

MBC MEN'S STUDY

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

CLASS 2: DISCIPLESHIP TODAY, CHAPTERS 3-4

- Jan 18: Current State of Discipleship & Defining Discipleship Biblically (Chs.1-2)
- **Feb 8: Principles of Biblical Discipleship Part I & II (Chs. 3-4)**
- Mar 8: Key Factors in Discipleship Today & Tomorrow (Chs. 5 & 8)
- April 12: Discipleship Avenues for the Church & Personal (Chs. 6-7)
- May 17: Becoming a Mature Disciple-Maker ([GIBC Grace & Granite Notes](#))

INTRODUCTION TO “DISCIPLESHIP TODAY”

- Our view of the importance of discipleship in the church and in our own lives is going to have far-reaching effects. These effects are not only in our own lives but also in the lives of those people whom the Lord has given to us.
- We must know how to take care of our own spiritual life so that we are able to take care of those around us as well.
- As we will come to see, discipleship is all about transformation. It is not so much about the transmission of information (though that's important) it is about how that information is impacting real life.

A (NOT SO) BRIEF WORD ON SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- A phrase that is used throughout this book in *spiritual formation*. In fact, the author of our book, Andy Burggraff, is the Vice President of Spiritual Formation at Shepherds Theological Seminary.
- **What does *spiritual formation* mean?**
- This has been a very “hot topic” over the past 10-15 years and has led people in two very different directions. It is extremely popular in almost every evangelical denomination and has brought many differing opinions and practices.

- The idea of spiritual formation has been completely disregarded by many evangelicals, and even protested in the early 90's.
 - In the early days, we experienced a great deal of resistance. Some evangelicals were sure our teachings on spiritual formation were dangerous and the work of the Devil. People would gather outside of our small conferences holding picket signs with messages like “New Age Heresy: Beware.”¹
- There are some deep Roman Catholic roots to the ideas and practices associated with spiritual formation.
- In the historic RCC, the overall ancient concept has a focus on mystical practices for growth in your spiritual life.
 - Things like contemplative prayer, daily mass, taking of communion, reciting the rosary, and other practices common to the RCC.
 - One problem is the thought that these practices will bring you closer to God.
 - Also, they believe you will be more like Jesus through the inner working of the Holy Spirit.
- “This idea of spiritual formation is based on the premise that if we do certain practices, we can be more like Jesus. Proponents of spiritual formation erroneously teach that anyone can practice these mystical rituals and find God within themselves.”²
- For some, by using the phrase *spiritual transformation*, they start by looking at themselves, inside themselves, and then stay there for the answer of how to fix what they see wrong.
- We know that the Christian is to live for the glory of God and to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. But, we also know that is not done from ourselves but through the power of the Spirit living inside of us.
- **Let me be clear...that’s not what Dr. Burggraff has in mind when using *spiritual formation*.**
- On the other side of the road are evangelicals who see spiritual formation as “simply another term for the process of becoming a full disciple of Jesus. It describes the life and goal to which Jesus calls his followers and students (disciples).”³
- “So spiritual formation is really the work of *transformation*, where the Spirit of God re-forms us from the inside out so that the things that are true of us because of our justification come to more and

¹ <https://www.christianitytoday.com/2022/08/dallas-willard-fears-spiritual-formation-movement/>

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/spiritual-formation.html#:~:text=This%20is%20part%20of%20a,into%20the%20image%20of%20Christ.>

³ <https://www.centralpres.com/our-blog/3-questions-answers-about-spiritual-formation/>

more reflect that way that we actually live our lives. Spiritual formation is the process of transformation such that, in any given situation, the words and thoughts and actions that come out of us authentically are the words and thoughts and actions of Jesus that would come out of Christ were he in the same circumstance.”⁴

- You’ve probably heard the phrase *spiritual disciplines* before.
 - Some are Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, worship, evangelism, serving, learning, etc.
- ***Both spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines should have a place in the Christian’s life.***
- Being transformed by the Spirit of God should be at the top of our list as Christians:
 - **Romans 12:2** “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”
 - **Colossians 3:2** “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”
 - **Ephesians 4:17** “So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind...”
 - **Ephesians 4:23** “...and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind...”
 - **Ephesians 5:10** “...trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”
- The verses can go on and on, but the point is that we need to be transformed in our minds so that we are then able to live in a way that is *pleasing to the Lord*.
- This is the heart of discipleship or spiritual formation.
- But the means, or the “how” it is done is called spiritual discipline.
- “The word discipline has disappeared from our minds, our mouths, our pulpits, and our culture. We hardly know what discipline means in modern American society. And yet, there is no other way to attain godliness; discipline is the path to godliness.”⁵
- Without being born again, the spiritual disciplines are of no use...none whatsoever.
- Once saved, the spiritual disciplines are of little to no use if done with the wrong goal or desire in mind. If they are done just to tick a box, to seem spiritual, to try and force growth; there is a good chance that little to no change will really take place.
- In chapter 10 of Whitney’s book, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, he talks about silence and solitude for the purpose of godliness.

⁴ <https://medium.com/@brycehales/what-is-spiritual-formation-69eb28dd129e>

⁵ Jay Adams quoted in *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* by Donald Whitney.

- Silence and solitude have been taken to two extremes over the years:
 - This is often times linked with monasticism or with some sort of mystical meditation and contemplative prayer ritual.
 - As a means of growing closer to God and becoming more in union with Christ.
 - How does Whitney use this as a spiritual discipline?
 - “The Discipline of silence is the voluntary and temporary abstention from speaking so that certain spiritual goals might be sought.”
 - Being silent: to read the Bible more, meditate on Scripture, pray, journal, and so on.
 - The silence is an outward silence so that there is an intentional biblical self-talk and/or prayer to God.
 - This is, as Whitney says, **Colossians 3:2**. “resting your soul in the love He displayed in Christ.”
 - “Solitude is the Spiritual Discipline of voluntarily and temporarily withdrawing to privacy for spiritual purposes.”
 - Being in solitude: thinking God’s thoughts, having an undistracted time with God, etc.
- “More than any generation in history we must *discipline* ourselves to enjoy the blessings of silence and solitude.”
- The technology we now have is in our ears and in front of our eyes all the time. We constantly live in an overloaded state...never really being able to digest or take in what we are learning about God.
- The problem is not that we don’t have enough time, it is that we are trying to pack in too much into the time we have been allotted.
- **How is this relevant to our current study on discipleship in the church?**
- Are you taking time to allow God’s Word (and other disciplines) to transform you from the inside out? Is your own priority spiritual transformation by the means that God’s given?
- Are you able to show this to others who come to you? This is discipleship.
- How does our culture influence us? Solitude and Silence...
- Quick stats: from 1980 to 2022, Americans are **half as likely** to be on vacation. College educated men saw their leisure time drop by six hours per week. High school educated gained 8 hours...
- About 60% of smartphone users are connected to work 13.5 hours or more daily.

- Pay attention to your wives and daughters...Employed women's average weekly hours rose from 34.1 – 36.2 but their average weeks worked per year went from 40.2 – 46.2.

CHAPTER 3: PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP PART I

- As we seek to practice discipleship in today's context, it is critical that we understand what biblical discipleship is, what Jesus called us to do and be, and what characteristics should be evident in our lives. (21)
- When thinking about discipleship and characteristics which are evident in your life, are there any that point to Jesus.
- In other words, do you friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, etc. know that you are a disciple of Jesus by how your life looks?
- Thinking about spiritual disciplines and spiritual formation, are these practices evident and do they take priority in your life?

Working through some biblical passages to gain some principles of true discipleship.

Matthew 28:19 – 20 (21-28) We are to make lifelong learners

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, {20} teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- This passage has been labeled the Great Commission. Jesus commissions His followers one final time as He prepares to ascend to heaven. This commission and final command are to be the passion of their hearts. Likewise, this same commission rings out to us today. Jesus' final command is to be the focus and passion of the church. **This command should drive and define our mission as individual disciples and as churches.**
- As Jesus called, trained, taught, and invested in them, **now they are to do the same with others.**

The Nature of the Command

- The command that Jesus gives to His disciples is to “make disciples” of other individuals. Jesus' commission, **which is imperative to all His followers**, involved one primary command: “make

disciples.” This command is accompanied by **three participles** in the Greek: going, baptizing, and teaching.⁶

- The first of these will be a once-for-all, decisive initiation into Christian community. The second proves a perennially incomplete, life-long task.⁷
- Knowing the difference between what brings you into the Christian community and what is expected of someone **in** the Christian community is vital.
- To “make disciples of all nations” does require people to leave their homelands. However, not everyone will be a missionary and take the gospel to unreached parts of the earth. Jesus’ focus remains **for all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be**.⁸ The activity demanded in the Great Commission is not to “go,” but rather to “make disciples.”

The Way Individuals Are Discipled (24-26)

- Jesus stated at the close of Matthew 28:19 that the disciples were to make disciples by “baptizing” and “teaching.”
- Jesus, in the Great Commission, makes baptism an essential component of discipleship. The new believer is baptized under the rulership of Christ. Baptism was an act of initiation, and Matthew 28:19 states that disciples initiate others (after salvation) into the church.
- Baptism would become the key first step that initiates new disciples into the church (that will be established later in Acts 2). This baptism is a single act, distinct from repeated Jewish ritual washings.
- Those who are baptized are to be taught not only to know all of Jesus’ commands but also to obey all of them (Matt 28:20). Therefore, in discipleship the intellectual component is secondary, the means to the end, which is spiritual formation.⁹
- The whole point of Jesus’ command is for the replication of believers to be in the image of Christ. This is done by following what Christ said and teaching what Christ taught.
- In other words, “...disciples are not the ones that the new disciples are to emulate; rather, new Christians are to be imitators/disciples of Jesus.”

⁶ Walvoord and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament ed.* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 94.

⁷ Craig L. Blomberg, *NAC: Matthew*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 431.

⁸ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

⁹ Turner, *Matthew*, 690.

- There are two different Greek words which convey the idea of “teaching” in verses 19–20 (“make disciples” v. 19 and “teaching” v. 20). The “teaching” in these two verses seems to include two things:
 - Bringing those who are out of Christianity into it, “teach all nations.” The word “teach” carries the sense of, “make disciples, proselytize them, bringing them over to my religion.”
 - An indoctrinating of those who are brought into the new religion into a practical observance of its holy truths. “Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (v. 20).

Luke 6:40 We Are to Resemble the Master in All Areas of life (28-31)

“A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”

- This passage not only provides an important principle in relation to NT discipleship, but also provides a beautiful picture of the relationship that disciples have to the Master Teacher (Jesus Christ).

The Nature of the Teacher – Pupil Instruction

- Because books were not readily available and oral instruction was standard, **a student (disciple) virtually lived alongside his teacher.**¹⁰ Teachers were regarded as authorities, and the student’s role was not simply to get information from the teacher—or, as is often the case in modern classrooms, to challenge the instruction of the teacher—but rather to **follow a teacher by adopting his teaching as normative for life.**¹¹
- The verb “fully trained” means “restored” (1 Pet 5:10, NIV) or “perfectly united” (1 Cor 1:10, NIV)
- The instruction in the teacher-pupil relationship involves **reordering one’s personal and spiritual life.** Ceslas Spicq writes, “the Christian life involves steady progress in preparation for glory, or the restoration and reordering of whatever is deficient either in one’s personal life or in one’s relations with one’s neighbor.”¹² **This depth of instruction is not achieved in a one-time sermon series or in a six-week discipleship course. Rather, this instruction requires continuous spiritual formation** (Phil 3:12–16).¹³

¹⁰ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 612.

¹¹ Bock, *Luke*, 612.

¹² Ceslas Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament, Vol. 2* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 274.

¹³ Garland, *Luke*, 284.

The Content of the Teacher – Pupil Instruction

- It is often assumed in modern teaching that content should drive the instruction. However, modern research on teaching suggests that though content is important the teacher and his/her methods of instruction are a critical component in the education of individual students.
- In the NT time period, the teacher-pupil relationship is assumed to be one in which the teacher does not merely impart a body of information (content) but rather praxis/practice (to mimic the actions of the teacher).¹⁴ Thomas Hudgins states, “mere cognition was never the exclusive goal of learning and education in the Old and New Testaments.”¹⁵
- There was not just a learning outcome, to repeat the information that was received. But the student was then to live out those truths and show that he/she really understood what they were taught.
- In other words, do as I say *and* as I do.

The Goal of the Teacher – Pupil Instruction

- Luke is challenging the disciples to strive to be like the Master in one’s ethical behavior (as a byproduct of gaining spiritual knowledge). Discipleship involves more than intellectual learning; it involves learning that impacts the head, heart, will, and body. Once an individual enters a salvation relationship with Jesus Christ, he then has the power or ability to mimic the Master (through the power of the Holy Spirit).¹⁶

Application for Today

- Though mentors/disciplers today are to provide an example for mentees/disciples to follow, the ultimate goal of discipleship is to point the learners to Christ. The modern day discipler needs to point those who he/she is discipling past themselves and ultimately to Christ. I do not want those who I am discipling to resemble me. I want those who I disciple to resemble Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ John Nolland, *WBC: Luke* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), 307.

¹⁵ Hudgins, *Luke 6:40 and the Theme of Likeness Education in the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 43.

¹⁶ Bovon, *Luke*, 249.

Luke 14:26 – 27 We are to be singular in our Allegiance to Christ no Matter the Cost (31-36)

“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. {27} Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

- **There is a huge difference between being involved and being committed.**
- The setting for this text was during the time in which large crowds journeyed with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem (vs. 25). The **people mistakenly saw in Jesus an earthly ruler who was marching to Jerusalem to establish His kingdom**, and they wanted to be there with Him and His disciples. But in Jerusalem, He would not ascend a throne; **He was on His way to die on the cross.**
- Human leaders oftentimes take great delight in having the masses follow them. However, **Jesus does not accept an insincere following of Him** on the part of the crowds.
- The purpose of this pericope was for Jesus to explain to his followers the cost of being His disciple. The section begins with an introduction (v. 25), transitions to two parallel sayings on discipleship (vv. 26–27), continues by providing two parabolic sayings with application regarding discipleship (vv. 28–33), and concludes with a challenge against half-hearted discipleship (vv. 34–35).¹⁷
- The opening sayings (vv. 26–27) and the application (v. 33) express the total commitment required from disciples of Jesus Christ.
- In both examples, **it is critical for an individual** to “count the cost” before venturing into the task.
- If a disciple is not **diligent**, family ties will become a greater pull for one’s allegiance than that of Jesus Christ.¹⁸ **One’s family is not to be the primary priority of one’s life**; only Jesus is to have that role. David Garland states, “love for him is to take precedence over all other loves.”¹⁹ **A disciple must make a choice.** He/she cannot have divided loyalties, pulling in opposite directions. He/she must be singular in his or her devotion to Jesus Christ.²⁰

¹⁷ I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 591.

¹⁸ Bock, *Luke*, 1285.

¹⁹ Garland, *Luke*, 601.

²⁰ Bovon, *Luke*, 386.

The Call to Endure Persecution for Christ

- In addition to the call for a singular allegiance to Christ, Jesus provides a second requirement to be his disciple. He calls disciples to be willing to endure persecution. In Luke 14:37, Jesus states: “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me **cannot be My disciple.**”
- **Jesus calls his disciples to be willing to bear their cross.** To “bear one’s cross” is not necessarily a call to death. **Rather, the call is to the denial of oneself with a willingness to endure hardship which may result in death.**
- Sadly, in American churches, persecution and suffering are often viewed as **something that should be avoided at all costs.** Most believers will only follow Christ as long as it doesn’t cost them too much. Many will only attend church services if they don’t conflict with vacations, family plans, activities, sporting events, etc. They will only get involved if the ministry opportunity does not take up too much of their time or energy. Many want to obey God on their terms.

3 Main Takeaways from Chapter 3

- We are commanded to make lifelong learners or disciples by baptizing and teaching.
 - Do we understand the meaning and purpose of baptism?
 - Do we know the content of the teaching that Jesus’ commands us to teach?
- We are to resemble our Master in all areas of life.
 - Are we only worried about head knowledge? Are there marks in our own life where we, and others, can see that our head knowledge has come out in our actions?
- We are to have a singular allegiance to our Master no matter what it costs us.
 - Are we willing to pay the two very high prices that Jesus demands...
 - A singular priority to Him and following Him over comfort in our own life?

CHAPTER 4: PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP PART II

- Continuing from Chapter 3, there are three additional passages to examine.

John 15:7-8 We Are to Display Specific Characteristics as Disciples of Christ (37-40)

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
{8} My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”

- I think that it’s important to note that these are *specific*, not traits that we think we should have.

Characteristic 1: Disciples Have an Intimate Relationship with Jesus Christ

- Jesus demands that the foundational commitment in a disciple’s life is to abide in Him. This means that **an intimate relationship with Christ is essential for a disciple**. A disciple must be so intimately connected with the Savior that he/she is characterized by the words and actions of Jesus.²¹

Characteristic 2: Disciples have a Passion for the Word of God

- Not only does Jesus state that disciples should “abide in Me,” but he also expects that “My words abide in you.” Just as the disciples were to have an intimate relationship with Christ, God’s Word should have an intimate relationship with the disciples. This concept is described by commentators as a “mutual indwelling.”²²
- Don Carson states, “Jesus’ words must so lodge in the disciple’s mind and heart that conformity to Christ, obedience to Christ, **is the most natural (supernatural?) thing in the world.**”²³

Characteristic 3: Disciples have a Consistent Prayer Life

- Once disciples display an intimate relationship with Christ and allow God’s Word to permeate their lives, they will not only display a dependence on God through prayer, but they will also pray according to God’s will.
- “When believers abide in Christ and Christ’s words abide in them, they live as close to Christ as well may be...their prayers...are in accord with God’s will, and they will be fully answered.”²⁴

²¹ Borchert, *John 12–21*, 145.

²² Kostenberger, *John*, 454 and Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 517.

²³ Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 517.

²⁴ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 562.

Characteristic 4: Disciples have a Heart for Ministry and Service

- The disciples will glorify the Father by their continual fruit-bearing. However, disciples cannot bear fruit of themselves, but rather the fruitfulness is confirmation of the Father's work in them. The bearing of fruit reveals that they are disciples.²⁵
- John obviously is writing figuratively when he states that believers should bear much fruit. John is describing the "fruit" of Christian ministry.²⁶ By involving themselves in Christian service, the disciples will glorify God the Father and prove that they are true disciples.

Romans 12:1-2 We Are to Display a Proper Mindset in Relationship to this World (41-46)

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. {2} And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

- The first word of Romans 12:1 carries the plea upon which verses 1 and 2 will be built. The verb "I urge," has a wide range of meanings including "to call to one's side," "to exhort," "to implore," "to encourage."²⁷ It is "the earnest appeal, based on the gospel, to those who are already believers to live consistently with the gospel they have received."²⁸ Robert Mounce reveals the importance of the exhortation considering the content that will follow in verses 1–2. "*Holiness of life rarely progresses apart from deliberative acts of the will. While sanctification is gradual in the sense that it continues throughout life, each advance depends upon a decision of the will.*"²⁹
- **What has Paul exhorted believers to do?**

²⁵ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 597.

²⁶ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 997. Keener expounds on the interpretation of the "fruit" described in John 15:7–8.

In John's larger usage, one might suppose the fruit of Christian witness (4:36; 12:24), but the immediate context, which bears more weight than John's usage elsewhere when the usage is so rare (two texts), suggests moral fruit. This is the most common sense of the metaphor in other traditions about Jesus and John the Baptist with which this Gospel's first audience may have been familiar (Matt 3:8, 10; 7:16–20; 12:33; Luke 3:8–9; 6:43–44; 13:6–9; probably Mark 11:14; 12:2); other early Christian writers also develop it (Gal 5:22; Phil 1:11; Eph 5:9; Col 1:10; Heb 12:11; Jas 3:18; Jude 12).

According to Keener, the idea of "fruit" is moral fruit that is displayed in the life of a believer.

²⁷ Robert H. Mounce, *NAC: Romans, Vol. 28* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Pub., 1995), 231.

²⁸ Charles E. B. Cranfield, *ICC: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Volume 2* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 2000), 597.

²⁹ Mounce, *Romans*, 231.

Believers are Called to be a Living Sacrifice

- Christians are not to offer animals to God but rather **to offer themselves** to God as “living sacrifices.”³⁰
- That the sacrifice is “living” reflects the **voluntary nature** of the act. F. F. Bruce comments that “the sacrifices of the new order do not consist in taking the lives of others, like the ancient animal sacrifices, but in giving one’s own (Heb 13:15–16; 1 Pet 2:5).”³¹ Paul qualifies the sacrifice that we offer by stating that it is a “living” sacrifice. This adjective refers **“to the nature of the sacrifice itself: one that does not die as it is offered but goes on living and therefore continues in its efficacy until the person who is offered dies.”**³² John MacArthur explains the “living” sacrifice we are to offer **“is the willingness to surrender to Him all** our hopes, plans, and everything that is precious to us, all that is humanly important to us, all that we find fulfilling.”³³ Believers are called upon to make an ongoing sacrifice of not only their lives but also their desires.
- Colin Kruse states, “Paul employs the idea of a ‘living sacrifice’ deliberately because the sacrifice he has in mind is not martyrdom, but rather lives that are pleasing to God.”³⁴ Paul is making a special point to emphasize that this sacrifice is not once and done.
- This type of ongoing, living, dedicated sacrifice of our bodies is “holy and pleasing to God.” Believers must realize that the possibility of bringing pleasure to God should provide a powerful motivation for the complete surrender of our will and self to him.³⁵
- This living sacrifice that God has commanded is not something that is so far out there that we will never be able to achieve it.
- **I would argue that this living sacrifice is hard (seemingly) not because it is difficult to actually do, but because it costs us more than we are willing to give up.**

Believers are Commanded to Not Conform to the World’s Systems

- He urges Christians to involve themselves in two ongoing activities. These activities reveal how the believer is to become an acceptable “living sacrifice.”

³⁰ MacArthur, *Romans 9–16*, 145.

³¹ F. F. Bruce, *Tyndale New Testament Commentary: Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1993), 213.

³² Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 751.

³³ MacArthur, *Romans 9–16*, 146.

³⁴ Kruse, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 462.

³⁵ Mounce, *Romans*, 231.

- The first activity is negative in nature; the second activity is positive.
- First, believers are no longer to “conform themselves” to the world’s system.
- As Christians, since we are to follow after our Master and conform to His image, we should leave the wicked system and the world behind.
- Disciples should have a different perspective on life and their actions should demonstrate this alternate viewpoint.

Believers are Commanded to Be Transformed by the Renewing of Their Mind

- Instead of being fitted into the world’s mold, believers are commanded to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” The tense of the verb is present and therefore describes **a continuing process of constant transformation.**³⁶ This transformation is not a once and done activity but rather is a consistent work of being altered in one’s thinking.
- In 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul taught that believers who behold the glory of the Lord are being “transformed” into his likeness. The transformation Paul is describing in Romans 12:2 is not a change affected from outside the individual but **rather a radical reorientation that begins deep within the human heart.**³⁷
- “The renewing of your mind” is how this transformation takes place. “Mind” is a word that Paul uses specifically to indicate a person’s “practical reason” or “moral consciousness.”³⁸ Christians are to adjust their way of thinking. This process does not occur overnight but is **a lifelong process of altering one’s thinking to resemble the way that God desires** that he/ she think about life and service.³⁹
- There is continuing pressure by the “world” on disciples to adopt the customs and mind-set of the world in which we live. **Though Christians may reject that pressure, this action alone will never create the kind of change God has in mind for his followers.** Real and lasting change comes from within.⁴⁰ Disciples must let themselves be transformed by the “renewing of the mind.”
- Our lives are not about ourselves and what we can get out of it. Our life is not about finding comfort in the world’s ways of thinking, but seeking to please the Lord with all we do.

³⁶ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 756.

³⁷ Mounce, *Romans*, 232.

³⁸ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 756.

³⁹ Moo, *The Epistle of the Romans*, 756–757.

⁴⁰ Mounce, *Romans*, 232.

- This can only start when our minds are being renewed...when we are being changed from the inside, the outside will start to look very different.

2 Timothy 2:2 We Are to Replicate Ourselves into the Lives of Others (46-49)

“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

What has Timothy Learned?

- What Timothy is to pass along to “faithful men” appears to be first mentioned in 2 Timothy 1:13–14: “Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.” The “sound words” mentioned in 1:13 and the “things” mentioned again in 2:2 are the **foundational truths of the gospel**.⁴¹
- Paul wants Timothy to entrust to others the “traditions” that he has received from Paul (cf. 2 Thess 2:15).⁴² **Timothy has received teaching from Paul over a period of several years.** Through his extensive travel with Paul and his ministry **alongside of Paul at Ephesus**, Timothy has been taught foundational truths.⁴³

What is Timothy to Do with the Learning?

- Timothy is commanded to take “the things” and entrust them to faithful men who will then teach “the things” to others. Timothy is commanded to “entrust” the deposit made by Paul to faithful people who will then teach others. **The chain of teaching, the “tradition,” is therefore continued generation to generation.**⁴⁴
- **There is a two-fold goal for Paul...**guard the foundational truths of the gospel and make sure that you teach them to men who will do the same for the next generation.

⁴¹ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *NAC: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 201.

⁴² George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1992), 390. Knight describes what Paul has entrusted to Timothy.

⁴³ John MacArthur, *2 Timothy* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 40.

⁴⁴ Risto Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles with Philemon & Jude* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 134.

- William Barclay states, “**The teacher is a link in the living chain which stretches unbroken from this present moment back to Jesus Christ.** The glory of teaching is that it links the present with the earthly life of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁵
- Faithful discipleship will have everlasting fruit in countless lives that you will never know.
- For this teaching to pass from generation to generation, it is essential that people of character continue to teach the true gospel. It is imperative that Timothy identify these men and entrust the gospel to them **before he departs.**
- There are two character traits that these men should have... **they are faithful** and they **are able to teach.**
- This is a **systematic way**, an order put in place so that the truths of the gospel and their consistent passing down from person to person would not fail.
- This pattern, which is explained in 2 Timothy 2:2 and revealed in Acts, provides us **the ongoing pattern of discipleship:** the church is to train young believers to maturity, who will then continue to teach and train other young believers.

3 Main Takeaways from Chapter 4

- We are to display specific characteristics as disciples of Christ.
 - We are to have an intimate relationship with Jesus, a Passion for His Word, a consistent prayer life and a heart for ministry and service.
- We are to display a proper mindset in relationship to this world.
 - Are we enthralled and engrossed with the world or are we being transformed by God’s Word so that we can be living sacrifices for God?
- We are to replicate ourselves into the lives of others.
 - Are you a faithful (not perfect) man who can be taught the sacred text so that you have in your mind to pass it down to the next generation?

⁴⁵ William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1957), 182.