

# *The Simple Art of Intentional Discipling*

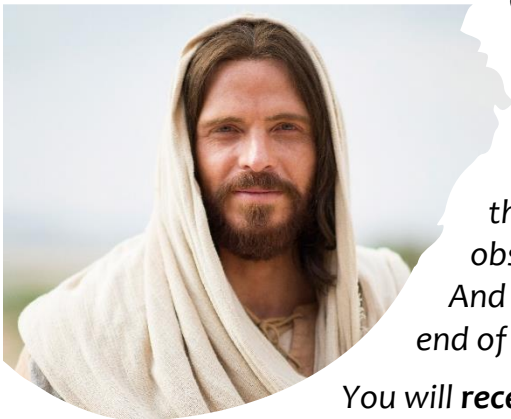


**Ron Kuest**

## **Scriptures:**

A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

**Follow me**, and I will make you **become** fishers of men. If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.



**Go** into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. **Go** therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them** to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

You will **receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should **go and bear fruit** and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. By this my **Father is glorified**, that you **bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples**. John 13:34; Mark 16:5; Mark 1:17; Luke 9:23; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; John 15:16; John 15:8

### The Why:

**The Key:** What is the core principle—the why? Teaching them to obey/observe all that I (says Jesus) have commanded you. Which is? Love one another as I have loved you. So you must love one another. (John 13:34-35) In other words, Love God, love others. Let the Holy Spirit transform you (Be holy) and make disciples.

### The Problem and the Opportunity

- **Resistance** – Know who your enemy is. Satan does not want you doing this. Also, know your selfish laziness. Know your inclination (like Martha) to feel useful in your work while ignoring your spiritual destiny. Don't listen to the Enemy—the agent of condemnation.
- **Relational not organizational** – Intentional discipling doesn't directly benefit the church (churches can and do survive without it) but Intentional Discipling is vital for the Church to flourish.
- **Makes you vulnerable.** But/and increasing vulnerability makes you authentic.
- **You have to fight passive engagement** (sitting and listening but not doing). Your brain resists “thinking” because thinking consumes a huge amount of energy (glucose).

### The Imperative of intentional discipling

- Intentional discipling: Forming a one-to-one friendship with another person and you regularly meet with an intentional agenda. So that? So that they desire and become an intentional discipler too.
- Regardless of your intention, because you are a Christian you already are discipling. The only question is, **how well?**
- Not an elective. You **get** to do it. No one else in the church can do it for you. Disciple-**ship** is the preparation. Discipl-**ing** is the experience.
- Intentional discipling **is** the Great Commission. It is foundational to who we are as Christ-ones—followers of Jesus.
- Intentional discipling is a releasing agent for the Holy Spirit.

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- Intentional discipling is not just a bible study, but bible study can be the foundation for your meeting.
- Intentional discipling can be the most effective and long-lasting form of evangelism.
- Resource: [Discipling Blog.docx](#)

### **The What:**

#### **A Commitment**

- Every disciple needs a discipler.
- Every discipler needs a discipler.
- Discipling isn't successful until you can see the third generation – disciples who are making disciples who are making disciples.

### **The Who:**

#### **The Disciple can be:**

- Family member
- Close friend
- Someone you are already ministering to or with
- Someone the Holy Spirit is directing you to disciple

### **The How:**

#### **Three Questions**

- Who are you?
- Who is God?
- Knowing somewhat the answer to those questions, why does it matter?

#### **Four Skills – Learning how to C L A P**

- **C**uriosity
- **L**istening
- **A**sking questions

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- **Patiently Promising** to be there for as long as wanted or needed

### **From Story to Calling and Mission**

- Story
- Identity
- Meaning
- Purpose
- Calling
- Mission

Keep in mind the progression from Story to Calling is NOT sequential. It is **layered**. Your story enlarges as you discover Meaning. As you become able to express your Purpose, your sense of Meaning enlarges too and so does your sense of Identity. Think of it as a wheel moving forward as it rotates backward, all the while picking up momentum.

### **Action Steps**

- Believe you can make a difference.
- Want/desire to have that kind of significant friendship.
- Start generation #1 with someone at that same place of spiritual growth as you. Make it mutual.
- Remember, the process must multiply in the timing of the Holy Spirit and the desire of the intentional discipler. Intentional discipling is the most inefficient process, ever. What if it takes a lifetime to disciple another? Was it worth it?

**The Approach.** Who do you intentionally disciple and who intentionally discipled you?

- Pray. Lord, who do you want me to influence for you.
- Look around. Listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Pick the obvious.

**What do you talk about?**

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- How's life?
- Circle back to the last conversation to summarize.
- Ask about “Bugs on the windshield.”
- A provoking question. “If time and money were no limits, what would you do in life?”
- How can I help you get there?
- A disciplined study.

### **The power of open-ended questions**

- Can't be answered with a yes or a no.
- They start with “What are..”, “Who is...”,
- Resource: [Asking Powerful Questions](#)



**So, What's the Point of the Process?:** Great Commission. To help you and then others to know the purpose and eventually clarity on calling. It starts with knowing your story and who you are—your identity.

**STORY:** *It starts with forming our Story.* Story is a clear, curated historical collection of our life experiences. These are the events of our life describing what we did, how we feel, and how we have changed and matured.

Our story usually begins with segments and anecdotes triggered by memories. But our story is more than that. There is a storyline, a connected timeline where the main character of the story is you as you play out the drama of life. That is your narrative.

As an intentional discipler, this is your opportunity to help another person grow in their knowledge of Creator God, Savior Jesus, and Encourager/Helper Holy Spirit and enlarge your story and theirs.

Then it becomes a narrative. As we can tell our chronological story it becomes a narrative. It is through knowing our Story that we can begin to discover and define and own our **Identity** – who we are in God’s great story of humanity. Keep in mind, that it is Satan who challenges your identity, 24-7-365. Satan is telling you the truth about what you’ve done and he’s lying to you about the role you play in God’s story. The fact that God loves and forgives you, no matter what you’ve done, and that the whole purpose of life on earth is that we can have life eternally. In other words:

**STORY says who we’ve *been*.**  
**Identity says who we *are* because of who we’ve  
**been.****

**IDENTITY:** Story, enlarged into Identity, is not just about our fails. More importantly, it is about how we have taken adversity and turned it into strengths and how we’ve taken great moments of joy and turned them into gratitude. Identity explains how our strengths have sustained us in our story and how we’ve used adversity and opportunity to create pathways of growth. It is in explaining Identity we begin to explain our growing relationship with God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our spiritual story tells how God has made his presence known. Our spiritual identity tells how God uses us for his purpose. In Identity, we begin to understand the nature of our soul mass—our spiritual identity.

Keep in mind story can be uncomfortable to relive yet it must be owned as who you were to form an authentic identity. In other words:

**STORY tells our history – our past.**

**IDENTITY describes our present.**

**MEANING and PURPOSE reveal our future.**

**Story, Identity, Meaning, and Purpose are connected.** If being able to tell our story and not just sketches of our story, identity forms our self-image. Identity begins to explain who we think we are and to understand who others think we are. Our self-esteem (the positive and negative values we associate with self) and our sense of individuality (what we think makes us unique) are the foundation of our identity. Next, we engage in a life-long process to own our identity in Christ. This is where intentional discipling is so essential. (Question: WHO ARE YOU?)



**MEANING:** Next, Identity leads to **Meaning**. If we can now begin to explain who we are based on wiring and our history, we can now begin to explain **why** we do the things we do. To answer our whys is what gives us our meaning.

That leads to determining what needs to change, what needs to remain the same, and what needs to be added as intentional strengths. In meaning, we can

begin to create a narrative of who we are in relationship with the Trinity of God. (Question: WHO IS GOD?). In other words:

**STORY and IDENTITY are about you.**

**MEANING and PURPOSE are about how you impact  
the lives of others.**

**Meaning leads to PURPOSE.** If we know better how God has equipped us through wiring and experiences and we have better insight into what paths lead to what ends, we can now better start to discern why God created us the way he did. As we put meaning to our life experiences, we now begin to understand a purpose or purposes for our life.

Meaning and Purpose define our future. Knowing our Meaning and Purpose points us to our mission which is refined by our calling. Don't get stuck in either Story or Identity.

As we understand our Purpose, our **CALLING** becomes clearer.

**CALLING is that clear sense  
of what I cannot, not do in serving Christ.**

**Your Calling becomes clearer as you drill down.** The first place to start is acknowledging and then believing that EVERYONE has a calling. That everyone is called to ministry. Calling is getting to a place in life where no matter how many times out of discouragement and dead-ends I want to chuck it all, yet I can't put my called ministry down. It may be becoming the most intentional parent or grandparent you can be. It may then extend to your Oikos – the significant people in your traffic pattern of life. Calling may come in an instant of revelation, or it more commonly comes in a process of refining your spiritual hearing, being able to tell your story, owning your identity, understanding meaning, defining





purpose, and clarifying your calling. When you can do that you will know without a doubt what your mission of the moment is.

***God didn't create us as monuments. He created us for his MISSION.***

***When we know our Purpose and Call our Mission becomes unmistakable.*** Mission is a clear vision of what the Holy Spirit is prompting, encouraging, spurring, and provoking us to do. Our mission that fulfills our calling lies in our present. Our calling always lies partly in the present and mainly in the future. It's our legacy because the work of our calling is never complete.

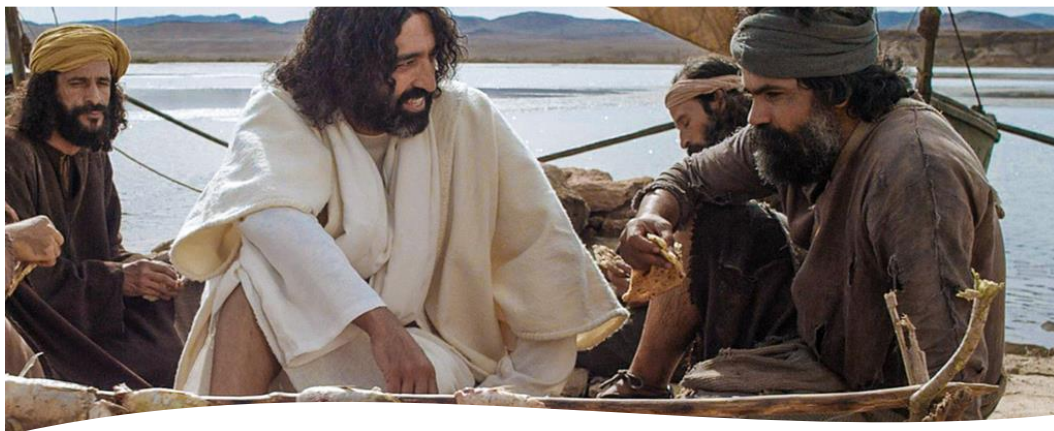
### ***The Role of an Intentional Discipler***

For most people, getting to mission is a lot of work. Let's be honest. It is hard work. And sadly, most won't and don't find their mission. Why? Because they haven't had a helper, an intentional discipler to help them on their way. Most people find it hard to self-initiate introspective experiences like this. For most of us, the right brain processes where much of this occurs have not been trained or awakened.

And, for many, the fear of discovery is greater than the expectation of truth. A friend who is a discipler is a person who can help lower the fear factor of self-discovery—an encourager, a guide, a friend, an intentional discipler.

Being a discipler helps others dive deeper into this sometimes scary unknown to discover who they are.

Whether as a friend, a parent, or a grandparent, a discipler is first a friend. And a friend by definition is a person who cares about the "other" in their life. (John 14). A friend is more interested in what they can do for others than what the other can do for them.



**A friend/discipler/coach/mentor's role is to patiently guide this conversation.** The intentional discipler doesn't direct it yet they are always looking for the opportunity to deepen the conversation. This is why a commitment to discipling means it has the potential of being a long-term relationship.

### **Using the Chart as a Road Map**

On the following pages is a chart showing the progression from Story to Mission. The role of the Intentional Discipler is to serve as a “tour guide” along the way. There are several dimensions to each stage of the journey highlighting, for example, questions to ask, aha moments, assessment tools, what's going on in the brain, spiritual identity, motivation as well as others.

The Intentional Discipler can use the chart to help gauge where the disciple is in their journey and can share it with the disciple to see where they've been and where they are going.

It is very important to note that this isn't a linear journey--the disciple isn't neatly moving from one state to another. In many cases as a disciple gains deeper awareness of who they are and who God is they will loop back and enlarge their understanding of Story and Identity and Meaning and Purpose. Returning backwards as they move forward.

The role of the Intentional Discipler is to be a patient guide, feeding the disciple new thoughts, drawing out insights and conclusions, asking many questions and keeping track of where the disciple seems to be. Most often the progression from Story to Calling is layered rather than a straight progression.

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	Who am I?		Who is God?		Why does it matter?	
	Story	Identity	Meaning	Purpose	Calling	Mission
<b>Questions</b>	“What I did/What I’ve done.”	“Who am I?/Who I am. What did you learn about yourself?”	“Why do I do what I do?/What do I want to do and not want to do?”	“Why do I exist? How do I add value to life?”	“What is it I cannot not do?”	What are the next steps? How does this satisfy ‘all that’?
<b>Elements of the Conversation</b>	Facts, anecdotes, and mini-life dramas are eventually strung into a chronological story of adventure, loss, gain, joy, happiness, pain, and sorrow.	Self-image. influences my feelings and my actions. And so, forms how I act. Integrated. Spiritual gifts identification.	Interpretation. Spiritual role identification. i.e. (shepherd, teacher, prophet, leading, apostle)	Why has God created you to be the person you are? What does that look like? Extrapolation (a method to understand the unknown by using the known). “What does this mean, Lord?”	Application, mobilization. “God, what is my role in your Kingdom?”	Focus, vision, goals, objectives, accountabilities, steps, outcomes, and impact.
<b>Ahahs</b>	Significant Incidents (divorce, trauma, sickness, abuse, poverty, death, births, marriage, passages)	Awareness/ Insight. Who do I say I am? Who does God say I am?	Understanding/ Interpretation	Intention	Exploration	Clear vision
<b>Tools</b>	Narrative	Assessments (ex. SHAPE)	Journal	Life Plan, APEST (apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher)	Ministry Plan	

	Who am I?		Who is God?		Why does it matter?	
	Story	Identity	Meaning	Purpose	Calling	Mission
<b>Personal Culture</b>	Behavior anecdotes	Behavior values	Belief values	Faith	Life	Ministry
<b>State</b>	Do		Be		Death to Self	
<b>State of Mind</b>	What makes me happy, sad, laugh, cry, angry, satisfied		What gives me joy, sorrow, mourning, fulfillment		What gives God joy	
<b>Composition/ personal-world view</b>	Objective and tangible		Subjective and intangible		Integration	
<b>Brain</b>	Predominately Left brain (analytical)		Predominately Right brain (subjective/feeling)		Whole brain	
<b>Growing Relationship with God as Trinity</b>	Knows scripture stories and teachings	Knows God	Loves God	Experiences God	An extension of God	
<b>Spiritual Identity</b>	Predominately Flesh (left brain)	Flesh (right brain) and Human Spirit (mind, will, heart)	Human Spirit and Soul	Soul	Wholeness	Shalom
<b>Motivation</b>	Ambition	Intention	Desire	Passion	Fulfillment	Content