

Jesus commands us to make disciples. His method was simple – provide willing students with sound instruction in the Scriptures while modeling a Godly life style.

Our Key Principles for Relational Discipleship

Fred & Joan Nelson

(These principles have kept us focused, sane, and loving our work)

1. **The purpose of the Gospel of Christ is friendship. (*Friend* - "one attached to another by affection or esteem"; we consider all our students as life-long friends!**
2. ***Friendship* is more important than *things*; but *integrity* is more important than *friendship*. We are commanded by God to speak the "truth in love."**
3. **We do not befriend people in order to share the Gospel with them. We befriend them because they have been created by God and are precious to Him. If by loving our friends well, we are given the opportunity to share Jesus with them, that is a bonus.**
4. **We generally let our students pick themselves. We pray for God to send us FAT people (faithful, available, and teachable). We try to raise the spiritual bar frequently.**
5. **Our plan from Mark 2 is to help people: *get saved* (conversion); *get well* (discipleship); *get going* (leadership). We are diligent to make sure that those who "think" they are saved know the Biblical requirements (Rom 10:9) and especially the correct NT definitions of *Lord* = one in total authority and *believe* - trust in, rely on, cling to, surrender to. (A useful question - "Do you believe that the Holy Spirit lives in you?"**
6. **We attempt to guide people not by our experience or even by common sense but by the written Word of God, the Bible. We often call ourselves compassionate "page turners."**
7. **Our job is to love our neighbors not to fix them. We try to listen more than we talk.**
8. **If time allows us to both *pray* for and *follow-up* with our friends - wonderful! If we have only enough time to do one or the other - we *pray* for our friend!**
9. **We can only lead someone as far as God has taken us. We must spend much time with our Father so that we have something worthwhile to share with our student friends.**
10. **Our most useful and enlightening question has proven to be "On what do you base your decisions?" Nearly everyone eventually answers, "on my feelings?"**
11. **We don't take the credit when people seem to do better, and we won't take the blame when they don't.**
12. **Every piece of advice we give has the following two principles at its core:
1. "Life is not about us but about God." 2. "Obeying God is the only thing in life that matters, and obeying God is always in our best interest."**

1 Thess 2:8 NIV *We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.*

Salvation – Is it Real?

How can you tell whether the Holy Spirit has performed a saving operation? As the principle evidence of life is motion, Jonathan Edwards wrote, so the principle evidence of saving grace is holy practice (pp. 262-63). He said true salvation always produces an abiding change of nature in a true convert. Therefore, whenever holiness of life does not accompany a confession of conversion, it must be understood that this individual is not a Christian.

A number of New Testament writers, of course, were very concerned about this matter of true salvation, as was our Lord Jesus Himself. The apostle John dedicated his first letter to the subject, stating his theme at the end: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). Throughout the letter is a series of tests to determine whether you possess eternal life. If you don't pass these tests, you'll know where you stand and what you need to do. If you do, you'll have reason to enjoy your eternal salvation with great assurance.

11 Biblical Tests of Genuine Salvation – from John MacArthur

- 1. Have You Enjoyed Fellowship with Christ and the Father?**
- 2. Are You Sensitive to Sin?**
- 3. Do You Obey God's Word?**
- 4. Do You Reject This Evil World?**
- 5. Do You Eagerly Await Christ's Return?**
- 6. Do You See a Decreasing Pattern of Sin in Your Life?**
- 7. Do You Love Other Christians?**
- 8. Do You Experience Answered Prayer?**
- 9. Do you Experience the Ministry of the Holy Spirit?**
- 10. Can You Discern between Spiritual Truth and Error?**
- 11. Have You Suffered Rejection Because of Your Faith?**

Matt 7:21-23 NIV 21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

