

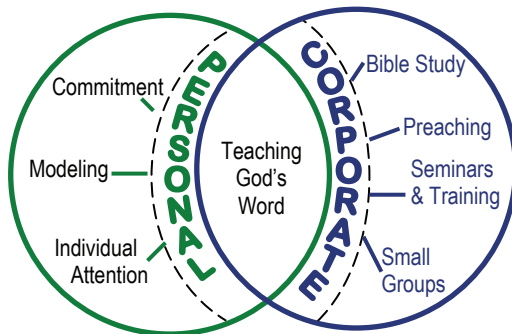
Balanced Discipleship

Balanced discipleship (Personal AND Corporate) is needed for healthy spiritual growth. They compliment each other. Most churches are focused on Corporate discipleship (i.e. teaching), and most leaders will admit they do not have the time or resources to spend individually with each new believer. They recognize, however, that something is missing—some additional ingredient is needed to produce healthy Christians. **What's the answer?** Training faithful men and women in the congregation to be Disciples, to provide the necessary individual attention. We do not believe that a person needs formal seminary or Bible school training or the gift of teaching in order to disciple others. All that's needed is faithfulness—to the Holy Spirit.

In addition to **Teaching God's Word**, Personal Discipleship consists of:

Personal Discipleship
(vitaly needed but largely neglected)

Corporate Discipleship
(needed but typically not sufficient by itself to produce the best results)

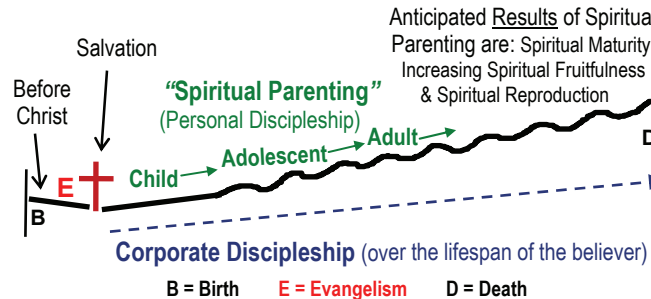


Commitment: A heart attitude of the Disciple towards the Disciple. It's more than just presenting God's Word. We want the Disciple to end up with the passion of the Disciple.

Modeling: Occurs mostly outside of formal teaching settings. The Disciple needs to be available and share personal experiences—both positive and negative.

Individual Attention: We don't want to just present the material in a mechanical sense. The Holy Spirit should be allowed to control the pace and direction, so He can address the needs of the Disciple.

Model for Biblical Discipleship



1 Thessalonians 2:3-13 is our Model for Spiritual Parenting (Biblical Discipleship)

1. They were Single-Minded in Purpose.

:3-6 ... we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed — God is witness — nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others ...

2. They cared for the believers as a Mother cares for her children.

:7-8 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing MOTHER tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

3. They became "Role Models" to the new believers.

:9-10 you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;

4. They gave individual attention and instruction as a Father.

:11-12 just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploing EACH ONE of you as a FATHER would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

5. The Word of God was an essential component of Discipleship.

:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

Spiritual Parenting

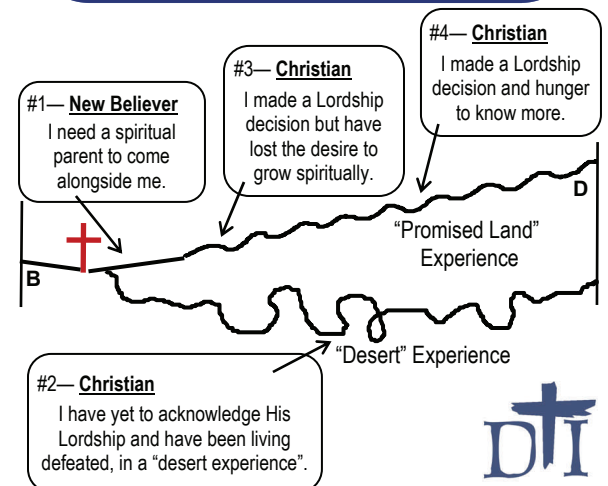
The Apostle Paul refers to himself as a nursing mother, treating each one with individualized personal attention. This supports the belief that God had these things written to help us understand that there is a parallel between the spiritual development of a new believer and the development of a human baby.

When parents bring a newborn baby home, they don't just set the baby down and say "Welcome to the family. Make yourself at home. The milk is in the 'fridge.'" They give lots of individual care and attention. God pictures the new believer as a spiritual baby that needs individual attention.

Disciple Training International has developed a special tool to help faithful believers who have a passion for the Lord and want to come alongside new believers. Or, it can be used with any Christian who wants to grow in their spiritual walk.

Use this diagnostic tool to determine where you are in your Christian life; then refer to our Resources page for additional assistance.

Where am I as a Christian?



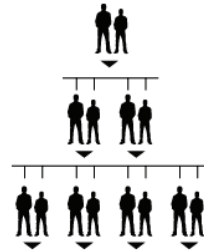
Resources

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Art and Toni Barkley served as missionaries for about 20 years in Bolivia with New Tribes Mission, where the groundwork for the importance of discipleship was formed. They observed that many new believers were enthusiastic at the beginning of their new life with the Lord, but after a time their zeal would often fade, and sometimes they could hardly be recognized as believers.

After returning to the U.S.A., they saw the same pattern and felt there was something missing. Art was also frustrated by the common perception that the Christian life is difficult. Why would the same God who designed the gift of salvation to be so easily received, turn around and make the Christian life so difficult to understand and live?

The Holy Spirit has directed Art over the last 12 years or so to develop "A Tool for Personal Discipleship" - the foundation of Discipler Training International.



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**A Guide to
Spiritual Parenting and
Spiritual Multiplication**

*A non-denominational discipleship ministry
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SPIRITUAL PARENTS

- As led by the Holy Spirit, we attempt to connect newer believers with spiritual parents.

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