

DISCIPLE

SEEKING A PAUL,
BECOMING A TIMOTHY



PASTOR LANDON CHURCHILL

Introduction: Why Discipleship, and Why Now?

For more than three decades, I have prayed for and longed for deep, life-on-life discipleship. I've desired that Paul-to-Timothy kind of relationship-someone older in the faith who would walk with me, shape me, challenge me, and help me grow. But that kind of one-on-one discipleship never fully came. And in that longing, the Lord met me.

He became my Teacher. I have been discipled by the living God through His Word and by abiding in Christ day after day (John 15:5). Along the way, the Lord also used many saints-most now with Him-to shepherd my soul from a distance. Through their sermons, writings, biographies, and examples, these faithful men and women became unexpected mentors. I am eternally grateful for their obedience and their willingness to pass on what they learned.

I've also learned from those I've observed up close-sometimes what to imitate, sometimes what not to do as a servant-leader. God used all of it: the longing, the absence, the examples, the warnings, the books, and the Scriptures. And though I never received the kind of formal discipleship I deeply desired, that ache became a holy hunger. It rooted discipleship deeply into my heart-a passion to pour into anyone who wants to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

Scripture makes it clear that discipleship is not optional or incidental. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul told Timothy to invest what he had learned into others who would then teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2). Titus was instructed to cultivate generational, gender-specific mentoring within the local church (Titus 2:1-8). The pattern is unmistakable: disciples who make disciples who make disciples.

For decades now, I have had the privilege of pastoring and preaching thousands of messages, and each one has been offered with discipling intent-so that we would not merely hear the Word, but obey it (James 1:22); not merely attend church, but become more like Christ. I live under the conviction that I must fight for personal holiness, because I can only lead people as far as I am willing to go (1 Timothy 4:16). Discipleship is not theory-it is apprenticeship to Jesus in the real stuff of life.

This little book is meant to be a simple help and a starting place. It will not replace your Bible, your local church, or the Holy Spirit's leading. It is not a substitute for faithful pastors, elders, and godly men and women who labor among you (Ephesians 4:11-16). But it will give you a clear pathway to walk with another believer-so that together you can:

Open the Scriptures and obey them (James 1:22).

Pray for and with one another in honest accountability (James 5:16).

Count the cost and follow Jesus wherever He leads (Luke 14:25-33).

Embrace sound doctrine and let truth shape life (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Share the gospel and multiply disciples who make disciples (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20).

You'll notice a workbook feel throughout: each chapter begins with Scripture and a short reading, followed by practical, face-to-face discussion questions and space for prayer. My hope is that you will not merely read these pages, but live them. Meet regularly-over coffee, on a job site, in a living room, after a worship service. Open the Bible, ask hard questions, confess sin, serve side-by-side, and pray with expectancy. Discipleship is not complicated; it's costly, consistent, and Christ-centered.

If you are new to all this, welcome. If you've been walking with Jesus for years, consider this a fresh invitation to take someone with you. Christ is worthy. His ways are good and right. And until He returns, His commission remains our calling: go and make disciples.

A Simple Prayer to Begin

"Lord Jesus, teach me to follow You closely and to help someone else do the same. Give me humility to be taught, courage to obey, and love to invest. Lead me to the person I should ask to walk with me, and the person I should invite to walk behind me. Make us more like You. Amen."

Chapter 1

The Mandate of Discipleship: Called to Follow and to Lead

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
— *Matthew 28:19-20*

“Discipleship is a long obedience in the same direction.” — Eugene Peterson

From the first moment Jesus said, “*Follow Me*,” He was inviting ordinary people into an extraordinary relationship. He didn’t form a classroom; He formed a community. The Great Commission wasn’t given to a few elite believers but to all who follow Christ.

Paul captured the same heartbeat when he told Timothy, “*The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*” (2 Timothy 2:2). The model is multiplication: Paul → Timothy → faithful men → others. Discipleship was never meant to end with us—it is designed to flow through us.

Discipleship happens in kitchens and coffee shops, while working, worshiping, and walking. It’s life-on-life formation in the presence of Jesus. When believers take that seriously—when they begin to invest deeply in one another—the Church becomes vibrant, fruitful, and unstoppable.

Walking Like Jesus Did

When I read the Gospels, what strikes me most is how **Jesus discipled through shared life**. He walked dusty roads with His followers, ate meals with them, answered their questions, corrected their pride, and modeled dependence on the Father. For three years they saw Him pray, weep, serve, and stand firm. He wasn’t just giving them lessons—He was giving them Himself.

Every miracle they witnessed, every parable they heard, every step beside Him was shaping them for the day He would say, “*As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*” (John 20:21).

They learned by living with Him. And because they lived with Him, they were transformed by Him.

What amazes me most is that this method—simple, relational discipleship—turned the world upside down. A handful of fishermen, tax collectors, and ordinary men and women carried the Gospel across continents. They weren't the religious elite; they were committed followers who reproduced what they had seen in Christ.

Imagine the power of that multiplication today. If **one believer** disciplined **one person** for a year—truly investing, praying, walking through life together—and the next year both of them each disciplined one more, the numbers would grow exponentially. Within **33 years**, the approximate length of Jesus' earthly life, the entire world—8 billion souls—could be reached through discipleship. It's simple math, but it's also divine design. Jesus' way still works when we walk His way.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

Take time to open each verse, underline key words, and write what it shows you about discipleship, relationship, and reproduction.

Matthew 4:19 – “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Mark 3:14 – Jesus appointed twelve “that they might be with Him.”

John 13:15 – “I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done.”

Luke 9:23 – “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself.”

Acts 2:42-47 – The early church devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer.

1 Corinthians 11:1 – “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”

2 Timothy 2:1-2 – Pass on what you have received.

Titus 2:1-8 – Older believers teaching the younger.

Hebrews 10:24-25 – “Let us consider one another to stir up love and good works.”

John 15:8 – “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit.”

Philippians 3:17 – “Join in following my example.”

Together Questions

What does Jesus' approach to discipleship teach us about our own relationships?

Why is "being with" people so essential to making disciples?

How can we begin walking with others the way Jesus did with His disciples?

What practical steps can we take this month to build intentional discipleship rhythms?

How might this type of relational discipleship affect our church, family, and community?

Prayer Together

"Father, thank You for showing us the way through Your Son. Teach us to follow closely, love deeply, and invest intentionally. Make us disciples who multiply, for Your glory and the joy of all nations. Amen."

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 2

1. Who in my life has modeled Christlike discipleship for me, even informally?
2. Am I living close enough with anyone that they see my walk with Jesus up close?
3. What would it take for me to begin discipling one person this year?
4. What comfort, time, or fear might I need to surrender to say "yes" to that call?
(These reflections prepare your heart for Chapter 2: "Counting the Cost of Following Jesus.")

"We are not simply followers of Jesus;
we are apprentices who become master-makers when we apprentice others."
— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 2

Counting the Cost of Following Jesus: The Call to Die Daily and Live Fully

“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”
— *Luke 9:23*

“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

From the very beginning, Jesus made something unmistakably clear: following Him is glorious, but it is not casual. He never softened the cost. He never hid the fine print. He looked crowds in the eye and said words that would thin them out: “*Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*” (Luke 14:27).

Jesus refuses to be an accessory to our lives; He must become our life. Discipleship requires surrender, sacrifice, and a willingness to lay down anything that competes with His Lordship.

The early disciples understood this. Their allegiance to Jesus cost them comfort, reputation, relationships—even their lives. Yet the New Testament doesn’t paint them as victims but as people overflowing with joy, hope, and purpose. They discovered what every true disciple finds: *losing your life for Christ is the only way to truly find it* (Matthew 16:24–25).

Counting the cost does not mean fearing the cost; it means embracing the worth of Christ. Discipleship is not about what we give up—it’s about who we get: **Jesus Himself**.

Walking the Hard Road With Jesus

When Jesus spoke of counting the cost, He was inviting His disciples into a deeper reality. He wasn’t turning them away; He was preparing them. Jesus did not hide the truth that narrow is the road that leads to life and few find it (Matthew 7:13–14). Yet He walked that same road Himself—first, best, and perfectly.

What stands out in the Gospels is that the disciples learned the cost by *being with Him*. They watched Him choose the Father’s will over comfort. They saw Him serve when tired, love when rejected, forgive when wounded, and pray when pressed. His life displayed a cross-shaped pattern long before He carried a literal cross.

And that pattern became theirs. After the resurrection, these once-fearful men and women turned the world upside down because they were utterly convinced that Jesus was worth everything.

The cross they carried did not crush them—it empowered them. Because Jesus had already carried the heavier weight.

Imagine a generation today that embraces this same costly faith. A church unafraid of inconvenience. Believers who choose holiness over ease, sacrifice over self, obedience over applause. Disciples who say with Paul: *“I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord”* (Philippians 3:8).

This is the kind of discipleship that multiplies. This is what transforms families, churches, and nations.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

Take time to open each verse, underline key words, and write what it reveals about surrender, sacrifice, and the cost of following Jesus.

Luke 14:25–33 — Jesus’ clearest teaching on counting the cost.

Luke 9:23–24 — Deny yourself, take up your cross daily.

Matthew 16:24–26 — Losing your life to find it.

John 12:24–26 — A grain of wheat must die to bear fruit.

Philippians 3:7–10 — Paul counts all things loss for Christ.

1 Peter 4:1–2 — Suffering in the flesh breaks the power of sin.

Romans 12:1–2 — Present your bodies as a living sacrifice.

2 Timothy 3:12 — All who desire to live godly will suffer persecution.

Matthew 7:13–14 — The narrow road that leads to life.

Galatians 2:20 — Crucified with Christ, yet alive in Him.

Hebrews 12:1–3 — Consider Jesus who endured the cross.

Together Questions

What are the biggest barriers in our culture that make costly discipleship difficult?

In your own life, what “cross” is Jesus asking you to carry right now?

How does Jesus’ example help us embrace the hard parts of discipleship?

What steps can we take together to walk the narrow road with faithfulness and joy?

How does counting the cost prepare us to make disciples ourselves?

Prayer Together

“Father, give us courage to follow Your Son wherever He leads. Teach us to deny ourselves with joy, to take up our cross daily, and to trust that Jesus is worth every sacrifice. Make us steadfast, unmovable, and overflowing with love as we walk this road together. Amen.”

How we can pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 3

1. What am I most afraid of losing if I follow Jesus wholeheartedly?
2. Where is God inviting me into deeper surrender and trust?
3. What is one step of obedience I can take this week that requires faith?
(These reflections will prepare you for Chapter 3: “The Word of God—Learning and Living Truth.”)

“Counting the cost isn’t about what you give up—it’s about who you gain.
And gaining Jesus is worth everything.”
— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 3

Shaped by the Word: Learning to Fit Our Lives into Scripture

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

— 2 Timothy 3:16–17

“Either the Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible.”

— D. L. Moody

The Word of God is not a collection of suggestions; it’s the voice of the living God calling His children into alignment with His ways. Yet, if we’re honest, there are seasons when we treat Scripture more like a buffet than a banquet—we take what looks good and leave what convicts us.

Real discipleship happens when we stop trying to bend the Word to fit our lifestyle and start bending our lives to fit the Word.

When the Word Reads You

There was a season in my life when God’s call for absolute surrender hit home. I was on fire for the Lord—worshiping, witnessing, ready to go wherever He led—but I was also fighting a losing battle with my flesh. I told myself it was “spiritual warfare,” but truthfully, a lot of it was just me being stubborn.

In that time, I slipped into what I now call “the school of learning the hard way.” I found myself doing things I knew were wrong—drinking, partying, and ignoring conviction. I’d wake up with guilt and shame and tell myself, *That’s the last time*. But the next weekend, there I was again.

Then one night, while reading Daniel 1:8—“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself”—the Holy Spirit made those words come alive. It wasn’t just about Daniel; it was about me. God was saying, “*You can purpose in your heart, too.*” That night, I surrendered. I told the Lord, “*You’re on the throne, not me. You call the shots.*”

It was the last time I ever touched alcohol. Not because I became legalistic, but because I finally agreed with God’s Word instead of arguing with it. That verse became my pre-decided boundary—when temptation came, the decision was already made.

When the Word Comforts You

Then there was the time young love broke my heart. I was certain life was over (and if you've ever been a heart-broken teenager, you know exactly what that means). While I was wallowing in despair, the Holy Spirit brought a verse to mind I'd never even memorized: "*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matthew 11:28).

It was like the Lord Himself whispered, "*You can come to Me. I'm right here.*" That verse became a lifeline, not just in heartbreak, but in every storm since. Scripture doesn't just expose sin—it also binds up wounds.

When the Word Transforms Others

Over the years, I've seen that same transforming power in biblical counseling sessions. People who had chased the world's wisdom—therapy, self-help, endless diagnoses—found true freedom when they turned to the Word of God.

Jesus said, "*You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32). Truth isn't a concept; it's a Person. And when His Word takes root, it renews the mind and rewires the heart.

I've watched men and women long bound by lies walk in freedom simply because they believed God's promises. Some even found healing from long-standing mental struggles—because truth replaced deception.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

2 Timothy 3:16–17 – Scripture's purpose.

Psalms 119:9–11 – Hiding the Word in the heart.

Hebrews 4:12 – The Word as a living sword.

John 17:17 – "Sanctify them by Your truth."

Joshua 1:8 – Meditate day and night.

James 1:22–25 – Be doers, not hearers only.

Psalms 19:7–11 – The law of the Lord is perfect.

Romans 12:2 – Renewal of the mind.

Proverbs 3:5–6 – Trust and acknowledge Him.

Colossians 3:16 – Let the Word dwell richly in you.

Together Questions

What does it mean to let Scripture “read” you rather than just reading it?

How has God used His Word to call you into deeper obedience?

What verse or truth do you need to “purpose in your heart” today?

How might our lives look different if we consistently applied what we already know?

How can we, as Paul and Timothy pairs, hold each other accountable to live the Word?

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 4

1. Is there an area of your life where you’re still trying to negotiate with God’s Word instead of submitting to it?
2. When was the last time Scripture brought you comfort or correction in a real-life moment?
3. What would it look like for you to become a student of the Word, not just a consumer of devotionals?

(Next chapter: “The Essentials of the Faith.”)

“The Bible isn’t meant to sit on our shelves; it’s meant to stand us upright.”

— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 4

The Essentials of the Christian Faith: Who God Is, Who Jesus Is, Who the Holy Spirit Is

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.”

— Hebrews 6:1–3

“You will know as much of God, and only as much of God,
as you are willing to put into practice.”

— Eric Liddell

From the beginning, Christian discipleship has rested on **truth about God** that is confessed, taught, and obeyed. The Church has always gathered around the essentials: **one God in three Persons** (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), **Jesus Christ fully God and fully Man**, His **substitutionary death** and **bodily resurrection**, the **indwelling Holy Spirit** who regenerates and empowers, **salvation by grace through faith**, the **authority and sufficiency of Scripture**, the **people of God (the Church)**, and our **blessed hope**—the **imminent** return of Christ and the resurrection to life and judgment. These are not abstract ideas; they are the living truths that shape a disciple’s worship, witness, and walk.

Doctrine matters because discipleship without truth becomes sentiment, and zeal without knowledge becomes error. Sound doctrine anchors relationships, guides decisions, guards the gospel, and fuels holiness. In healthy discipling relationships, we **open the Bible together**, confess the faith once delivered to the saints, and help one another live it out with courage and humility.

“Let us go on to maturity.” That is the call of Hebrews 6: not to abandon foundations, but to **build on them**, moving from milk to meat—so that our lives, families, and churches display the glory of the Triune God and the hope of Christ’s soon appearing.

A Personal Word From My Own Story

Looking back over my walk with Jesus, I can see how deeply essential doctrine has been in forming me as a disciple. I didn’t grow up with an older “Paul” walking beside me line by line through Scripture—but the Lord, in His kindness, disciplined me Himself through His Word and through the voices of faithful saints across the centuries.

I still remember being about nine years old, sitting in the adult service next to my mom. (I had bailed on Sunday school—not because I was godlier, but because the kids picked on me for not being able to read.) That morning, the pastor preached on the return of Christ, and something ignited in my heart. I went home and prayed a bold prayer, telling the Lord I would stand and fight for Him during the Great Tribulation. (I’ve since actually studied the Tribulation—and let’s just say, I don’t want to be around for that!)

But that *moment* awakened something in me: a conviction that Jesus is truly coming again, and that life must be lived ready, holy, watchful, anchored in truth.

Years later, as a young man, I found myself reading A.W. Tozer late at night—barely understanding half of it—but being gripped by the realization that **knowing God is the highest pursuit of life**. Around that same season, I remember laboring through the opening chapters of Romans, wrestling with the weight of sin and the holiness of God, surrounded by five different commentaries just trying to make sense of it all. Then I reached Romans 5, and it was like the Holy Spirit turned the lights on in my soul.

For the first time, I *felt* the doctrine of **justification by faith**—and I wept. Not because I understood every nuance, but because God’s grace suddenly became personal, beautiful, and utterly undeserved.

Not long after, someone handed me Chuck Smith’s *Why Grace Changes Everything*. I didn’t like reading, but I devoured that book in one sitting—and then read it again. The message of grace rearranged my understanding of God, my calling, my identity, and my future. It’s why I teach the way I do today.

My prayer for you, as you walk through this discipleship journey, is that **you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ** (2 Peter 3:18).

But I want to caution you with something that has stayed with me my whole life: Many people know doctrine without knowing God.

The Pharisees were experts in Scripture, yet blind to the God who authored it. Doctrine became to them a ladder of pride instead of a pathway to a Person.

Doctrine is vital—but doctrine that leads to legalism rather than love, to pride rather than worship, to self-righteousness rather than surrender—is doctrine misused.

If your theology does not lead you to Jesus, you’ve missed the point.

And it is only by grace—grace alone—that we can rightly be disciples of Jesus at all.

These moments in my story shaped me—not because they were emotional, but because they were doctrinal. They revealed **who God is**, and in light of that, **who I must become**. They taught me that discipleship is always built on truth—and truth is always meant to become right devotion.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

Take time to open each passage, underline key words, and note what it teaches about the nature and work of God—and why that matters for discipleship.

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 — The LORD is one; love Him with all your being.

Isaiah 40:25–31 — God’s holiness, power, and sustaining strength.

John 1:1–3, 14 — The Word is God; the Word became flesh.

John 14:6–9 — Jesus reveals the Father; He is the only way.

Acts 2:32–33, 38–39 — Risen Christ, promised Spirit, repentance, and gift of the Spirit.

Romans 3:21–26 — Justification by grace through faith in Christ’s finished work.

Romans 8:9–11, 14–16 — The indwelling Spirit gives life and adoption.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4, 20–26 — The gospel essentials and the bodily resurrection.

Ephesians 2:8–10 — By grace through faith—unto good works.

Titus 2:11–14 — Grace trains us now as we look for the **blessed hope**.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 — Scripture is God-breathed and sufficient to equip.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 5:1–11 — The Lord’s imminent return; comfort and readiness.

Revelation 22:12, 20–21 — “Surely I am coming quickly.” The Church’s “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

Together Questions

Why does Hebrews 6:1–3 call us to “go on to maturity,” and how do we do that without **leaving** the foundations behind?

Which essential doctrine (Trinity, Person/work of Christ, work of the Spirit, salvation by grace, Scripture’s authority, the Church, Christ’s return) do we most need to strengthen together, and how?

How does our belief in the **imminent** return of Christ shape our daily discipleship (holiness, urgency, comfort, mission)?

What safeguards can we build into our discipling relationship so that doctrine stays **biblical, humble, and practical**(not merely theoretical)?

Which passages above will we memorize or study in depth this month to anchor our conversations?

Prayer Together

“Father, we praise You—holy, sovereign, and good. Lord Jesus, true God and true Man, our only Savior, we trust in Your finished work. Please open our eyes, renew our minds, and empower our obedience with the help of Your Holy Spirit. Keep us rooted in truth, abounding in love, watchful for Christ’s return, and faithful in disciple-making—for Your glory. Amen.”

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 5

(The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus)

1. Where has right doctrine stayed mostly in my head instead of shaping my habits, speech, and relationships? What one change will I make this week?
2. How does believing Jesus could return **at any moment** purify my priorities today (1 John 3:2–3)? Name one priority to realign before next Sunday.
3. Which truth about **who Jesus is** do I need to cling to as we enter Chapter 5—and how will that truth comfort, correct, or commission me?

“Doctrine is not a shelf of ideas; it is the scaffolding of obedience. When truth holds, disciples stand—and the Church builds upward in love while watching for His soon return.”

— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 5

The Gospel:

The Life, Death & Resurrection of Jesus

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

— 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

“Take Jesus out of Christianity, and there remains nothing.”

— *Charles Spurgeon*

Everything in Christian discipleship flows from the gospel. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are not just the beginning of our faith — they are the center, the fuel, and the anchor of our discipleship. We don’t graduate from the gospel; we grow deeper into it.

The Gospel at the Center of Discipleship

The gospel is not merely a message to accept — it is a reality to enter.

Jesus’ life shows us how to live.

Jesus’ death shows us what our sin required.

Jesus’ resurrection gives us the power to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).

A disciple is not someone who merely knows truths about Jesus, but someone who *lives* in the light of His finished work. The cross isn’t simply where Jesus died — it’s where disciples live, die to self, rise again daily, and find new mercies every morning.

Discipleship detached from the gospel becomes moral improvement.

Discipleship rooted in the gospel becomes transformation.

Young Faith & Battles Collide: The Gospel Became Personal

Though my childhood memories are scattered, I remember one thing clearly: my mom dragging my little butt to church when I was just two years old. It was a tiny white church not far from our home. My earliest memory of God is standing at my bedroom window before preschool, overwhelmed and anxious, whispering a simple prayer: “*God, go with me.*”

I didn’t understand theology then, but something inside me knew the Bible was not just information — it was personal. God wasn’t a Sunday idea; He was Someone I could talk to.

The Night the Gospel Broke Me & Called Me

Though I believe I was saved at a young age, the gospel *hit me with full force* about a month before I graduated high school. A friend invited me to his youth group. That night, surrounded by students on the edge of adulthood, something inside me broke wide open.

I worshiped and wept before the Lord like I never had.
It was surrender — real surrender.

I laid down every dream, every ambition, every plan and told Jesus He could have my life completely. That moment was equal parts joy and holy fear. I didn't know what He would ask of me — but I knew He was worthy.

That night marked me. I left wanting to grow, to serve, to learn *everything* I could about Him. And so I did — prayer meetings, Bible studies, small groups, serving anywhere anyone would let me. The gospel had become more than a message; it had become my Master.

The Gospel Became My Lungs

Over the years, the gospel became the lens through which I see everything.

I preach it to myself.

I preach it to others.

I cling to it when my flesh rises.

It confronts and comforts me.

It disciplines and delights me.

The gospel has become my lungs — the very breath of my discipleship.

It corrects my pride.

It exposes my sin.

It pulls me back when I wander.

It lifts me when I fall.

And it keeps me looking to Jesus when everything in me wants to look elsewhere.

The Gospel Shapes Discipleship

There is no discipleship without the gospel.

When we understand the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus —
not merely in theory, but in our bones —
we begin to long for others to know the same hope.

Paul said, “*The love of Christ compels us.*”

That's what compels me.

From Genesis to Revelation, the whole story of Scripture is about God reconciling man to Himself — this is the gospel. But the gospel is impossible unless God came. He did, in His first Advent. And the same Scriptures that foretold His first coming promise He will return again.

That is our blessed hope.
And that hope gives disciples urgency.

If Christ could return today, how can we delay obeying His Great Commission?
The harvest is ready.
The world is aching.
The gospel is the only hope.

And Jesus has chosen the Church — *His disciples* — to be the ones who carry it. Not with a “come and see” mentality, but with a bold “go and tell.”
Go into all the world.
Make disciples.
Live the gospel.
Share the gospel.
Multiply disciples who cling to the gospel.

Scriptures to Read & Reflect On

Take time to open each passage, underline key words, and consider what each reveals about Christ’s life, death, and resurrection — and why they matter for discipleship.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 – The gospel defined.

Romans 6:4–11 – United with Christ in death and resurrection.

John 19:28–30 – “It is finished.”

Isaiah 53:3–6 – The suffering Servant.

Philippians 2:5–11 – The humility and exaltation of Christ.

Colossians 1:13–22 – Christ supreme and reconciling.

1 Peter 2:24–25 – He bore our sins in His body.

Hebrews 12:1–3 – Look to Jesus, who endured the cross.

Romans 1:16 – The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

John 11:25–26 – “I am the resurrection and the life.”

Revelation 1:17–18 – “I am alive forevermore.”

Together Questions

What part of the gospel stands out to you most right now — Christ’s life, His death, or His resurrection?

How does the resurrection give you strength to fight sin this week?

In what ways does the gospel confront your fears, pride, or habits?

How can we preach the gospel to each other in our discipleship relationship?

Who in your life desperately needs to hear or see the gospel lived out?

Prayer Together

“Lord Jesus, thank You for living for us, dying for us, and rising again in victory. Teach us to walk in Your finished work, to breathe the gospel deeply, and to share it boldly. Make us disciples who carry the cross, proclaim the resurrection, and love with Your love. Amen.”

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 6

(Christian Worship: Living & Gathering)

1. Has the gospel become personal to me — or has it become familiar?
2. What part of the gospel do I need to meditate on more deeply this week?
3. Where is Jesus calling me to obedience because of His finished work?
4. Who can I share the hope of the gospel with in the next seven days?

“The gospel is not the first step of discipleship — it is the ground we walk on, the air we breathe, and the message we multiply.”

— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 6

Christian Worship: A Life Before His Throne

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God,
which is your reasonable service.”

— *Romans 12:1*

“Nothing teaches us about the preciousness of the Creator as much as when we learn
the emptiness of everything else.”

— *Charles Spurgeon*

Worship Is Not a Moment — It’s a Life

Worship is not a style, a preference, or a Sunday ritual. Worship is the posture of the heart that says, “*Jesus is worthy of all I am.*”

Before disciples serve, before they witness, before they obey—they worship.

The early church understood this well. They “continued daily with one accord... praising God” (Acts 2:46–47). Paul taught that worship was not simply what happened in a gathering, but the offering of one’s entire life as a sacrifice before God (Romans 12:1–2). David showed us that worship is the cry of the soul—whether rejoicing or broken (Psalm 34; Psalm 63; Psalm 27).

True Christian worship fuels discipleship.

True discipleship produces worshipers.

Theology of Worship in Discipleship

Worship shapes disciples in at least four ways:

1. Worship reorients our hearts toward God.

We behold what we become (2 Corinthians 3:18).

If disciples spend more time looking inward than upward, they will never grow.

2. Worship softens the heart for obedience.

A heart bowed in worship becomes a heart ready to obey (John 14:15).

3. Worship anchors us when life shakes us.

Paul and Silas worshiped in prison (Acts 16).
Worship doesn't ignore battles—it transforms them.

4. Worship multiplies discipleship across generations.

You cannot disciple people into what you do not delight in.
David said, “*One generation shall praise Your works to another*” (Psalm 145:4). Worship perpetuates discipleship.

A Personal Word From My Own Story

1. A Heart for the Next Generation

My heart for worship—and for raising up the next generation—goes back farther than I realized.

In high school I served summers as a parks and recreation supervisor. Kids would come all day, and I would run games, lead programs, and simply *be with them*. Even then, before I fully understood discipleship, God was shaping in me a heart for the younger ones coming up behind.

Years later, I attended the largest youth gathering in the world at that time—over 70,000 teens packed into the old Detroit Lions stadium. Third Day was leading worship. As the sun was setting, beams of light streamed through the stadium roof, and I remember thinking:

“This is what I want to do for the rest of my life—teach the next generation to worship Jesus.”

It was more than a moment; it was a calling.

2. Worship Overflowed Into Ministry

I remember coming home from a retreat where we had spent hours worshipping the Lord. I had a sermon fully planned for Sunday—typed, prepared, ready to go.

But when I stepped into the pulpit after that weekend of worship, the Holy Spirit nudged me:
“Set your notes aside.”

And what came next wasn't rehearsed—it was overflow.
Worship had so filled my heart that preaching became the fruit of abiding.

That day taught me:
A worshiping heart produces a fruitful ministry.

3. When Worship Is Hard

Not every season of life makes worship easy.

I know the difference between a heart turned toward God in worship and a heart turned inward toward the flesh. And I've had plenty of moments where worship didn't rise naturally—but had to be chosen.

Sometimes in the middle of a battle, worship is the last thing you feel like doing. Which is exactly why you need to do it.

Many times I've gotten in my car, turned the radio up as loud as it would go, and worshiped at the top of my lungs. Nobody could hear me but God—and He was the only one who needed to.

Worship realigns the soul and breaks strongholds.

4. The Most Practical Advice I Can Give

If you want to cultivate a life of worship:

- **Commit to regular fellowship and weekly corporate worship.**
God designed the church to sing together (Colossians 3:16).
- **Talk about Jesus often.**
Let His name be normal in your conversations.
- **Pray the Psalms.**
They have shaped my worship more than anything outside Scripture itself.
Psalm 27 — Confidence in the Lord
Psalm 34 — Worship in affliction
Psalm 63 — Thirsting for God
Psalm 103 — Bless the Lord, O my soul

And most importantly:

Worship daily, not just weekly.

Worship is a lifestyle, not an event.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

Take time to open each passage, underline key words, and note what it reveals about worship as a way of life.

Romans 12:1–2 — Worship as a living sacrifice.

John 4:23–24 — Worship in spirit and truth.

Psalm 27:4 — The one thing David desired.

Psalm 34:1–3 — Worship in affliction.

Psalm 63:1–8 — Thirsting for God in the wilderness.

Hebrews 13:15 — Sacrifice of praise.

Colossians 3:16 — Worship through song and Scripture.

Acts 2:46–47 — The early church praising daily.

Revelation 4:8–11 — Heavenly worship.

Acts 16:25 — Worship in suffering.

Together Questions

How would you describe the difference between “singing worship” and “living worship”?

What moments in your life has worship carried you through, strengthened you, or redirected you?

When worship feels difficult, what practices or Scriptures help you turn your heart back toward Jesus?

How can we cultivate a shared rhythm of worship—together and individually—in our discipleship relationship?

What distractions or idols most often compete for the worship of your heart?

Prayer Together

“Father, shape us into worshipers—men and women whose lives reveal Your worth.

Tune our hearts to Your glory.

Teach us to worship in the battle and in the blessing.

Let our worship lead others to You.”

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 7

(Discipline & Obedience)

1. When I look at my daily habits, what do they reveal I value most?
2. Does my lifestyle reflect Romans 12:1—my whole self offered to God in worship?
3. What area of my life is hardest to surrender as an act of worship?
4. Where is God calling me to turn worship into obedience—especially in areas requiring discipline?

“Worship is not what I give God on Sunday; it’s the offering of who I am every day.”
— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 7

Discipline & Obedience: Trained by Grace, Formed for Fruit

“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”
— *John 14:15*

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”
— *Hebrews 12:11*

Teaching Overview

Biblical discipleship does not stop at knowing truth or even loving worship—it moves into **obedience shaped by love**. Discipline in the Christian life is not punishment; it is training. God does not discipline His children to harm them, but to form them.

Jesus makes the connection unmistakably clear: *love leads to obedience*. Obedience is not the root of our salvation, but it is the fruit of it. Grace saves us, and that same grace trains us “to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts” and to live holy lives (Titus 2:11–12).

Discipline is how love takes shape over time. Prayer trains the heart to depend on God. Scripture trains the mind to think rightly. Obedience trains the will to submit joyfully. Left unattended, our hearts drift; disciplined, they are anchored.

This is why discipleship cannot exist without discipline. A disciple is a learner—but also a follower. Hearing without obeying leads to self-deception (James 1:22). But obedience rooted in grace leads to freedom, joy, and spiritual maturity.

A Personal Word From My Own Story

Over the years, I’ve learned something about my own heart: **when worship fades, discipline usually follows—and not far behind is compromise**. I don’t say that lightly or abstractly; I’ve lived it.

There are seasons when obedience feels natural—when prayer flows, Scripture is sweet, and walking with Jesus feels light. But there are other seasons, especially in trials, fatigue, or

discouragement, when discipline feels costly. In those moments, obedience becomes an act of worship.

I've learned that when I neglect spiritual disciplines, my flesh rarely stays neutral—it fills the vacuum. But when I choose obedience, even when I don't *feel* like it, something remarkable happens: my affections begin to realign.

Discipline has trained me to return—again and again—to Jesus. To open the Word when I'd rather scroll. To pray when silence feels uncomfortable. To obey when my pride resists. Over time, I've seen Hebrews 12:11 prove true: discipline yields fruit—but only *afterward*.

And this is where discipleship becomes deeply practical. We don't just teach obedience—we model it. We don't just talk about discipline—we walk it out together. We help one another train for godliness, not as athletes striving for medals, but as sons and daughters being formed into the likeness of Christ.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

Take time to read each passage carefully. Note what it teaches about discipline, obedience, and the heart behind them.

1. **John 14:15** – Love expressed through obedience
2. **Hebrews 12:5–11** – God's loving discipline
3. **James 1:22–25** – Hearing vs. doing the Word
4. **Luke 6:46** – “Why do you call Me ‘Lord’ and not do the things I say?”
5. **1 Timothy 4:7–8** – Training for godliness
6. **Titus 2:11–12** – Grace that trains us
7. **Psalms 119:9–11** – Guarding the heart through the Word
8. **Romans 6:16–18** – Obedience leading to righteousness
9. **Matthew 7:24–27** – Obedience as a foundation
10. **Galatians 5:16–25** – Walking by the Spirit, not the flesh

Together Questions

1. How does Scripture define discipline differently than punishment or legalism?
2. Why is obedience a response to love rather than a condition for acceptance?
3. Which spiritual disciplines have been most formative in your walk with Christ?
4. Where do you currently feel resistance to obedience—and why?
5. How can we help one another grow in joyful, grace-filled obedience?

Prayer Together

“Father, thank You that You discipline those You love. Train our hearts to obey You with joy, not fear. Help us walk in step with Your Spirit, growing in holiness and humility. Shape us into disciples who follow Jesus fully. Amen.”

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 8

1. Where has God been calling me to greater obedience—and what has delayed my response?
2. Are there disciplines I’ve neglected that once helped keep my heart soft toward God?
3. Do I view obedience as burden or blessing—and why?
4. How might consistent obedience prepare me to share my faith more faithfully?

“Obedience is not the price we pay for grace; it is the pathway grace trains us to walk.”
— Pastor Landon Churchill

Chapter 8

Sharing Our Faith: Disciples Who Multiply

A Brief Word Before We Begin

This chapter is a little longer than the others—and that’s intentional.

Evangelism has never been a side note in my life or ministry. It has been a shaping force. Sharing the gospel has taught me dependence, exposed my fears, stretched my obedience, and anchored me again and again in the power of the Holy Spirit. For anyone who knows me personally, this won’t come as a surprise. I can’t talk about discipleship for long without talking about telling others about Jesus.

The reason is simple: discipleship that never moves outward eventually turns inward. Faith that never speaks eventually forgets why it exists. Jesus did not save us merely to mature us—He saved us to send us.

So in this chapter, I want to slow down. I want to tell stories. I want to linger in Scripture. And I want to be honest—about fear, boldness, faithfulness, failure, and the grace of God that keeps calling us forward. My prayer is not that you feel pressure to “perform,” but that you feel invited into the joy of witnessing to what God has done in your life.

Witness Is Not a Program—It’s a Life

Sharing our faith is not an optional add-on to discipleship; it is one of its most natural fruits. Jesus did not say, “*Go and make converts,*” but “*Go and make disciples*” (Matthew 28:19). Evangelism is not merely the starting line—it is woven throughout the entire race.

Biblically, a witness is simply someone who tells the truth about what they have seen, heard, and experienced. When disciples walk closely with Jesus, speak often of Him, and live in step with the Spirit, the gospel naturally overflows. Paul captured this when he wrote, “*The love of Christ compels us*” (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Evangelism is not about mastering a script or winning arguments. It is about loving people, asking good questions, listening well, and faithfully pointing others to Jesus—trusting the Holy Spirit to do what only He can do.

A Personal Word From My Own Story

Seeds Planted in a Sleeping Bag

The first time I remember sharing my faith with any depth was in sixth grade. I was at a sleepover at my friend Ryan's house. We had finally quieted down, the lights were off, and the room was still. I knew I believed in Jesus. I knew He was real. I knew He forgave sins. But I had no idea how to package all of that into a clear gospel presentation.

So I didn't.

Instead, I asked questions.

I asked Ryan what he believed about God, why he believed it, and why it was different from what I believed. I don't remember convincing him of anything that night. I don't remember a prayer. I don't remember a dramatic moment.

What I remember is learning something important very early on: **sharing your faith often begins with curiosity, not conclusions.**

Years later—many years later—I had another opportunity to talk with Ryan about Jesus. And again, I found myself asking questions. I don't know what seeds were planted in that sleeping bag or in the years that followed, but I know this: Jesus asked a lot of questions in the Gospels. Questions open doors. Seeds grow slowly. God is patient.

That night taught me that faithfulness does not always look like immediate fruit.

Fear, Boldness, and Love

If I'm honest, I've had seasons where fear kept me from sharing my faith—and I still do. Boldness is not something you permanently arrive at.

What I've learned is this: **the seasons where I am most bold are the seasons where I am most in love with Jesus and most burdened for the lost.** Scripture says, "*Perfect love casts out fear*" (1 John 4:18), and I've found that to be true. When I'm abiding in Christ, enjoying Him, and walking humbly with Him, there is a natural overflow—what Jesus called "*rivers of living water*" (John 7:38).

Boldness does not come from personality.

It does not come from freedom of speech.

It comes from love.

I think often about believers around the world who face real consequences—prison, loss, even death—for sharing Christ. It humbles me. We have tremendous freedoms in the West, and it raises an important question: **what are we doing with them?**

I also love that Jesus sent His disciples out **two by two**. There is something uniquely strengthening about sharing Christ together—praying together, encouraging one another, stepping out side by side. Obedience is often easier when it is shared.

Fourteen on a Friday Night

As a young adult, I spent many Friday nights sharing the gospel on College Avenue in downtown Appleton, WI. Back then, people would cruise the Ave, hang out, park their cars, blast music, and just linger. I went week after week. Honestly, it often felt fruitless. A few conversations here and there, but no visible response.

There was always the same group parked on the same corner. They thought I was nuts. One guy in particular would point me out and joke, “Here comes that Bible thumper.”

Then one Friday night, everything changed.

As I was crossing the street, that same guy stuck out his hand to shake mine and said, “Hey—everyone needs to listen to this man.” He had just talked with his grandpa, who told him the very same things I had been saying for weeks.

That night, I shared the gospel like I always did. But this time they really listened. **Fourteen young people bowed their heads and received Christ.**

I wish that happened every Friday. It didn’t. But that night taught me something I’ve never forgotten: **faithfulness matters, even when you don’t see results.**

Jesus said, “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men*” (Matthew 4:19). I’m not the greatest fisherman—but I’ve learned. Sometimes you change bait. Sometimes the waters shift. Sometimes the fish aren’t biting. Our job is not results; our job is obedience.

A Holy Interruption by the Ocean

One of the clearest moments of Spirit-led evangelism I’ve ever experienced happened on a set of steps along a steep ocean cliff in Southern California. As I was walking down, a young couple was coming up. We stepped aside to pass, and the Holy Spirit said clearly: “*Stop.*”

I stepped back, looked the young man in the eyes, and said, “You need to pray with me right now to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.”

He looked at me and said, “Yes, I do.”

We bowed our heads right there and prayed. When I opened my eyes, his girlfriend was weeping. She said, “We’ve been praying for him for so long to come to know Jesus. Thank you.”

I've often wondered about them. Did they get married? Are they walking with Jesus today? Are they discipling others? I don't know—but I know God was at work. That moment reminded me that the Holy Spirit is always ahead of us.

Sharing as a Way of Life

Over the years, I've seen people come to faith through preaching, counseling, conversations, and moments I never could have planned. I've seen people who thought they were Christians realize, sometimes in counseling, that they were trusting in themselves rather than in Christ—and come to genuine faith.

Sharing the gospel is not something I turn on and off. It's a way of life. I'm often amazed at how freely we talk about everything else—and how quiet we can be about Jesus. For me, talking about Him is not performative; it's personal. He has been too good to keep to myself.

The Word of God has fueled this in me. God is a missionary God. The more time I spend in Scripture, the more my heart aligns with His mission. Just recently, while teaching in the jail, we walked through a broad overview of the book of Acts. I was reminded again that **God is still on mission, still building His church, still saving sinners.**

Sometimes people respond. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes I walk away wishing I'd said more—or less. But Jesus is faithful. He is still making us into fishers of men.

Scriptures to Read and Reflect On

- **Matthew 28:18–20** — The Great Commission
- **Acts 1:8** — Power to be witnesses
- **Romans 1:16** — Not ashamed of the gospel
- **2 Corinthians 5:14–21** — Ambassadors for Christ
- **Colossians 4:2–6** — Speaking with grace and wisdom
- **Matthew 9:36–38** — Compassion for the harvest
- **1 Peter 3:15** — Ready to give a reason with gentleness
- **John 20:21** — Sent as Jesus was sent
- **Acts 4:29–31** — Praying for boldness
- **Luke 8:11–15** — The seed and the soil

Together Questions

1. What fears most often keep you from sharing your faith?
2. How has love for Christ—or lack of it—affected your boldness?
3. What role do questions and listening play in your gospel conversations?
4. Who has God placed in your life right now to walk with patiently?
5. How can we support one another in faithful witness?

Prayer Together

“Lord, give us hearts that love You deeply and love people genuinely. Fill us with Your Spirit, give us wisdom and courage, and help us speak of Jesus faithfully. Make us disciples who multiply for Your glory. Amen.”

How can we pray for each other this week:

Specific Requests:

Personal Reflection & Preparation for Chapter 9

1. When was the last time I intentionally shared my faith?
2. What fears or distractions might God be calling me to surrender?
3. Who is God placing in my life to walk with or disciple?
4. Do I trust God with the results of obedience?

“We don’t share the gospel because we have it all figured out—
we share it because Jesus is too good to keep to ourselves.”

— Pastor Landon Churchill