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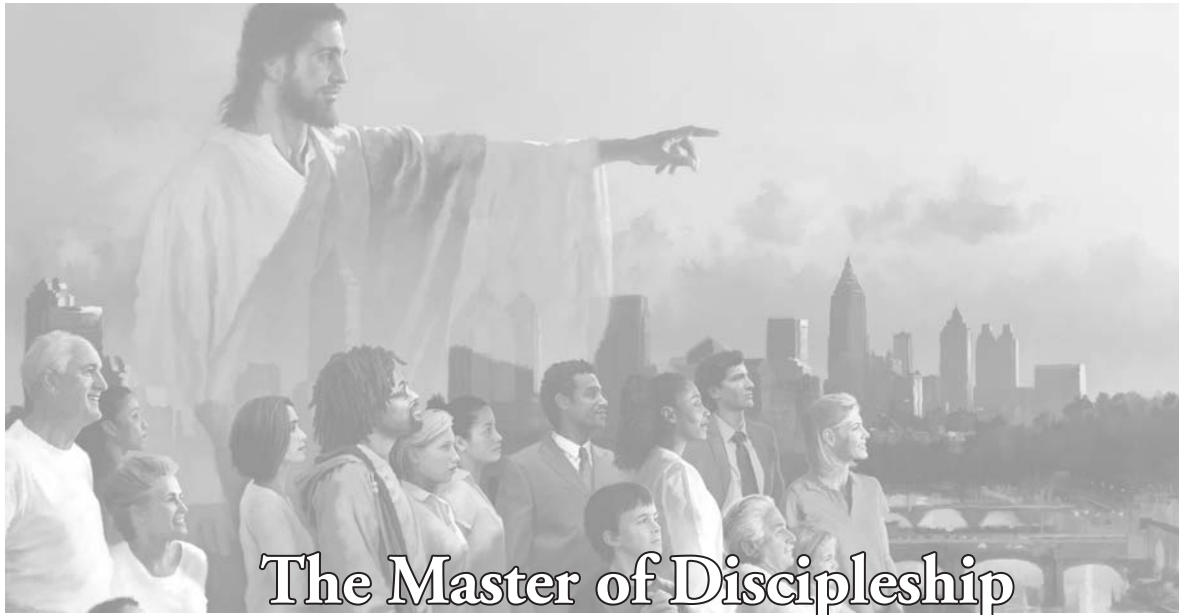
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The Master of Discipleship

In the beginning God created a perfect, sinless world. Human beings enjoyed the privilege of honoring, worshiping, and following their Creator. Life should have continued thus for eternity.

Christ's sacrifice provided our only hope. Calvary's redemption offers us freedom and our only escape from insignificance and meaninglessness. Sinful humans are offered liberty, forgiveness, and the opportunity for restoration to their original state.

God beckons believers everywhere to become heralds of this matchless grace—ambassadors who communicate this divine redemption to those enslaved by Satan, calling them to follow, worship, and praise their Maker. Christ's example of disciple-making must become the model that believers follow in answering the Great Commission (*Matt. 28:19, 20*).

Therefore, the topic of our quarter is discipleship. Though the term has many facets, in this study we will look at discipleship as the process by which we become followers of Jesus and, as such, better soul winners.

After all, Jesus is every Christian's example, especially in the work of soul winning. Is it illogical to suppose that the keys to effective evangelism are discovered in popular psychology, mass-marketing techniques, and elaborate promotional programs rather than in following the simple example of Christ?

How did Jesus attract His followers? What can we learn from Christ's example that would enable us to more effectively lead others to Him? How can we fulfill the Great Commission?

How did Jesus appeal to such diverse groups: the wealthy and the destitute, the religious and the irreligious, the politically powerful and the powerless? How did Jesus unlock callous hearts, inspire hope among outcasts, gently awaken the child's tender heart, and leap over ethnic and social barriers in order to make disciples? How did He penetrate the fortresses of wealth and power, open the cocoons of spiritually arrogant religious leaders, or revive hope among those fighting terminal illnesses?

These are not merely discussion questions that stimulate intellectual interchange; rather, they are a crucial area of study for Christians whose passionate desire is to follow Jesus' example of guiding lost sheep to the loving Shepherd.

Paul also challenged believers to follow him as he followed Christ. It is unthinkable that believers in the twenty-first century should accept a lower standard than that which Paul established in the first century.

In the end, following Jesus vastly exceeds the limiting view that discipleship equals methods for correcting aberrant behaviors and habits, however important these changes are. A comprehensive understanding of discipleship is incomplete until it incorporates a passionate desire to follow Jesus and, as a supernatural result, a passionate desire to lead others to Christ, as well.

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Or, as we have so eloquently been told: "No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. . . . There will be an intensity of desire to follow in the path that Jesus trod."—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 78, 79.

Thus, our subject for this quarter.

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How to Use This Teachers Edition

Get Motivated to Explore, Apply, and Create

We hope that this format of the teachers edition will encourage adult Sabbath School class members to do just that—explore, apply, and create. Each weekly teachers lesson takes your class through the following learning process, based on the Natural Learning Cycle:

1. Why is this lesson important to me? (Motivate);
2. What do I need to know from God’s Word? (Explore);
3. How can I practice what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Apply); and
4. What can I do with what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Create).

And for teachers who haven’t had time to prepare during the week for class, there is a one-page outline of easy-to-digest material in “The Lesson in Brief” section.

Here’s a closer look at the four steps of the Natural Learning Cycle and suggestions for how you, the teacher, can approach each one:

Step 1—Motivate: Link the learners’ experiences to the central concept of the lesson to show why the lesson is relevant to their lives. Help them answer the question, Why is this week’s lesson important to me?

Step 2—Explore: Present learners with the biblical information they need to understand the central concept of the lesson. (Such information could include facts about the people; the setting; cultural, historical, and/or geographical details; the plot or what’s happening; and conflicts or tension of the texts you are studying.) Help learners answer the question, What do I need to know from God’s Word?

Step 3—Apply: Provide learners with opportunities to practice the information given in Step 2. This is a crucial step; information alone is not enough to help a person grow in Christ. Assist the learners in answering the question, How can I apply to my life what I’ve learned?

Step 4—Create: Finally, encourage learners to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (*James 1:22*). Invite them to make a life response to the lesson. This step provides individuals and groups with opportunities for creative self-expression and exploration. All such activities should help learners answer the question, With God’s help, what can I do with what I’ve learned from this week’s lesson?

When teachers use material from each of these four steps, they will appeal to most every student in their class: those who enjoy talking about what’s happening in their lives, those who want more information about the texts being studied, those who want to know how it all fits in with real life, and those who want to get out and apply what they’ve learned.