I. The Purpose of this Profile

The purpose of this document is to provide the biblical and philosophical thinking for a Holistic View of discipleship ministry and practice called, The Perfecting Discipleship Model. It is NOT all-inclusive (this is already too long) but it does provide the Framework for discussion, teaching, and leadership development of the Church-wide Discipleship Ministry Model presented here.

This document has helped me to crystallize my thoughts and ideas and provides opportunity to think, write, plan and embrace discipleship concepts as applied to our modern day situation and West Angeles Church. This document is NOT a critique or analysis of the past or present wonderful programs of the West Angeles Church Discipleship Department or its leaders. It is just my thinking “out loud” at the keyboard about discipleship from a Holistic perspective.

Herein are some seminal thoughts for meditation and action. This Profile is at once scriptural, didactic, reflective and action-based. Most of the Scripture investigations are not new, just reminders of our task and Mission. There are some few hints at some general processes and ideas to be considered, but there is no full fleshing out of the implementation of these concepts since that is not the primary purpose of this Profile. That kind of activity can only be done with discussions and interaction with leadership and with the people to whom we minister.

It is hoped that this profile will offer some motivation concerning the importance of discipleship as the believer is being perfected in his or her walk for Christ and I trust it will act as a catalyst for new ideas for growing believers in this modern age. Part of this Profile may also be utilized as a basic introduction to discipleship principles.

II. Definitions of Discipleship

The word ‘disciple’ is the English form of the Latin word discipulus, which is derived from discere, which means to learn. From this term we expand the meaning to learner, pupil, follower, scholar. These are the same basic meanings of the New Testament Greek word, mathētēs. [New Testament scholar, Craig Keener, adds to the description of disciple as one who is memorizing and living according to the teachings of the Master.]
It indeed is one who is disciplined in the way of his leader or lord. Jesus adds three more key elements to this basic definition. They are: 1. Total Commitment, 2. Obedience to His Lordship, and 3. Service to the “little people.” So, for the Church of Jesus Christ, discipleship is the process by which we become more capable, committed and competent followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is through the spiritual disciplines like daily devotions, fasting, prayer, meditation, church attendance and the reading of the Word of God that we can live the Word in our daily lives. As we also seek to grow through our local churches and the wider fellowship of the believers, we will be well on the way to becoming effective disciples of Jesus Christ. (The above is quoted from an article from Bishop J. W. Macklin, The Disciple and the Church.)

Bishop Macklin was the Chief Production Head for the COGIC Centennial Discipleship Bible. I was fortunate enough to be a part of the production of this Discipleship Bible project as its Chief Editor.

Defining Disciple (KH)

A disciple is one who is disciplined in living out the lifestyle and teachings of his or her Master Teacher and Lord.

Some MODERN DAY WORDS for the older word “disciple” would be – fan, supporter, believer, groupie, advocate, devotee, enthusiast and adherent. Most of these words will fit depending upon the context. However, I like the words Supporter, Enthusiast, Believer, Advocate and Adherent. There are even contexts in which the word “groupie” is not necessarily negative or too fanatical. (A Jesus groupie – makes me think of the 1960’s and the Jesus hippies movement. – Sorry for the digression.)

THREE CORE DEFINITIONS:
What a disciple does and believes.

❖ A Disciple – Embraces the teaching and lifestyle of his or her teacher.
❖ A Disciple – Assists in Spreading the teachings of his or her teacher.
❖ A Disciple – Is an Active Adherent of his or her teacher.

I like especially the word “adherent” for it seems to encompass a variety of related words. Seven are below.

Seven Meanings of the word, adherent, for a description of a disciple
1. Supporter: Worker and Christian steward of God’s resources
2. Believer: A Pisteuō Believer (Pisteuō – Greek meaning, one with a passionate commitment to a person, cause or idea)
3. Advocate, Proponent - Makes Other Disciples: Is vocal in sharing the teachings (Good News). The disciple tells others about his or her teacher and the teacher’s wisdom, knowledge and life. The disciple also shares the personal effects of these teachings upon his or her life.
4. Devotee: Is fully loyal to the mission of the teacher.
5. Enthusiast: Gladly shares in the joy of the teacher’s teachings.
6. Member of a Community: Enjoys the camaraderie of assembly with other disciples and as such, the disciple wants to multiply the number of the community’s members.
7. Living Example, Living Proof of the Teacher’s Teachings: This shows that the teachings of the Teacher do work and are indeed true. The disciple’s life change and personal improvement are Proof Positive of the effects of the teacher’s power to affect lives.

All of these descriptions above apply to the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
DISCIPLESHIP PHILOSOPHIES AND IDEAS

Today, the phrase most in fashion is “Spiritual Formation.”

Traditional Ideas
- Spiritual Growth through Personal Evangelism
- Spiritual Growth through Personal Bible Study
- Spiritual Growth through Personal Devotional Studies
- Spiritual Growth through Personal Mentorship
- Spiritual Growth through Personal Spiritual Maturity (personal piety)

Current Concepts – Psychological and Social Impact Emphases
- Spiritual Growth through a personal therapeutic faith community using Christ-likeness, a biblical pneuma-psychology and a therapeutic process for development. (Peter Holmes)
- Resurrection-Discipleship-Justice-Discipleship means also declaring and working for justice. (Thorward Lorenzen)
- The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics – Discipleship also means participating in politics and political discussion. (Jurgen Moltmann)

Ill. The Goals, Aims and Definitions of Discipleship (A Holistic View)

Simply Defining Christian Discipleship
- Perfecting Believers
- Perfecting Believers for Service
- Perfecting Disciplined Believers Serving Christ More Effectively both in the Church and in the World as God’s Representatives.

The Goal of Christian Disciples

The goal of discipleship is to foster and provide an environment for the complete maturity (maturity in every way) of the believer in Christ. It aims to make the individual a better follower, learner and student of Jesus Christ.

More simply, discipleship’s goal is to Perfect Disciples (Believers)

How to Perfect Disciples – Program Structural Elements

⇒ One way the perfecting of disciples will be accomplished is by assisting disciples to find their gifts to serve the Church and the world. (Self-assessments, Other Self-growth Instruments)

⇒ Another way to perfect disciples is by providing an atmosphere where their maturity can be enhanced through fellowship and both formal and informal educational experiences. (Classroom, fellowships, teleclasses, teleconference fellowships, webinars, and all the available Internet social media.)

⇒ Encouraging personal discipleship growth by offering resources for their development in a practical way. Believers in this instructive experiential milieu will be able to grow in Christ and serve the community when they are NOT in classes or even a church environment. (Recommended books, readings, CDs, DVDs, other media formats)

Definition of Holistic

Holistic - from the Greek word, *holos*, meaning all, entire, the total, complete. It is the whole, complete integration of all aspects of life and the interdependence of each area of life contributing to (or distracting from) the full growth of the individual.
Holistic Discipleship, An Attempted Definition

A Holistic Discipleship – An all-inclusive human development growth of spiritual, personal, social and relational disciplines that assist the believer to serve Christ more effectively both in the Church and in the world as God’s representatives on Earth.

This holistic view of Christian development sees Christian formation as more than only “spiritual” maturity and growth. It also views discipleship formation as the all-pervasive influence of the Holy Spirit empowering the believer at every point of the human condition and concern.

A More Formal Definition (perhaps too formal)

Holistic or Gestalt Discipleship is an existential and experiential formation of the Christian disciple that focuses upon the individual’s experience and relationship with God in daily walk within the environmental and social contexts in which the disciple of Christ lives and the daily relationships encountered. It is in this “worldly” environment the Christian disciple must practice self-regulation through spiritual life adjustments in EVERY AREA of life (holistic living) because he or she is indeed a Disciplined One, shaped, transformed and being transformed by the Spirit of God for daily service to Christ. It is the continual transformation (progressive sanctification) of the disciple into the image of Christ for service to the Church and world (Galatians 4:19, Romans. 8:29, Colossians 3:10).

Holistic Scriptures

Jesus’ Growth was Holistic – Not Just “Spiritual”

Luke 2:52 - And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

- **Wisdom = Growth in Knowledge and Experience**
- **Stature = Physical Maturity**
- **Favour with God = Spiritual Maturity**
- **Favour with Man = Social Maturity**

3 John, Verse 2 (NKJV)
Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

James 1:4 (New International Version, NIV) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV) Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. (More on the Pauline view of discipleship in Section VII.)

IV. Discipleship in the Gospels: Basic Requirements for Jewish Followers of Jesus

During Jesus’ days on Earth the focus was upon the twelve disciples. Their occupation was literally “following” Jesus – being a disciple. They had left “all” to follow Him. They were also called “apostles” (personally chosen and commissioned ambassadors). Then there was also a multitude of disciples (Luke 19:37).

Today, most of us will not be “professional followers,” and certainly not directly chosen apostles, however, even though we have other occupations and jobs, yet nonetheless, we too are His disciples.

Jesus’ Requirements for Discipleship

Note: These analyses of the various contexts of the word “disciple” in the Gospels and Acts do not include the term “follower” or the verb “following.” These terms will indeed greatly expand the details for Jesus’
requirements for a disciple of Jesus Christ. But, for our purposes this beginning scriptural inquiry will lay adequate foundation for our delineation of the Discipleship Model presented here.

Jesus begins to require full commitment from certain of His followers to distinguish his “true” disciples from the crowd of “followers.” Note: Judas is also called a “disciple” (John 12:4).

The Requirements Mentioned in Conjunction with the Word “Disciple” are:


Requirement #2: Share in His Sufferings – John 6:66. Some “disciples” left. (This is a fore view of the establishment of the Christian Death-Resurrection Celebration – The Lord’s Supper, Communion.)

Requirement #3: The “real” disciples will live by (continue in) His words – John 8:31.

Requirement #4: Disciples are now also believers – John 8:31.


Requirement #7: “Ye must be born again.” (John 3:7) Jesus announces this born again spiritually requirement to a former disciple and teacher of the Pharisees who is now a probing thinker and “inquisitive” disciple of Jesus. (See John 3:7; 7:50; 19:39.)

There are Three Groups of Jesus Followers in the Gospels

- The Crowd of Non-disciples
- The Crowd of Disciples, Unsure of their Full Commitment or Belief
- The Group of Committed Disciples who were Fully Believers

These groups still exist in the visible church today: 1) the crowd, 2) the crowd of uncommitted, unsure disciples, and then 3) the committed disciples – the true believers.

There are three groups of “disciples” mentioned in the Gospels: the Disciples of John, the Disciples of the Pharisees and the Disciples of Jesus.

V. The Crucified and Resurrected Lord Extends His Discipleship Model for the Church (A New People Created for a New and Living Way)

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

It is nearly common Bible knowledge now that the word “teach” in verse 18 is the Greek word mathēteuō which means to make a disciple, to enroll as a student or scholar; to teach, to instruct. This is the key passage for the Mission of the Church: To disciple (teach, train) and enroll others into relationship with the Jesus Christ. [mathēteuō  pronounced – mah-thay-TWO-oh]

Hebrews 10:20 (KJV)

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;
The Resurrected Lord has Full Authority over the Church – His Body of Believers.

In the Matthew 28 passage He reminds us of one prior requirement (baptism), but places it into a different Triune godhead context and now extends the baptism requirement to all those who would be His disciples.

Requirement #8: Go – (Another way to say evangelize – preach the Gospel for repentance, conversion and inner change)

Requirement # 9: Another requirement upon the believer (disciple) is to now be a discipler (teacher) of another. (A mentor of spiritual, personal, social and relational life.)

Thus, Jesus’ two new requirements are evangelizing and discipling – that is, teaching followers the principles regarding how to live out His teachings and necessary way of life. These elements of enlisting other learners (#8) and growing (teaching, discipling) those who are apart of this new community (#9) are now given as two primary tasks of His Church (Greek – ekklēsia = His called out assembly of followers, believers). This ekklēsia (this Church) is a totally new group comprised of Jews and Gentiles who are to be His representatives on Earth.

This is a fundamental change. And it is the only way that Christ will both individually grow His followers into His image and then expand the reach and scope of His teachings globally. Since He will not be present physically, Jesus wants His true followers to be His representatives on Earth.

VI. Discipleship in the Book of Acts: More Requirements, New Terms for a New People

This new group – the Church of Jesus Christ, is now being formed rapidly in Acts. And the Book of Acts gives us some further insights into Jesus’ Disciples.

Requirement # 10: The disciples of Christ are now clearly those who believe in his death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:32; 6:7).

Requirement # 11: They are supposed to multiply – rapidly. The disciples start out at about 120, but multiply very rapidly Acts 1:15, 6:1, 7 and includes the common populous and those with advanced learning and positions.

Requirement # 12: They are to be Givers, Supporters (Stewardship). The disciples are givers, financial supporters according to their ability to share. (Supporting the Christians in need in Judea, Acts 11:29.)

Requirement # 13: They are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. A clear joy for this dispensation. In the old dispensation only a few chosen people of God were filled with the Spirit. In this new dispensation all believers have access to this gift and endowment (Acts 2:33; 13:52). Indeed, it is the power for their desire to serve.

Requirement # 14: They are expected to be obedient (Acts 6:7).

Requirement # 15: They are to be ONLY followers of Christ and not any man, not even one in the Church. Acts 20:30 – Paul warns that there will come some from within the ranks of the Church who will “draw away the disciples after themselves” NKJV

NRSV (New Revised Standard Version)- Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them.
The point here is that the Scriptures never refer to a believer in Christ as a “disciple” of Paul or Peter. The term disciple is ONLY used of those who are to follow as committed disciples of Jesus Christ only. It is interesting that the term *disciples of*, is also used for the location of residence. Like, the disciples of Caesarea, that is, the disciples [of Jesus Christ] who live in Caesarea. See also 1 Corinthians 1:12.

**The Last Occurrence of the Word “Disciple”**

The last reference to “disciple” in the Bible (NT) is a rich one. Acts 21:16 refers to Mnason of Cyprus, as “an old disciple.” The Greek word here, “old” referring to Mnason, is not so much an emphasis on his age as to him being one of the older disciples “in time,” an ORIGINAL DISCIPLE.

Indeed, Mnason was an O.G., one of the original disciples of Jesus Christ. This is about A.D. 57, only 24 years after the earthly ministry of Jesus. So, Mnason may not have been really that old, but the fact that he is one of the “Original” followers of Jesus makes this man noteworthy. Many had fallen away, but Mnason remains a committed disciple of Jesus Christ through these two decades.

**New Names for the New Disciples**

In the Book of Acts the original term “disciple” is gradually being replaced by other words, more descriptive the characteristics of a true disciple, thus eliminating the confusion that was evident in the Gospels. In the Gospels during the ministry of Jesus Christ several words were used: *Apostles, disciples, crowds, disciples indeed, and followers* – all these terms became confusing as to who were the “real” followers of Jesus and His Lordship. So, in the Book of Acts other terms began to take prominence and thus clarify what we mean in the Christian Church by the using the word, “disciple.”

**Distinguishing Characteristics of the Disciples from their New Names**

1. Disciples – Disciplined, committed followers
2. Christians – Those who belong to, are followers, adherents, and supporters of Christ
4. Believers – Those who have a passionate commitment of their entire self to the man, the message and the ministry of Jesus Christ. (Greek word *pisteuō* – To commit oneself with passion. To have a passionate commitment to a person, system or idea.)
5. Those of the Way – Those who follow the path set before them by their Master Teacher and Lord.
6. Brothers, Sisters – Those who are a part of a new family and relationship, a new fellowship – the Family of God

**VII. Discipleship in Pauline Epistles: Expanding the Discipleship Design for the Gentiles**

Paul expands the Christian Discipleship Design for the task of the Church as being to PERFECT BELIEVERS. Paul transitions from merely the broader word “make disciples” with its multiple choices of followers to the stronger and clearer concepts with content, and that is to perfect and equip. To sum this up, in the Pauline view the task of discipleship is to perfect believers internally and to equip them so they might serve externally.

Paul makes a wonderful application from a statement of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. Paul builds his view of discipleship centering it around the basic concept of PERFECTING and uses various NT words indicating equipping, edifying (growing), completing, making whole, repairing, etc. Jesus’ statement in the Gospel of Luke was Paul’s catalyst for developing his view. It is even possible that Paul heard of this saying of Jesus as Luke was doing his investigations to write his Gospel. Paul now uses it as the springboard for expanding the concept of a Christian disciple to the Gentile world.
In Luke 6:40 Jesus says,
KJV – The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.
NKJV – A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

The word for “perfect” in this verse is a verb with very powerful and rich meanings. *Katartizō* means to complete thoroughly, to outfit, thoroughly equip or even to repair that which was broken. The richest definition of the *katartizō* is to make one what he ought to be. That indeed is the task of the Church (people of the Church, the disciples of the Church, you as a disciple) TO PERFECT, that is — to empower individuals to be what that ought to be and what they can be.

Paul picks up on the statement of Jesus and makes perfecting disciples (believers) the task of the Church. He sums it up this primary task with the two final requirements for discipleship’s task. Disciples are to be **Edified and Equipped**.

We alliteratively say it is the task of the Church to: **Evangelize, Edify, and Equip**

**Evangelize** the World – Preach and teach the Gospel (the Good News about God and what He has done through His Son, Jesus Christ) to every group and class of people. Matthew 28:19 – all nations = Greek, ethnē = nation, race, tribe, nation, people group (non-Jewish group of people). That is to say, the entire human family.

Requirement # 16: **Edify (build up, grow)** To mature believers in Christ. To preach and teach the Word (the Bible) to believers (2 Timothy 4:2).

Requirement # 17: **Equip (prepare, fully equip)** To make ready and organize believers for effective and valuable service to Christ both in the Church and in the world as God’s representatives (2 Timothy 3:17; 1 Thessalonians. 3:10).

**2 Timothy 3:17** (NKJV)
The man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The Greek word for “thoroughly equipped” is *exartizō*. It means to complete, finish, to be thoroughly prepared or thoroughly furnished or equipped. To be furnished or provided with everything one needs.

**1 Thessalonians 3:10** (KJV)
Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect (*katartizō* – thoroughly equip) that which is lacking in your faith.

Notice the West Angeles Church Mission Statement (1996) and this three-fold task of the Church:
THE WEST ANGELES C.O.G.I.C.  
MISSION STATEMENT

West Angeles Church of God in Christ seeks to be a Biblical ministry of Excellence designed to encourage life transformation through our threefold purpose: to **Evangelize, Edify, and Equip the whole person** to serve the community and reach the world for Jesus Christ.

We strive to be compassionate in our love, excellent in our service, holy in our living, and passionate and reverent in our worship.

Also, note the West Angeles Church self-defining pledge to “grow” believers is stated throughout the entire West Angeles Church Philosophy of Ministry Statement produced in 1995. This two page Statement provided the philosophical exposition and commitment for our ministry as a church. Seven Key Statements are listed below.

THE WEST ANGELES C.O.G.I.C.  
PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY STATEMENT

**Seven Key Growth Statements**

1. Called by God to foster the growth of believers
2. We meet the needs of the whole person – spirit, soul, and body and the whole community – political, social, spiritual and moral.
3. We fellowship together to develop our spiritual gifts, to encourage each other through prayer and deed to become better disciples of Christ.
4. Two of the seven words that best describe our ministry are “growth” and “wholeness.”
5. The mission of West Angeles Church is to the total person, to educate and develop the whole person.
6. The mission of the West Angeles Church is to enhance the growth of individuals (church, as well as unchurched).
7. We prayerfully join Jesus Christ in His goal to **make people whole** [KH Note: *disciple people*] by serving the whole person: spirit, soul and body.
Paul’s best exposition of this concept is in Ephesians 4:7-16 (NIV)

7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” 9 (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:12 (KJV)
For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
KJV – For the perfecting of the saints (the goal of discipleship)
KJV – For the work of the ministry (equip for service)
KJV – For the edifying of the body of Christ (edify – build up, mature)

VIII. Discipleship and Mentoring

There are various types of mentorship and communication methods – Paul used small groups, larger groups and one-on-one individualized types of mentoring. He utilized the speaking and writing communication methods. This is a model for today: to use the modern-day communication methods available to us. (See again paragraph above, How to Perfect Disciples, page 3.)

The Pauline Mentoring Model Types

- Groups (small and larger)
- One-to-One (individualized)

The Pauline Mentoring Communication Methods

- Media Communication (letters, personal speaking, sending representatives)

Paul mentors (a modern word) believers in order to prepare disciples (God’s people) for leadership and service for Christ to the Church and to the world.

Mentor – A Word History

By the way, the word “mentor” was available for Paul in his times. The original Mentor in classical Greek literature was in the epic, Odyssey by Homer (c. 700 B.C.). He was the trusted friend of Odysseus left in charge of the household and son during Odysseus’s absence. The word probably means, advisor although in modern usage around the 18th century it was elevated to mean wise and trusted counselor or teacher. The word root meaning is “to think.”

Paul, The Discipler

However, Paul is not merely a “mentor,” teacher, or counselor, he is a DISCIPLER – a maker, perfecter, enabler, equipper, designer, and a private instructor (tutor). He prepares them for leadership and service to the Kingdom of God, service to the world, and for the expansion of the Kingdom of God in the world.

In the search for the right word to call this relationship and the person leading the relationship the word search is broad as you can see from the above attempts in word choices. They all are somewhat
Biblical Historical Note: Luke uses the same word during Paul’s First Missionary Journey (A.D. 48) that Jesus says in Matthew 28:19 \[mathēteuō\] (to disciple, to make a disciple, to instruct) for Paul’s mission work in the first missionary journey in the town of Derbe.

Acts 14:21 (KJV)
And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

Acts 14:21 (NKJV)
And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

Paul, The Master People Builder

With the passion for expanding the Kingdom of God by adding, training and influencing people Paul is essentially a People-Builder. Indeed, we note that Paul after about 9 years into his formal missionary work calls himself a Master Builder in 1 Corinthians 3:10.

1 Corinthians 3:10 (KJV)
According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1 Corinthians 3:10 (NIV)
By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.

1 Corinthians 3:10 (NRSV)
According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it.

So herein, after an extensive search of the meaning of discipleship for the Church, Paul sums it up in one Greek word – KJV, masterbuilder – Greek architektōn. This word is used of a chief constructor, that is, “architect”—masterbuilder, a master builder, an architect, the superintendent in the erection of buildings. In classical Greek it is also used of a chief-artificer, master-builder, director of works, architect, engineer. Architektōn is used of both an expert producer of fabrics (artificer) and a skilled maker of wood materials (craftsman).

The building Paul refers to is of course that of “people” building. Ah, here now is the essence of the Pauline Discipleship Model – People Building. Thus, Paul declares himself one who is wise, expert and skilled (Greek word, sophos = wise, expert, skilled) at people building. The word sophos is used of one who fashions the best plans and uses the best tools for implementing the plan. Discipleship and the entire work of the Lord in building His Kingdom is about building people.
The discipleship relationship is not a \textit{degrading hierarchy} of that of:

- Master-Slave
- Parent-Child
- Smart One –Dumb One
- Good One-Bad One

Indeed, as I see it, it is not two-tiered at all. Paul calls all those serving the Lord Jesus Christ and working in His Kingdom “workers together” – Greek = coworkers. Yes, we are coworkers, partners, associates in this spiritual task. We are on the same team, team members with different positions, but all working for the same team owner. He is the Master. Our positions don’t make us essentially “superior” just more “responsible” to answer to the Lord for the diligence with which we served the Lord with the gifts and “position tasks” we have been called to serve the Body and the world.

\textbf{James 3:1 (NIV)}

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be \textbf{judged more strictly}.

In more modern terms perhaps a discipler may best be termed as an individual’s \textbf{Private Ministry Tutor} or \textbf{Private Instructor in Spiritual Living}.

\textbf{Categories of Disciplers}

But since this Discipler is not the parent or the master of the Christian who he or she disciples, what actually does a discipler teach? Well, from my perspective there are at least two Categories of Disciplers.

\textit{Category One – General Encouragers – Teachers of General Christian Life Principles}

Those assisting other believers with the general principles of developing a Christ-like lifestyle and strategy for Christian growth. Teaching those distinctly spiritual disciplines – a prayer and devotional life before the Lord, fasting, Bible mediation, etc. They also teach all the \textit{basic and introductory} principles of the Five Components of the Perfecting Discipleship Model (See Section IX.)

These are further divided into two groups: (See below.)

1. One-to-One Disciplers (Private Instructor)
2. Group Disciplers (Public Instructor)

\textit{Category Two – Specific Equippers – Teachers of Specific Areas of the Christian Life or the Christian’s Life in the World (occupational, life skills, or ANY need for the development of the whole person).}

In this view a discipler is an “expert” in some field of endeavor regarding specifically Christian topics or a Christian’s functioning in this world. This may be a lawyer, physician, engineer, real state professional, banker, life coach, Bible college instructor, theologian, mathematician, scientist, college professor, public school teacher or administrator, psychotherapist, a business person, an executive in ANY profession, life’s task, or occupation in life. This individual has specific expertise that can and must be utilized for the Kingdom of God and the people of God.

In this Category Two view of a discipler, the teacher instructors believers as to the details of \textbf{how to live a better life in this world} and \textbf{how to access the resources} that will make the believer successful and prosperous in life. This discipler \textbf{equips the believers with expert knowledge} so that the believers as a recipients of this expert knowledge now can better live and serve the Lord with less distractions from being ignorant of the \textbf{resources and rights available} to them.
In the traditional view of discipleship these important individuals are not seen as disciplers, just experts in their “secular” occupations. But, in this expanded, holistic view of discipleship these individuals are God-called disciplers and people builders who are at the SAME LEVEL and part of the SAME DISCIPLES BODY of instructors as teachers of the “spiritual” disciplines. (See 1 Corinthians Chapter 12.) Indeed, they are also required by the Lord also be both “spiritual” and professionally competent. They may have even critiqued the principles of their various disciplines and professions and may have developed a “Christian Approach” to the understanding of that discipline or profession.

Paul and His Professional Associates

Early in the development of the Church, emphasis was primarily upon preaching the Gospel only, but under the Pauline discipleship model the Church more formally organized and instructed believers in a more formal setting. Then as Paul moved toward the final days of his ministry he began to set up more positions of authority and church offices and ministries. His own evangelistic team members were quite extensive – a lawyer (Zenas – Titus 3:13), a physician (Luke), a secretary/professional letter stenographer (Tertius – Romans 16:22) and there was Apollos, a professional public speaker. The Greek word used to describe Apollos in Acts 18:24 is logios. And it points to an orator, one formally trained in rhetoric – the art or study of proper forms and methods of public speaking). Thus, we see that early in the ministry of Paul, he used professional people and discipled them who in turn were to disciple others.

Note: Many converts served in the world and also as disciples of Christ. Some were from Paul's ministry, like Lydia – the businesswoman, but there were others not directly from Paul's ministry like Theophilus – the dignity and government official, and those in Caesar’s household.

Paul desired to be a People Builder by winning (and training, discipling) all classes of people, in all kinds of occupations in every way possible (1 Corinthians 9:22). This is the spirit of the pastor of West Angeles Church and the Scriptural foundation to his evangelistic philosophy and practice. This evangelistic strategy is also at the foundation of the Perfecting Discipleship Model (See Section IX.) Bishop Blake’s strategy theme is “All Things, All People, All Godly Strategies.” This is the view of this holistic discipleship model: Disciplers include:

- All God’s People
- In All Kinds of Professional Occupations
- Teaching the Disciples of Christ in All Areas of Godly Living – Spiritual and Natural
  Spiritual [God] and Natural [God and the business of everyday living]
  That is, they (the disciplers) teach regarding the principles of the life to come, but they ALSO
  teach regarding the everyday affairs and business savvy of this life.

These also are further divided into two groups: (See below.)

1. One-to-One Disciplers
2. Group Disciplers

What does a Discipler Teach?

Well, since we now have two categories of disciplers and if all the specifics areas are different, what exactly does a discipler in either category teach?

Answer:
Disciplers teach believers how to apply the principles of the Word of God to everyday life’s joys, challenges and decisions. These disciplers assist believers as they live and arrange their lives according to God’s principles. In the case of the Specific Equipping Disciplers, they additionally
provide a spiritual foundation and environment for their specific area of their expertise and information.

**Discipler, A More Formal Definition (maybe too formal)**

An encourager discipler is a private spiritual tutor who gives a more formal additional, special instruction to a believer and is responsible for providing assisting and supporting an **internal spiritual discipline guidance system** and an **awareness apparatus** for the followers of Jesus in their growth in Christ. Like the apostle Paul, this discipler prepares the believer he or she disciples for leadership and service to the Kingdom of God, service to the world, and for the expansion of the Kingdom of God in the world.

NOTICE IN THIS MODEL, disciplers don’t decide or impose their own will upon the disciple of Christ; they joyfully, carefully and prayerfully assist the believer to live and arrange his or her life after God’s principles. The idea is to support the believer in developing an INTERNAL control system and NOT an unhealthy dependence upon the discipler for that believer’s functioning in life.

**Requirements for Being a Discipler (both categories)**

I see **four fundamental requirements** for effective disciplers:

1. Know the Word of God (know the Bible and be in a regular study of the Bible).
2. Know the basic spiritual principles of the Word of God and how to apply them to daily living.
3. Be working on their own personal spiritual journey and developing a Christian life growth based upon the Five Components of Discipleship. (See Section IX.)
4. Understand how to properly disciple others.

(These may either formal or informal instruction regarding the principles of one-to-one mentoring, and the principles of instruction and delivery in public settings – public speaking.)

**Paul Mentees/Trainees**

Some of Paul’s Mentees, Trainees (NT words - coworkers, ministry assistants): Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus [same as Epaphras?] (his church leaders and special assistants) Phil. 2:25-30; 4:10-18, Priscilla and Aquilla (his couples’ ministry), Phoebe (his women’s ministry), and Luke (his professionals’ ministry). If we broaden this “trainee” concept to include the valued associates who worked closely with Paul in the Pauline Evangelistic Association we would also include all the “professional” coworkers in Category Two above.

**Types of Mentors (NT word – disciplers, teachers)**

1. **Direct Disciplers** (Private Instructors, Direct Teachers) – one-to-one, as mentor and coach. These are Private (one-to-one) People-Builders.

2. **Group Disciplers**, (Public Instructors, Group Teachers) – Instructors, teachers, coaches who disciple small and larger group leaders. These are Public (one-to-group) People-Builders.

3. **Disciplers of Disciplers** (Teachers of Teachers) – This is Paul also. This is a Train-the-Trainer Program. It is where the discipler is - making disciples who make disciples who make disciples. Mentoring those who will in turn themselves become mentors of others. These are People Builders who make People Builders who make People Builders.

**2 Timothy 2:2**

NRSV - and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful (NIV reliable) people who will be able to teach others as well.
This goes back to Jesus’ statement in Mark 1:12 as He was gathering His disciples for His earthly ministry.

**Mark 1:17 (New Revised Standard Version)**
And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.”

Here Jesus says, I will make you into the kind of people who will be people fishers.

(I will make you people-fishers.)

In Matthew 28:19 Jesus extends this to:
I’m commissioning you to be the kind of people who will be people-fishers who create people-fishers who in turn create other people-fishers.

(They are: people-fishers who create people-fishers who create people-fishers)

It is New Testament mentoring – equipping people to be leaders in the Church and in the world in the Name of Christ.

**IX. The Five-Fold Perfecting Discipleship Model (A Holistic Model)**

A study of the Basic Requirements for Discipleship has caused me to develop a Discipleship FRAMEWORK where all believers’ experiences in life will be connected to this framework for his or her spiritual, personal, relational, and social growth - for a believer’s personal maturity and spiritually in every area of life.

On the journey of the road to perfecting discipleship there are certain activities and relationships that must be developed to increase one’s maturity (growth) and effectiveness for Christ.

The five components of this **Perfecting Discipleship Model** encompass the entire life of every believer. All activities and relationships can be placed within this framework and assist in developing an effective disciple of Jesus Christ.

**The Five Components of the Perfecting Discipleship Model are:**
- Inner Growth – Personal Devotions
- Bible Study Habits
- Sharing the Faith
- Relationships (Fellowship and Stewardship)
- Mentoring Others

**The Five Components of the Perfecting Discipleship Model (More Details)**

**Perfecting Disciples Component #1**

**#1 Inner Growth - Personal Devotions**

**Description:** Deeply Knowing the God of the Christian Faith
Joyfully Discovering and Enjoying Your Gifts of Service
Emotional Maturity (sound control of your inner life’s feelings and passions)

**Types of Growth Activities:**
Personal Devotions, Time with God, Scripture Reading for Meditation, Fasting, Meditation and Reflection, Prayer, A Life of Purity before God (holiness as a way of life), Proper Nutritional Eating, Exercise, and a General Health and Body Care Pattern of Living
Perfecting Disciples Component #2
#2 Good Bible Study Habits
Description: Accurately Knowing the Faith
    Intellectual Richness (rich in life-long learning and discovery)

Types of Growth Activities:
Studying the Scriptures, Memorizing Scriptures, In-Depth Bible Studies, Classes on the Bible and the
Christian Faith, Personal Study of Books about the Bible and Basic Christian Theology, Advanced
Studies in Various Aspects of the Christian Faith, Reading Good Christian Literature, Utilizing Other
Christian Media Resources – CDs, DVDs, etc., Reading Other Literature through the Perceptive Lens
of a Christian World and Life View.

Perfecting Disciples Component #3
#3 Sharing the Faith
Description: Enthusiastically Sharing the Faith
    Actively Living the Faith (Evangelistic Activity)

Types of Growth Activities:
Witnessing (Sharing the Good News about what God has done through Jesus for the world), a Life of
Example (Lifestyle Witness), Going out with Evangelistic Teams, Going on Mission Trips (Local
Areas, National and International Fields), Sharing Your Faith with Another, Inviting Others to Church
for Services or to Special Church Events, Sharing an Encouraging Word in the Name of Jesus to
Someone in Need, Sharing Often and Happy about Sharing with Others.

Perfecting Disciples Component #4
#4 Relationships (Fellowship, Stewardship)
Description: Building and Sustaining Healthy Relationships
    Imparting and Perfecting Your Gifts (Through Interpersonal Activity)

Types of Growth Activities:
After discovering your gifts you can then center your life around assisting people through the
exercising of your talents and gifts in many social contexts:
    ❖ At home, church, social gatherings, school, etc.
    ❖ Relationships with family, friends, on the job, and in every other social encounter
    ❖ You also grow and share your gifts by: Attending Church Worship and Teaching Services,
        Attending Church Social Events (fellowshipping with the believers); and Attending Other
        Wholesome Non-church Social Events and Healthy Environments.

These activities strengthen your personal and spiritual maturity by having you deal with people in
your daily walk. You can’t grow by always avoiding people; only by actively loving and interacting
with people. Included among the skills learned in Component #4 are: Empathy, Identity, Encouraging,
and Confronting (admonishing) in LOVE.

This area also includes Stewardship – The Voluntary Giving of Time, Talent and Resources (money,
assets, etc.) to the Work of the Lord and the Service of Mankind.

Perfecting Disciples Component #5
#5 Mentoring Others in All Areas of Godly Living – Spiritual and Natural
Description: Carefully Discipling Others in the Faith (Spiritual - about God and the Church)
    Carefully Discipling Others in the Faith for Everyday Living
    (Natural - about God and the Affairs and Business Savvy of Everyday Living)
Types of Growth Activities:
Working One-on-One with a confused teenager, Building a One-to-One relationship with an individual who asked you to help with their Christian walk and life skills, Teaching a group of mothers the principles of Christian motherhood, Sharing your business knowledge and skills with new business owners, Having a prayer phone partner to whom you teach the principles of effective prayer, Writing a book and creating other media to get the word out to others that will aide them in their life’s journey, Teaching a Bible Class, etc., etc., etc.

We all are REQUIRED as disciples of Christ to be on the path from New Convert to a Disciplined Disciple to a Disciple who Disciples Others (discipler)

THE REQUIRED PATH:

New Convert ★ Disciplined Disciple ★ Discipler

All distinctly “discipleship” activities need to be focused in one or more of these components. These Five Components of Holistic Discipleship encompass a believer’s entire trek in life and as an integrated whole providing growth experiences assisting any believer desiring to be a “disciple indeed” (John 8:31). Jesus’ phrase “disciples indeed” refers to His “real” committed disciples, not just the distant crowd followers.

X. A Life Curriculum Design for Christian Discipleship (A Holistic Model)

Also a New Curriculum Model that flows from the Five Components has been developed portraying the Discipleship Ministry at West Angeles Church as not just a “department.” More discussion on this idea of “department” will be in a supplement to the Profile called Supplement #2 Expansion and Ministry Integration vs. Contraction and Compartmentalization within the Organization. This Five-Fold Discipleship Framework is applied directly and personally to a believer’s life.

It is a curriculum for living and growing, not just a bunch of classes from the Discipleship Department or centered only upon certain leaders within the West Angeles Discipleship Ministry. The curriculum is tailored for individual needs. Some will want the help of a spiritual mentor some will grow much on their own with help, influence and suggestions from the Discipleship Ministry as to the proper resources to use to reach their spiritual goals.

This New Model of Discipleship and its Curriculum proclaims Discipleship as an all-pervasive way of life happening anywhere and everywhere. It affirms training (discipleship) to also be that which happens IN THE SCHOOL OF LIFE utilizing modern media techniques and tools to reach those among us who are presently on the outside fringes of the life of the church and of the joy of serving and growing in Christ.

An Integrated Curriculum

The curriculum is integrated throughout the various ministries of West Angeles Church. It is interdepartmental, intradepartmental even transdepartmental. There will be no problem with referring an individual believer on the road to discipleship to classes and activities in other West A ministries. The best avenue for that individual may be PCL, or Bible College, or the Counseling Department, or a service that can be rendered in Volunteers. The curriculum is a “life curriculum” and not merely a series of classes. It is the development of a disciple of Christ serving the church.

Yes, it is a different idea and will need to be forged in the marketplace of enlightened ideas and sound experience. But, it is necessary and possible. I see the Discipleship Ministry as perfecting disciples, not merely enlisting people to join a “department.” We do not develop Discipleship Department Disciples, but Christian Disciples of Jesus Christ who serve the Lord at West Angeles and in their
families, community and the world. Our Charge is to deliver on the pursuit of the West Angeles Mission Statement: to encourage life transformation through our threefold purpose: to Evangelize, Edify, and Equip the whole person to serve the community and reach the world for Jesus Christ.

Tools to Utilize for Gifts and Personal Life Inventories

One of the first tools to be utilized will be a gifts inventory and personality style assessment. By identifying the gifts of God in believers they will be better serve and enjoy the service they perform. Also, other instruments will be utilized to empower believers to identify and utilize their God-given gifts, abilities, skills and empowerments.

Some of the Life, Personal and Social Building Tools

- Coaching Assessments
- DISC Personality Profiles
- DISC Personality Profiles and Giftedness Inventories
- 10 Dimensions of Life
- The Discipleship Bible – with KH created Study Guides
- Other Instruments a created to propel disciples forward.
  (ex. See the Perfecting Disciples Monthly Review Sheet below.)

Life Balance, Life Growth and Life Service will be major themes in developing effective tools for an individual’s growth in Christ.

The Perfecting Disciples Monthly Review and Reflection Sheet

This will be a personal discipleship progress sheet for all those who wish to keep up with their progress as a disciple in their daily living. Hopefully, it will be the kind of organizationally supportive Ministry Model tool to reach throughout the entire congregation and empowering each person toward spiritual growth without necessarily being enrolled in classes held at the West Angeles campus.

The Contents of the Review and Reflection Sheet Ideas

- Reviewing each of the five areas for your effectiveness and growth each month of the year
- Need the group of West A leaders to help develop this sheet.
- Needs to be a way of assessing progress with suggested basic goals, ex. Reading through the Bible this year or the next two years, devotions every Sunday, or every day, taking a class in some area of Christian growth. Maybe using a coaching assessment model.

XI. Expansion and Integration of the Discipleship Organizational Structure

Below is a listing of some of the structural components that will be a part of the Discipleship Ministry.

- Ideas for Correction and Expansion from Discipleship Group Leaders
- Interconnections with all ministry aspects of West A (educational, counseling and fellowship ministries)
- Media Committee
- Advertisement Promotion Committee
- Teleconference Discipleship Groups
- Video Recording
- Generating Income through DVD and Audio Recording Sales and Other Products
XII. Resultant Ideas, Themes, Logos, and Graphic Models

There will be t-shirts, lapel pins and other discipleship promotional materials. The Discipleship Theme will be: A Disciple: Be One – Make One or sometimes, simply: Be One – Make One

Graphically depicted as:

A Disciple: Be One ——> Make One
Discipleship@WestA.org

Also: Discipleship: Perfecting Believers For Service

The Five Components of Discipleship
- Perfecting Disciples Component #1: Inner Growth
- Perfecting Disciples Component #2: Good Bible Study Habits
- Perfecting Disciples Component #3: Sharing the Faith
- Perfecting Disciples Component #4: Relationships (Fellowship, Stewardship)
- Perfecting Disciples Component #5: Mentoring Others

Each Component Listed Separately
Sample Growth Activities for each Component are listed on pages 15-17. Believers will be encouraged to make it their life’s aim to grow in Christ with the Five Components as an model instrument of guidance.

A Disciple: Be One ——> Make One
Discipleship@WestA.org

The Five Components of Discipleship

Perfecting Disciples Component #1
#1 Inner Growth - Personal Devotions
- Deeply Knowing the God of the Christian Faith
- Joyfully Discovering and Enjoying Your Gifts of Service
- Emotional Maturity

Perfecting Disciples Component #2
#2 Good Bible Study Habits
- Accurately Knowing the Faith
- Intellectual Richness

Perfecting Disciples Component #3
#3 Sharing The Faith
- Enthusiastically Sharing the Faith
- Actively Living the Faith

Perfecting Disciples Component #4
#4 Relationships (Fellowship, Stewardship)
- Building and Sustaining Healthy Relationships
- Imparting and Perfecting Your Gifts

Perfecting Disciples Component #5
#5 Mentoring Others in All Areas of Godly Living – Spiritual and Natural
- Carefully Discipling Others in the Faith
- Carefully Discipling Others in the Faith for Everyday Living