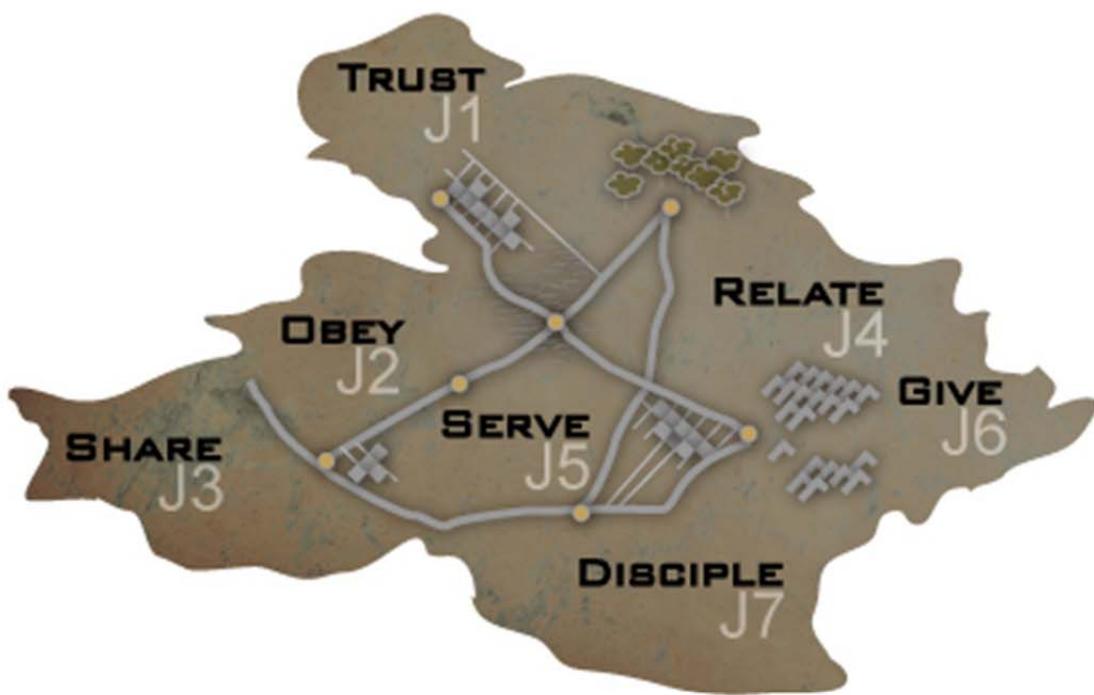


7 Journeys



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JOURNEY 7
TRAVELER TO GUIDE



“The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.”
(St. Augustine)

“A journey is like marriage. The certain way to be wrong is to think you control it.” (John Steinbeck)

“Traveling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and to lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things – air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky – all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it.” (Cesare Pavese)

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.” (Mark Twain)

“The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is at last to set foot on one’s own country as a foreign land.” (G. K. Chesterton)

Which of the quotes about travel above do you resonate with the most? Why?

- *St. Augustine*
- *John Steinbeck*
- *Cesare Pavese*
- *Mark Twain*
- *G. K. Chesterton*

For most, traveling—or being on a journey is an inviting change of scenery and a welcome change in life. The spiritual journey that God invites us on has the same kind of wonder and mystery that traveling the globe does. But as we’ve seen in *Journey 4: Isolation to Community*, God desires for us to journey together not by ourselves.

In fact, Jesus’ last words to his followers addressed what that journey should look like.

And having come near, Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘Given to me was all authority in heaven and on earth; having gone, then, disciple all the nations, (baptizing them - - to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all, whatever I did command you,) and lo, I am with you all the days -- till the full end of the age.’ (Matthew 28:19-20, Young’s Literal Translation)

Let’s do a little spade work!

Define the word “disciple” without using any resource.

Can you complete this phrase? _____ is a disciple of _____.
(This is not a trick question! Just think of someone who is an example of being a disciple in any area.)

Now take a look at a dictionary or visit www.dictionary.com and read the definition.

Dallas Willard says,

My definition: A disciple is a person who has decided that the most important thing in their life is to learn how to do what Jesus said to do. A disciple is not a person who has things under control, or knows a lot of things. Disciples simply are people who are constantly revising their affairs to carry through on their decision to follow Jesus. (Dallas Willard, “Rethinking Evangelism”, *Cutting Edge* magazine, Winter 2001)

What do you like or dislike about Willard’s definition?

Is it possible to be a follower of Christ (a Christian) and not a disciple? Please explain.

A quick review of the word “disciple” in the book of Acts reveals that it was the word of choice of those who followed Jesus. In Acts 11:26 we find that in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians which translated means “Christ’s ones.” The Bible doesn’t seem to make a distinction between types of people who claim to follow Jesus. There is an assumption that full devotion is normal for those who believe.

When describing the process of being a disciple, Dallas Willard suggests,

The ultimate outcome of this process is expressed by Paul the Apostle: “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” (Col. 3:17) And again: “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Cor. 10:31) My entire life is to be caught up in the life that Jesus Christ himself is now living on earth and will continue throughout eternity. And that is why being his apprentice is the greatest opportunity any human being ever has.

That is how grace possesses our whole life. That is how those “saved by grace through faith...are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10) (Dallas Willard, “How Does the Disciple Live?”, *Radix* magazine, Spring 2009, Vol. 34:3)

This is why in Matthew 28:20 Jesus says,

‘and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’ (NIV)

To claim Jesus as Savior is to commit to his ownership in our lives. That demands we become lifelong learners of His ways because what He says, thinks and wants matters most.

Here is the point of Matthew 28:18-20—**once we become disciples, our mission is reproducing ourselves.**

What are the key objections that arise within you when you hear this?

Paul says in Colossians 1:27,

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (NIV)

Despite your objections to lack of knowledge, inexperience, giftedness, life stage, maturity, etc, Paul is convinced that “Christ in you is the hope of glory.” And so was Jesus when he commanded that our chief activity was to “make disciples.”

Paul puts it this way in 2 Corinthians 5:16-20,

Because of this decision we don't evaluate people by what they have or how they look. We looked at the Messiah that way once and got it all wrong, as you know. We certainly don't look at him that way anymore. Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons! Look at it! All this comes from the God who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with himself through the Messiah, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins. *God has given us the task of telling everyone what he is doing. We're Christ's representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them. We're speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he's already a friend with you.* (The Message, *emphasis added*)

Here is another way of looking at it. You are the fruit hanging off the Christian tree! In you resides “Christ, the hope of glory.” It is God’s hope that your life will smell and taste good (Galatians 5:22-23) to those he has placed around you.

Most often fruit is a tasty seed packet! It has substance inside that is tasty to eat and small seeds that are used to grow more plants or trees that produce fruit. It is not a mistake that the Bible uses terms like fruit, seeds, vines, etc, to describe truths around the spiritual journey.

You then are God’s plan for the spreading of the message of hope to the world. But not just in a *Journey 3* sense as *receiver to giver* but in a *Journey 7* sense, moving from *traveler to guide*.

Fertility follows health. We all know the heartache of couples who struggle to get pregnant. The quest to understand what’s wrong is filled with self-doubt and tension. It is natural for a couple to reproduce and when that doesn’t happen, most couples suffer terribly.

Jesus gave his “Church”, you and I, a command that is reminiscent of the command to Noah and his children. “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.” On the Mount of Olives Jesus said, “As you go into the world, make disciples, spiritually reproduce.” As we have seen the sorry state of the church in the western world, God’s heart must be terribly crushed at the lack of reproduction. It is the lack of reproduction that prompted Dallas Willard to write the book, *The Great Omission, Reclaiming Jesus’ Essential Teachings on Discipleship*.

When you think of God’s expectation of you reproducing your spiritual journey in the lives of others, what are your primary emotions?

The Bible doesn’t leave us in the dark about what reproduction looks like. 2 Timothy 2:2 describes four generations of reproduction. See if you can find all four. Circle them in the verse.

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (NIV)

Paul was a great-grandfather. Four generations are accounted for in this verse. The certainty of reproduction is found in your children having children. Just as there is great joy in being a grandparent in the physical world, there is just as much joy connecting with God’s purposes in this world by having grandchildren in the spiritual sense.

Take a look at the verse again. *What did Paul ask Timothy to pass on?*

Paul says it another way in 1 Thessalonians 2:8,

We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. (NIV)

So reproduction involves sharing _____ and _____.

Paul asks Timothy to do what was done to/for him. Paul shared the truth of the gospel and his life with Timothy and Timothy did the same with others. Moving from traveler to guide is a simple process of doing unto others what was done to us. Taking the truth about Jesus and sharing it in the context of our lives.

Have you ever taught anyone something someone taught you? Make a list of things you've passed on and to whom.

Reflect for a few moments on each of the examples you listed above.

Were you an expert at that particular task?

Were there people who knew more than you?

Were there things about the task that you didn't know?

What qualified you to be the "discipler" on that occasion?

Was it that you possessed enough "truth" and "life" and that qualified you for the job?

Notice what Dallas Willard says about the church's past attempts to reproduce,

We have counted on preaching, teaching, and knowledge or information to form faith in the hearer, and have counted on faith to form the inner life and outward behavior of the Christian. But, for whatever reason, this strategy has not turned out well. The result is that we have multitudes of professing Christians who well may be ready to die, but obviously are not ready to live, and can hardly get along with themselves, much less with others. ("Spiritual Formation in Christ: A Perspective on What it is and How it Might be Done" Published in *The Great Omission*, San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006)

All the while most people who claim to be Christian miss the adventure of this life by refusing to partner with God by moving from traveler to guide.

What could this look like for you? Since you've been through the 7 Journeys you are at least one step further down the path than someone who hasn't even started. So, in effect, you could be their guide. You could get with them and do a 7-week study going through one Journey a week. Do you know everything there is to know about each journey? NO, and you never will. But you know something and that is enough to share it with someone. In fact, there is an amazing transformation that happens when you attempt to share with others, your understanding grows!

While serving a summer internship in Haiti several years ago, I (Roy) met a missionary who had been in Port-au-Prince for four and half years. He was trying to learn the Creole language. He was an engineer by training with an overactive desire for perfection. His idea of learning the language was to read and study by himself until he got it then go out and speak.

His major fear was making a mistake. So here I come, a totally shameless extrovert spending time with kids laughing at me trying to learn the language. Who do you think knew more Creole at the end of my three months in Haiti? Not hard to figure out is it?

The tragedy is that he and his family returned to the United States because he was intent on getting it perfect. Many people who are following Christ are making this same mistake. I have often heard, "I need to get my knowledge or my behavior or my ability to explain or my vocabulary perfect before I can share my life and the truth with others." And many have gone to meet their Heavenly Father without the joy of joining Him in this adventure. I can't imagine that meeting. Certainly joy for finally being home but a definite sadness in missing what God had intended.

Where you are right now, you are ready to reproduce! In you is "Christ the hope of glory." You are a tasty seed packet equipped to reproduce. God has done his job.

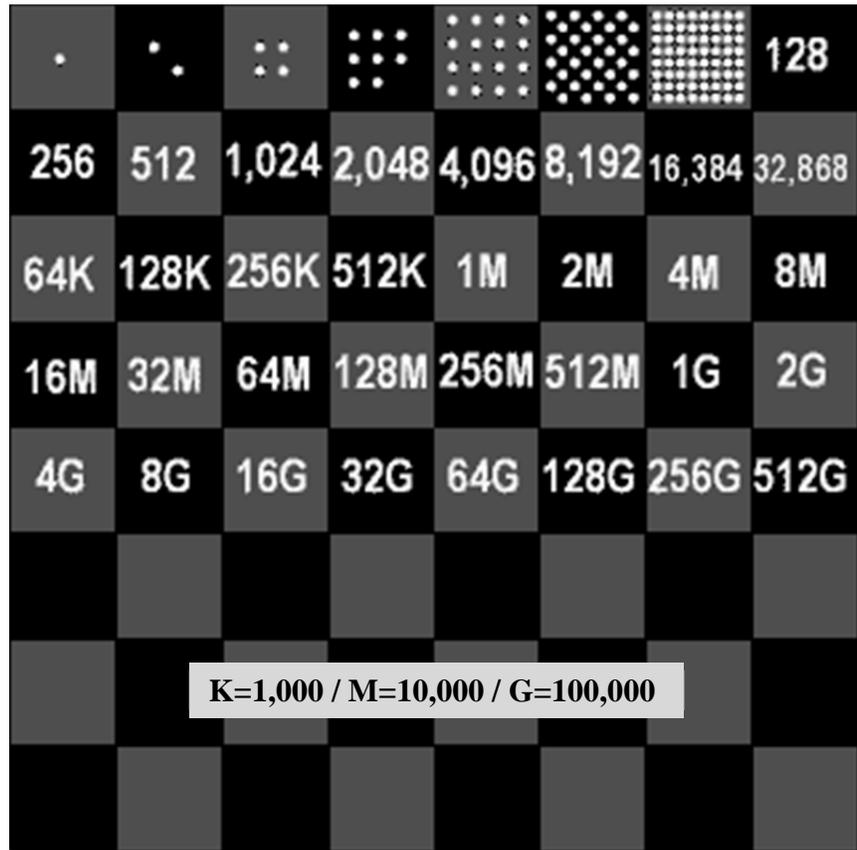
So let's list the objections you have to moving from traveler to guide?

In *Journey 5: Consumer to Producer*, we talked about the desire we each have to make an impact on our world. Most of us view our lives as important but not necessarily as eternally significant. The *church* south of the equator is growing rapidly simply because they have become obedient to the way of Jesus, reproduction. They aren't captive to an academic structure that values information over transformation. Simple people have become responsible for thousands of others beginning a journey with their Heavenly Father. They simply passed on to others what was passed on to them.

Remember the chessboard illustration from the *Journey 5* study guide? Take a look below.

So here's the way it works:

- The dot in the 1st box represents you.
- In the first year of your journey with Christ (2nd box), you take one person through the 7 Journeys.
- In the second year of your journey with Christ (3rd box), you take one person through the 7 Journeys as does your friend (from the 2nd box).
- In the third year (4th box), the four of you (from the 3rd box) each take one person through the 7 Journeys.
- And this repeats year after year.



Let's do the math! How long before your reach...

- Pleasant Valley?
- Liberty?
- Northland?
- Kansas City?
- Missouri?
- United States?
- World?

Multi-level marketing schemes didn't invent this, Jesus did. The reproduction of human lives infused with divine power was and is His Plan A. He has no Plan B. Now think about what we learned in *Journey 5* about the state of the Church in the western world. If this is what Jesus had in mind, then the present state of the church should cause us to question everything we've ever thought about the church.

Even if you have some *decay* in your down-line family, the number is still huge! It would certainly make Warren Buffet take notice if it were interest on investments.

Let's review:

Reproduction is normal for those who follow Christ and is simply sharing the *truth* I know and the *life* I am living.

Truth & Life

- *Journey 1: Earner to Heir* — transfer my trust to God and His work through Jesus on the Cross
- *Journey 2: Self Hearted to Soft Hearted* — begin to grow by seeing my inner world through the Cross
- *Journey 3: Receiver to Giver* — share this new life with those God has placed around me
- *Journey 4: Isolation to Community* — authentically and vulnerably connect my life with others who are on this journey
- *Journey 5: Consumer to Producer* — find places to serve and participate in the work God is doing in this world
- *Journey 6: Charitable to Extravagant* — give the resources God has entrusted to me to further His Kingdom
- *Journey 7: Traveler to Guide* — it isn't the information I know but the transformation I've experienced that allows me to guide my friends and enable them to reproduce themselves in the lives of others

Jesus has a moment with his disciples in Samaria which is recorded in John 4:34-35. After having a discussion with a woman at a well and having the towns people come out to meet him, he says this to his disciples,

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. (NIV)

When you think of your relational network, do you share Jesus' opinion? Why or why not?

Think about your spheres of influence:

- Neighborhood
- Workplace
- School
- Relatives
- Gym
- Coffee Shop
- Service Club

traveler to guide

Journey 7

Who can you engage in this lifestyle of reproduction? Remember, they don't have to have a relationship with Christ because Journey 1 will take them there!

I will pray for the people listed below that God would use me to introduce them to life as He intended it.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

This is both the end and the beginning of the *7 Journeys*. The end of your study and the beginning of a life committed to reproduction. You are God's *Plan A!*

He has resourced you and is committed to your life of reproduction. The only question that remains is, "Are you?"

What is your next step to a reproductive lifestyle?