



## BREATH OF LIFE: YOU, YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT, AND THE CHURCH

### “The Discipling Church” 1 Peter 2:1-3

#### Introduction

“Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in *The Cost of Discipleship*, “The call goes forth, and is at once followed by the response of obedience. The response of the disciples is an act of obedience, not a confession of faith in Jesus.”<sup>1</sup> Jesus calls and, because it is Jesus who is calling, people follow. “This response is a testimony to the absolute, direct, and unaccountable authority of Jesus.”<sup>2</sup> People ran along behind Jesus and He poured His word into their lives! The discipling church seeks to pour the word of God into the lives of Christ followers.

**Lesson Thought:** Discipleship is adherence to Christ, so it follows that discipling churches call people to lifelong Christ-loyalty.

#### I. Placing the Text in Our Context: 1 Peter 2:1-3

##### A. A Quick Review: Teaching (*Didache*)

1. The church must always assign the highest priority to the ministry of teaching because it was central in the teaching of Jesus and the early church.
2. After Pentecost, the young church devoted itself to the teaching of the Apostles.

##### B. Healthy Churches Grow with A Healthy Diet

1. Peter uses a number of images to describe the Christian life.
2. Churches “disciple” well when both aspects of the Christian life are emphasized. Here are several key elements to keep a church centered in a discipling ministry:
  - a. Conversion (1 Peter 1:21; cf. also worship; proclamation).
  - b. Rejection (2:1; “rid yourself of”; cf. Mark 7:21-22; Romans 1:29-31; 13:13; 1 Corinthians 5:10; teaching; fellowship). Vice lists were common in the ancient world and the New Testament.
  - c. Sanctification (2:2; “desire pure milk”; teaching; fellowship).
  - d. Dedication (2:3; “now that you have tasted = 1<sup>st</sup> class conditional; cf. Psalm 34:8). We are to exhibit a continuing appetite for spiritual food; teaching; fellowship)

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<sup>1</sup>Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship* (SCM Classics) (Kindle Locations 789-790). Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., (Kindle Locations 789-790).

## **II. Discipling People for the Work of the Ministry**

### **A. Status of the Church**

1. In Current Society
2. Different beliefs and attitudes shaped by non-Christian systems
3. Frustrated Proclamation
4. Reality – We may grow numerically but be empty of spiritual life.
5. Need

### **B. Steps Toward True Equipping Disciples**

1. Determine Needs
2. Become Missional
3. Seek to have a vital public witness (See II. A. 1.).

### **C. Geographic Teaching** (Teaching never only about edification – must be about evangelization)

1. Disciple members to reach people where they live and work (ministry; proclamation).
2. Sincerely obedient to his great commission (proclamation).
3. Unrestricted world focus in your local context (worship/Philippians 2:9-11).

### **D. Possess a Contagious Experience**

1. Share what we have been taught ourselves.
2. Draw others into the orbit of our own experience.
3. Expect new believers to reproduce immediately.
4. Flaw in discipleship classes – evangelism is often muted (John 15:1-2, 8).
5. “Inward journey must be outward” (John 17:18).

## **III. Shifting Focus in Discipling Toward Mentoring Disciples**

### **A. Origin of Mentoring**

1. Greek mythology
2. Christian discipling
  - a. Give up one’s will for that of Father’s.
  - b. Live sacrificially each day for Christ’s glory.
  - c. Strive to be obedient to Christ’s commands.

### **B. Mentor in general**

1. One of superior rank in an organization.
2. Authority in his or her field as a result of disciplined work, study, and experience.
3. Has a certain measure of influence in his or her chosen field.
4. Genuinely interested in a protégés growth and development.

## **III. Spiritual Gifts for a Discipling Church**

### **A. Knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:8)**

1. Bible Meaning

2. Bible Examples

3. Practical Application

**B. Prophecy (1 Corinthians 10:10, 28; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11)**

1. Bible Meaning

2. Biblical Examples

3. Practical Application

**C. Teaching (Ephesians 4:11; Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29)**

1. Bible Meaning

2. Bible Examples

3. Practical Application