

PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLE BUILDING I Howard Hendricks

I asked you in preparation for this hour to study with me in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 6, verses 12 through 49. We want to concentrate on the first paragraph, but we like to see it in its entire setting. The first paragraph, verse 12-19 set forth the choosing of the 12. Interesting to note when this occurred in the life and ministry of Jesus. The next four paragraphs comprise a unit which we might entitle "The Great Sermon". It is a sermon on the lesson on discipleship, ending up with the crucial climax, it is important not only to hear but also to do.

While we are ever impressed that the fact that the Word was not written to satisfy one's curiosity but to change one's life, the life and teaching of Jesus would overwhelmingly convince me. Notice how repeatedly he emphasises the importance of keeping, feeling, living, not simply interested in restructuring your mental processes. He is interested in overhauling your experience.

When you get into the section dealing with ethics, you will notice what a revolutionary ethic it is which he is advocating for his disciples.

The remarkable thing is to note the context or setting for this selection of the disciples. Prior to verse 12 of Chapter 6, there is a segment in Luke which might be entitled "The Acquisition Segment". It begins in Chapter 5 vs. 17 goes through Chapter 6, verse 11. The picture of mounting opposition and hostility, and it reaches a climax in verse 11, chapter 6. "But they were filled with madness." The Greek word translated in the English text "madness", one of the strongest words in the Greek language for reaction. Literally, it means to see "red". It is the picture of a bull who sees a red flag waved in front of him and now he launches the charge. One of the lexicographers translates it "to lose one's conscious control of one's self in a fit of rage." This is not the ordinary word translated "madness". This was an exceptional and highly heightened and intensified word. This had been building since 5:17 when it was precipitated and it is moving to a climax. Now they reach a point of discouraged opposition. They communed with one another as to what they might do to Jesus. Another of the gospels said it was their purpose to put him to death. He must go!

I want you to note the significance of this. The moment they decide he must go, he decides to handpick a core of disciples for someone must carry on. If in a period of time his ministry will be over here on earth, then this points up the necessity for training of small groups to continue his work after his death. They are determined to fight him to the death. He is determined that others will carry on.

I had a funeral just before I came to Arrowhead Springs. Rather sudden death. Individual who was in perfect health, in fact, had just completed an extensive series of tests ordered by the company in which he is an executive. Everything was perfect. A few days after the final report, he was gone. You know, experiences like this in the life of each of us cause us to do some thinking. I came away having talked with a lot of people who like myself walked away from this experience saying, "My, that's amazing." It is really not amazing at all. We think we are in the land of the living and are on our way to the land of the dying. The truth of the matter is, we need to come to grips with the fact that we are in the land of the dying and on our way to the land of the living. And if your life or my life should be sunned out like that it is not an amazing thing when you are living in the land of the dying. And there is no exception. This says worlds to us about the process of building disciples. Some of us are working with Crusade as if we were going to be

with Crusade for eternity. Did you ever ask yourself as a member of Crusade committed to reaching this generation with the Gospel of God how can we make an impact on, or to personalize, how can I make an impact upon the next generation. ~~Only~~ Only one way. There is only one way to guarantee the impact of Crusade or of your life in the next generation and that is by building qualitatively into people in this generation. Because you may not be here to guarantee it or to perpetuate its verity. But you can build into the life of others who may be living and leaders in the next generation.

Someone said to me, "I heard you had a rather close experience this past year." I said, "Yes, I thought I was moving into the land of the living permanently." "I suppose you did a lot of thinking." "I did a considerable amount of thinking, but I ~~was~~ also came away with a deep satisfaction. This is my ~~only~~ own personal viewpoint - not representing the viewpoint of the sponsors or the management--but I am constantly having people ask me, "do you believe Christ may return?" I believe he may return. "If he returned next week, what would you do?" "I would go on doing what I am doing right now." Because I don't know how I could do anything more significant than what I am doing right now, and that is attempting to build into your lives. That is what you ought to be doing. I find that sometimes we can get ourselves so compulsive that we really shoot the hide out of our own ministry and should our Lord come back and should in grace allow us another generation to get the Gospel out in the hands of the earth. We haven't built significantly into the life of someone else, ~~for~~ who can carry on in the next generation. I hope you won't make this mistake. Hope that you will teach the vision that if you want to preserve this kind of ministry in the next generation, build right now into the kids on your campus with a *dynamic* ministry and if you should die next week after you have completed a years training program of this, you can die with complete satisfaction and fulfillment.

If Jesus Christ should take me home today, I think I can die with a sense of real fulfillment, being able to point to men right here in this room as well as men all around the world whose lives I have built and now that I am going on, they are simply carrying on what those who went on before me built into my life. This is exactly what happens here. They are going to put him to death, so he selects a hand full of men and begins to move into their lives. I want you to notice another principle in this passage, and I am sure it hits you with full force. "It came to pass in these days (notice in these days) that the the time when they made the decision to put him to death, that he went out into the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God."

Let me ask you a question, and I have been asking myself this question for a good many years now. If Jesus Christ who had unbroken fellowship with the Father needed to pray, what must you need be? What must my need be? So high on his priority list with the Father, that at every critical point, and you can trace it particularly in Luke's gospel, which is the gospel of prayer, but throughout the ~~rest~~ of the gospels, he retires to a solitary place in order to pray. Do you ever ask yourself why is it you are constantly bombed out in this area? Is there anybody here who needs an to pray? The Lord says men ought always to pray and never throw in the towel. Paul said pray without interruption, ~~in~~ making it the pattern of your life. Yet it is the one area in which you *bomb* out. You witness. Some of us study the scriptures. We're busy. Like crazy!

Activity is merely the anesthetic to deaden the pain of an empty life. If you get off long enough, you'll discover your active but not accomplishing anything. I think the most sobering question confronting every individual at the beginning of every day of his life is how can I spend my time most

profitably today. One thing we all have in common. We don't have the same gifts. We don't have the same of a lot of things. But we all have the same time. How can I spend my time most profitably?

Ln. 6/12
Jesus spends all night in prayer, and after this night in prayer, when it was day, then he calls his disciples and chooses them. I keep asking myself why is it that this is the one area in which I am shot down in flight? The older I become in the Lord, the more impressed I am with the subtlety of Satan. The Bible says in Genesis 3 "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field", and he is always slipping up on your blind side. He doesn't mind your studying the Word as long as you don't pray. Then you'll develop a good case of spiritual pride. You will be overly impressed by how much you know of the Word. But you'll never amount to anything. He knows, if you don't know, that it is far more important to talk to God about men than it is to talk to men about God. He knows if you don't know, that it is far more important for you to be in the will of God than that you be compulsively active in his work. And that work may sometimes mean inactivity--sitting down and thinking.

He chose after a night of prayer. That intrigues me and I want to ~~say~~ share it with you in terms of practical application. I believe how you enlist a person will determine how that person serves. And I believe how our Lord enlisted his disciples eventually determined how they served. In fact, it is very intriguing for me to note that Jesus Christ never launched a series of lectures on prayer with his disciples until they said "Lord, teach us to pray." What an example! In fact, every time Peter was hunting Him out, he found Him on his knees. Go all the way down to Chapter 11 and suddenly you get a bolt out of the blue, the light goes on and one of them says, "Lord, teach us to pray."

There are three ways commonly used for enlisting people and I see them most commonly in a local church, but actually they are using a variety of ~~ways~~. One of them is public announcement. I can almost hear it now. A little pious whang "Beloved...." Next Tuesday nobody shows up except a few people who ought never to be sent visiting.

Our sometimes we enlist people in this manner -- last minute pressurized procedure. The opening exercise in the 'assault department' have now commenced. I have always thought that was an appropriate title. They don't open anything and they exercies less. Sing another hymn while the late commers arrive and the S.S. Superintendent steals in the back door, down the aisle and taps the guy on the end of the row on the shoulder and the guy gets the sentence for life in the Junior Department. The moral of the story is never sit on the end of the row in the adult department.

Or we see another approach. I have to dramatize this to get the message across ".... lost 7 teachers in the last month. Hendrichs we are so hard up we finally got down to you." "Not very effective in scriptures." "That's perfectly all right. If you can read the quarterly, you can teach it." Which is exactly what he does. "Or I'm a traveling man ..." "That's all right, all you need is a willing heart." The real problem is not him. It's you; by enlisting a person in this manner.

I was working with a church at one time who had this kind of enlistment program and they decided maybe there was a more feasible approach. They were studying in the gospels, and they ran across this truth and it hit them right between the eyes. So they got a core of concerned men in the church who got down on their knees to pray the Lord of the Harvest that he would send

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forth laborers - not to Africa - but into their local *membership* and God was pleased to answer and he started a program. There is a very prominent surgeon in our community who is a member of that church. They were interested in launching a program in the college department and as you people know, working with college students you go long and far to find a church that has a program. So that when you lead someone to Christ this church has a good college program. Of all of the departments, this is the one that has the least number in the churches across the country.. So they recognized this need and through Campus Crusade and also intervarsity a number of kids were coming to know Christ in this area and they were encouraging them to come to this local church which they did but no class for them. Put them in the class for the newly weds, the nearly weds, and the never weds. And they really feel at home. They decided that they needed to start a program and they needed to get a couple who would really take it on. So for three months they prayed. And ~~they~~ the more they prayed, the more it seemed that the Lord zeroed in on this doctor and his wife. So instead of catching them going out of the door, they said "Doc, could we make an appointment to see you this week? We have an urgent matter we would like to share with you. He said "Certainly, I'll be glad to, so he carves out a couple of hours in the middle of a very busy day. Calls up the secretary receptionist and says look, I don't want to be disturbed for any reason. I have a very important conference. It is spiritual. Three of these men walked into his office and sat down. Had a word of prayer together and said "Doc, we would like to put down a challenge to you -- the biggest challenge you have ever had in your life. We have a job bigger than you are and bigger than we are -- demands supernatural power to get the job done. Continued to explain the challenge, the detail, the cost and said we have been praying for three months and we together agree that the Lord would have us approach you about the possibility of taking this class. Now don't give us an answer until you have prayed about it. Don't tell us yes until you have told God yes. Don't tell us no until you have told him no.

I would give anything if I had that doctor here with me today because he could really give you the message. Of all the individuals I know in the medical profession in Dallas, I don't know of anybody who could afford less to get involved in this if you are just talking about sheer involvement on a time basis. He and his wife shared some of the details with me. He said he went home. "I couldn't sleep for several nights. My wife and I would get up and get down on our knees and pray about it. The thing that overwhelmed me was this. To think that here were three ~~spirit-controlled~~ spirit-controlled men who by word of God approached me. How could I consider that proposition lightly? He answered the question *ca. 1/6*.

That is exactly the way I think you ought to approach people if you are going to disciple. I think you ought to spend considerable time praying over this so that you are led of the spirit of God and can approach this individual to ask him to pray about his involvement. And when you enlist him this way, then you develop a spiritual pattern which is the key to the whole relationship. How you enlist a person will determine who he serves.

It is a question of
It isn't even a question of going around looking for the sharpest people -- whatever that means. This is a question of getting spirit direction.

Would you look at the list of those he chose. Ask yourself the question *A* Are these the men you would have chosen? Here we are at Crusade now to launch a world-wide enterprise. Going to pick 12 regional directors. The first one is Peter. I don't know if Peter would ever make it in Crusade. I think he would blow the blueprint. He had a tremendous facility for putting

form laborer - out to Africa - out into their local
 was needed to answer and be started a program. There is a very prominent
 situation in our country and a number of other countries. They were interested
 in launching a program in the college department and an even greater
 working with other students and to launch this church in a good
 program. So that when you look at the church in a good
 college program. We all of the students, this in the one that has the
 least number in the program now. It is only... so they recognized this
 need and through their own initiative and also through a number of others were
 coming to know about it in their own way they were encouraging them to come to
 this local church. And they had no other idea. But then in the
 class on the Sabbath, the Sabbath school, and the prayer club, and they
 really feel it was... they thought that they needed to start a program and
 they needed to get a committee which would really get it on its feet.
 When they started, they had no money. They had no office. They had no
 the love spread in the region and the whole area instead of staying in
 living out of the door, they said "No, we will stay in the church and we
 you the week - we have an office. We have a room. We have a secretary.
 He is in "California". I'll be glad to go to any office of mine in
 the office of a very busy day. Call it up the secretary representative and a
 look, I don't want to be disturbed for any reason. I have a very important
 conference. It is essential. It is essential. These of course, and his wife
 and home. And a great number of other people and his wife and home.
 from a challenge to you - the biggest challenge you have ever had in your
 life. We have a job right there and we are going to do it. We are going to
 our spiritual power to get the job done. Continued to explain the challenge, the
 details, the cost and all we have been praying for. I am sure that we
 together again that the Lord would have an answer for every prayer and possibility
 of solving this issue. Now we'll give us an answer until you have prayed about
 it. God's will is what you will. Don't tell us no until
 you have told him no.

I could give you an idea of it if I had that doctor here with me today because
 he could really give you the picture. Of all the individuals I know in the
 world, I know the least. I don't know anybody who would allow us
 to get involved in this if you are just talking about other involvement on a
 time basis. He and his wife shared some of the details with me. He said he
 was very busy. I don't know if you are a doctor or a nurse. He said he was
 and he was on our team and he was about it. The last year or so he was
 the day. I think that was a real challenge. I consider that a real
 challenge. He was a real challenge.

That is exactly the way I think you ought to approach people if you are
 going to last. I don't want to say that. I don't want to say that. I don't
 want to say that you are not in the spirit of God and you are not in the
 way. To ask him to help. But when you enter the way,
 then you develop a spiritual relationship which is the key to the whole relation-
 ship. the spiritual relationship is the key.

It is a question of... If you have a question of going around looking for the right set people --
 behavior is a matter. This is a question of going spirit direction.

Would you look at the list of those he chose. Ask yourself the question
 "Are these the people you would have chosen?" Here is a list of people who
 I think would be a good list. I don't think Peter would ever have been at the Cross.
 I think the world has the blessing of having a man who had a passionate love for Christ