

FOLLOWING JESUS TOGETHER:

PART 3 - SEVEN PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR EVERY DISCIPLE

Welcome to part 3 of our series designed to help you know Jesus and experience authentic Christian life. Here, we will focus on seven basic skills every disciple of Jesus needs to master for a fruitful life in the Kingdom of God. (This study guide has 9 pages).

Denis and Marianne introduce the seven practical skills here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1x5267OK0Pc>

The prerequisite for this equipping study is to understand and experience the six elementary teachings about Jesus in Hebrews 6:1-3. You can find that study at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dZbK5YGLCZjnPAPhL7Xt639151QAomMW/edit>

Having laid a solid foundation, here are seven basic skills a disciple needs to master in order to love and connect with God and love others by proclaiming his Kingdom:

1. How to have a daily time with God to worship, hear his voice, and apply his Word.
2. How to share your story and the Kingdom Gospel with power and confidence.
3. How to start and lead a Discovery Bible Study with unbelievers.
4. How to make a disciple: invite someone to emigrate from Satan's grip into Jesus' Kingdom.
5. How to prepare a disciple for water and Spirit baptism and Christian community.
6. How to lead communion at home or in a small group as an act of cleansing and worship.
7. How to teach someone to obey everything that Jesus commanded.

These seven skills are basic requirements for walking as disciples of Jesus - being his redeemed worshippers, his friends, his ambassadors, his witnesses, his fishers of men, his servants, his royal priests, and his disciple makers. These are all tasks that every follower of Jesus must know how to do - these things are not reserved for church officers - every dad, every mom, and every mature Christian will be effective - through practice - in doing these things well.

1. How to have a daily time with God to worship, hear his voice, and apply his Word.

Denis and Marianne briefly introduce having a daily time with God:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSXH6C5huco>

There is no doubt that starting each day with total focus on Jesus is a common practical priority for every follower of Jesus. The master himself did this daily - very early in the morning. (Mark 1:35) The devotional works of believers throughout the ages point to this reality over and over. It is the "firstfruits principle" of giving the Lord the best of the first. (2 Chronicles 31:5, 1 Corinthians 16:2)

Commit yourself to give undivided attention to God. Turn your phone off or leave it in another room. Ask God to use the time as he pleases. There are many ways to implement this daily time with God. It will vary by personality and temperament. It will develop over time and change to fit the season you are in with the Lord. Abba will “change things up” for our good from time to time. The key is to listen to the Lord and to do what he says. Read James 1:22.

To get you started, here is a simple model based on James 4:7-8.

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.

A. Submit to God: "Lord, I surrender myself, my will, and my thoughts to you now. Not my will, but your will be done. Lord, please quiet my thoughts now.

1. Worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Open your heart to him. Give him this time. Gaze on his beauty. Remember his deeds, praise him. Get in the yoke with Jesus and settle in.

2. Forgive anyone God brings to mind. Mk. 11:25 "When you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him . . ."

3. Confess any sin God brings to mind. Ps. 66:18 "If I had cherished sin in my heart the Lord would not have listened."

4. Ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18)

B. Resist the devil: "I command Satan to leave my presence in the name of Jesus". Matthew 16:23 "Get behind me, Satan!".

C. Draw near to God, and ask Him to draw near to you: "Come Holy Spirit" 2 Cor. 3:17 "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom" Ps. 141:1 "O Lord, I call to you; come quickly to me"; Ps. 139:7 "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" Read a portion of Scripture as God leads you. Ask God how he wants you to apply that Scripture to knowing him better, to grow in wisdom, and to obey more thoroughly.

D. Quietly listen: Dial down, “unplug and empty” yourself of your busy thoughts so that you receive the Lord’s thoughts, “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16) -- wait in silence for a few minutes and believe that God will speak to you James 1:5-8 "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all.... But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt." Look at the story of Samuel in 1 Sam 3.

1. Wait for the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit (I Kings 19:12-13), a thought that gently surfaces, a Scripture passage, a picture that flashes in your mind, or an impression (a vaguely perceived thought or picture). Look at your calendar for the day and ask God to speak into the day’s planned events. Listen for how God may want to shape your day!

2. Remember that you will often feel uncertain whether a thought is from you or the Lord until it can be confirmed. Jer. 32:8b "Then I knew that it was the word of the Lord. ... " which suggests that before this point Jeremiah did not know for sure if what he had was the word of the Lord. Don't get discouraged if you don't get anything. Sometimes we need a few tries to learn to dial

down and quiet ourselves enough to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit (Job 33:14 "For God does speak -- now one way, now another--though man may not perceive it.")

3. Keep a "parking lot" page nearby to scribble distracting thoughts or other priorities that surface. You can deal with these when your time with Jesus is finished.

E. Discern and weigh what you received in waiting and prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not put out the Spirit's fire; 20 do not treat prophecies with contempt. 21 Test everything. Hold on to the good. 22 Avoid every kind of evil. NIV

1. Does it honor Jesus? (1 Cor 12:3)
 2. Would Jesus do or say that? (1 Cor 11:1)
 3. Is it in harmony with Scripture? (Isaiah 8:20)
 4. Does it build you and your prayer partners up in your faith? (1 Cor 14:3)
 5. Does your close community believe this is from God? (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21)
- Consider keeping a journal to help you remember what he reveals to you! (Ps 105:5, Phil 1:3)

F. Do it! Obey what you hear fully, and immediately! – observe, learn, and repeat the cycle! You may be led to share the Gospel with someone at work, or to pray for your lost friends and family members. You may get a word of encouragement for someone you plan to meet that day. Whatever you received from the Lord, put it into action. The more you obey and prove yourself faithful, the more God will give you. See Matthew 25:28-29.

Keep listening to God. Let him fill you with his Spirit so you can be filled with wonder and love, which will mean you will be talking about Jesus all day, every day, naturally and supernaturally! He will direct you in how to know him. Some seasons may be Bible intensive. Others may be about intercession, worship, even walking or running as you pray. Follow his lead and don't overthink everything! This advice may encourage you:

"So I made an assumption. I decided to just sit still, listen to God, and assume that whatever came to my mind was either from Him or allowed by Him for some special purpose that I was probably not aware of. If the thoughts that came to me were temptations, I would assume they reflected an area of weakness that God wanted me to be honest about with Him. I didn't approach this passively. I took every thought captive to the obedience of Christ and dealt with everything that came to my mind. To my surprise I spent an hour in prayer for the first time in my life and it was refreshing." Dr. Neil T. Anderson in the introduction to *A Guide for Listening and Inner-Healing Prayer: Meeting God in Broken Places* by Rusty Rustenbach.

2. How to share your story and the Kingdom Gospel with power and confidence.

Denis and Marianne introduce thoughts on sharing your story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4x5IG4CIUw>

As we are filled with the Spirit day by day through our intimate time with Jesus, we will naturally want to talk about Jesus with others. As we meet people, we should talk about Jesus often, even if it is just a brief mention of a Jesus story or Jesus saying that struck you from your morning reading. This is crucial so that you are making friendships and building relationships that include your best friend from the start. It's also what Scripture tells us to do! Look at Deuteronomy 6:4-9!

Some have said that we need to "earn the right" to talk about Jesus, but that often leads to a feeling of "bait and switch" if our love for Jesus comes out of left field several months into a relationship. Also, by speaking of Jesus all the time, people know who to come to for help when they may have a need for prayer or comfort! (Resource: "Speaking of Jesus" by Carl Medearis)

Beyond a daily habit of sharing Jesus, we are told to be ready to give a reason for our hope to people who may ask, according to 1 Peter 3:15. Preparing your story or testimony is an important step to prepare yourself to share Jesus more deeply with others in a personal and natural way. A good model to follow comes from the way Paul shares his faith in the book of Acts (see Acts 22:1-21 and 26:1-23). The format follows the basic outline of who I was before Jesus, how I met Jesus and experienced the Gospel, and who I am in Jesus.

When you share what Jesus has done for you, you can speak with confidence and authority because this is your story. It is also good to prepare a brief version, say two minutes or less, so you can share it with someone with whom you may have little time, or to invite further discussion and questions.

Here, as an example, is my two minute story:

I began as a poor kid and rose quite unexpectedly to the upper ranks of one of the largest corporations in the world. I had virtually unlimited wealth, power and success, a beautiful wife and four wonderful kids.

One day, a massive earthquake devastated Kobe Japan and almost killed me. This near-death event forced me to evaluate my life. I was successful on the outside but really depressed and guilty inside.

On a retreat in Hong Kong, I experienced Jesus for the first time. How? In the stories of business people that Jesus had changed. Jesus felt less religious and more personal to me than ever before - and for the first time I heard about him being a King over a Kingdom.

Reading Paul's letter to the Romans, I realized that my depression was due to my violation of God's law. I was amazed that Jesus came to deal with my guilt by dying on the cross for my sins. His resurrection proved he was really God's son!

I asked Jesus to forgive me and this transformed my life. I have been set free from my guilt, a controlling personality, a sexual addiction, alcoholism, adultery and a lack of vision.

My wife forgave me and we prayed to have a family full of vision, love, generosity and freedom. Five years later, I left my job to serve Jesus as a herald of his Kingdom.

Our children are walking with Jesus and changing the world in their generation. I have redirected my time and wealth to the vision Jesus has for the world - his coming Kingdom.

In Nigeria a few years back, we prayed for sick people in a small village. Many people were healed. A 10 year old boy deaf from birth received his hearing when I put my fingers in his ears and asked Jesus to open them.

I see people transformed by Jesus often. They are healed from cancer, depression and anxiety. Jesus is healing marriages, families and our neighborhood.

Jesus is also inviting you to follow him today. Would you and your family like to read God's word to find out how the amazing story of Jesus could change your life?

Notice that the story includes life before Jesus, the Gospel of the Kingdom, life after Jesus, and some kind of invitation and next step. Don't worry if you receive a rejection. Our job is to spread seed liberally and his job is to show us people of peace! He alone controls the harvest. As we abide in him however, and obey, he has promised us he will produce much fruit. John 15:1-5.

We should also be ready to share the Gospel in a few minutes. This can be shared after the two minute story or in the next conversation. The key is to ask good questions. One way of sharing the Gospel that we have found effective is what is known as the "Three Circles" approach.

In this approach, it is recommended to lead in from questions. Watch this three minute video for a great example of using this tool:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYU-a2wlbxc&feature=emb_logo

You will note that the presenter starts with questions. He then proceeds to an interactive approach that can start with a question something like this: "Can I show you a picture that has really helped me understand the message of Jesus?" The three circles can be used on a napkin or small piece of paper, which makes it really natural to use anywhere. Also, since the tool uses the idea of brokenness, it makes it easy to start with whatever problem or issue that may come up in conversation, which is all around us and in each of our lives.

Practice often. Ask Jesus to give you people with whom you can share this. Once a person responds positively to the Gospel, we can treat them like people of peace. Of course some will be more fruitful than others. We are ready to engage them in a Discovery Bible Study!

3. How to start and lead a Discovery Bible Study (DBS).

Denis and Marianne introduce how to start a Discovery Bible Study (DBS) here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5w2beOnsuY>

Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs. (See Luke 10:1-12) Their target was to look for a person who promotes peace - or a person of peace. This person welcomes you, opens their home and their network to you and wants to hear about the Word of God. Once they hear your story and the

Kingdom Gospel, people of peace will be desiring to know more. They will also be willing to gather family and friends. If you don't find a person of peace, don't waste any time - move on with the Kingdom message which may cause change later on. Jesus wants us to sow the Kingdom Gospel liberally, but not to waste our time on bad soil. Let's stay focused on the high yield respondents. (Read Mark 4:1-20)

So the first step is to go in pairs whenever possible and take your story and the Kingdom Gospel to people far from God. You can take an hour every Saturday and go out with your wife and kids, asking God for people to connect with and share with. Or you can talk to people at work, share your story and then start a Discovery study with any people of peace you find.

The Discovery Bible Study is a methodology that has been proven effective all around the world, because it forms people's lives according to the story of God and in conformity with his Word. Some groups with little spiritual background or deep training in other religions start in Genesis. Other groups have found starting with Psalm 1 and moving more quickly through key stories to be effective. Others with previous church background find that starting in the Gospels works to introduce people to Jesus as he really is.

Discovery Bible Study - typical agenda and suggested questions

1. Opening the meeting

What are you thankful for this week? *(Leads to thanksgiving and worship)*

What problems do you have this week? *(Leads to prayer)*

Is there any way the group can help? *(Leads to service)*

2. Review from last week *(Leads to accountability)*

Did you do your application for last week's story? *(Accountability for obedience)*

Did you share with the person you identified? *(Accountability for multiplication)*

3. Discover - read this week's passage.

Ask someone to retell the passage in their own words. *(Aids memory for sharing later)*

Ask the group: "Do you agree with their retelling? Was something added or left out?"

If something was missed, ask, "What else is in the passage?" - reread as needed.

If something was added, ask, "Where did you find that in the passage?"

Reread the passage, if necessary. *(Builds group cohesion and understanding)*

4. Obedience - discussing and selecting application

What does this passage teach us about God? *(Promotes revelation)*

What does this passage teach us about people? *(Promotes examination)*

How will I apply and obey this passage? *(Promotes obedience and transformation)*

5. Sharing with others

Who will you share this passage with before we meet again? *(promotes multiplication)*

Can we invite them to the group or invite them to start their own group? *(multiplication)*

4. How to make a disciple: invite someone to emigrate from Satan's grip into Jesus' Kingdom.

Denis and Marianne introduce the skill of asking someone to follow Jesus at the link below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UDsR7FBTm0>

At this point in the process, you may have individuals ready to pledge allegiance to Jesus and commit themselves to a life of following the King. Ideally, the entire discovery group will desire to follow Jesus and to become citizens in his Kingdom. It is important at this point that they do not join a typical church community, because in most cases that community will not be focused on discovery and obedience to reaching others. To preserve the DNA of Scriptural authority and obedience, we will want them to continue to live their lives in the way that they were welcomed to the Kingdom - through the obedient practice of Luke 10 and all the things they have learned.

At this point, the best thing they can do is to complete the study from Hebrews 6:1-3, using the discovery method that they have been following so far - looking at the Scriptures provided for each step. That study can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dZbK5YGLCZjnPAPhL7Xt639151QAomMW/edit>

Following the foundational study, the group will be ready to minister to others. Their next discovery assignment will be to read the book of Acts together, spending 10 weeks on each of the first 10 chapters. This will show them how to be a church together and how to keep reaching out in the power of the Holy Spirit. They will apply the same foundations and the same seven skills they have learned from you.

5. How to prepare a disciple for water and Spirit baptism and Christian community.

Denis and Marianne share on preparing someone for water and Spirit baptisms here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kw4XwmQd2Zo>

As you know from the study you completed in Hebrews 6:1-3, water baptism is a matter of obedience to Jesus by a believer who has understood and received the Gospel of the Kingdom. As a baptized believer, you have the authority in the Kingdom - gained by faith and obedience - to baptize another new believer. You do not need a pastor or elder.

Preparing another new believer for baptism is essentially a process of helping them learn what you have learned. Simply share this Discovery Bible Study with them and have them complete the study on their own. Use this link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BSI7PdugOGFD51cRIk3WVnKkEbjiV7ir2gD4wpzj_el/edit

When the disciple understands water baptism, take them through the prayer for spiritual cleansing here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K5JlZKQ9ag0Q3QBR4EU1P0mw6gGUgvRc/edit?usp=share_link&oid=111907018244671604215&rtpof=true&sd=true

Then they may need deeper instruction on the Holy Spirit:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ncgHB9dp-ic5Hm3XQALosK5JSOrSRFpg/edit>

When the disciple is ready, plan for their baptism and get an experienced prayer team to join you. Get in the water and pray over your disciple. Cut off all ties to the kingdom of darkness and pray for your disciple. Invite them to share their decision to follow Jesus, to forsake the enemy's kingdom and to share why they are being baptized. Speak over them the words of Jesus' command - based on your declaration of faith, I baptize you in the name and character of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. When they come up out of the water, bless them and have the prayer team lay hands on for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

6. How to lead communion at home or in a small group as an act of cleansing and worship.

Denis and Marianne introduce the skill of leading communion here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzUGJl7ytF8>

The 15 steps below are for a longer time together like a special meal. In a more abbreviated time available for communion, feel free to skip the steps marked with an asterisk.

1. Remember that as a follower of Jesus, you are a royal priest, authorized to lead communion.
2. Prepare the wine/juice and bread. Pray over the elements and place them on your table.
3. Pray and invite the presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- *4. It can be fun for kids to light candles, symbolizing God's presence.
- *5. Have someone read Psalm 139: 23-24
6. Invite everyone to ponder and confess their sins to the Father privately.
- *7. Invite anyone willing to share one sin from this week (or this day).
8. Have someone read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29
9. Ask someone what the bread represents. Break it. (OK to say that must have hurt!!!!)
10. Ask someone what the juice represents. Pass the cup (dip bread in cup and wait)
11. Share the good news that Jesus' death on the cross pays for all our sins. Eat together!
- *12. Have someone read 1 John 1:9 and celebrate that we are all clean! (Cheering OK)
13. Give thanks for our forgiveness and freedom. (More cheering OK)
- *14. Sing a simple song together - the Doxology for example.
- *15. Decide who gets to blow candles out. (or re-light candles so every child can have a turn)

Parents, you are the ones to decide about the ages at which your kids will partake of communion. In my experience, seeing my grandchildren partaking and learning the Gospel with weekly repetition has been very encouraging. Hopefully, one day they will really understand and receive the Good News for themselves. It is also fine to have them abstain until they understand, as long as they participate. The key is that we are rehearsing the nuggets of the Gospel often. Especially on days or weeks when behaviors offer object lessons in the pain of sin and the cost and wonder of the Cross.

7. How to teach someone to obey everything that Jesus commanded.

Denis and Marianne introduce a great resource on the commands of Christ here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpkDj44kmdE>

Let's remind ourselves of the Great Commission entrusted to us by Jesus in Matthew 28:

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We have learned to be with Jesus and walk in his authority and power. We have gone in his authority to engage the world around us, in our families, workplaces, neighborhoods. We can obey Jesus right where we are, we don't have to go on a mission trip (but they are great!)

Then we have baptized them into the character and nature of Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. All that remains is to teach them to obey all that Jesus commanded us! Fortunately, we have been modeling obedience all the way through our process so we hopefully have preached the Kingdom Gospel and we have reaped true Kingdom disciples. The second fortunate reality is that Jesus did not give us an infinite number of commands.

My friend developed a simple but robust and challenging guide through the 45 key commands of Jesus. By walking through this study with another disciple, you can dig deep into the relevant areas of your life and apply and obey all the commands of Jesus. It will take practice and repetition, but mastering these basic commands represents the practical theological, moral and ethical teaching of Jesus. And since he has commanded that we master these commands, and promised his presence, any serious student will be brought to success by the power of Jesus, because he keeps his Word. By teaching another disciple, your own walk with Jesus will be strengthened and matured. Click [here](#) for that study guide.

Conclusion: We hope these resources will help you grow in your journey with Jesus and we look forward to hearing how God touches your life. May the Father bless your journey with Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit!