore, to create man with the ability to sincerely love, it was necessary for mankind to be given free will. Therefore, God allowed sin to enter into the World, but this separated selfish man from the Holy God. Furthermore, when Adam and Eve embraced free will, a consequence was spiritual death, resulting in all mankind being born with a broken and fallen spirit.

However, God addressed the problem of the separation by sending His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to pay for sin. When individuals embrace God's love, the Holy Spirit enters, washes them, and regenerates their spirit (Titus 3:5). They are then clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and being born-again Believers, they have the ability to develop close friendships with God.

However, God does not destroy their free will. The desires of lust-of-the-eyes, lust-of-the-flesh, or pride-of-life (1 John 2:16) remain. If He removed these desires, significant elements of free will would be lost, and Believers would lose the opportunity to demonstrate love to Him. When Believers crucify their selfish wants, desires, and passions they demonstrate love and genuine worship. Without such desires, love would only involve easy or “cheap” sacrifices, which would not be fulfilling, would have little impact on others, and would not delight God. Therefore, when motives are correct, the great cost of denying such strong desires expresses the highest form of love to others, and pure worship of God (Romans 12:1, Galatians 2:20).

It is important to understand that with a new spirit and desires of lust-of-the-eyes, lust-of-the-flesh, and pride-of-life, a war exists within every Believer. The battles of these wars appear in many forms and some Believers are able to have victory more quickly than others. God understands these challenges, is very patient, and gives grace and mercy. Understanding these challenges, God provides some tools to help born-again Believers live victorious lives. God commissioned discipleship as a primary tool for adults and designed the family structure to be the perfect discipleship environment for children.

The Lord Jesus Christ modeled discipleship by focusing on discipling the 12 during the last 3 years of His life. His last direct verbal command, as He ascended into heaven was to make disciples of all nations:

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Given the Lord Jesus Christ’s example, His command, and the critical need to guide Believers to be transformed to love God and others, effective discipleship must become a very high priority for Believers (See [All Honor to The King- Rebuilding the Church](#)), and for fathers/ parents (See [Challenges to Disciple Children](#)).

Another powerful weapon that God provides against the internal war within man’s heart is His Word.

2 Tim 3:16,17 All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷**so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.**

The heart of man is filled with evil and is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9) but God provides His Word to be a powerful weapon.

Hebrews 4:12 For **the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

God’s Word is “living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit”. Ultimately, every Believer must respond to God’s revelation, and transformation is challenging. Therefore, it is critical to integrate Biblical truths into hearts and minds for effective

discipleship to help Believers live victorious lives. The [Discipleship Meditation System \(DMS\)- A Handbook of Mentors](#) contains key Biblical verses to guide Believers to develop Sincere Faith, a Pure Heart, and a Clear Conscience.

Many promote spending time in God's word but it is proposed that to conquer the evil intent of the heart, it is necessary to integrate Biblical truths into hearts and minds. Thus, the Handbook is designed for mentors to guide and challenge Disciples to memorize, *consistently review, meditate on, and apply* the truths of God's Word to their lives. Goals, questions, and challenges are also presented in the Handbook. However, the **motivations** to spend time in God's Word and obey it are critical so much of this discussion presents how to engage the power of God's love.

Section 2, Proposed Elements of Discipleship:

[1 Timothy 1:5 "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a clear conscience and a sincere faith"](#)

The Apostle Paul described to Timothy what the goal of their teaching should be. It is proposed that Paul's stated goal should be adopted as the primary objective for all teachings in the Church, including teaching from pulpits, classes, studies, and especially for discipleship.

Careful inspection of Paul's letters to the Churches of Rome and Ephesus reveals that Paul used this structure of Biblical truths in his teaching. These letters address the foundational truths of sincere faith, a pure heart, and a clear conscience, with the ultimate goal of promoting genuine love. After addressing these three foundations in these letters, Romans 12:1 and Ephesians 4:1 then state, "therefore" and proceed to teach practical aspects of love. These three vital foundations are discussed in the following sections.

Section 3, The Foundation of Sincere Faith:

[John 3:3 Jesus responded and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."](#)

Being born again with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, an important truth of the Gospel, is the foundation of Sincere Faith. Therefore, it is important to begin discipleship by helping individuals verify within their hearts that they are only trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation. Reliance on any works or achievements reveals that they are clinging to their pride-of-life, instead of embracing God's unconditional love.

[Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,](#)

The truths of the Gospel have the power to deliver spiritual salvation and to help Believers be victorious over their internal wars. Therefore, the deeper truths of the Gospel must be incorporated into the hearts and minds of Believers.

Titus 3:4-7 But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit**, ⁶ whom He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

I Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that **you are God's temple** and that **God's Spirit dwells in you**?

The significance of the Holy Spirit entering in and regenerating our spirits is spectacularly significant. In Old Testament times, the center of all worship was God's Temple. And in the center of the temple, where God resided was the Holy of Holy. When Jesus died on the cross, God tore the curtain in the temple from top to bottom, indicating a new relationship between God and Believers. When the Holy Spirit enters into a Believer, they literally become the place where God resides. Therefore, all Believers become part of the Holy Temple of God.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, **he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Another important truth of Sincere Faith is to understand that God regenerates and recreates Believers. Some proclaim statements like, "A sinner saved by grace", but such ideas do not reflect the true nature of born-again Believers becoming new. Another example is a statement like, "I am an alcoholic". There are often struggles between old natural desires and the new nature. Hence, an important goal of discipleship **is to help Believers understand and embrace their new identity in the Lord Jesus Christ and to embrace the power God gives them to conquer sin** (Romans 6:12-14).

Ephesians 1:7-10 In him we have **redemption through his blood**, the **forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace**, ⁸ **which he lavished upon us**, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

God is Holy, so for Believers to have a relationship with Him, they must be covered with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27). These statements, "Redemption through His Blood", "forgiveness of our trespasses", and "according to the riches of His grace", all affirm that believers are covered with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. An important element of discipleship is to help Believers fully grasp their new identities and that God views them with the same righteousness that He views the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a **chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

Understanding the full implications of being chosen, being a royal priest, part of a holy nation is challenging but it is critical for effective discipleship to lead Believers to embrace the elements of their identity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:3-6 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**, just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. **In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself**, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, **which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved**.

A very important truth of Sincere Faith is to understand that Believers are chosen before the foundations of the World to be adopted as sons, chosen to be the light of the world, to be salt and light, to be the Lord Jesus Christ's Representatives (Matthew 28:18-20), and other benefits and responsibilities.

An important element of being gripped by God's love is to embrace God's forgiveness. God's love and His forgiveness are intimately tied together.

1 Timothy 1:15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, **of whom I am the foremost**.

A core truth of the Gospel is that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. When Paul looked back at His persecution of the Church, later when he became a fellow heir, he recognized his guilt of killing his then brothers and sisters in Christ. It is no surprise that he would proclaim that he was the foremost sinner. Paul understood his need to cling to God's forgiveness and to press on to honor the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very important for Believers to cling to God's mercy and forgiveness.

Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Being at peace with all is vital for maintaining a Clear Conscience and a critical activity for obtaining peace is to seek appropriate forgiveness and reconciliation from others.

Matthew 6:14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 5:12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

In the Lord's Prayer, the Lord Jesus Christ emphasized the importance of forgiving others. It is proposed that there is an unbreakable relationship between embracing God's forgiveness and sincerely forgiving others. Therefore, an important element of discipleship is to help Believers confront and address where they need **to seek forgiveness** and **to sincerely forgive all those who have wronged them**.

Through God's Word and guidance from mentors, as new Believers begin to grasp the holiness and glory of God, the sinfulness of their nature, and the tremendous price that God made for them, God's love becomes significant and a powerful motivation to live a Godly life. It is proposed that an understanding of all the spiritual blessings, benefits, and positions that God freely gives to His Children, are part of their identity before Him and is the foundation to promote and reinforce God's love.

Experience has shown that to the extent that **Believers are embraced by God's love, they have the power and desire to be transformed, allowing them to crucify their pride-of-life, reflect the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, and develop an abiding relationship with Him.** However, **Believers who have had weak understandings of their identities, and especially a poor grasp of God's love, have been vulnerable to being controlled by their pride-of-life.** They are driven to outwardly appear to be righteous, but their lives and hearts have been filled with sins and failures. These inconsistencies have driven some to be critical towards others and legalistic. To support their credibility, some have been driven by pride-of-life to acquire credentials and advanced degrees to achieve positions of authority. Therefore, the importance of mentoring Believers to embrace their positions before God, their identities, and especially to be gripped by God's love cannot be over-emphasized.

It is worth noting that God allows trials and suffering. Believers must understand that He causes all things to work together for the good of His Children (Romans 8:28). And to be thankful that short-term challenges are inconsequential compared to the relationship that will be enjoyed with Him for eternity (James 1).

Note: The verses, questions, and challenges in Modules A and B of the Handbook are designed to help mentors guide Believers to develop Sincere Faith. The verses in Module B of the Handbook are selected to help Believers understand and incorporate their identity in the Lord Jesus Christ. These modules are also designed to help meet the third challenge of discipling children (Discussed in [Challenges to Disciple Children](#)). Module A in the Handbook is also vital to empower Believers to effectively share the Gospel.

Section 4, The Foundation of a Pure Heart:

Having and maintaining a Pure Heart is foundational for genuine love and a critical goal for effective discipleship. It is proposed that two vital elements are necessary for guiding and encouraging Believers to develop Pure Hearts.

The first element is for all Believers to be committed to bowing to Jesus Christ as Lord. Some are tempted to intellectually "confess Jesus as Lord" and then strive to live the Christian life by the power of their will. Bowing to Jesus Christ as Lord is important but the driving force must be empowered by pure motives, embraced by God's love.

[John 14:15](#) **"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.**

[John 14:21](#) **Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."**

2 John 1:6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

There is an intimate relationship between dying to self, obeying Jesus Christ's commands (Lordship), and being embraced by God's love. Sadly, many who ask Jesus into their hearts, do not have an adequate view of God's love and therefore strive to be obedient through determination and works (applications). Without the power of God's love, many Christians experience significant failure and sin, often for a significant time in their lives. God patiently gives them mercy and grace but God has commissioned effective discipleship to decrease the time to accomplish maturity, and hopefully the severity of sins. Therefore, a major challenge for discipleship is to guide Believers to be gripped by God's love so they have proper motivations to humbly bow to Jesus Christ as Lord.

Without being gripped by God's love, the driving force for obedience (Lordship) is pride-of-life. Instead of conquering pride-of-life, such Christians remain under a yoke of slavery, constantly needing to earn God's approval and acceptance. Under these cruel taskmasters, when they fail, guilt leads them to self-loathing, anger, bitterness, and hopelessness, sometimes leading them to reject their faith. Regardless of how genuine a Christian may appear; it is critical to challenge and mentor them to bow to Jesus Christ as their Lord through perfecting God's love within them.

If Lordship and Godly living are empowered by any other reason than to love, desires to honor, and a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, catastrophic failures have been very high. If the driving force is to gain **recognition** from men, mentors, parents, or even God, such motives are fed by pride-of-life and lust-of-the-eyes, which destroy a Pure Heart. Without the critical motivation of God's love, some older Christians have even rejected their faith after decades of what appeared to be "successful" ministry.

For children, fathers/ parents must be particularly careful to help them embrace and be gripped by God's love. When younger, children are often obedient to their parents and may appear to love Jesus. But if God's love is not *perfected* in them there is a high probability that when they are out from under their parent's authority, they will reject their faith. And, as they experiment with sin, they will experience greater guilt that often drives them to become outspoken enemies of God, the Gospel, and the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:18-23).

1 John 2:3-6 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" **but does not keep his commandments** is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but **whoever keeps his word**, in him **truly the love of God is perfected**. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

The implications of these truths are not only obedience but **a continual commitment to bow to Jesus Christ as Lord**.

The second element of a Pure Heart is for Believers to develop an **abiding** relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Being embraced by God's love is the "engine" to bow to Jesus Christ as Lord, and the fuel to power the engine comes from a close friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Believers develop a constant conversation with Him (abide with Him), asking questions, making requests, and expressing appreciation for His love, two-way conversations develop. God responds with prompting and insights into His Word, various thoughts, ideas, and challenges. Having God's Word hidden in the heart (memorization and meditation) greatly enhances such conversations. **As these conversations grow into a *constant awareness of God's presence*, the result is an abiding friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ.**

The greater the awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ's presence in the life of Believers, the greater their ability will be to resist temptation. When temptation appears, they have the choice to ignore it or to continue to dwell on it, and then possibly pursue it. However, when Believers are tempted and make wrong choices, aware of His presence, there are several possible responses. Sometimes He expresses sadness. Sometimes He shouts warnings. Sometimes He just looks and doesn't say anything. When Believers are in His presence, they learn that it is just a matter of time before they will not be able to ignore Him. And the longer temptation is allowed, the more painful they will become. And if temptation is dwelt on long enough, it will lead to sin, which carries many consequences. However, when there are failures, the closer the relationship that Believers have with the Lord Jesus Christ, the easier it is for them to confess and repent, rightfully claiming 1 John 1:9. (Appendix C describes some mental disciplines to help address tougher temptations.)

Sin always carries destructive consequences but when Believers repent and experience God's forgiveness, those in His presence have a deeper understanding of God's love, which strengthens His grip of love on them. It is God's goal for Believers to develop a close relationship with Him so He allows and even designs trials for His Children. He is more concerned with developing Godly character that will last for eternity than with their short-term happiness. Therefore, mentors (especially parents) must work to help Believers not only overcome trials but to view them from God's perspective and to be thankful for them (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

God continues the good work He starts within every Believer. But effective mentors who encourage, guide, and challenge Believers to die to their selfish wants and desires (Lordship) and to build an abiding friendship with God can decrease the time, the extent of failures, and streamline the development of Pure Hearts. Therefore, a key objective for discipling Believers is to evaluate, guide, encourage, and challenge them to be embraced by God's unconditional love, crucify themselves, submit to Jesus Christ as Lord, and **develop a personal relationship with Him.**

The third element of having a Pure Heart, related to having an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is to know God. (Module D in the Handbook presents the character and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.) Spending time in God's Word, with Him in prayer reveals a deeper understanding of who God is, His character, His holiness, His power, and His love. But the goal should never be to develop academic knowledge or to hold to forms of Godliness. As Believers know God, they will develop a deeper respect for Him and an appropriate fear of the Lord.

[Psalms 1:1,2 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.](#)

Obedience through discipline alone is burdensome, feeds the pride-of-life, and only changes outward appearances (such examples were the Pharisees). However, obedience motivated by love and abiding with the Lord Jesus Christ (a Pure Heart) strengthens respect for God and His Word.

As Believers begin to understand and know Him, God's intent is revealed to them and they gain wisdom, giving them great delight in His laws and standards. Not only "a delight" but their joy in the Lord strengthens a Pure Heart.

Module D in the Handbook, to know the Lord Jesus Christ is also helpful to meet the 4th challenge, in the ["Challenges to Disciple Children"](#), and to gain wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).

The result of Pure Hearts and a Clear Conscience (discussed below) are expressions of love to God, being living sacrifices (Galatians 2:20), and demonstrating true worship (Romans 12:2).

Module C in the Handbook addresses Lordship, purity, and becoming living sacrifices. These are important elements of developing a Pure Heart and will help meet the 2nd challenge in the ["Challenges to Disciple Children"](#) (A Pure Heart). Module E in the Handbook is also designed to help build closer friendships with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note: Quiet times of prayer and God's Word can be valuable tools. But the emphasis must be to spend quality time with God and build a deep friendship with Him. If quiet times, time in prayer, or God's Word are for any other reasons, the value of such efforts is questionable.

Section 5, The Foundation of a Clear Conscience:

When Believers respond to God's love, are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, embrace Sincere Faith, submit to Jesus Christ as Lord (the truths of the Gospel), and begin developing a Pure Heart, they have an increased power and desire to be a living sacrifice and maintain a Clear Conscience.

It is proposed that at least, the following aspects are key to maintaining a Clear Conscience:

1. To transform the mind (Romans 12:2), trained to discern good and evil (Hebrews 5:14). (Challenges 5 and 6 of the ["Challenges to Disciple Children"](#)).
2. To be crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

- a. Developing Christ-like character and to be transformed into His image.
 - b. To be a living sacrifice, worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1).
 - c. To diligently guard the heart (Proverbs 4:23), maintaining personal purity.
 - d. To have the fruits of the Spirit, especially joy and peace by being thankful in all circumstances (Phil 4:4-8).
3. To maintain an honorable marriage.

A Transformed Mind is Necessary for a Clear Conscience:

Knowing God with a transformed mind provides confidence in doing what is right and a Clear Conscience.

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

A solid grasp of the truths of God's Word is necessary to renew the mind and to think Biblically. Thus, the emphasis of the Handbook is on **memorizing**, consistent **review**, and **meditation of God's Word**. However, knowledge puffs up and feeds pride-of-life so to maintain a Clear Conscience, all Biblical knowledge must be the product of the motivations that are only possible through Sincere Faith and a Pure Heart.

Heb 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Because of the deceitfulness of the heart, an important aspect of renewing the mind is to abide with the Lord Jesus Christ, resulting in an understanding of God's intentions. Then as God's Word and Biblical truths are ingrained into hearts, the minds of Believers are renewed and they can begin learning to discern good and evil. All of which provides great confidence in developing a clear conscience.

Dying to Self is Vital for Producing a Clear Conscience:

Being crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ, developing Christ-like character, and being transformed into His image are vital to develop and maintain a Clear Conscience. These are lifetime challenges but Believers will enjoy many important qualities when they die to themselves and bow to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 9:23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

To take up "his cross" requires the sacrifice of their selfish desires, daily, hourly, and even moment-by-moment.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

All Believers must overcome the challenges below so it is necessary for mentors and fathers/parents to guide and encourage disciples-in-training to focus on specific areas of weaknesses.

Pride-of-life:

- To bow to God's Word as the ultimate source of truth.
- The discipline of scripture memory, review, and meditation.
- Serve, forgive, and love others (Philippians 2:20,21).
- Appropriately submit to rightful authorities (such as parents).
- Committed to rightly knowing and handling truth.
- Submit time, energy, and money to God (giving, sabbath).
- To be faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ (Prophet, Priest, and King).
- To seek appropriate forgiveness and to diligently forgive others.

Lust of the eyes:

- Crucify desires of appearances and reputations.
- Boldness to share the Gospel.
- Disciplined life, putting away laziness and greed.
- Commitment to promoting integrity, honesty, and truthfulness (Psalms 15).
- To openly identify with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lust of the Flesh:

- To guard their heart with all diligence, maintaining personal purity (Proverbs 4:23).
- Proper diet, exercise, fasting.
- Sacrifice self-indulgent appetites, drugs, alcohol, and lifestyles.
- Sacrifice lusts for power and control.
- Humbly embrace the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Genuine worship honors God, resulting in confidence in having a Clear Conscience. (Being living sacrifices meets the sixth challenge of discipling children- Worship).

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

As Believers reflect the image of the Lord Jesus Christ and develop Christ-like character, their lives will be living sacrifices, which God delights in as holy and acceptable worship.

Maintaining moral purity is critical to having and maintaining a Clear Conscience.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

It is very important for Believers to be constantly alert to guard their hearts, including moral purity. Maintaining moral purity in actions and thoughts is the "crown" of a Clear Conscience.

Having the fruits of the Spirit is important for a Clear Conscious.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** ²³ **gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Each of the fruits of the Spirit are important. Several are addressed under a Sincere Faith and a Pure Heart but for a Clear Conscience, maintaining joy is particularly important.

Philippians 4:4-7 **Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.** ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ **do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Anxiety and fear can lead to desperate and destructive actions, words, and attitudes that carry negative consequences that destroy a Clear Conscious. The defense against anxiety and fear is to rejoice in God's love (Sincere Faith), to submit worries and concerns to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to maintain thankfulness under all circumstances. Again, the closer the friendship is with Him (a Pure Heart), the greater the confidence is in God's love, His provision, and the peace that surpasses all understanding (supporting a Clear Conscience).

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 **Rejoice always,** ¹⁷ **pray without ceasing,** ¹⁸ **give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**

Rejoicing, having an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and diligently guarding the heart to be thankful in all things provide tremendous power for Believers.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think about these things.**

The fruits of disciplined minds (Romans 12:2, 2 Timothy 1:7, and Proverbs 4:23), present the importance of only dwelling on what is true, honorable, just, etc. are vital for maintaining the fruits of the Spirit, especially joy and peace.

Maintaining an Honorable Marriage is Vital for a Clear Conscience:

Another proposed area that is vital for a Clear Conscience is for Believers to maintain an honorable marriage. God has designed marriage to be a model between the relationship of His Children and the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33). However, the close relationships within marriage reveal selfishness and pride-of-life issues. Therefore, developing and maintaining honorable marriages must be an important goal for discipleship. Husbands are to love their wives, and wives must demonstrate their love by submitting to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22). Appendix B further discusses important elements of marriage.

Summary of a Clear Conscience:

It is proposed that to the extent that Believers incorporate the elements of Clear Conscience: Knowing and fearing the Lord, maintaining a transformed mind, being living sacrifices, developing Christ-like character, diligently guarding the heart, embracing thankfulness, and maintaining an honorable marriage will result in moral victory and will produce a Clear Conscience.

Section 6, Love for God and Others:

1 John 3:23,24 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. **Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him.** And by this, we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. (Also: John 15:10, John 14:15).

The goal of a Sincere Faith, a Pure Heart, and a Clear Conscience is an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. As these foundations are established, the Lord Jesus Christ's goal and desire for Believers is to be a conduit for His love to the World.

It is proposed that genuine love should be demonstrated in at least the following areas:

1. To walk in the light and true fellowship (1 John 1:7), reflected in sincere hospitality.
2. To be Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. The importance of one-on-one discipleship.
 - b. For fathers to be leaders in their homes, effectively discipling their children.
 - c. To embrace the importance of sharing the Gospel.
3. Promoting and being involved with Communities of Believers.
4. To be faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. To not love the World and to be salt and light.

To Walk in the Light and True Fellowship:

The power of being embraced by God's love (Sincere Faith), an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (a Pure Heart), and being transformed into His Image (a Clear Conscience) provides the foundations for Believers to walk in the light and emanate love to God and others.

1 John 1:6,7 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

It is proposed that walking in the light is synonymous with abiding with the Lord Jesus Christ and walking in fellowship with other Believers (1 John 1:7). A major concern is that some falsely believe they are walking in the light and therefore have an abiding relationship with God because of their accomplishments. But God is very clear that no confidence should be given to practicing applications and achieving accomplishments (Matthew 7:23). Furthermore, some confuse "friendships" with walking in "fellowship". Several characteristics of friendships are similar to fellowship but friendships are not the

same. Solid friendships are built on good character qualities, such as faithfulness, dependability, loyalty, etc. These qualities should also be reflected in fellowship but fellowship forms brother/ sister relationships that can only be created as a result of all parties abiding with the Lord Jesus Christ together. Surprisingly, many non-believers have high levels of integrity and often have stronger friendships than some Christians. Given the implications of walking in “counterfeit fellowship”, great care should be taken to discern if there is genuine fellowship.

1 John 4:9-12 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.** No one has ever seen God; **if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.**

1 John 4:16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and **whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

If there is valid evidence of fellowship, respect for God’s Word, keeping His commandments, genuine love for others, and abiding friendships with God, Believers can have confidence in their eternal relationship with Him. These are the challenges for mentors and the measures of success discipleship.

Walking in the light does not mean sinless perfection, but humble dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ. The ultimate test of walking in the light, abiding in Christ, and walking in fellowship is genuine love.

A natural result of genuine love, fellowship, community, and serving others is hospitality. There is no surprise that hospitality is a basic requirement for Church leadership.

1 Timothy 3:2-7 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, **hospitable**, able to teach, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Close inspection reveals that the foundation for every requirement for Church leadership is genuine love, and “hospitality” is an obvious expression of love.

Genuine love for God and others is especially important, and is the 7th challenge of “[Challenges to Disciple Children](#)”. There are other significant differences between friendships and fellowship, Appendix A describes the qualities of some who walk in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Matthew 20:28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Serving others is the natural outpouring of genuine love. Much could be said about the importance of serving but the Lord Jesus Christ's example is the ultimate display of service from love.

A major temptation for many is to claim sincere love for others by serving, especially in positions of authority or full-time ministries. Such responsibilities may be sincere but if the motives are for personal success, possibly control of others, and not a sincere concern for the welfare of others, the value that God places on such service is questionable (Philippians 2:1-8). Therefore, mentors must be alert to discern if goals and especially motives are appropriate.

One-on-one discipleship of others is a demonstration of love. However, a common philosophy in the modern American Church has been dependency upon group, congregation, and classroom teaching. Some aspects of discipleship can be accomplished in classroom-type settings but the Lord Jesus Christ's example was to disciple the 12, in one-on-one relationships. The specifics of Paul's discipleship effort are not as clearly described, and he did teach in group settings as well, but there are several indications that he disciplined through one-on-one relationships.

As there should be many challenges to encouraging dying to self and accountabilities, it follows that an important element of effective discipleship is the quality of the relationships between mentors and disciples-in-training. The qualities of discipleship relationships are the same as what God has designed for fathers/ parents to be effective. Therefore, if goals of effective discipleship are embraced? If there are goals to mentor "Timothies", then it is proposed that it is vital to follow the Lord Jesus Christ's and Paul's examples of one-on-one discipleship.

The importance of genuine love applies to all discipleship relationships. When Paul wrote, "I have you in my heart", this was not a casual or polite statement but a clear declaration of his deep love and concern for fellow believers, many of whom he no doubt disciplined. Paul was a great teacher but it is proposed that the deep love within their relationships was the result of spending time together in one-on-one discipleship relationships.

God holds fathers to be leaders of their families, especially to disciple their children. Parents naturally love their children sacrificially, which is the perfect discipleship environment. Many fathers, especially young fathers/ parents are not significantly spiritually mature but God appoints them to be responsible for their children. While parents are far from perfect, if they diligently seek God's direction, and lead by example, as the children become young adults, the lives of both the parents and the children will be transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God will continue to transform the lives of Believers, but He has commissioned discipleship (Matthew 28:18-20) to develop genuine love and an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. All of which are most effectively accomplished through family and fellowship relationships. Discipling others requires time, emotional energy, and sometimes money. Genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of others requires love. Sadly, so many relationships within the Church are only casual friendships or less.

It is also worth noting that discipleship should not only incorporate the desire and ability to disciple others but also instill the importance of becoming disciple-makers (2 Timothy 2:2).

Another demonstration of loving and serving others is for Believers to share the Gospel. Another result of love is to understand the hopelessness of those who have not embraced God's love and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Believers must place concern for others above their insecurities and share the Gospel. Again, Section A of the Handbook provides verses that are critical for presenting the Gospel. The Handbook also encourages mentors to guide Believers to develop an effective testimony of what God has done in their lives.

Promoting and being involved with Communities of Believers:

Fellowship-based communities are the result of Believers abiding with the Lord Jesus Christ and reflecting His love towards others. Friendship-based groups are much more common and can be good but they are often cliquish and exclusive. Friendship-based groups should never be confused with fellowship-based communities. Fellowship-based communities should be a high priority for all local Churches.

It is worth noting that the description of the early Church includes elements of Christian Communities (Acts 2:42-47).

Wise Believers understand the consequences of sin are misery, destruction, and death. Being alert to opportunities, Believers should be motivated to reflect God's love for the Word, to share the Gospel, and to mentor (disciple) others. And, as the Believers are often involved in significant spiritual battles, to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). Communities are very important for sincere prayer, support, encouragement, and for Believers to work together to resist the forces of darkness. Solid Christian communities are a source of joy and bring great honor to the Lord Jesus Christ. Fellowship-based communities are evidence of and are a source of sincere love.

Faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Genuine love serves others and God by being faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ. God calls every Believer to minister as His commissioned Representative (see [Representatives of The Lord Jesus Christ](#)). As Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ's offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, Believers will discourage sin and promote God's love (especially the Gospel), thus being salt and light. Only genuine love can provide the power for Believers to be salt and light and to have the stamina to remain in such battles.

John 2:15,16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

Genuine love does not Love the World, guiding Believers to be Salt and Light. Those who abide in the Lord Jesus Christ will fear the Lord, develop wisdom and discernment, and a deep respect for God and the authority of His Word. However, the deceitfulness of the heart of those who do not walk in the light often claim to embrace the authority of God's Word but take exception when God's standards are *inconvenient*. Secretly, they love the world, embracing and promoting compromises of Biblical standards. **Outward evidence of loving the world is the embrace of self-indulgent choices and lifestyles.**

Desires of the flesh, desires of the eyes, and the pride-of-life promote goals of pleasure, success, and pride. Such individuals are driven to accumulate accolades, even spiritual accomplishments. However, God clearly warns that great accomplishments do not indicate His approval or if they are even truly born again (Matthew 7:21-23). Therefore, a significant challenge for mentors is to recognize and address that the natural man loves and desires to conform to the world and to strive to be great.

Final comments for Love for God and Others:

When the foundational truths of sincere faith, a pure heart, and a clear conscience are integrated into the life of Believers, they possess the power to love God with all of their hearts, souls, and minds, and to genuinely love others (Matthew 22:37). Module F of the Handbook presents qualities that are necessary to reflect God's love and hospitality should be a natural result.

Section 7, Closing- Paul's Prayer for the Maturity of Believers:

Ephesians 3:14-19, For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**—that you, **being rooted and grounded in love**, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

Appendix A, Examples of Those Who Walk in the Light:

Of the hundreds of Christians that I have met and known over the years, sadly, there has been fellowship with very few of them. It is not possible to know the true nature of the relationship that many have with the Lord Jesus Christ, but those who walk in fellowship have been a delight and a joy. The light of a few of these fellow Believers is worth remembering.

Mr. B is one of the few men that I have known who consistently memorized and meditated on God's Word. He rose early every morning to present devotions with his children before He went to work. Fellowship with Mr. B was a joy. However, God allowed him to be stricken with a debilitating disease and his physical abilities continued to decline for over two decades. For many of those years, he was bound to a wheelchair. As his illness progressed, he was fed through a feeding tube. In the end, he could barely talk, but he often whispered prayers with visitors. Mr. B never complained, and there were no reports or evidence that he was ever bitter at God, he walked in the light, and the love relationship that he had with the Lord Jesus Christ was obvious to all who knew him.

Some of the greatest fellowship that I had was with Mr. J. Shortly after we met, Mr. J was like a brother. He wanted to emphasize the importance of marriage for his children so he and his family drove several hours to give an anniversary party for another dear brother. After the party, as Mr. J finished cleaning up, he suffered a massive heart attack. His wife and children said goodbye as he went to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. I really look forward to seeing this dear brother in the Lord.

Both Mr. B and Mr. J often made the comment, "God is Sovereign". They both trusted that God was in control and that His ways were higher than our ways. When Mr. J went to be with the Lord, I complained to God, "Don't you know that we are short of Godly men down here?" Of all of the men that God should have used to accomplish great things for His Kingdom, it should have been these men. I later had to ask God for forgiveness. God's ways are not our ways and I was forced to consider, "What does God value from His Children?" To accomplish great things for His Kingdom or to walk humbly with Him.

Then there was Mr. M, who grew up on a farm. He had a fantastic knowledge of the Bible and Biblical philosophies that were very practical and extremely valuable. We spent many hours discussing various Biblical issues. Mr. M decided that he had made enough money so he retired early with plans to go on the mission field. However, while working to gain the required credentials, Mr. M had a massive heart attack. He survived for about another 8 years but every time he attempted to go to the mission field, God allowed him to have more physical challenges. Mr. M recently went to be with the Lord. I so appreciated our fellowship together. Mr. M had a tremendous desire to honor God and a close friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ. God did not choose to use Mr. M to do the great things for His Kingdom that Mr. M visualized, but he greatly impacted many of those whom God brought into his life.

Surprisingly, there has only been fellowship with a few pastors, one of whom was Pastor D. He was a great pastor in every respect. He had a fantastic grasp of God's Word. He knew and feared God. And, and he lived by Biblical convictions. One of his convictions was not to remarry divorced individuals, but the leadership of the Church he pastored at the time did not respect his conviction and fired him. He worked diligently to start a new Church but God directed him away from full-time ministry. Pastor D

continued to share the Gospel, disciple young Believers, and lead home Bible studies for decades. During the last few years of his life, our life situations allowed me to spend considerable time together before he went to be with the Lord. I enjoyed discussing so many Biblical philosophies, issues, and truths but the true value was our fellowship together.

Another fellow Believer was Dr. D. I didn't have much opportunity to know him very well but I have had great fellowship with some of his children, his grandchildren, and his "Timothy". Dr. D walked humbly before God and many came to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because he was so effective at demonstrating God's unconditional love. Many years ago, God prompted him with the question, "Why are we sharing the Gospel with those who have heard it before". So, he jumped on a plane and flew to India. He continued his medical practice in the States but he flew to India many times over the years. Dr. D shared God's love and then disciplined new believers. He emphasized the importance of sharing the Gospel and for them to disciple others. He was a "tent-maker" as he ministered part-time for over 40 years. He went to be with the Lord last year. The result of the one-on-one discipleship ministry multiplied and is pushing 10 million. The claims of his ministry efforts were so spectacular, that inquiries were made to verify if they were true. Not only were the results true but God allowed many of the Disciples to survive severe persecution, and they continue to share the Gospel and disciple others. It is estimated that God used Dr. D's efforts to share the Gospel with over 100 million individuals. God did use Dr. D. He accomplished great things for God's Kingdom, but what set him apart was his love for God. What is ironic is that while God used Dr. D so mightily, he is virtually unknown within the modern American Church. With such powerful ministry results, he could have been highly renowned. The best explanation for his lack of fame is that he loved the Lord Jesus Christ and desired to raise Him up instead of himself.

Every one of these and others who walked in the light, in fellowship, and love held strong convictions of the sovereignty of God's Word, of the sanctity of marriage, and the importance of discipling others, especially their children. None claimed to be perfect and in humility, they clung to the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. When they sinned, they ran toward God instead of running away from Him.

It is impossible to adequately describe the relationships that each of these men had with God. Their fellowship, abiding friendships with God, and their love are clear evidence that they walk/ed in the light.

Appendix B, Marriage:

With so many Christian marriages failing, it is important to consider how they can be strengthened.

Ephesians chapter 5 describes marriage as a model of the relationship between the Church and the Lord Jesus Christ. This model reveals insights into the relationship between Believers and God. God's desire to purify the Church is consistent with the model of marriage He uses to purify spouses.

The primary Biblical terms in Greek for love are Eros, Philos, and Agape. Each of these types of love represents qualities of the foundation of marriage and provides insight into why some marriages fail and others succeed.

Marriages built upon Eros love, emotional attachments, romance, and sex are at tremendous risk of failure because the emphasis on Eros love is what each of the individuals can selfishly get for themselves. Eros love feeds pride-of-life. Any relationship based on selfish motives is built on sand and is doomed to failure. As soon as either party stops receiving what they want, the relationship begins to be washed away.

Marriages based upon Philos love (friendships) weather storms much better because they are built on qualities like faithfulness, honesty, dependability, and others. The mutual responsibilities of friendships require loyalty and faithfulness of all parties. Philos relationships are not as self-centered and therefore support and promote stronger marriages. Both Christian and non-Christian marriages built on Philos love are often successful, and able to survive significant storms.

Because of the deceitfulness of the heart, the natural man cannot sustain Agape love. Thankfully, as Believers bow to Jesus Christ as their Lord, they are able to walk in the light and offer Agape love. Therefore, when the Lord Jesus Christ is the center of both spouses' lives, as they walk in the light, they are able to go beyond friendship (Philos) and have fellowship (Agape). The joy and love of these marriages greatly honor and please God. Therefore, as the ultimate goal of effective discipleship is Agape love, the path to building successful marriages is the above-described principles of discipleship.

Sadly, in American culture, including the modern Church, many relationships and marriages begin with romantic attraction (Eros "love"). A few of these relationships are able to grow into friendships (Philos love) and fewer are mature enough to walk in fellowship together (Agape love). By the very nature of Eros love, the probability of such relationships surviving is very low. For marriages built on Eros foundations to survive, it is critical that both spouses work to submit their selfish wants and desires to the Lord Jesus Christ. They can then begin to focus on serving others to transform the foundation of their marriage into friendships (Philos love). Such transformations are challenging but possible if there is sincere repentance and reliance on God. Given the devastating numbers of failed marriages within the Church are about the same as non-Christian, the statistics of divorce indicate that many marriages within the modern American Church are built on self-centered Eros love.

! Timothy 1:1,2 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

Dating has been accepted for several generations within the American culture and the Church. One reaction against dating has been to promote courtships. Several approaches to courtship have been tried but it is proposed that single men and women should treat each other with the same attitude as brothers and sisters. Brothers and sisters don't flirt, they don't ignore, they don't avoid, or try to impress, but it is good for them to have healthy friendships. As friends, they shouldn't feel uncomfortable, or excited to work together as God presents appropriate opportunities, respecting each other as brothers and sisters in all purity. If potential couples are both walking in the light, they will walk in fellowship together. Then if God's design is for a couple to be married, strong friendships will grow out of their fellowship, and

romantic love will grow out of their friendship. Marriages built on Agape love greatly honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is hope for marriages that start based on Eros love. They face tougher obstacles but if both spouses are willing to crucify pride-of-life, making Jesus Christ Lord, and work diligently to be transformed, such marriages can be salvaged. Marriages that start on Philo love have a higher probability of success to achieve Agape love. Again, both spouses must be challenged and guided to meet the described challenges of discipleship. Regardless of the foundation of marriages, the key to strengthening marriages is effective one-on-one discipleship.

A comment worth noting is that Believers married to non-Christians must realize that their marriage can never develop beyond Philo love.

Appendix C, The Furnace:

When I fall into temptations, I ask forgiveness and then determine to put it out of my life. Many times, that is the end of it, but living sacrifices try to wiggle off of the altar.

God commands us to burn idols with fire and the root of sin is worshiping the false god of self. So, as a solution, I constructed a furnace in my mind where I visualize throwing temptations, wrong ideas, thoughts, and pictures into the furnace to be burnt. If they crawl back out, I propose not to dwell on them and quickly throw them back into the fire. I continue throwing them back in as long as it takes until they don't crawl back out again. For stronger temptations, I visualize them burning and sometimes turning up the flames.

When I was younger and looked into the furnace, there were smoldering piles of ashes as far as I could imagine. Thankfully, in recent years there only a few piles of smoldering ashes. There is nothing "magic" about my furnace but the key is mental discipline.

Appendix D, Challenges for Church Leaders:

The first challenge for all Christians, especially leaders, is to honestly evaluate yourself, your family, and everyone you serve. Regardless of any credentials, or "successes", if God's love is not the primary driving force, honest repentance is necessary.

The second challenge is to be on constant guard against pride. The pride-of-life motivates all, great and small to desire to be great before men. One-on-one discipleship is vital but many do not view it as accomplishing great things for God and it is not likely to attract great recognition. Is it important to do great things for God or should Believers be conduits for God to do great things? God does choose a few to be recognized to do great things for Him but one of their greatest challenges is to deal with the tremendous temptations of pride. Thus, God's design for most is to reproduce God's love in others through one-on-one discipleship.

The "fruit" of pride and arrogance (pride-of-life) is often discouragement and resentment towards God. Resentment turns into bitterness; bitterness yields moral failure and moral failures result in further

failures (Romans 1). Sadly, this series of events describes too many pastors and Church leaders who have dropped out of their ministries. When Believers repeatedly struggle and fail, they need to put away their bitterness and anger, embracing God's love with thankfulness. Then as they experience God's unconditional love and forgiveness, they will be gripped by God's love, which will lead them to develop a constant awareness of Him (abiding in Christ), and their life will be truly transformed. Effective one-on-one discipleship can help transform hearts, so it must become a very high priority.

A third challenge is that discipleship "programs" are often designed around a series of accomplishments and applications. Applications promote the development of credentials and intellectual achievements but they do not measure heart attitudes. "Knowledge puffs up but love builds up". Thus, it is common for "champions" of the faith to have catastrophic failures in their lives and ministries, usually bringing tremendous shame to the Lord Jesus Christ. The risk of focusing on "applications" and accomplishments is that they usually engage and strengthen pride-of-life. The goal must be true transformation, which begins with dying to self (pride-of-life). And because accountability is so vital, effective discipleship must be developed through one-on-one relationships.

2 Timothy 2:2 "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses **entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.**"

The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, a key element of the leadership of the early Church to disciple faithful men. Discipleship cannot only be taught from the pulpit **but Pastors and Church leaders must lead by example.**

Most modern Churches have a monolithic leadership structure over congregations. The dynamics of faithful men who have discipled others in one-on-one relationships results in a "family" structure, forming powerful communities compared to how most modern Churches operate. Through the Apostles and the Apostle Paul God built the early Church on a foundation of discipleship, which has survived and spreading the Gospel for over 2000 years. Monolithic leadership structures over the millennium have propagated tremendous failures and most have not survived very long after the founders have passed on. Therefore, the modern Church must return to transforming Believers through effective discipleship.

A final comment is that discipleship is important but the goal of preparing Believers to disciple others engages dynamic challenges, purpose, and direction for Believers and Churches.

Therefore, Pastors and Church leaders must follow the examples of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul.