

*“The Process of Discipleship!”*

## 1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Father/son fishing Trip** – *Allan Darden* caught a 3.9 lb trout for grand prize.
- 1.2. **July 4<sup>th</sup>** (this Fri.) – When the Founders approved the *Declaration of Independence* in 1776, **John Adams** suggested the way in which the day should be celebrated. We still follow his suggestion that the 4<sup>th</sup> "be solemnized with pomp and parade - with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other," but we seem to have forgotten his recommendation that the day "be commemorated as a day of solemn deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty."
- 1.3. **3 suggestions for this 4<sup>th</sup> of July:**
  - 1.3.1. [1] Commemorate the day by acts of **devotion** to God Almighty.
  - 1.3.2. [2] **Read** the *Declaration of Independence*. {**Read last paragraph**}
  - 1.3.3. [3] **Read John Quincy Adams'** fabulous 1837 4<sup>th</sup> of July oration.
    - 1.3.3.1. **Both on Web Site?**
- 1.4. **Intro to chapter 18:**
- 1.5. **The yoke and the cross** are *twin symbols* of Christian experience.
  - 1.5.1. **The cross** speaks of leaving the world for Christ.
  - 1.5.2. **The yoke** speaks of learning in the world from Christ.
    - 1.5.2.1. The one speaks of **sacrifice**; the other **service**.
    - 1.5.2.2. The disciple must bear **both**; he cannot choose to take one and leave the other!

## 2. **PAUL AT CORINTH! (1-28)**

- 2.1. Let's do a **running commentary**, & then hit on our **main theme!**
- 2.2. **CORINTH!** (1-17)
- 2.3. When Kel & I were dating, fresh out of high school, we went up to see her sister in San Francisco. We were to meet her sister downtown & we stepped off a bus & found ourselves at the start of the *Gay Pride Parade*. Needless to say we saw things I can't repeat.
  - 2.3.1. Paul just stepped off the bus in **Corinth**, the seediest place in all of Greece. Equipped with 1000 temple prostitutes. (*Temple of Aphrodite*)
  - 2.3.2. The Greeks had a verb to "**Corinthianize**" which meant to live a life of lustful debauchery. (*To fornicate*)
- 2.4. (1) **Corinth** – Very bottom of Greece there was an isthmus that joined the southern part of the Greek peninsula (Peloponnesus) w/the mainland to the north.
  - 2.4.1. On 8-8-08 we start the Olympic games! They came from the **Isthmian Games** located right here on the **Isthmus** of Corinth.

- 2.4.2. This **Isthmus** was 3 ½ miles wide which if people crossed, would save 200 miles of perilous navigation to go around.
- 2.4.2.1. Thus the controlled 2 ports Lechaem(west) & Cenchrea (east).
- 2.4.2.2. Pop. 200,000. **Athens**(Intellectual & Cultural center); **Corinth** (commercial)
- 2.5. Paul will write 2 epistles while in Corinth... **1 & 2 Thes.**
- 2.5.1. He actually wrote 10 books in the span of the book of Acts.
- 2.6. (3) **Tentmakers** – “cloth worker” a coarse fabric from thick goats hair of his native Cilicia. [They made curtains, rugs, clothing, as well as tents from it]
- 2.7. (5) **Relief** comes from Silas & Timothy, probably through Philippi (Phil.4:15)
- 2.8. (9) **Fear** seems to do it’s best haunting **at night!**
- 2.8.1. What are **your late night fears** telling you?
- 2.8.2. Which area of your life do you need to hear “Do not be afraid?”
- 2.9. (10) **I am with you** – the promise God gave to **Isaac; Jacob**; the **Jewish remnant** returning from Babylon; **Jeremiah**; the **Jews** rebuilding the temple; & **Jesus gave to us!** (Mt.28:20).
- 2.10. (12-17) **Gallio** – Roman authority in Achaia.
- 2.10.1. Elder brother of **Seneca** (famous philosopher, & tutor of Emperor Nero)
- 2.11. Here’s what just happened in this section. (unprecedented, Historic decision)
- 2.11.1. **Te Jews** are forcing **Rome’s** hand in regards to the **imperial cult.**
- 2.11.2. **By the time Christianity arrived, the Roman Empire had begun to deify its human emperors.**
- 2.11.2.1. **All Roman citizens were requires by law to participate in the festivals & ceremonies that would honor them as gods.**
- 2.11.3. This becomes a serious problem, from the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, to Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. [For 200 yrs the Roman gov was responsible for some of the most indescribable atrocities against Christians ever recorded]
- 2.11.4. But this wasn’t a problem yet. **Why not?** **Jews, like Christians, also worshiped only one God.** The Romans had recognized this, & had declared Judaism a **religio licita**, Latin for a “*legal religion.*”
- 2.11.5. Thus Jews were exempted from the requirements. When Christianity came along, it began as **Messianic Judaism** (a **branch** of Judaism)
- 2.11.5.1. Here in Corinth the Jewish leaders tried to draw the line, & declare Christianity shouldn’t be considered a part of Judaism.
- 2.11.5.2. **If they could only get it declared religio illicita.** (an illicit religion)
- 2.11.6. **Gallio** couldn’t understand theological nuances, like most of us today couldn’t analyze the differences between **Sunni & Shiite Muslims.**
- 2.11.7. **For the next 10-12 years, until imperial policy toward Christians underwent a complete reversal, (remain free to share the gospel)**

- 2.12. **EPHESUS!** (18-23)
- 2.13. (18) **Why the stop at the barbershop?** – Represented the fulfillment of a Nazarite vow (Num.6) as a symbol of a *self-offering* to God.
- 2.13.1. **It was a Jewish ritual of thanksgiving.** [Deeply grateful for the fruit of his 2<sup>nd</sup> term; large church in Corinth; legal victory in Gallio's court; he wouldn't be harmed & many converts]
- 2.14. **ACHAIA!** (24-28)
- 2.15. **Apollos – Man on Fire!**

### 3. **THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLESHIP!**

- 3.1. **Discipleship Explained!** - 2 Tim 2:2 – me; you; faithful men/women; others.
- 3.1.1. Our Motto (our "simplified rule to live by") at CCM is:  
 "To **live** the Great Commandment & To **fulfill** the Great Commission"
- 3.1.1.1. **Great Commission?** – making disciples...**but how?**
- 3.2. **When Christians develop principles of a balanced life...then what?**
- 3.2.1. These were not meant to stay **locked in a vault** but be **invested in others!**
- 3.3. **PAUL MODELS DISCIPLESHIP IN CORINTH!** (1-23)
- 3.4. You probably don't picture Paul as a *personal discipler*, & more **exploring new frontiers**, but examine what happens here.
- 3.4.1. Paul arrives in Corinth alone & seemingly financially strapped.
- 3.4.2. He ends up ministering here for a **year & a half** (11).
- 3.4.2.1. **Can date because of Gallio's reign.** Paul arrived fall of 50ad, left 52ad.
- 3.5. **1<sup>st</sup> STEP – GET CLOSE!**
- 3.6. He initiated a friendship; worked with them to make tents; & even lived with them.
- 3.6.1. **Great couple.** Each time mentioned together. **Important workers** to the early church. Being Jews they were expelled from Rome. One day they returned to Rome & had a church in their house. They were w/Paul in Eph when he wrote 1 Cor.
- 3.6.1.1. Their **hearts, hands, & homes** were given to the Lord!
- 3.7. **Appl:** In a discipleship relationship the better we know one another, the more we learn how to resolve real-life problems.
- 3.7.1. Don't display a "*perfect*" Christian standard no one can reach.
- 3.7.2. Discipleship keeps the truth at **eye level**, making it **understandable & accessible!**
- 3.7.3. That's **taking risks** allowing them to watch your Christianity!
- 3.8. **2<sup>nd</sup> STEP – TRAIN!**
- 3.9. He trained them in spiritual matters.
- 3.9.1. These included **formal times** in the synagogue as well as **casual times** in their home. (see 4,11)

- 3.10. His teaching wasn't cloaked in **rhetoric**, it was clothed in **real life**, & they eagerly embraced it.
- 3.11. **Appl:** I just took a friend through "One on One Discipleship" (a book).
- 3.11.1. **Start simply** – **Read** a book of the Bible together; **do** a study guide together.
- 3.11.2. **Here's another idea I found** (you can download the last page of my notes on-line & get these questions. They provide plenty of questions to ask whom you're discipling.
- 3.11.2.1. **Read - 26 Questions, by Gordon MacDonald.**
- 3.12. **Here's your ultimate goal: A disciple continues in the Word, loves others, bears fruit, and puts Christ first!**
- 3.13. **3<sup>rd</sup> STEP – MULTIPLY!**
- 3.14. His 3<sup>rd</sup> step was to multiply himself through them.
- 3.14.1. This is implied in his actions in vs.18,19 & 24.
- 3.14.2. Those in Ephesus desired Paul to stay(20); but instead turned it over to Aquila & Priscilla.
- 3.15. After a distinguished **performing** career, virtuoso violinist **Jascha Heifetz** accepted an appointment as **professor of music** at UCLA. Asked what had prompted his change of career, Heifetz replied: "Violin playing is a **perishable art**. It must be **passed on** as a personal skill; otherwise it is **lost**."
- 3.15.1. We need to listen to this great musician!
- 3.15.2. Living the Christian life is a highly **personal** experience.
- 3.15.3. We can't pull it off merely by **watching** skilled veterans "**perform**."
- 3.15.3.1. **We need hands-on instruction!**
- 3.16. **AQUILA & PRISCILLA MODELS DISCIPLESHIP IN EPHESUS!** (24-26)
- 3.17. They were immediately impressed with this young man.
- 3.17.1. They saw a diamond-in-the-rough.
- 3.18. **Apollos:**
- 3.18.1. He was from **Alexandria** (a University town w/a great library, & a worldwide reputation for learning)
- 3.18.2. He was **eloquent** (*logios* in Greek, means "a gifted speaker & deep thinker")<sup>1</sup>
- 3.18.3. He was **mighty in the OT Scriptures**
- 3.18.4. He **had been instructed in the way of the Lord** (teachings about Christ)
- 3.18.5. He had **a heart on fire! Being fervent in spirit**. (Lit. means "boiling over in spirit", full of enthusiasm) [LKGNT]
- 3.18.6. He was obviously **teachable!** – What a trait!
- 3.19. **But**, this is where his eloquence & knowledge stops.
- 3.19.1. He didn't understand the **full orb** of the **gospel of grace** completed with Jesus' crucifixion & resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> A.T.Robertson; Vol.3, pg.306.

- 3.19.2. Neither did he know about the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.  
 3.19.2.1. **Apollos needed to be disciplined!**
- 3.20. Aquila & Priscilla **tactfully** reached out to **disciple him**.
- 3.21. Once he grasped the complete truth, there was no holding him back!  
 3.21.1. **He wanted to go to the region of Achaia.**  
 3.21.2. **He had his own goals & style of ministry.** (Don't disciple them to be exactly like you! – It's not *Christian-Cloning!*)  
 3.21.3. **Rather than squelching/suppressing him, Aquila & Priscilla helped to write a letter of recommendation for him.**
- 3.22. In all positive discipling relationships, there is a time to **let go**.  
 3.22.1. **Discipling is training**, but it is also **releasing** the person **so that the** disciplined one can **train others**.  
 3.22.2. And that's what Apollos set out to do, as he set sail for Achaia.
- 3.23. APOLLOS MODELS DISCIPLESHP IN ACHAIA!** (27,28)
- 3.24. As **Paul** instructed **Aquila & Priscilla**; **then** they passed their learning on to **Apollos**; **now** he voiced the same message to those back in **Achaia**, where Paul had started.
- 3.25. Remember **2 Tim 2:2** – **me**; **you**; **faithful men/women**; **others**.  
 3.25.1. **Me**(Paul); **you**(Timothy, Silas, Aquila & Priscilla, Dr. Luke); **faithful men**(Corinthians, Apollos, Ephesians); **others**(many in Achaia).
- 3.26. OUR PERSONAL CHALLENGE:**
- 3.27. **What were the 3 steps? – Get Close; Train; & Multiply.**
- 3.28. **Do you see any diamond-in-the-rough's around you, you can invest in?**  
 3.28.1. **Whom might you reach through the discipleship process?**
- 3.29. **Are you ready? When is the best time to start? – Now!**  
 3.29.1. **If you're not presently in a discipling relationship, what barriers have you kept you from entering one?**  
 3.29.2. **Sometimes we think, "How could I help anyone else in their Christian Life? I'm having enough problems as it is."**  
 3.29.2.1. **Remember:** The best disciplers **aren't perfect** Christians.  
 3.29.2.1.1. **Just be caring, authentic, & take some initiative.**
- 3.30. **Maybe find someone like Aquila & Priscilla** – Someone who has a **background** similar to yours. Similar likes & dislikes. Someone with whom you can work well. Someone who is interested in following the Lord!  
 3.30.1. **Then, how can you associate more closely w/this person?**  
 3.30.2. **How can you build companionship & vulnerability before the training begins?**

- 3.31. What satisfaction that God has used **you** to change **one person**, who changed **another**, who changed **another**, who changed **another**!
- 3.32. **The most overlooked disciples are our children.** Whether a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or friend, the children in your life look to you as a model.
- 3.32.1. Consider discipling them.
- 3.32.2. How would looking at "**the children in your life**" as disciples change your perspective toward them?
- 3.32.3. **But, don't let them be an excuse to not disciple others.**
- 3.33. **Last Advice:**
- 3.33.1. **Remember:** They belong to God(not you). Don't let them become dependent on you. Allow them the freedom to fail. Instill confidence in the Lord in them. When they demonstrate the ability to train someone else, your job is through. **Now begin again! That's discipleship!**
- 3.33.2. **Q:** Are you willing to try?
- 3.34. **End:** The disciple must bear both **the Yoke & the Cross**; he **cannot** choose to take one and leave the other!

See 26 questions next page(7).

In *Rebuilding Your Broken World*, Gordon MacDonald suggests 26 questions to help develop accountability and invite feedback. If we desire to grow, we should submit ourselves to a spiritual mentor and answer these questions honestly.

1. How is your relationship with God right now?
2. What have you read in the Bible in the past week?
3. What has God said to you in this reading?
4. Where do you find yourself resisting Him these days?
5. What specific things are you praying for in regard to others?
6. What specific things are you praying for in regard to yourself?
7. What are the specific tasks facing you right now that you consider incomplete?
8. What habits intimidate you?
9. What have you read in the secular press this week?
10. What general reading are you doing?
11. What have you done to play?
12. How are you doing with your spouse? Kids?
13. If I were to ask your spouse about your state of mind, state of spirit, state of energy level, what would the response be?
14. Are you sensing spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
15. If Satan were to try to invalidate you as a person or as a servant of the Lord, how might he do it?
16. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Entertainment?
17. Where are you financially right now? (things under control? under anxiety? in great debt?)
18. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
19. When was the last time you spent time with a good friend of your own gender?
20. What kind of time have you spent with anyone who is a non-Christian this month?
21. What challenges do you think you're going to face in the coming week? Month?
22. What would you say are your fears at this present time?
23. Are you sleeping well?
24. What three things are you most thankful for?
25. Do you like yourself at this point in your pilgrimage?
26. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God?

*Leading the Way* by Paul Borthwick, Navpress, 1989, pp.171–172 <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Galaxie Software. (2002; 2002). *10,000 Sermon Illustrations*. Biblical Studies Press.