

SKILLS TRAINING

DISCIPLESHIP IS ABOUT OBEDIENCE

The concept of discipleship was not a new idea in the times of Jesus, and it has never been something exclusive to Christianity. Philosophers as Plato, Socrates, and others have had disciples. The Pharisees had disciples. What is it that determined exactly who was someone's disciple? A person who would put to practice what his master taught. We can see it in what the Lord said here:

*Therefore, as you go, disciple people in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you.** And remember, I am with you each and every day until the end of the age."*
Matthew 28:19-20 ISV

The Lord spoke about teaching others to obey all of His commandments. **Discipleship is about obedience.** As disciple-makers, we need to teach the younger brothers how to obey the commandments of Christ. How are they supposed to do the practical side of the work of the Kingdom?

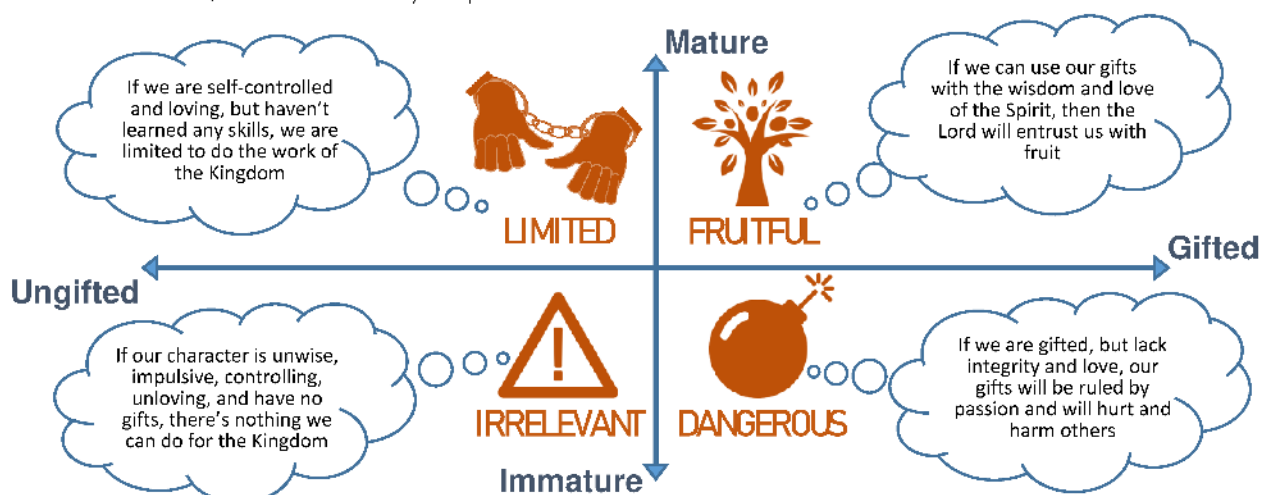
*For everyone partaking of milk is **unskillful in the Word of Righteousness**, for he is an infant. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, **even those who because of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***
Hebrews 5:13-14 MKJV

This text explains two very important things. First, that the Word requires *skill*, which implies that the Word is *practical* and not theoretical. Living and working in the Kingdom is just like learning to drive a car: it's very important to know the theory, but you will never bring anyone to their destination if you have no practical experience.

Second, the text shows that discernment of good and evil comes through use, through practice. In other words, if the disciples we serve have not been putting to practice what they will not become able to discern good from evil, and therefore grow up to maturity. So, again, if knowledge doesn't become obedience, discipleship turns inefficient.

TIMING FOR SKILLS TRAINING

When talking about skills, we need to be very aware of the fact that teaching skills to someone requires certain level of maturity of character. The gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12) go hand in hand with the fruit of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 13, Galatians 5:22-23). To put it more visual:



If you meditate on this, and understand what the Bible is teaching on this regard, you will see that skills training should take place *only when the disciple has a level of spiritual stability*. This is vital because the immature can get puffed up when he sees supernatural or practical gifts operating in his or her life.

WHAT SKILLS TO TEACH

If you have watched and read the lesson about [Spiritual Ages](#), you have already understood that we are speaking about a spiritual “youngster.” By this time, this disciple knows how to have fellowship with God and other brothers and sisters, how to live in victory over sin, and how to read and study the Word of God. He/she is now coming out of the cocoon and starting to help and serve others.

The core mission of any disciple is to become a disciple maker. This can happen in many different ways within the Body of Christ, but a set of basic skills are connected to the proclamation of the Good News, that is, evangelism. To learn to evangelize effectively, you can see the lessons on evangelism that come after this lesson. There is network evangelism, street evangelism, how to present the gospel in different ways, how fast to go when testifying, telling your testimony in 3 minutes, etc.

A logical following set of skills will be about leading people to repentance. If evangelism was effective, and they understand and believe, how can we help them to repent? After that, comes the commitment part. How do we explain that? Next, baptism. Who, how, and when do we baptize? And also, the baptism in the Holy Spirit. How do we do that? What are the signs of it? All of this takes practice and observation. They need to see us doing it, help us, and then get the chance to do it themselves.

The seven steps of skills training should look like this:

1. I explain it to you.
2. You observe me do it.
3. You help me do it.
4. We do it together.
5. I help you do it.
6. I observe you do it (for feedback).
7. I let you do it alone.

After the proclamation of the gospel and taking someone through the new birth, one-on-one discipleship would be the next skill to learn. As shown in the list above, this will start with your example and supervision, but eventually you will try to work yourself out of the picture and let the young disciple take over.

Important: these is not the only training. In their baby level they have dealt with personal hurts, family life, marriage issues, and other character and emotional issues. Keep in perspective the complete scope of discipleship.

Other skills to learn are the use of spiritual gifts (faith, miracle working, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, etc.), healing the sick as a sign on evangelism, ministering deliverance, shepherding, among others. Skills training is probably what will take the longest in the discipleship process, since we want the disciple to be ready to become a father once he is out of this level of training.