

Ten Indicators of the Fastest Growing Church

- A. This is a simple and practical instrument for evaluating our congregations.
 B. This instrument will help to indicate how well our congregations are growing.

Growth Indicators		
Please rate each <i>statement</i> from 1 to 10, with <i>ten</i> being the highest score and <i>one</i> being the lowest score		Score
1.	Our congregation is passionate about the growth of God's kingdom and places it as a priority.	
2.	Our church board often places <i>numerical</i> growth high on the agenda.	
3.	We have an effective prayer ministry with well organized prayer groups that meet regularly to pray for the lost.	
4.	We are intentional about <i>spiritual</i> growth; hence we constantly equip church members according to their gifts to fulfill multiple ministry activities in the community.	
5.	Our church is actively <i>reaching out</i> with its programming to meet the needs of the community.	
6.	Every year we plan a variety of <i>harvesting (evangelistic) activities</i> to present the truth to the unsaved world.	
7.	We have a well-defined <i>discipleship plan</i> for new converts, which includes a strong program of social activities.	
8.	Our church shows <i>love, companionship, and acceptance</i> to first-time attendees to help them become returnees.	
9.	Our worship service is <i>Biblical, relevant, and inspirational</i> with an exclusively Adventist flavor.	
10	Our church has a careful <i>strategic plan for growth</i> that has been mutually <u>agreed upon</u> by leaders, <u>voted</u> by the Church Board, and <u>understood</u> by the church members.	

TOTAL OF POINTS

EVALUATE ITS GROWTH

- Less than 60 Little or no growth
 From 60 – 70 Slow Growth
 From 70 – 80 Moderate Growth

- From 80 – 90 Fast Growth
 From 90 –100 Extremely Fast Growth.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Forming a Life of Biblical Spirituality

By Dr. Wayne Knowles

22Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; 23Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: 24But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.
(Numbers 14:22-24)

Anyone who has seen Christ as their Saviour must now commit to follow Him. All of us who are true believers in Christ and His church will commit to Him with all our hearts. We must discipline ourselves to make the necessary sacrifices to be all that Christ wants us to be. It takes all that we have, to truly follow fully all that Christ requires of us. These include: 1). Changing our Habits, 2). Surrendering our wills daily, 3). Promoting church unity 4). Having regular worship times, 5). Building authentic relationships with others, and 6). Readily giving self and means to the cause of God.

Evaluate and Celebrate “Come and Be With”

Each member should evaluate and celebrate their spiritual growth in the area of Come and Be With. Remember that “Come and Be With” refers to each member’s spiritual connection to Christ.

1. Consider how the five pointers on the table below relate to your spiritual growth over the past three months. See how you can improve for the next three months.
2. Score yourself on a scale of 1-5 for each of the pointers in the table.
3. Challenge yourself to improve in these areas of your spiritual connection.

Come and Be With	Months					
DISCOVERING your Spiritual vocation (Ministry) <i>How can I develop myself for ministry? (Ephesians 4:11-13; John 14: 26)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I am <i>attending</i> church activities to discover and develop my spiritual <i>calling</i> .						
2. I am <i>servicing</i> in a regular (monthly or better) ministry to the church body.						
3. I am <i>expressing</i> my gifts as a way of life at work and at home.						
4. I am <i>sharing</i> responsibility within my small group by taking a role.						
5. I am <i>praying</i> , disciplining, or mentoring persons in my group or community.						
Outreach Ministry Total						

TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT TIPS:

Suggestions on How to Connect Activities to Make Soul Winning More Effective (Pt. 4)

Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)

¹⁹Go 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, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.”

EVANGELISM RESOURCES

1. New Beginnings Evangelism Training:

Free to Download – Click on “New Beginnings Resources on the black sidebar. You will get the page “New Beginnings Evangelism Resources”. At the very bottom of the page is the option “Evangelism Inspiration”.

<http://www.asiministries.org/asi-evangelism-app>

2. Choices of evangelistic sermons:

ASI New Beginnings in many languages – no charge. New Beginnings Evangelism Training; audio and downloadable Mark Finley briefly covers the basic principles of preaching, explains how to relieve anxiety, how to present truth, how to present appeals, and briefly explains the difference between a sales person and a lay evangelist.

<http://www.asiministries.org/new-beginnings-evangelism-tools>. Available in Chinese with Bible Study Guides, Training Materials and Response Card.

ASI Evangelism App – Free download and <http://www.asiministries.org/asi-evangelism-app>

3. Revelation of Hope II from Total Member Involvement (not on the web yet).

This series was originally done by Mark Finley. It has been shortened and revised with lots of new graphics and has been put into a new program; however, you can also use it with power point and key note.

Come and Go | Apr -- Jun 2017

4. Programs for Children: To have a successful evangelistic meeting, a solid children’s program is vital.

a) Truth for Youth

<https://www.youngdisciple.org/truth-4-youth.aspx> - the sermons can be preached by youth to ages 6-11 or 12. The sermon topics are the same as the adult sermons. They’re very comprehensive. Patterns for crafts are included for each sermon and can be printed. There is a CD for music that is necessary to get because it goes along with the music of the sermons.

b) AYS programs.

This link has games, songs, illustrations, sermons, lectures and so much more

<https://youthays.wordpress.com/ay-songs/>

3) VOP Kid Zone

14 Bible studies for kids

<https://www.voiceofprophecy.com/study/kidzone>

5. RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Seminars Unlimited,

www.seminarsunlimited.org,

Adopted from www.tmi.adventist.org

TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT TIPS:

Suggestions on How to Connect Activities to Make Soul Winning More Effective (Pt. 3)

1. SUGGESTED BIBLE STUDIES:

A. **Lifting Up Jesus** – These lessons can be downloaded for free in the following languages: <http://ww.liftingupjesus.net/> (or At SLM Resource center)

B. **Unsealing Daniel's Mysteries** – Free to download.
<https://www.adventistevangelism.com/> or
<http://www.itiswritten.com/bible-studies-unsealing-daniels-mysteries>

C. **Discover Bible Studies** – Free to download in English and Spanish.
<http://www.asiministries.org/new-beginnings-bible-studies>.

D. **Revived by God's Word** – free to download from
www.revivalandreformation.org/bible-study.

E. **Stay Alive with Jesus Lessons** (available at SLM Resource center).

F. **Come Alive with Jesus Lessons** (available at SLM Resource center).

Reaching the
Community
through Bible
Study.

EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS: It is vital that the local church members are engaged and invited to attend. The pastor and/or elders should begin talking about the meetings several weeks in advance of the meetings. Preplanning with prayer and some of the aforementioned seminars should be done leading up to the meetings.

Look at your meeting place or church. Is it a place where you would come for the first time if it wasn't your usual meeting place? Have a work day and clean and tidy inside and out. Is the outside of the building painted and clean? Look at the walls inside, are they clean? If you have a kitchen, is it clean? Are there unwanted items just stuck here and there that should be tossed or organized? Are the grounds clean? Is the grass cut? Have the weeds been removed? Is it a meeting place that you would be happy to say to your friends, "Come and join me?" Remember, God is a God of order.

Advertise your meetings – Have a big sign outside of your meeting place. Be professional. Ensure that it is hung straight. Build your interest list from your Bible studies and seminar attendees. Make one-on-one contact with your neighborhood and survey them. Ensure that your people are trained for their jobs, especially greeters and ushers.

When possible:

Keep a record of those attending your meeting, name, address, telephone number and email address. At the end of each meeting, the speaker should always shake hands and tell the people how happy he/she was that they came and that they'll see them tomorrow night or whenever the next meeting is.

Adopted from www.tmi.adventist.org

TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT TIPS:

Suggestions on How to Connect Activities to Make Soul Winning More Effective (Pt. 2)

1. SPECIAL ACTIVITY FOR THE

COMMUNITY: Your Best Pathway to Health
(See the videos on tmi.adventist.org)

2. SOUP AND SALVATION: Seminars:

A. Diabetes Undone -<http://diabetesundone.com/>

B. Depression Recovery (Weimar).
<http://depressionthewayout.com/>

C. Celebrations Health (GC Health Ministries)
http://healthministries.com/celebrations_presentations Please note: The presentations and power points are all free for downloading. The General Conference Health Ministries Department has been most generous in supplying all the needed information on the web to do a seminar so you don't have to have the book.

D. Creation Health – Florida Hospital -
<http://creationhealth.com/> If you use Creation Health, you need to explain what it really means in your advertisements.

E. Eight weeks to Wellness <http://8ww.com/>

F. Chip Program <https://www.chiphealth.com/>

G. Win Wellness <http://www.winwellness.org/>

H. Win Wellness Lectures
<https://youthays.wordpress.com/integrated-evangelism-lifestyle/>

I. Natural Lifestyle Cooking School by Ernestine Finley – Google Natural Lifestyle Cooking. You can purchase this from Amazon or your local ABC.

J. Naturally Gourmet by Karen Houghton – You can use this for a cooking school. It can be purchased from Amazon or your local ABC.

K. New Beginnings Health Evangelism – Free to Download – Click on “New Beginnings Resources on the black sidebar. You will get the page “New Beginnings Evangelism Resources”. At the very bottom of the page is the option of health presentations. Click on the apple and you will get the health presentations. <http://www.asiministries.org/asi-evangelism-app>

L. Health Sermons Vol. 3 – 13 sermons on health found on www.gcevangelism.com.

M. You may want to have a special class for training those that are interested in giving Bible studies. If so, the following is a good source for teaching:
<http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/light-your-world-for-god-a-dynamic-soul-winning-manual-to-lead-your-church.html> by Ernestine and Mark Finley

Reaching the Community Through Health Initiatives

Adopted from www.tmi.adventist.org

TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT TIPS:

Suggestions on How to Connect Activities to Make Soul Winning More Effective (Pt. 1)

1. CALENDAR-DRIVEN PLANNING

SESSION: Carefully and thoughtfully plan the church calendar so there won't be more than one event scheduled at a time. Always make sure that the church members know about the planned events well in advance.

2. BUILD SYNERGY: Synergy is the interaction of forces that when combined produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual elements. For example, when one person says "Amen," not many hear. However, if the whole church together in unison say, "Amen," then everyone hears. In evangelism, if all the churches in a given conference or union do meetings at the same time, they make a loud "noise" for Jesus that is heard all across the conference, creating great excitement for advancing the Lord's work.

3. CONNECT THE DOTS: Total Member Involvement is not a stand-alone event. It is about connecting the dots. For example, if we do a cooking school by itself, or have a single evangelistic meeting by itself, not a lot will happen. However, if it's well planned and the dots are connected, and the cooking school and the evangelistic meeting are part of the process that the church has planned connecting other outreach events, then the results will be phenomenal like what happened in Rwanda.

4. PRAYER: Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

A. Use the TMI Prayer Card and follow the suggestions:

1) Write no more than 5-6 names (local family, friends and members that are not attending) on your prayer card of people you will pray and work for.

2) Perform an act of kindness for each of the 5-6 individuals each week. (see suggestions under resources on the TMI website).

3) Pray for an opportunity to invite them to a seminar or an activity connected to the church.

4) Pray that you'll have an opportunity to invite them to participate in a Bible study group or an evangelistic meeting.

B. Ten Days of Prayer before the evangelistic meetings begin. The theme sheets are free for downloading as well as other resources. www.tendaysofprayer.org

C. Praying for Rain – downloadable in English and Spanish. **Communion with God**; Download at www.revivalandreformation.org

5. LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION

A. Glow Tracts: <http://glowcentral.com/>

C. Missionary book of the year. Contact the Personal Ministries or the Publishing department for the book of the year.

C. Blanket your area with (by hand or mail) Bible Study enrollment cards.

D. Do a survey of the community around your home or the church and find out what the people's needs and interests are. When doing this, make an attractive flyer with your church events.

Adopted from www.tmi.adventist.org

the god of this world, we were hopelessly hell-bent until he called us by name and raised us from the dead. "The sheep hear his voice and he calls his sheep by name (he chooses them) and leads them out" (John 10:3). So your choice of Christ was very different than his choice of you. His choice was a recreating, resurrecting, life-giving choice when he called you by name and you were born again and made a child of God. Your choice was all response and trust in his commitment to you.

The other sense in which Christ chose you differently than you chose him is in the call to ministry. Now all believers are chosen in that first sense, and can have the assurance that Christ's honor is at stake in their perseverance. And indeed all believers are chosen for ministry. But among the saints, whose responsibility is the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12), Christ sets some people apart as pastors and teachers to devote their full-time labor to the ministry of the Word and prayer, in order to equip the saints. Here again those who serve do so willingly. We have chosen the ministry. But if we are where we belong, there has been a call *from the Lord* preceding, equipping, inspiring, and finally enabling our choice of the ministry. If this were not so, ordination would be a sham. For what we will do here in the next few minutes in the laying on of hands is confirm not Glen's choice of the ministry, but God's choice of Glen. "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Therefore, be encouraged, Glen, be very bold in your work, for Christ is for you, and his very honor is at stake in your success.

Chosen to Bear Fruit

"And I have appointed you that you go and bear fruit."

If the origin and assurance of your ministry is election, Glen, the immediate *aim* is fruit-bearing. The context of John 15:1–16 answers three questions about this task. First, what is it? Second, *how* shall we accomplish it? And, third, *to what end* should it be pursued?

First, what is fruit-bearing? What is the fruit you are called to bear—indeed must bear? I think fruit in this chapter is a broad term and embraces two things: love for people and the conversion of sinners. If you bear fruit, you love people and win people to Christ. Let's take love first. The picture in verses 1 and 2 is that Christ is like a vine, and you, his minister, are like a branch shooting off this vine. And God the Father is like the vinedresser who prunes back the branches so they bear the most fruit. Since the fruit is simply the out-forming of what has passed through the branch from the vine, we should ask, What is it that we receive from the vine? Jesus' answer is *love*. Abiding in Jesus means abiding in his love according to verse 9—"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love." "Abide in me" is replaced by "Abide in my love," and this shows more specifically what we receive when we are united to the vine, namely, the sap of divine love. And it stands to reason, then, that what we receive from the vine flows through the branch and crops out in the fruit of love, for the nourishment and refreshment of other people.

There is another way to see the same thing. Verse 2 says that if you don't bear fruit, you don't abide in the vine; you get snapped off and thrown in the fire (v. 6). So in order to abide in the vine or to abide in Christ's love, we must bear fruit. There is an exact parallel to that thought in verse 10: "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love." So "If you keep my commandments" and "if you bear fruit" mean the same thing. Or at least we can say that fruit-bearing includes keeping the commandments of Jesus. And if we ask what is it in *this* context that Jesus means by "commandments," the answer again is love. Verse 12: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." And verse 17: "These things I command you, that you love one another." Therefore, love is fulfilling the commands of Jesus. And fulfilling the commands of Jesus is at least part of what it means to bear fruit. Therefore, bearing fruit means loving other people. It means letting the love which we constantly receive from Christ as we abide in him flow through us and out to others for their benefit.

I Have Chosen You to Bear Fruit

Scripture: John 15: 16

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit. (John 15:16)

On the day after the night in which Jesus spoke these words to the eleven and to you, Glen, he laid himself down on the cross and bought you with his blood. You are now his fruit and his fruit-bearer. The only fruit that will ever endure to eternal life is fruit which grows out of the cross. "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:23, 24). We are Christ's fruit because he died for us. We are his fruit-bearers if we are willing to take up our cross and die with Him. Never forget the setting of your text, Glen. It is no accident that when Jesus had commanded you to go and bear fruit, He went and died. Your call and your ministry must always stand in the shadow of the cross of Christ. The only fruit that will last is the fruit that grows on the cross.

Jesus Chose You

"You did not choose me, but I chose you," Jesus says to the eleven apostles, and surely to everyone whom he calls to the ministry. Why did he say, "You did not choose me"? It's not literally true. They had chosen to follow Jesus. He did not drag them into his service kicking and screaming. He does not hold them with bit and bridle. They are not looking for ways to escape from his ministry. In John 1:37 Andrew follows Jesus without even being asked, and he goes to get Peter and brings him to Jesus (1:41). So the point is not even that Jesus made the first contact.

Turn it around. What if Jesus had said, "I did not choose you; you chose me?" What would

most likely be the point of saying that? Wouldn't it mean, "I'm not bound to you. You wanted to come along. If the going gets rough, don't come whimpering to me. It's your choice, man. I didn't stake anything on your success." But Jesus said the opposite: "You did not choose me, but I chose you." And so the meaning probably is: "Your presence here is my doing and so I take full responsibility. I know you agreed to join me in this work, but deep in your heart you know it was I who laid claim on you and so my honor, not yours, is at stake in this work." If that is what Jesus means, then the reason he said, "You did not choose me, but I chose you, was to encourage us that he would help us. If his honor is at stake in our success because he chose us for the work, then we can be sure he will exert all his power to make us fruitful. Jesus will not lightly let his wisdom be scorned. Therefore, he will not look lightly on our cry for help, when we say, "Lord you chose me! You are not fickle. You are not shortsighted. You are not impulsive. Your choices have the weight of eternity in them. You will not let your chosen one be ruined. Help me, Lord." Such a plea—if it comes from the heart—he cannot ignore. His wisdom and constancy and reliability are at stake.

But in what sense did Jesus choose you differently from your choice of him? In at least two senses. He said, "All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" ([Matthew 11:27](#)). Glen, you nor I would have ever chosen Jesus, had he not revealed to us the glory of the Father. Had Jesus not enabled us to see in him the image of the invisible God, we would never have come. Dead in trespasses and sins, blinded by

How is Total Member Involvement Done?

A few months ago, our G. C. president, Pastor Ted C. Wilson, was asked about Total Member Involvement. Here is the question: *What is Total Member Involvement, and how should it be done?*

Here is his answer:

Total Member Involvement (TMI) is really the last great proclamation of the Advent message. It's an initiative that encourages everyone in the Seventh-day Adventist church to find ways to actively bring friends, neighbors, and even strangers to Jesus.

TMI is an intentional soul winning plan that discovers the needs of family, friends, and neighbors, then shares how God fulfills every need. To do this, we must first ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, pray often, become diligent students of God's Word, and then share it with others. And there are so many possibilities for sharing!

Personal witnessing, literature distribution, small groups, health ministry outreach, community services, Pathfinder and youth programs, and of course, public evangelism are just some of the ways in which we can reach others for Jesus. Whether you are a lay member, pastor, or church administrator, we need to become completely involved with God's advent message to the world. Everyone doing something for Jesus.

The amazing results that we recently saw in Rwanda (97,344) are a direct result of Total Member Involvement and serve as a wonderful example of what God can do when people are totally committed to reaching others for Him.

Only in heaven will we see the full results of how God has used us to bless others through Total Member Involvement!

Ellen G. White supports our President's message very well when she appealed to the church in her day to rally together to labor for the Master. Here are two of her impressive statements about working for the master:

In every church there is talent, which, with the right kind of labor, might be developed to become a great help in this work. That which is needed now for the upbuilding of our churches is the nice work of wise laborers to discern and develop talent in the church—talent that can be elevated for the Master's use. There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the upbuilding of the church and also for unbelievers. It is training, education, that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work. {9T 117.2}

All the preaching in the world will not make men feel deeply the need of perishing souls around them. Nothing will so arouse in men and women a self-sacrificing zeal as to send them forth into new fields to work for those in darkness. Prepare workers to go out into the highways and hedges. We need wise nurserymen who will transplant trees to different localities and give them advantages, that they may grow. It is the positive duty of God's people to go into the regions beyond. Let forces be set at work to clear new ground, to establish new centers of influence wherever an opening can be found. Rally workers who possess true missionary zeal, and let them go forth to diffuse light and knowledge far and near. Let them take the living principles of health reform into the communities that to a large degree are ignorant of these principles." *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 9, page 117.

Reprinted from:

<http://perspectives.adventist.org/en/questions-answers/questions/go/2016-06-24/how-is-total-member-involvement-done/24/>

SLM Personal Ministries Department

COME AND BE WITH ME THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

To be with Christ is to accept Him as Lord and Savior.

The challenge in acceptance is only the beginning of the journey. It requires day by day commitment, surrender, and dying to self as we walk and talk with Him. He aids us constantly as we listen to the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

To be with Christ also means that we are willing to learn from Him. He has promised to instruct us and teach us in the way we should go and to guide us with His eye. Psalm 32:8. As the disciples watched Him each day, they were anxious to learn from Him. They requested, "Teach us to pray" Luke 11:1. After teaching in parables, Jesus shared with them the true meaning. The love He showed to those in need, and the compassion expressed had a positive effect on those who came to be with Him.

Just being in His presence is transforming. Ellen G. White says, "Even John, the beloved disciple, the one who most fully reflected the likeness of the Saviour, did not naturally possess that loveliness of character. He was not only self-assertive and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injuries. But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love. Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielded to the molding

Power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus." Steps to Christ, p. 73.

It therefore means that being with Christ gives us the privilege to live out the stewardship principle. We accept His lordship, walk in partnership with Him, and act as His agents managing His affairs on earth. It means that all our resources, time, talent, treasure, and temple are surrendered to His service. May we ever desire to be with Him so that we may grow, share our faith, and press on for the prize.

Stewardship Ministries Department

"True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of *grateful love*. Love to Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom He came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all the emotions and directing all the energies. Redeeming love should awaken all the tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that can possibly exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of *truth*."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 396. (Italics supplied.)

Discipling our Children for God's Glory

Parents are Disciple-makers

It is most important that our parenting focuses on the heart and not on the behavior. A changed heart will result in changed behavior. One of the best ways we can address the heart of the child is if we shift our focus from parenting behavior to developing disciples of Jesus.

The dictionary defines a disciple as "one who believes in and helps disseminate the teachings of a master." One could then conclude that the verb form of this noun would be: "the act of disseminating the teachings of a master to another." Therein lies the foundational aim of all Christian parents: **To pass on the teachings of the Master to their children.**

So how do we do this? Is it as simple as taking our kids to church and [Sabbath school], praying before meals or engaging in a quick breakfast devotional? Is that all there is to it? Or is discipling more about *being* than doing? It seems to me that in order to make disciples, you have to first *be* a disciple. *As parents, we can use Jesus' model (Matthew 10: 1-4) to bring the gospel to the hearts of our children.*

Parents as Disciples

Jesus modeled in His own life what He wanted His disciples to be and do. He spent at least three intense years with His disciples. Like Jesus, parents are also models. You don't have to put your life on hold to spend three intense years with Jesus. You can start today. Here are some ways you can become a disciple of Jesus.

- 1. Hang out with God.** After all, God is always hanging out with you – even if you don't know it He is always around.
- 2. Read God's word.** The best way to get to know the teachings of the Master is to read about Him and His Father.
- 3. Ask questions.** Doubts are to faith as free weights are to muscles. The more questions you ask, the more you will seek answers and the stronger your faith will become.

4. Be authentic. Do your best to live out authentic faith in front of your children. The disciples were far from perfect but Jesus used them anyway. In fact, it seems quite clear that God likes using imperfect vessels so that He gets the glory instead of us.

Implications for Making Disciples in Our Homes

1. Realize that our children have a choice: to accept or reject Jesus' call to follow Him children are faced with the same choice – they can accept the gift of salvation or pass it by. Our job as parents is to make sure that the gift is front and center in our home so that they can't avoid tripping over it.

2. Live it, don't just preach it. One of the reasons that Jesus' message was so powerful was because He practiced what He preached.

3. Be present with your children. Jesus was the master of being present, no matter what He was doing or who He was with. It was this unconditional attention that he showered on people that attracted them to Him and made them feel like they were the only one in a field of thousands.

4. Prepare them for the future. Jesus spent a lot of time talking to His disciples about what things would be like when He was gone. He prepared them for the hardships as well as the glory to come.

5. Pray for your children in front of them. In John 17, Jesus prays for His disciples. The very fact that it is written down by the apostle John makes me think that He prayed those words in front of them. Use the passage as a template to pray for your children.

By the leading and power of the Holy Spirit that lives within you, God can give you the desire and direction to disciple your children. *Go therefore and make disciples . . . in your own home.*

SLM Children's Ministries Department

Total Member Involvement: Every Member Using Their Spiritual Gifts

What Can I do?

The Holy Spirit sovereignly gives to every Christian spiritual gift(s) for the building of God's kingdom. Church leaders have the responsibility to help believers discover, develop and exercise their gifts in appropriate ministries so that the body of Christ "grows and builds itself up in love."

The gift-based approach reflects the conviction that God sovereignly determines which Christians should best assume which ministries. The role of church leadership is to help its members to identify their gifts and to integrate them into appropriate ministries. When Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, ordinary people can accomplish the extraordinary! (www.nadie.com)

Invite people to take the spiritual gift test.

There are several different spiritual gifts inventories that can be used. This means that all congregations should have access to spiritual gifts assessments. It is important to note that a spiritual gift inventory does not determine your gifts. It only identifies your potential gifts. This means that the invitation to participate and complete a spiritual gift inventory is only one step in helping you to identify your gifts.

- *Remember that every Christian is a member of the body of Christ, and can only live out God's calling if he or she has a task that is in line with his or her spiritual gifts.*
- *Remember that your gifts are given by God not the church at election. Once your gifts are discovered you should be determined to use them for God's glory.*

We Have No Time to Lose

Once the gifts are identified, offer continuous training in relation to the gifts. To keep up the momentum, there should be regular training events on the use of spiritual gifts within the church. Some of these events should be offered at least once a year. Every new member should be helped to discover and utilize their spiritual gifts, and all existing members should get the chance to regularly re-assess their ministry involvement.

Create new ministry possibilities for people with the corresponding gifts. When gifts cannot fit into an existing ministry within your congregation, you may wish to create brand-new ministry possibilities for people who have just discovered their spiritual gifts. The guiding question behind this principle is not: *Where are the volunteers who could help in some ministries we have established?* The question is, *What ministry opportunities arise from the unique gift mix that God has given to our church?*

Encourage people to use their gifts outside of the local church. Some churches restrict the application of spiritual gifts exclusively to tasks defined and performed within the official programs of their churches. By following that approach, they restrict both their reach and their fruitfulness dramatically. Church members spend the bulk of their overall time outside of formal church activities. The use of their spiritual gifts in their everyday life is key to expanding the kingdom of God. Let us use our gifts to fulfill the work of the kingdom of God.

SLM Personal Ministries Department

SPECIAL FEATURE

Lord Transform Me District # 1 St. Kitts By Pastor Kay White

Each member of the congregation is called to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the purpose of the “Lord Transform Me” initiative in District # 1, St. Kitts is to facilitate spiritual regeneration and transformation, and to inspire each member to become a witness who will lead others to Jesus Christ.

This important initiative commenced in the first quarter of 2017 emphasizing its first phase, “Come and See.” This stage involved several spiritual programs which would encourage transformation by the Holy Spirit. The Ten Days of Prayer was held in each congregation in the district from January 4-14th to stimulate spiritual revival and reformation among the members. A training program was later conducted by the South Leeward Mission’s administrators and directors on January 28th to educate, motivate and challenge the membership to experience individual change, and to become effective ministers in their communities.

One significant highlight from the first quarter was the implementation of a retention strategy. An enthused new believer’s class was formed at the Faith In Emmanuel Church. Baptized members from the first quarter meet every Monday night for Bible study conducted by the pastors, the first elder, Austin Nwosu, and other elders of that congregation.

In the second quarter, the emphasis was captioned, “Come and Follow.” The main aim was to prepare members of the congregation for service. The Basseterre School of Evangelism under the leadership of Elders Peter Adrien and Sherron Mc Leish, trained members on Sunday afternoons to become successful witnesses for Jesus Christ. Pastor Otis Browne (Ministerial Intern) conducted weeks of training on “How to conduct a Bible study” through the School of Evangelism. Additionally, training was facilitated throughout the district by Pastor Kay White who conducted district board training on June 27th with the emphasis on, “Lord Transform Me.” As we enter the third stage of the Lord Transform Me initiative, “Come and Be With,” we anticipate success as we intentionally seek to minister to the felt needs of the community.

II. JESUS SAW THEIR DEPRAVITY IN SIN

In Matthew 9:36, Jesus said that the people were in desperate need because they fainted. In other words, they were weary. Sin wearies us. Sin makes us faint. However, Jesus wasn't referring to physical fainting! He intended a deeper meaning! He was speaking of their spiritual position.

Hence, Jesus was moved with compassion because these people were lost under a burdensome load of sin – Eph. 2:1-3; Psa. 38:4! Notice the sins of the world! We are surrounded by men and women who are capable of absolutely anything you can imagine! (David and Bathsheba, Simon Peter, Judas Iscariot, and you and me!) Some may say, "Not me!" Beware of 1 Corinthians 10:12. It says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

This means that these depraved people need to be reached by a compassionate Christian soul winner! All of us can be soul winners. All of us should be soul winners. All of us ARE called by God to win souls for Christ.

III. JESUS SAW THEIR DESTINY IN HELL

Jesus could see the end from the beginning. He knew that apart from Him, they would all be in Hell. Remember the Rich Young Ruler? No wonder Jesus was moved with compassion! Jesus doesn't want anyone to go to Hell! Jesus is not willing that any should be lost.

As followers of Christ, Christians need the same vision! If we really believe in Hell like we say we do, then why aren't we telling more men about the Savior? Why aren't we making an extra effort to get people into the fold of safety?

Look around church! There are people all around you who will die and go to Hell. Will they go without your having told them? Ezekiel. 33:8 "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." What a message of warning to all of us.

IV. JESUS SAW THEIR DESPAIR WITHOUT A SHEPHERD

Jesus said that the people were without a shepherd! This means that the blessings of the church and of the saved should be made available to the world. Prayer, companionship, peace, joy, rest, satisfaction, etc. are things the lost world knows nothing about. Therefore, our duty as believers is to tell them about Jesus! Our hearts ought to be broken because the world doesn't know our Saviour!

V JESUS SENT HIS DISCIPLES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE (Matthew 9:37-28)

In these verses, Jesus places three responsibilities on the shoulders of his people.

A. Visualize – See the harvest! Recognize that not everyone is saved and millions are poised on the edge of everlasting damnation! We also need to see that the harvest is just waiting to be gleaned! We will never reap until we first enter the field! (Mark 16:15).

B. Agonize – "Pray ye therefore." This is a call to be broken and burdened over the plight of the lost. There are few broken hearts over the lost in our day! We need to attack Hell on their behalf, constantly praying for them and seeking the Lord for the souls of sinners.

C. Evangelize – It isn't enough to see the need, nor is it enough to pray for the lost and be concerned for their souls. Jesus desires that each of us do the work of an evangelist, Acts 1:8. We can be like Andrew (John 1:40-42; John 6:8-9; John 12:20-22)! Andrew fulfilled the call to be a fisher of men – Matt. 4:18-19.)

Conclusion: What are you doing to keep men out of Hell? Are you having any success? God's plan is that His people bear the good news to a dying planet. Our job is the greatest the world has ever known. If we can reach but one for God, then we have altered eternity for someone and gained the smile of God for ourselves. Perhaps you need to come before the Lord and confess to him that you haven't witnessed as you should have. Perhaps there is a name on your heart that lays there like a lead weight, bring it to Him! Time is short, the laborers are few and the harvest is plentiful and ready. Are you willing do your part today?

Pursuing a Passion for Souls!

Matthew 9:36-38 (NKJV)

³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Introduction: The Bible is a book filled with meaning and blessing. However, some passages are very disturbing. For instance, Psa. 142:4, where the Bible says, "no man cared for my soul." That passage has always bothered me. I believe there are literally billions in our world today about whom no man cares. It is safe to say that millions live in this world with no one to pray for them, tell them about Jesus or to live a Christian witness before them. Sadly, there are many Christians who are saved, hell proof, heaven bound, etc., who do not care about the souls of the lost. What a contrast with the Lord Jesus Christ! It was His passion for souls that brought Him from Heaven to earth, that motivated His every waking activity, Luke 19:10; Mark 10:45. It was this passion for souls that propelled Him to an old rugged cross where He gave His life to save the lost sinner, Rom. 5:8.

In this passage, Jesus looked upon the multitudes that had gathered around Him because of the miracles. As He looked at the helpless, hopeless, and hurting people, Jesus saw four elements that caused Him to be moved with compassion on these lost ones. These same four elements ought to cause us that claim the Name of Jesus to have the same heart for sinners that motivated our Savior! Let's spend a few minutes looking into this passage as we consider the thought, "A Passion For Souls."

I. JESUS SAW THEIR DEPARTURE FROM GOD

Read Matthew 9:36 ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

The people Jesus met in the cities were "scattered abroad." This means that they were outside the fold of safety. They were lost. This means that they did not have company with God. They were out of the fellowship with Him. This is the natural result of sin. Isaiah 59:2 tells us that our sins have separated us from God. The communities in which we live have many people who are separated from God. What will God do about it? He sent His Son to die to save them. What are you doing about it? Tell someone the good news.

Anyone who is separated from God is like a sheep separated from the Shepherd. Not only is a separated sheep lost and scattered but it cannot find its way back to the fold by itself. It needs guidance. It needs protection. It needs shepherding. Similarly, our communities need to be guided back to the fold of safety. They need to be protected from the dangers of living apart from God, the Chief Shepherd. God wants us to help guide people back to Him.

Away from home there can be no comfort nor rest for those outside the fold of God. They are long ways from where they ought to have been (Eph. 2:12). The truth is sheep do not do well alone! They need others. They need a shepherd. Christians need to understand that this world is away from God! Not everyone is in a right relationship with Him. But, all need a witness! The Good Shepherd seeks sheep like these (Luke 15:3-7).

HOW TO PURSUE SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN SMALL GROUPS

WHEN Jesus called His twelve disciples to be with Him, He kept them in a small group for two years. This was Jesus' best method for pursuing spiritual growth for each of them. Our churches would do well to use small groups in the way Jesus used them. For most of us Sabbath school is the only small group experience that we have.

Ask a small-group leader, "Is spiritual growth important to our groups?" and you'll hear an enthusiastic, "Absolutely!" But follow that with this risky query: "Okay, but is it actually possible for real change to happen in our groups?" Many would force the reply, "Of course, it's possible." A hint of doubt would betray their real feelings. Even if it is possible, how do we as leaders work alongside the Holy Spirit to foster that growth?

It's like asking West Indies cricket fans whether it's possible for West Indies to win the World Cup. The required answer is, "Sure. The next cup is going to be their cup!" But deep down, they may wonder.

Press further, though, and you'll reach the question that gnaws at the soul of every small-group leader: "Is spiritual growth actually happening in our small groups?" Don't be surprised if people respond with silence, confusion, shame, or doubt—or all four.

Spiritual Growth Is Communal

It's hard to foster growth, but the Bible exhorts us in Colossians 1:28 to admonish and teach everyone with all wisdom, "so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ." The Bible is clear on this, giving us over 25 "one another" statements exhorting us to pray for, serve, love, encourage, and comfort one another—just to name a few.

Church leaders remain convinced that people find hope and strength for their journey when they gather regularly with a small community for mutual support and wisdom. Among the many passages that connect spiritual maturity with community life, Ephesians 4:14–16 (NIV) is exemplary:

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. *From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

No one committed to walking with Jesus wants to do the Christian life alone. Yes, intentional community is essential for life change, and it's clearly taught in the Bible and confirmed with data. But privately we may fearfully wonder, "Can our groups *actually* produce disciples? Can we become radically transformed human beings who are nuts about Jesus, instead of just nuts?"

Spiritual Growth Is for Everyone

Groups are not just for Jesus and His disciples. They are for everyone. From Sabbath school to spiritual growth groups, from youth to adults we can all benefit from small groups. So, get in a group today. Better yet, start a group today. You may even consider transforming a group you are already in. *Small groups will only work when we make it a priority, like Jesus did.*

From www.smallgroups.com

GROWING UP WITH JESUS

“God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love – like Christ in everything” (Ephesians 4:15 The Message).

“We are not meant to remain as children” (Ephesians 4:14 Phillips).

Your heavenly Father’s goal is for you to mature and develop the characteristics of Jesus Christ, living a life of love and humble service. Sadly, millions of Christians grow older but never grow up. They are stuck in perpetual spiritual infancy, remaining in diapers and booties. The reason is because they never intended to grow.

“Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think” (Romans 12:2 NLT).

Your first step in spiritual growth is to start changing the way you think. Change always starts first in your mind. The way you think determines the way you feel, and the way you feel influences the way you act. To be like Christ, you must develop a mind like Christ. You adopt Christ’s outlook and perspective on life.

“Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes” (Ephesians 4:23 NLT).

“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5 NIV).

There are two parts to thinking like Jesus. The first half of this mental shift is to stop thinking immature thoughts, which are self-centered and self-seeking. Babies, by nature, are completely selfish. They think only of themselves. That is immature thinking.

“Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things” (Romans 8:5 NLT).

“Stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults” (1 Corinthians 14:20 NIV).

The second half of thinking like Jesus is to start thinking maturely, which focuses on others, not on self. In his great chapter on what real love is, Paul concluded that thinking of others is the mark of maturity: *“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me” (1 Corinthians 13:11 NIV).*

Today, many assume that spiritual maturity is measured by how much biblical knowledge and doctrine you know. While knowledge is one measurement of maturity, it isn’t the whole story. The Christian life is far more than creeds and convictions; it includes conduct and character. Our deeds must be consistent with our creeds and our beliefs must be backed up with Christ-like behavior. Christianity is not a philosophy, but a relationship and a life, where we practice thinking of others as Jesus did:

“We should think of their good and try to help them by doing what pleases them” (Romans 15:2 CEV).

Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too” (Philippians 2:3-4 NLT).

Thinking of others is the heart of Christlikeness and the goal of spiritual growth. This kind of thinking is unnatural, countercultural, and rare. The only way we will learn to think this way is by filling our minds with the Word of God.

Adopted from pastors.com

FAMILY MINISTRIES AND DISCIPLESHIP

The over-arching objective of Family Ministries is to strengthen the family as a discipling center.

The family was established by divine creation as the fundamental human institution. It is the primary setting in which values are learned and the capacity for close relationships with God and with other human beings is developed.

Family Ministries is a ministry of grace which acknowledges as normative the biblical teachings relating to the family and holds high God's ideals for family living. At the same time, it brings an understanding of the brokenness experienced by individuals and families in a fallen world. Thus, Family Ministries seeks to enable families to stretch toward divine ideals, while at the same time ever extending the good news of God's saving grace and the promise of growth possible through the indwelling Spirit.

Family Ministries focuses on people in relationships. It is concerned with the needs of married couples, parents and children, the family needs of singles and all members of the wider family circle as they pass through life's predictable stages and contend with unexpected changes in their lives.

Family Ministries reinforces and encourages wholesome families. It helps individuals build and maintain strong family relationships because it recognizes that healthy Christian families make strong members for the kingdom of God and present a winsome witness to the community around them.

Family Ministries promotes understanding, acceptance, and love within the family and in the larger family of God and fosters the reconciliation and healing between the generations promised in the Elijah message of Malachi 4:5, 6. It extends hope and support to those who have been injured and hurt by abuse, family dysfunction, and broken relationships. Family Ministries fosters competence in a variety of interpersonal skills needed in relationships. It provides growth opportunities through family life education and enrichment. It encourages individuals, married couples, and families to avail themselves of professional counseling when necessary.

An adequate ministry to families will include: premarital guidance available to all couples before marriage; marriage strengthening opportunities; parent education, with attention given to the special needs of single parents and step-families; instruction in family to family evangelism; and support ministries to help families with special needs.

Ministry opportunities to Families

Identify any of the ministry areas above that you are qualified to minister in. On the other hand, you could choose an area of interest that you would like to minister in. Our families are struggling to survive. God wants you to play a role in helping a child, a youth, a single parent, or a marriage to reach their true potential. You can start a married couples' counseling ministry, a job search ministry, a mentoring program, et cetera.

Adopted from <http://family.adventist.org>

START A MINISTRY “PASS IT ON”

Private Funds For Small Projects Funding Opportunity

This is an actual project that any member can access through SLM ADRA. Any member can start a similar project.

Elder Wally Amundson, the immediate past ADRA/IAD Director, have disclosed that both he and his wife have access to private grant funds from an international donor.

One of the objectives for the use of these private funds is to keep the gift alive and viable by creating a world where each person receiving the gift has an understanding how to help another person, and continues to give to someone else. The concept is to **“Pass It On.”** The projects funded by this donor have the potential to create groups or communities where each person continues giving, once they receive.

The procedure for receiving the assistance would require a concept paper with an implementation plan and timeline including a budget of **less than US\$1,500.00** to start with. The basic guidelines are:

1. Demonstrate that the individuals receiving this grant are able and willing to develop a plan or a way to continue giving to other individuals within the community, once they receive assistance.
2. The cost/benefit ratio is modest.
3. The project or activity can be implemented with reportable results (even if the project is ongoing) within two or four weeks after the funds are received by your organization.

3. The reporting is instant with photos and /or video along with a short narrative including personal testimonies.

4. Reference if this project includes a spiritual value or dimension for the community, now or later. (Not a requirement) IMPORTANT: The donors will consider more than one project at the same time from the same organization.

Pass it on!

An Example Of Keeping The Gift Alive Could Be:

Several families buy chickens and chicken feed with funds received. Each family agrees in advance to donate some of their eggs to a neighbor. Later they will give some of the new chicks to another family in need to start or increase that neighbor's egg production. The new family or recipients would agree to do the same.

This sample idea demonstrates that along with the project activity which should address a need within the community, each beneficiary would be expected to organize practical ways to pass on the gift at least once, or even perpetually.

Please apply now. Time is of the essence. If you have any questions or need any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the ADRA Director at SLM.

ADRA Department SLM

Implementating Our Mission

Our Mission The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to call all people to **become disciples of Jesus Christ, to proclaim the everlasting gospel embraced by the three angels' messages (Revelation 14:6-12), and to prepare the world for Christ's soon return.**

How many of us know how our world church intend to carry out God's mission?

Here is our plan.

Seventh-day Adventists affirm the Bible as God's infallible revelation of His will, accepting its authority in the life of the Church and of each believer, and its foundational role for faith and doctrine. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the Holy Spirit is the power that transforms lives and equips people with abilities to advance God's kingdom in this world.

Called by God, guided by the Bible, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventists, wherever we live in the world, devote ourselves to:

1. *Christ-Like Living:*
Illustrating the lordship of Jesus in our lives by moral, ethical, and social behaviors that are consistent with the teachings and example of Jesus.
2. *Christ-Like Communicating:*
Realizing that all are called to active witness, we share through personal conversation, preaching, publishing, and the arts, the Bible's message about God and the hope and salvation offered through the life, ministry, atoning death, resurrection, and high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ.

3. *Christ-Like Discipling:*

Affirming the vital importance of continued spiritual growth and development among all who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we nurture and instruct each other in righteous living, provide training for effective witness, and encourage responsive obedience to God's will.

4. *Christ-Like Teaching:*

Acknowledging that development of mind and character is essential to God's redemptive plan, we promote the growth of a mature understanding of and relationship to God, His Word, and the created universe.

5. *Christ-Like Healing:*

Affirming the biblical principles of the well-being of the whole person, we make healthful living and the healing of the sick a priority and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed, cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration.

6. *Christ-Like Serving:*

Following the example of Jesus we commit ourselves to humble service, ministering to individuals and populations most affected by poverty, tragedy, hopelessness, and disease.

This statement was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in Silver Spring, Maryland on October 13, 2014

SLM Lifestyle of Discipleship

Every Member Transformation (Five levels of Commitment)

A. Each Existing Believer (from inside to out)

1. *Come and See* (Personal spiritual connection to Christ)
2. *Come and Follow* (Commitment to Christ and His church - SDA church and its beliefs)
3. *Come and Be With* (Dedication to growth in spiritual knowledge, gifts and ministry abilities)
4. *Go and Bear Fruits* (Share your faith through a corporate or personal plan)
5. *Go and Make Disciples* (Grow and mature those we baptize = conservation)

B. From Unbelievers to mature members (from outside in to inside out)

1. *Come and See ...* (Learning about Christ)
UNBELIEVERS
2. *Come and Follow ..* (Accepting Christ and committing to Christ) NEW BELIEVERS
3. *Come and Be With ..* (Ministering for Christ)
4. *Go and Bear Fruit ...* (Winning Souls for Christ)
5. *Go and Make Disciples ...* (Make soul-winners for Christ)

CHURCH
CALENDAR



C. Schedule for Monthly Emphasis (2017) •

1. **January to March (3 Months)** -- Come and See
2. **April to May (2 Months)** -- Come and Follow (Consecration and commitment to SDA church and its beliefs)
3. **June to August (3 Months)** -- Come and Be With
4. **September to October (2 Months)** -- Go and Bear Fruits
5. **November to December (2 Months)** -- Go and Make Disciples

There had been great multitudes following Jesus as He moved from place to place and ministered. Now, He chooses twelve men from among those vast multitudes to be His disciples. He had already called them to follow Him. We saw that with Peter, Andrew, James, John and Matthew. Now, He calls them to a special place of service. **Matthew 10:2** tells us that these men were set aside and were called “*apostles*.” This word means, “*One sent with orders*.” It refers to a “*representative of the king; one who speaks with the king’s authority; one who must not be ignored*.” Jesus handpicked these twelve men and sent them out with His message.

Why did He call these men and not other men? Why were these singled out for this great honor? Was it something they possessed that other men lacked? Were they especially spiritual and close to the Lord? Did He know that they would make great preachers?

The Bible says, “*He called unto Him whom He would*”. There was nothing special in these men. They were common men with common deficiencies and common problems. So, why did He call them? Because He wanted to! It was sovereign choice that He made based on His Own Will. May I just say that it is a privilege to be chosen by Him! You will notice that when He called, they came! That is how this thing works!

It is important to note that Jesus could have chosen a thousand different ways to get His work done on the earth. He could have used angels. He could have done it Himself. He could have created a special race of people to do it. Wait! That’s just what He did! He saved us out of our sins and created us as a special race to do His will on the earth! He chose you! So, get busy and serve Him. His call will not go away, **Rom. 11:29**.

II. THE MISSION (v. 14-15)

(These two verses tell us what the Lord expected these twelve men to do. These two verses establish a *pattern* of ministry that continues to this day. These verses also reveal a *priority* in ministry that we must not ignore.)

A. **It involved discipleship**: “*that they should be with Him*.” This phrase highlights every disciple’s *priority*: being with Jesus.

Being with Jesus should be the priority in each of our lives. If we would be like Him, then we must spend time with Him. If we would serve Him like He desires, then we must spend time with Him. Intimacy on that level is available to all those who desire it.

B. **It involved declaration**: Jesus called these men to go “*forth to preach*”. The word “*preach*” means “*to act as a herald; to sound forth the message of the King*.” Jesus handpicked these men and called them to take His message to the nation of Israel. What was the message they were to preach? It was the same message that Jesus Himself had been preaching. It was the “*Gospel of the Kingdom*.” What a great and high calling they received!

Now, while God only calls some to be preachers; He calls all His children to be witnesses! When He saved you, He placed His Spirit within you. When the Spirit came in, He gave you a testimony to share and a commission to share it, **Acts 1:8**. So, while you may never stand in a pulpit and preach a sermon, you can still preach the Gospel everywhere you go to every creature you encounter, **Mark 16:15**. Jesus still wants His disciples to declare His message!

Every time He saves a soul and delivers a sinner from the grip of his or her sins, His message is declared. Every time an alcoholic or drug addict is set free, His message is declared. Every time a marriage is put back together His message is declared. Every time a redeemed saint of God can stand and give testimony to the live-changing, soul-saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ His message is declared!

Conclusion: Despite their weaknesses, the Lord used twelve ordinary men to turn the world upside down for His glory. If He can use them, surely, He can use us too! That gives me hope today! Jesus led them patiently along, filled them with His Spirit and shocked the world with the way He used these men. I am convinced that He can and will use us, if we will place the clay of our lives in His hand and let Him have His way. *If you would like Him to use you more than he has ever used you before then let us stand and pray.*

Personal Ministries Department - SLM

THE CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE

Read Mark 3: 13-19.

Introduction: This is a special passage. The ministry of Jesus is in full swing. The common people of the area follow Jesus because He preaches the Word of God in power and because He is working miracles for the glory of God. The religious leaders hate Jesus because He refuses to play by their rules and because He exposes them for the hypocrites they are. Our Lord's days are filled with ministry and things are happening at a hectic pace. These verses find Jesus taking some time out of His frantic schedule. He takes the time to commune with His Father and to choose the twelve men who will be His representatives to the lost sheep of Israel.

I said this passage is special and it is because it reminds us that anyone who will follow the Lord can be used by the Lord. As we look at the kind of men Jesus chose and used in those days it gives us hope in these days. If Jesus can use men like these in the manner that He did, then surely, He can use you and me in these days. If you are saved, I want you to know that you have a place in the Lord's service.

Let's look into these verses and observe the blessings revealed here as we consider the subject of *The Choosing Of The Twelve*.

I. The Master (Mark 3: 13)

In this first verse, the focus is on the Lord Jesus Christ. He has stepped aside from His public work for a time of solitude. He has left the crowds so that He might call His disciples. Luke tells us that "**he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God,**" **Luke 6:12**. Jesus is about to ordain twelve men who will be His spokesmen, His representatives to the people of Israel. This is a big decision and Jesus wants to be fully prepared for this moment. Thus, He sought a private place and spent the night in prayer seeking His Father's will.

What a lesson for us! Jesus, God the Son, God in the flesh, felt the need to commune with God the Father before He made a big decision. Jesus took time out of His busy schedule to spend a protracted time in prayer. Jesus saw the great need of reaching up to the Father for the help He needed day by day.

The fact that Jesus made prayer a priority in His life, highlights to us our own need to seek the Lord in prayer. We are not God in the flesh. We are not the Savior and Redeemer of humanity. We are just a group of people that should have been sent to Hell. But, God in His great grace and mercy reached out to us and saved us from our sins. He brought us into His family and gave unto us the privilege of prayer. Just a brief glimpse at prayer and the promises attached to it is enough to showcase its importance in our lives.

A. God has promised to hear our prayers – **Jer. 33:3; Isa. 65:24**.

B. God has promised to answer our prayers – **Matt. 7:7-8; John 16:23**.

C. God uses our prayers to accomplish His will in the world – **James 5:16-18**. God knows what you are going to ask before you ask it. Since that is true, some people have wondered about the need to pray. After all, God is only going to do what He pleases to do. Your prayers and mine change nothing! So why pray? ***Have you ever thought that the whole end of prayer might be prayer itself?*** Have you ever considered the truth that God commands us to pray because He longs for fellowship and communion with people like us? He desires for us to pray so that we might spend time in His presence. And time spent in His presence is well spent!

Let me just encourage you to be a man or woman of prayer! Seek the Lord and seek Him often. Nothing will develop your life any more than prayer. Spend quality time with God! The biggest decisions in your life require it.

COME AND BE WITH CHRIST



By: Pastor Wayne Knowles

IN Matthew 10: 1-4, Mark 3: 13-19, and Luke 6:12-16 Jesus called twelve of His disciples to be with Him. In so doing, Jesus had to personally hand-pick them. He intended to make apostles of these disciples. They were to become Jesus' discipleship prototype. As a result, He kept these twelve disciples close to Him so that He could *model* the spiritual life before them and *mentor* them.

By so doing, He separated them from the other disciples who were also faithfully following Him (Acts 1: 21-22). These twelve disciples were singled out by Jesus for His special attention, training, and leadership development. He invited to be constantly in His presence. Jesus formed them into a *small group* of apprentices to prepare them to fulfill His mission more effectively than the other disciples. It was at this stage that these twelve disciples were first called *apostles*.

This call, to 'Come and Be with Jesus,' ushered in the most involved growth stage of Jesus' discipleship plan. The first two growth indicators (come and see; come and follow) prepared the disciples for this one, and the last two (go and bear fruits; go and make disciples) are determined by it. As such, Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before He called those whom He wanted (Luke 6:12). After such intense prayer, the Master then appointed the twelve disciples, designating them apostles that they might be with Him (Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13).

It is important to note here that the use of apostles in the Gospels referred primarily to the mission the disciples were to fulfill and not the office they were to fill. In His book, *The Disciple Making Church*, Bill Hull (1984), "These men were the Lord's personal choice; on them rested the future of his church" (p. 147). It was only after these fishermen were made-over by God into fishers-of-men that they could be called apostles.

Jesus was *preparing* them to assume leadership over His disciple-making ministry. They were to become witnesses of the things of God (Luke 24:44-48). After eighteen months of *seeing* how their Master lived, and *following* His will, the disciples had to demonstrate their undying devotion to Him. They were more than mere spectators of Jesus; they were becoming imitators of their Master and co-laborers with Him (Matthew 9: 36- 10:1).

For the next two years, these disciples were taught everything they needed to know to help shape them into world changers. They learned to pray (Luke 11&18), preach (Mark 6:12), cast out demons (v.13), and heal the sick (v.13). They learned to be like Jesus. Jesus also taught these twelve disciples all they needed to know about the Father and His Kingdom.

This means that being with Jesus has its spiritual advantages. It is about changing your life into what God desires it to be. Being with Jesus means that you are totally committed to Him and His ministry. It is about praying like He prayed, living like He lived, and making His priorities your priorities. Being with Jesus is about knowing Jesus and the Father. It is about having eternal life (John 17:3). Being with Jesus is about growing up spiritually. It is about becoming leaders that God can use. It is about mastering yourself.

As we enter this third quarter, we will be covering two growth stages. For the first two months, we will complete the 'Come and Be With' stage and for the final month, we will focus on the fourth growth stage: "Go and Bear Fruits." It is our hope that this quarter's sermons and promotions will assist all our members to embrace in a fuller way the path to Spiritual maturity. May God continue to bless you as you make every effort to remain in Him and help others to experience spiritual maturity.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By: Pastor Desmond James

As we conclude the first quarter of 2017, I wish to commend all who have been engaged in the Total Membership Involvement (TMI) Initiative. It has been my joy to be an eyewitness to the Lord Transform Me (LTM) coordinated approach to ministry and mission as the churches engaged and impacted their communities in a series of crusades where we led non-members into a saving relationship with Christ. **Come and See** in action!

In our comprehensive quest to replete our churches with active and faithful disciples, we wish to give laser focus this month to the **Lord Transform Me** strategic imperative: “**Come and Follow.**” I am forever fascinated with how Jesus trained ordinary men and women to turn the world upside down. It is so amazing and mindboggling how in three and a half years He turned them from learners to apostles, from those called to those sent. He bade them, ‘Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men’ (Matt 4: 18). Just imagine being trained by Jesus Himself! In John 1:35-42 the Bible chronicles a rich and instructive account from which I would like to extract four simple principles to “**Come and Follow.**”

Firstly, we must “Behold the Lamb of God”. In this context, John the Baptist, the one who was born to introduce the Messiah to the world, invites two of his disciples to fix their gaze on Jesus. Unlike his public declaration at the Jordan where he introduced Jesus to the world, he is issuing a personal invitation. “*And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’*” John 1:36. If we must “**Come and Follow,**” we must first see Jesus for who He is. He was not just announcing the coming of Jesus, he was telling them what to do. Jesus must become the most attractive distraction in our lives, in our churches, and in our world. Transformation will definitely take place when we look to Jesus.

Secondly, we must possess an incredible curiosity. They began immediately to follow Him. Jesus makes an inquiring statement. He stirred their curiosity. Jesus said unto them, “What seek ye?” John 1:38. In other words, “What do you want?” “What are you looking for?” They said unto Him, “Rabbi (*which is to say when translated, Master*), Where do you live?” John 1:39. The more we behold Him, the more we want to know Him. Imagine that in their very first conversation with Him, they recognized Him as their Master—as Lord of their lives. They decided He is not only good enough to save them but He is great enough to lead them. When we ‘come and follow,’ Jesus becomes the Master of our lives. He is indeed the answer to all our questions.

Thirdly, we must abide with Him. Upon His invitation, they abode with Him that day (John 1:39). The disciples spent the entire day with Jesus. Once we behold Him and enquire of Him, we will eventually spend time with Him. When last did you spend an entire day with Jesus? Jesus bids us “Learn of Me” in Matt 11:29. Learning takes place when we spend time with Jesus. Take time out to sit where Jesus sits, to go where Jesus goes, and to walk where Jesus walks, while just beholding the aura of His glory. Discipleship is not a two-week course in the classroom, it is a lifetime of walking and talking with Jesus and learning more and more of Him each day.

Finally, we must joyfully declare Him. Andrew, after spending the day with Jesus, ran to find his brother Simon Peter and said unto him, “We have found the Messiah” (John 1:40). What conviction! He is my Saviour. He is my Lord. I have found what I have been looking for. I was lost but I have found the good Shepherd.

Yes, Saints of SLM! Jesus is still using ordinary men and women like you and me to bring His kingdom come. Today, I invite you to discover the joy and experience the thrill that common men and women with an uncommon calling receive when they have an extraordinary encounter to “**Come and Follow!**”

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South Leeward Mission of Seventh-day Adventists

EDITOR'S NOTES: The articles in this publication have been revised slightly or updated to conform to the intended audience and nature of *Come and Follow*

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LTM Growth Stages

1. **Come and See.**
2. **Come and Follow.**
3. **Come and Be With**
4. **Go and Bear Fruit.**
5. **Go and Make Disciples**



COME & GO

July–Sept. 2017

A Quarterly Evangelism and Discipleship Resource for Church Leaders

...that I might
know Him.

Come and Be With Me!