

# The Baton: Rediscovering The Way of Jesus

Everyone seems to be rethinking religion and spirituality today. While people are anti-religious, they are not anti-God. Like us. We don't want organized religion. We desire relationship. We meet with others who also want to experience Jesus. This is what we are about. We are seeking to discover the powerful simplicity of knowing Jesus. We are on a journey. A journey of rediscovery. To rediscover Jesus. To live with him in today's world. To know what it means to be His people (his church) today

This "baton" comes out of our journey. And it is still in process since we are still in process. One thing we are sure of- Jesus is powerfully real. To know Jesus is not an event, a ritual, creed or a religion. It is a living relationship. Contrary to much of today's popular Christianity, believing in Jesus has nothing to do with organized religion, political agendas or big bucks. Knowing Jesus is all about relationships. This is his primary purpose - to restore relationships. And this is what church is about - nothing less, nothing more.

## The Baton

Just as a baton is designed to be passed on runners. This baton is not about running a race around a track, but about living life. It is a way of life. A way of life that by it's very nature is designed to be passed on to others. It expresses what it means to be in relationship with Jesus and our world. It *is NOT* a methodology, model, program, or an exhaustive theology. It is simply the way of Jesus.

Like a relay baton, this life baton is light, mobile and open-ended. It is *light* and so simple, even the newest believer can live it out ~ Cor 11:3). It is *mobile* - designed to be passed on (11Tirn 2:2) It is *open-ended* - it can be lived out in any cultural context (1 Cor 4:17). It describes what it means to live in relationship with Jesus today.

The important thing is not what is *on* these pages, but the life of Jesus *lived* out in community. This is just a sketch of what it means to experience the life of Jesus today. We cannot fully understand this way of life outside of experience. It is more than doctrine - It is inherently spiritual and relational It is spiritual in that Jesus is the Head of the church and is the Spirit who gives life to the church. It is relational because the reality and fullness of Jesus Christ can only be experienced in community not individually.

We don't want the church to be anything less or more than what the Word of God makes it The church should stay clear of anything that hinders the body from functioning and reproducing - anything that is heavy or complicated. If from the outset Christians learned to gather together according to the Scriptures, many problems would be avoided.

Words cannot do justice in describing what it means to know Jesus and follow His ways (II Thess. 2:3-9; II John 6; III John 14). Our only hope is that these words would encourage you to seek to experience the reality of Jesus as revealed in the Bible. We encourage you to join with a few others in reading this together.

Be aware. The truths in this paper may change your life. Our purpose here is to spark your interest and encourage you to search the Bible with others to discover what it means to follow Jesus today. This is NOT intended to give all the answers, to present a model or set out a program. It is simply a guide -- a discovery guide to go hand in hand with your Bible and a few other people who also desire to understand Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life for today. We encourage you to join with a few others in reading this together and "test everything" to the Bible (Lam 3:40; Acts 17:10-13; Rom 12:12-2; 1 Cor 4:1-6; II Cor 13:5-8; I Thess 5:21; II Tim 3:16-17, I John 4:1-3).

*Patterns for Movement* - The Big Picture

*Patterns for Faith & Practice* - How to Read the Bible

*Patterns for Community* - How to be a Church

*Patterns for Life* - How to Follow Jesus

Compiled by Jonathan Campbell in teamship with George Patterson, Paul Ingram, Ben Stewart, Ray Shultz, Jeff Kurtz, James Russell, Hsieh Sun, Chris Berry, Earl Anderson, Cameron Stratton.

For more on the baton and to connect with those passing it on, contact ... (Under construction)

## The Way of Jesus: *Patterns for Movement*

---

*So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers* - Acts 16:5

Every church will give an account for her faithfulness to the great commission. The pattern for church growth is not only to expand in size, but also to freely send out believers to continue the movement of the gospel to all peoples. As

the church embraces and fulfils her calling as a missionary people, God will hasten the coming of the day of Lord (Matt 24:14).

God's strategy for building His kingdom is through the growing and multiplication of missionary communities. Although the context and methods will change, the mission of the church is timeless. The church is to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit among all the social groupings and gather those who respond into disciple making communities. *New churches flow naturally out of discipleship-making in community context.*

### Lifecycle of a Movement

All growth is a process. Like any living organism, churches go through identifiable phases of development or "growing up." The patterns that facilitated church reproduction in the first century can be described as a three-phase process. This lifecycle is not so much a rigid sequence, but rather an organic rhythm that we see throughout the book of Acts (Acts ~3:1-14:26). Though the process has an obvious beginning, it does not really have an ending. It is organic and continuous.

This process supports the assumption that New Testament churches make disciples by two means - through **addition** and **multiplication**. Churches grow by **addition** by sharing the gospel and connecting new believers in a disciple-making community. **Multiplication** refers to churches reproducing churches by sending out apostolic teams to start new churches among new peoples.

The process is simple. Great commission churches send out apostolic (church planting) teams. Apostolic teams gather people by evangelising the lost and connecting the undisciplined. They covenant these new believers into disciple-making communities. These churches then continue the process of sending out apostolic teams. The following chart illustrates four phases for church growth and reproduction. Each of the phases should be seen as interdependent and continuous rather than separate and sequential.

PHASE	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	TEAMROLE
Send →	Commission Apostolic Team(s) (short term or long term) (local or translocal)	- Pray & Intercede - Build relationships - Find person of peace	<i>Intercede</i> - Watch & Pray - Strategize
Gather	Evangelise strategic peoples by... 1) Evangelise the undisciplined 2) Connect undisciplined believers	- Gathering events - Share the Gospel - Draw the net & baptise	<i>Evangelise</i> - Identify emerging leader - Disciple believers to multiply
Covenant	Establish Indigenous Church(es).. 1) Covenant together 2) Indigenous expression, leaders, support, teaching and multiplication	- Teach obedience - Baptise new Believers - Lord's Supper Commission pastors	Equip - Teach patterns of church life - Develop leaders
Reproduce	A Movement of Churches... 1) Commission Apostolic Teams 2) Partner with other Great Commission Churches	- Commission teams - Continue process locally and globally	Empower - Team exits - Coach new leaders

COPY for Local Church Use

**1. Send ... Apostolic Team(s)** The focus of this phase is to commission. A new team covenants to affirm its mission, roles, relationships and strategy. The primary functions at this stage are intercession and building new relationships with seeking unbelievers. In a context of prayer, the team begins to make contact in the community through a variety of means to discover people open to the gospel and those who will open their homes for a discovery group.

**2. Gather... Discovery Groups** The goal here is to start discovery groups where seekers and new believers can bring their family and friends to hear the gospel (Acts 16). These groups meet on the "turf" of unbelievers. The goal is for at least two or three families who will put their faith in Jesus, be baptised and become a church. The group has a growing sense of purpose and commitment and potential leaders are being identified.

**3. Covenant... Churches** As a new group is being disciplined, the team works to develop the group as a disciple-making

community. A group of believers is considered a church when they commit (or covenant) to relate to one another and to the world as a church - the body of Christ. Not only do they discover what church is, but they begin to learn how to function as ministers. Teams must be careful that everything they do is understood and reproducible by even the newest of believers.

4. **Reproduce... A Movement of Churches** Healthy churches don't just get bigger - they reproduce. To facilitate ongoing movement, churches follow a simple lifestyle and strategy for evangelism and training. They reproduce at every level of church life: disciples, leaders, churches and teams. A high value for mission creates a climate for equipping and empowering the community to regularly send out teams who will reproduce disciples and churches.

### **Patterns of a Movement**

The Bible reveals the essentials for seeing world evangelisation and church reproduction. By combining these mission patterns (or values) with methods compatible with the culture we can see the spontaneous multiplication of churches in potentially any context. When these patterns are compromised, we impede the gospel from spreading unhindered to the ends of the earth.

1. Permeation - We intentionally share the Gospel and establish disciple-making communities in the midst of unreached and/or undisciplined people groups (Mat 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rom 15:14)
2. Incarnation - We seek group conversions (*oikos* evangelism) by sharing the gospel in and through relational networks and cultural systems (Luke 10; Acts 16:1 Cor 9:19-23)
3. Reproduction - We intentionally reproduce in every sphere of church life: disciples, leaders, churches and teams (Gen 1:22,28; II Tim 2:2; Titus 2:3-8)
4. Mobilization - We equip and empower every believer to actively participate in fulfilling Christ's mission for His church in the world (Acts 2; I Cor 12; Col 4:17; Eph 4; IPet 2)
5. Teamship - We identify, equip and empower indigenous leaders to partner together in serving the church and starting new churches (I Tim 3; Acts 4:13; 6:3-7; 13:1-3; 14:23)
6. Interdependence - We partner with churches, teams and groups of like faith and mission for mutual edification and mission (John 13:34-35; 17:20-23; Phil 2:1-5)
7. Tent making - We affirm tent making as the primary pattern for supporting missionaries (Acts 1:8-24; I Cor 4:12; 9:1-18; II Cor 2:17; 12:14-18; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Thess. 3:7-13)
8. Holy Spirit - We listen and obey as the Spirit leads us in fulfilling His mission (Zech 4; 6; John 5:19-20; Acts 1:8; Rom 15:13-19; Gal 3:3; Eph 3:16-21; I Thess. 1:5; II Tim 1:7)

Church growth and reproduction is built upon loving obedience to Jesus Christ. Developing an effective mission strategy involves catching a glimpse of where God is leading and how He wills us to follow Him. Our challenge is to discover how to translate the gospel message and church into our own mission context.

---

Questions? How are we involved in a mission movement? At what phase are we? Who might God be preparing now for us to send out? Where is God leading us to begin? Is missions our job as Christians or part of our identity in Christ? How should we prepare ourselves to be more effective missionaries?

Baton (ver 98.1) Copy for Local Church Use

## ***The Way of Jesus: Patterns of Faith and Practice***

---

Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you - Philippians 3:16-17

Almost 2000 years ago, Jesus said, "I will build My church" (Matt 16:18). But how does Jesus build his church today? The Bible reveals patterns that sustained the movement of the gospel throughout the first century. These patterns are more than belief, they represent a way of life. Faith and practice are integrally wrapped into one another. What we believe (our faith) and how we live (our practices) cannot be separated.

These patterns are perfectly represented in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ (Matt 13:16; 28:18-20; John 13:15,34; 17:1-8; 20:21; Eph 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:2:5-8). They can also be seen in the life and teachings of the early church. The question for us today is not "what should we do?," but rather "how will we live out the way of Jesus today?" Therefore, the challenge is to rediscover and live out these patterns in today's mission contexts -to live in the tension of cultural relevance and biblical integrity.

**Our Authority is Jesus: In Word & In Spirit**

Jesus said to the religious leaders of the day, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God" (Matt 22:29). We discover the ways of Jesus through both His Word (John 8:31-32; I Tim 3:15-16; Col 3:15; II Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12) and through His Spirit (John 14:15-31; 15:26-27; 16:5-15). The Bible is God's inspired Word and is relevant for all times and cultures. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the wisdom and power to live in the way of Jesus (Matt. 22:29; Luke 11:5-13; John 5:19; I Cor 2:4; 4:20; Gal.3:3) The Holy Spirit comforts us (John 14:16, 26; 15:26), convicts us (John 16:8-11); guides us (John 16:13-15); reminds us (John 14:26); and empowers us (Acts 1:8)

Authority does not rest in the words or traditions of men (Col. 2:8, 2-23, I Peter 1:18), but in Jesus Christ. He is our authority for faith *and* practice. In Jesus we discover not only what to believe; but also how to live. By faith we live in the power and authority of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:17-23, Col. 2:9-23). Jesus has not only modelled *how to* live out the gospel, He has promised to remain with us and to empower us to fulfil His mission until he comes back (Matt 28:20; John 14-16).

### Rediscovering the Way of Jesus: *Patterns of Faith and Practice*

The first followers of Jesus described themselves as "the Way" (Acts 9:2; 18:25-26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). They simply lived with the reality that Jesus is not only the way *to* life eternal, He is also the way *of* life. To live the way of Jesus means we join together to live out his purposes, through his patterns and in his power.

- **Live out the purposes of Jesus.** Jesus gives us purpose and meaning for bib. He is our 1db. The church is not only to enjoy new *life* in *Christ*, but also *to* embody this new life in the world. The church as the *body* of Christ is called to *carry* on the mission of reconciliation *that* she has already experienced. Whatever the church receives or experiences *in* Jesus is to be passed *on* to the world (Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:4-8)

- **Live by the patterns of Jesus.** Not only *has* Jesus told *us what to* do as *His church*, He has modelled *how*. He has called us to walk as He has walked (John 20:21; I John 2:3-6; I Pet 2:21). The New Testament points to patterns that sustained the movement of the gospel throughout the first century. These patterns or values are based on the life and teachings of Jesus (John 13:15,34; 17:18; 20:21), affirmed by Luke (Acts 1:1-5), Paul (Rom 15:5; I Cor. 4:16-17; 11:1; Phil. 2:5;3:16-17;4:19; II Thess. 2:15; 3:15; II Tim 1:13-14; 2:1-2), Peter (I Peter 2:21) and John (I John 2:6; 3:16) (cf. Deut 28:9-10;30:16-20; II Chron 7:14; Pta 67; Isa 2:3; 55:8-9; Hos 14:9).

- **Live in the power of Jesus.** We cannot live this lift on our Own. Jesus doesn't expect us to. The book *of* Acts shows the central role of the Holy Spirit in the growth (2:4; 4:30-31; 13:215-28; 20:22-23). New believers not only received the Spirit for salvation, they were empowered with the same Spirit and entrusted with the same purpose to be witnesses to all peoples. Filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13; Acts 1:2-8; 2:13-18; 8:15-25; 10:44-4; Eph 5:18), these first believers often shared the gospel with demonstrations of power (1 Cor 2:4-5; Acts 243, 3 6-8, 143).

### Spheres of Authority:

God's Word is our primary authority for faith *and* practice. The following chart recognizes four realms of authority which serve as a standard for making decisions. It is designed to discern the difference between Biblical essentials from the non-essentials. It will help filter out anything that might slow the church down

SPHERE OF AUTHORITY	DESCRIPTION	DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY
Christ's Commands (The Core)	Commands are non-negotiable. Jesus Christ is our ultimate authority. Therefore, our first priority is to faithfully follow Jesus and fulfil His purposes (Matt 28:19-20, John 14:15, 21; I John 5:2-3)	No Adaptation Non-Negotiable
Biblical Principles	Principles refer to Scriptural teachings that compliment the words and works of Jesus. Cross-cultural principles can be drawn from the apostolic teachings (Acts 2:42, John 16:17; II Thess.3:6, 14; II Tim3:16)	The essence in unchanging. Adapt only to maintain the dynamic equivalent.
Apostolic Patterns (The Application)	Patterns are principles and values in action. They are expressed in Specific cultural contexts as behaviours, practices and lifestyles of first century Christians that are the normative (Phil. 3:7, I Thess 1:7-8, II Thess 3:9)	Interpret or contextualise to fit the culture.
Church Practices	Church practices or traditions are culturally inherited	Fully adaptable and

and/or established ways of thinking, feeling or doing. flexible for the culture.  
They should be tested to the commands of Christ,  
(The Expression) Biblical principles and then to cultural relevance (Matt  
15:3,6; Rom 12:2; Co1.2:8)

**How do we read and apply the Bible today?** Simply, we read the Bible with a focus on Jesus - to know him and follow him. It is in Jesus that we discover not only what to believe, but also how to live. As we read the Bible we see patterns emerge that are seen in the life of Jesus Christ and the early church. As we study the Bible it *is* important to know the difference between those things that we are to continue to live out from those things that merely described what was going on in the first century. True patterns are rooted in the life of Jesus, are manifest throughout the New Testament record and can be lived out in a variety of cultural (and historical) contexts. Therefore, there are three basic criteria for determining patterns:

1. **Jesus:** Are the patterns seen in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ?
2. **Early Church:** Are the patterns seen in the New Testament church?
3. **Culture:** Are the patterns seen throughout a variety of cultural-historical contexts?

The strength and effectiveness of patterns rest in their inherent simplicity and cultural flexibility. They may be expressed in countless cultural contexts. They were so plain that Paul could simply tell his readers to remember how he lived and what he taught (1 Cor 4:16-17; 11:1-2; Phi' 3:16-17; I Thess. 1:4-7). He also warned churches from straying from these simple patterns and from their devotion to Christ (Rom. 12:1- 211 Cor 11:3; Col 2:6-10; Gal 1:6-9; see also Deut 8:6; 1 Kings 17:13; Isa 42:24; Ezek 33:11).

---

**Questions?** How then should we live? Do we *accept* the Bible as our authority for faith and practice? Do we desire to follow Jesus in both faith and *practice* as revealed in the Bible? How do we know what is true for today?

Baton (ver 9&1)

Copy for Local Church Use

## ***The Way of Jesus. . . Patterns For Community***

*He (Timothy) will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. - 1 Corinthians 4:17*

The Nature of Church: *What is a Church?*

The best picture of church is seen in Jesus' relationship with His disciples. It is all about relationship. By living in community with Jesus, the disciples discovered that the nature and purpose of their calling is to carry on the mission of their Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 14:12-16; 20:21; Acts 1:8).

A church is simply a group of people brought together by the Holy Spirit in loving relationship with Jesus and one another. It is a community where lives are restored and relationships reconciled with God and one another. The objective is simply to continue the reconciling work of Jesus Christ by making disciples of all peoples. A church is a group of people moving together under the lordship of Jesus Christ (Cor 11:3; Eph 1:10,22-23; 3:14-21; 4:15-16; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:10, 19).

Pictures of Church: what ***does a New Testament Church Look Like?***

Read Acts 2:41-47 for a description of the Jerusalem Church just after Pentecost. There are many other passages that give us a glimpse of how churches lived out their faith in the first century: Antioch (Acts 11:19-27; 13:14); Thessalonica (Thess 1; Acts 17:1-10); Collosae (Col 3:12-17); Berea (Acts 17:10-14); Ephesus (Acts 19:14-18; 20:13-38; Eph 1-5); Tyre (Acts 20:3-6); the seven churches in Revelation 2:1-3:22. Underlying the diversity of cultural expressions of the first century church we see clear patterns of community.

There are also many images and metaphors that describe various aspects of the church lit. Two of the most common are Body of Christ (Rom. 12:1-21; I Cor 10:16-7; 12:12-27, Eph 1:22-23; 4-5; Col 1:18-24; 2:18-23) and Family of God (Gal 6:10; Eph 2:19; 3:14-15; I Tim 3:4-5; I Peter 4:17).

The Purpose of Church: *Why Gather for Church?*

The church does not have a life outside of Jesus Christ. The essence of church is relationship -relationship with God,

one another and the world. These relationships are intertwined in such a way that it impossible to have right relationship with God without being in right relationship with one another And we cannot be in right relationship with the world if we am not living in healthy relationship with God and His community (Matt.5:21-24; 22.37-39, Ron' 12, fl Cor 5.18-21). To be

the people of God means we are called not only to receive blessing, but to be a blessing to all peoples (Gen 12; Matt 28:19-20). We are a people who are actively developing our relationship with Jesus, one another and our world.

**1. In Relationship with Jesus: *In Communion*** The church is "*Christ in community*"- a group of people gathered in Jesus' name and in his presence, sharing his life. This community is first of all determined by their shared *communion with Christ*. A mature church is measured by Christ likeness in both character and conduct. To be the people of God means that we orient our lives completely to Him. Just as Jesus fully obeyed His Father's commands (John 5:19-20, 30; 15:10), so we, His church, are to obey His commands (Matt 28:18-20; John 14:15; 15:1-1).

**2. In Relationship with One Another: *In Community*** Our relationship with Jesus cannot be separated from our relationship with one another (Matt 22:37-39). True community combines the vertical (divine) and the horizontal (human). It is a place to be real, accepted and loved. Such an atmosphere of community provides the context for significant life change. Believers experience the presence and power of Christ through their shared love and ministry (Matt 18:20; John 13:34-35; 17:23; I John 3:16). To be in community is to experience Christ through "one another": Mark 9:50; John 13; loom 12:10-16; 14:13; 15:7, 14; 16:16;rcor 11:33; 12:25;Ga15:13; 5:26; 6:2; ~h4:2, 32; 5:19-21; Phil 2:1-5; Ccl 3:1-17; I Thess 3:12; 5:11; Heb 3:13; 10:24; Jam 4:11; 5:9, 16; I Pd 1:22; 3:8; 4:8-10; 55. To be in Community also means we regularly encourage me another in Jesus (Heb 10:24-25); we abide in Word and Spirit throughout the week so we can edify one another when we gather (Col 3:15; I Cor 14); we exercise our gifts and fulfil our calling (1 Cor 12; Eph 2:10; Col 4:17; Prov. 16:9).

Baton (ver 98.1)

Copy for Local Church Use

**3. In Relationship with the World: *On Mission*** Christ came into the world with a mission (John 4:34), and when He returned to His Father, Jesus charged His followers to carry out His same mission (Man 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-49; Mark 16:15-18; John 14-15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Cor 5:18-21). This was the passion of Paul (Rom 15:20) and is a picture of the completed church (Mat 24:14; Rev 5:9-10). The church is *the body of Christ in the world*. Every church will give account for how she was faithful to the mission of our Lord. To *be on mission* means believers are salt and light (Matt 5:13-16), pray regularly for the lost (Jer 29:4-14; I Pet 3:9); befriend persons of peace (Luke 10; John 4; Acts 16); make the most of every opportunity (Col 4:24); are prepared to answer everyone (Pet 3:13-17); and minister in practical ways to those outside the church (1 Pet 2:12).

Patterns of Church Life: ***How are Churches to Function?***

The good news of Jesus was validated by the lifestyle of the church. The church was a living sign of the powerful reality of the risen Jesus. The New Testament reveals patterns that sustained the movement of the gospel throughout the first century. These patterns reflect and reinforce the essential nature of the church as a missionary community (Eph 1:5-8, 11-12; 14,3:21; II Thess 2:12).

**1. Lord's Supper and Worship** (I Cor 11:23-26) -Worship is not an event or service, it is a way of life (Matt 28:8-9, 17; Rom 12:1-2; Col 3:15-17). This is why the church early celebrates the life, death and resurrection of Jesus through communion. It is a time for remembrance, renewal and restoration (Matt 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-23). We praise Him, thank him and renew our love to Him. We also restore our love for one another (Matt 5:23-24; 6:12-15; 18:21-35; Luke 11:4).

**2. Make Disciples** (Matt 28:18-20) - Jesus expects his disciples to make disciples: to initiate new believers through baptism (Rom 6:14; Gal 3 28, I Car 12:13; Col 3:11) and to teach all to grow in obedience to Jesus (John 14:15; 15:14). At times it is necessary for the body to exhort, correct or even discipline in love those believers who are not following Jesus (Matt 18; Gal 6:1-10; Jam 5:13-20).

**3. Equip the church for Ministry** (Eph 4 7-16~ Every person is expected to actively participate in fulfilling Christ's mission for His church in the world (Rom 12; I Cor 12). There is no special class "ministers" - everyone does his or her part The Holy Spirit calls, gifts and empowers every believer to build up the body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:26-28; I Pet 4:10; Col 3:16) We expect God to work in our midst through His body.

**4. Strengthen Families** (Acts 16) - Family is the primary context for spiritual growth. Parents are to raise their children in the ways of The Lord (Prov. 22:6; 29 17, Acts 238-39 Eph 64) Church is an extension of the family (Matt 12:46-50; Eph 2:19-22; Gal 4:5, 6 10, I Tim 5 1-2) Young and old alike experienced the love and care of the "one another' community (cf. Deut 3112-13 Josh 8 35, II Chron 20:13; Neb 8:3).

**5. Train and Multiply Servant Leaders** (Matt 20:25-28) - While all are called to minister, some are appointed by the church to serve the body -to encourage and equip all believers to fulfil their calling and mission (Eph 4:7-16). They function in teamship rather than solo a (I Tim 3:2; Titus 17) These servant leaders are identified and developed in the



context of church life (Acts 14:23; 16:4; II Tim 2:2; 3-1ff).

**6. Fellowship Among Churches** (Acts 2:41-47; 20:20) - The book of Acts shows two types of fellowship. The most essential gathering was when believers gathered together in a home for worship and edification (Acts 2:46; Rom 16:5; I Car 16:19; Col 4:15; Heb 10:24-25). We also see reference to the larger fellowship of the city (1 Cor 14:23; 11:18) or province (Gal 1:1-2; Acts 15:41; 18:23; I Cor 16:1).

**7. Distribute Resources** (Acts 2:44-45) - There are only two reasons clearly given in the New Testament for collecting money: *benevolence* (meeting physical needs of those within and outside their community ( Matt 25:31- 46; Acts 11:27-30; I Car 16:14; II Cor 8:1-7;9:1) and *mission* (supporting apostles and their work ( Acts 15:3; Rom 15:24; 1 Cor 16:6; II Cor. 11:9; Phil 2:29; Titus 3:13; III John 5-10).

**8. Send Mission Teams** (Acts 13:1-14:28) - The book of Acts reveals the local church as responsible for sending apostolic teams to make disciples and plant churches among un-disciplined peoples (Matt 28:19-20; Luke 10:1-9; II Cor. 5:18-21). Sending comes naturally out of a healthy church. The church recognizes and commissions missionaries to find those who God has prepared to receive them (1 Thess 1:6-10).

---

Questions? What are we doing well? How are we developing relationships with Jesus, one another and<sup>1</sup> our world? What is missing from our church? What patterns do we need to improve upon?

The patterns the apostles left were different from the Old Covenant and unlike the pagan religions of the day (Cf. Heb & 1 0).

---

## The Way of Jesus: *Patterns for Life*

*I am the way, the truth and the life-Jesus*

---

Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness (Col 2:6-7).

How did the gospel spread from "Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)? One factor is that the gospel was not just a doctrine. It was not a new religion. It is a *new life*. They had a powerfully real encounter with the risen Jesus. And this new life led to a new way *of life*. Believers modelled this way of life wherever they went. The way of Jesus was not the result of human ingenuity, but the natural outgrowth of abiding in Jesus and carrying on his way of life (John 15).

### A New Life: *Receiving the Life of Jesus*

IN PROCESS OF EDITING

Luke 9:23

### A New Lifestyle: *Following the Way of Jesus*

The most accurate picture of the life and work of the church is found *in* the person of Jesus *Christ*. *In* Acts 11:26 we read that in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians. To be a Christian is to be a disciple - a follower of Jesus. A Christian is one who reflects the person of Jesus Christ in both *character* and conduct. Jesus said "if you love Me, you will obey my commands" (John 14:15). Jesus is the head of the church (Col 1:15-20). We obey Him because we love him (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 6:46-49; John 15:14; I John 2:3-6) just as Jesus obeys His Father's commands (John 5: 19-20, 30, 15 10)

Jesus commissions his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*" (Mat 28:19-20). *All* authority has been given to all believers to make disciples of *all* people groups (see also Ps 2:8; Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49). Discipleship is not determined by one's knowledge but rather by one's lifestyle in following Jesus. Simple obedience to Jesus will safeguard the church from being controlled by the traditions and rules of men which stifle growth and reproduction (Mark 7:4-9; I Car 11:3; Col 2:8-10). As we examine the gospels, we find at least seven primary commands of Christ.

- ❖ **Believe in Jesus** (John 3:16; Rom. 10:9-10) Repent of sin (Mark 1:15; Matt 21:32; Acts 20:21), Confess Jesus Christ as Lord (Mark 1:15; John 1:12,3:1 ff; 6:28-29; 20:22) and Receive the Holy Spirit (John 20:22; Acts 2:36-39; 10:44-45).
- ❖ **Be Baptised** (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41). This command includes choosing to live the new holy life it signifies (Rom. 6:1-4; Gal 3:28; I Cor. 12:13; Gal 3:11).
- ❖ **Love God, One Another and the World** (Matt 6:44; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; 15:12-13, 17; I Cor 13; Gal 5:16). It is from His love that we *forgive one another* (Matt. 6:1-15; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 6:37- 42; 17:34) and

practice all the other "one another's."

- ❖ **Make Disciples** (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-48; II Tim 2:2). Jesus expects his disciples to make disciples. This includes evangelism, teaching obedience, shepherding and training believers for ministry.
- ❖ **Celebrate the Lord's Supper** (Matt 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-23; I Cor 11:23-25). We remember the work of Christ, renew our love for Him and restore our love for one another (Matt 5:23-24; 6:12-15; 18:21-35; Luke 11:4).
- ❖ **Pray Daily** (Matt 6:5-13; Luke 6:38; 11:1-13; John 15:7, 16; 16:24). We follow the example of our Lord Jesus who regularly set aside time to commune with His Father. We praise Him, thank Him, confess to Him and intercede for fellow believers and our world.
- ❖ **Give Generously** As stewards of all that God has entrusted to us, we should give freely and cheerfully to those in need and to missionaries on their way (Matt. 6:5-13; 10:8, Luke 6:38; I Cor 16:1-2; II Cor 8:3-12; 9:5-15; Phil 4:18-19; Prov 3:9; 11:24-25).

### **Marks of Discipleship: What is a Disciple?**

A follower is one who abides in Jesus. He or she walks in the way of Jesus (Matt. 4:19-20; 10:37-40; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 6:40; 9:23-26; John 10:27; 12:24-26; 13:15; 21:19-22).

According to Jesus, there are three marks of discipleship:

1. **Obedying Jesus and His Word** (John 8:31-32; 14:15; 21:24-25; 8-14)
2. **Loving One Another & The World** (John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; Gal. 5:6, 22-23; I John 3:16)
3. **Bearing Fruit that lasts** (John 15:4-5, 8, 16; Matt 7:16; Luke 6:43-45)

All three marks of discipleship emerge from a loving relationship with Jesus. We don't "do" these things in order to earn our salvation (Eph 2:10). The relationship has been freely given to us. He paid for it with His life. We now live it through the power of the resurrection. Therefore, *commitment*, knowledge and intentions mean very little unless we are abiding in Jesus. And to obey for any other reason than love is legalism, which God condemns (Rom 13:8-10; I Cor 13:1-3). It is through His love and grace that God brings transformation in our lives (Rom. 2:4; Heb. 12:5-14; Hosea 2:14-16; 11:14; Jer. 31:1-3 1).

### **Objectives of Discipleship: What is Our Goal?**

The goal of discipleship is to be like Jesus (Rom 8:28-29; II Cor 3:18; Eph 1:4; Col. 1:28-29; I John 3:2). To be like Jesus means to become all that he has called us to be and to do. We share a *general calling* with all believers that involves our basic identity in Christ our relationships and our purpose for living (John 15:16; II Cor 5:18; Eph 1:17-23; I Pet 2:9-10). As we fulfil our general calling, we come to understand that we have also been created by God to fulfil a *specific calling*. This is based on our unique personalities, experiences, gifts and ministries (Rom.12:4-8, I Cor. 12; Eph. 2:10; Col 4:17 Jer 29:11-13; Ps 139). Our specific ministry is discovered, developed and affirmed in community.

### **Four Dimensions of Disciple-making: How Do We Make Disciples?**

Discipleship is a lifelong journey (Ps 84:5; Phil 1:6); it is not an event, program, class or book. It begins with baptism (Matt 28 18-20; Rom 6:14; Gal 3:28; I Cor 12:13; Col 3 11) and continues with a lifestyle of obedience (John 14:15; 15:14).

We are exhorted to make disciples "on the go" as we live. Look at Jesus. He developed His followers life on life – in relationship. There are at least four elements vital for Christian growth and reproduction. To become a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, we must be taught the truths of God's Word through the power of the Holy Spirit in the context of relationships.

- **God's Word** We discover the ways of Jesus through the Bible, God's inspired Word (John 8:31-32; Matt 22:29; I Tim 3:15-16; Col 3:15; I Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12). The Bible is the authoritative guide for both what we believe and how we live.
- **Relationships and Community** Discipleship begins in our closest relationships - our family. It is in and through our relationships at home, in church, at work and in the world that we struggle in being faithful to Jesus (I Thess. 2:8, II John 6; III John 14; Eph 5:1-6:9; Col 3:18-25). Christian community is the greatest context for life change because it provides accountability for obedience.
- **Spiritual Disciplines** Spiritual maturity does not come naturally - it is forged through sacrifice and even suffering (Luke 9:23; I Cor 9:24-27; Phil 2:12-13; I Tim 4:7-8; James 1:24; II Peter 1:5-8). There are a number of spiritual disciplines that can be exercised to build Christlike character and lifestyle: Fasting (Mat 4:1-11; 17:21; John 4:32,34-35; Acts 9:9); Silence and Solitude (Matt 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 4:1-14,42; Ps 46:10); Scripture Memorisation (Luke 4:4, 8, 12; Ps 37:31; 119:9-11); Bible Study (II Tim 2:15; Ezr 7:10); Confession



(James 5:16; I John 1:9).

- ***The Holy Spirit*** The Holy Spirit gives us the wisdom and power to live in the way *of* Jesus (Matt 22:29; Luke 11:5-13; John 5:19; 14:15-31; 15:26-27; 16:5-15; I Cor. 2:4; 4:20; Gal 3:3). The Holy Spirit comforts us (John 14:16,26; 15:26), convicts us (John 16:8-11); guides us (John 16:13-15); reminds us (John 14:26); and empowers us (Acts 1:8).
- 

Questions? What is a disciple? How have we been discipling one another? How can we become better disciples? Better disciple-makers? How shall we go about making new disciples? How do we live in Jesus?