At age 16 a young Hungarian pianist named Andor Foldes had mastered and was performing some of the most difficult piano compositions. But that year one of the most renowned pianists of the day came to his city of Budapest.

Emil von Sauer was famous not only for his abilities; he was also the last surviving pupil of the great Franz Liszt. The master, Von Sauer invited young Foldes play for him. The boy obliged with some of the most difficult works of Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann.

When he finished, von Sauer got up, walked over to the young student, took his head in his hands and kissed him on the forehead. “My son,” he said, “when I was your age I became a student of Liszt.

He kissed me on the forehead after my first lesson, saying, ‘Take good care of this kiss--it comes from Beethoven, who gave it to me after hearing me play.’ I have waited for years to pass on this sacred heritage, but now I feel you deserve it.’

Andor Földes rose to the expectation. Beethoven's kiss miraculously lifted him from the high level at which he was performing and put him on a level of real greatness.

The incomparable greatness and uniqueness of Ludwig von Beethoven survives in many ways, but none more personally or more powerfully than through the mentoring of those touched by this symbolic kiss.

I share this illustration because we are coming to the end of our series Discipleship Essentials. And the next step when we have completed the initial discipleship training is to gather a small group in a quad or a triad and pass on what you have learned to others.

Jesus began with just 12 men and then sent them out. Two thousand years later the message is still spreading.
Our **effectiveness** in **fulfilling** Christ’s Great Commission, in making **disciples** in all nations is **dependent** on **four** things. First our **efforts** must be

**1<sup>ST</sup> GENERATIONAL**

By **generational** I mean **continuing** to **pass** it on.

2 Timothy 2:2 “**You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.**”

This is Paul’s **last** NT letter and he is giving **final instructions** to a young man he **led** to Christ, **discipled** and **installed** as a pastor of a prominent **1<sup>st</sup> Century** church.

Paul is **nearing** the **end** of his life. His **ministry** on earth will soon come to **an end** and he wants to **make sure** that the **riches** that he received from **Jesus** and passed on to **Timothy**, will **continue** to be **passed down** to succeeding generations.

You see, **Paul** was a very **wealthy** man; and his wealth was **far above** earthly riches. He was an **heir** to the riches of **heaven; God’s** riches.

**Listen** to what he says in **Galatians 4:7.** “**You are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are his child, everything he has belongs to you.**”

Under **Roman law** an **adopted** child had all the **rights** and **privileges** of a natural child—all **legal right** to the father’s **property** and **possessions**, even if formerly a **slave**. The **moment** you and I **chose** to become **disciples** of Jesus Christ, **God** adopted us into his **royal family**.

**Paul** says that **because** we are **now** God’s children and because **he** is **owner** of the entire **universe**, all **he** has **belongs** to us. We are children of **enormous wealth**. There is **nothing** in all creation that **does not** belong to us.

Now **some** of you may be **thinking**, I don’t feel **wealthy**. I’m still **struggling** to pay my **bills**. Well **before** you **leave** this morning I want to **make sure** you know how to **access** your **fortune**, so **hang** around.
That’s what Paul is telling the Galatians. No more feelings of being a pauper; of being deprived. We now have access to the wealth of the universe. But Paul explains:

“Think of it this way. If a father dies and leaves an inheritance for his young children, those children are not much better off than slaves until they grow up, even though they actually own everything their father had. They have to obey their guardians until they reach whatever age their father set. And that’s the way it was with us before Christ came. We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world.” Galatians 4:1-3

Paul is saying that as children we are not much better off than slaves, until we grow up. The master provides for his slaves, but they don’t have access to the inheritance.

But when the children grow up and they know how to handle their father’s wealth, things change. As adult children of God we are expected to use our God-given wealth with godly maturity.

We don’t have to plead of beg for what we need. He knows our needs and we can relax in his provision. We can wear our wealth with pride but we must be generous and share the wealth.

Now the verse in 2 Timothy denotes four levels of discipleship.

1st there is Paul, a man uniquely chosen by God to share the wealth of Christ all across the Roman Empire. Paul faithfully does this, planting churches along the way and leaving trained leadership in each city.

Apart from Jesus, Paul is probably the most influential leader in the founding and rampant proliferation of the 1st century church.

The 2nd level of discipleship is Paul to Timothy. Paul led Timothy to Christ but then began to teach him what it meant to be a fully devoted disciple of Christ. As you follow their story through the pages of the NT you see how committed Paul was to this mentoring relationship.

3rd Paul instructs Timothy to share all he has learned with other trustworthy people who will (4th level) pass it on to others. There is Paul, Timothy, trustworthy people and others – four levels.
This was not just instruction for Jesus’ first disciples or Paul’s, but every follower of Christ is expected to share the wealth, pass on to others the things we have learned. Only then can we really enjoy the wealth that is ours.

So how do we accomplish this; just how do we go about sharing the wealth, passing it on? First it is generational. 2nd it is

**2ND RELATIONAL**

Effective discipleship is relationally intensive. It’s relationally demanding. That’s why it can’t be done on Sunday morning. Me standing up here passing on information will never accomplish the task. Information is good but not enough.

Ephesians 5:1-2 says, “Follow God’s example in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ, who loved you and gave himself as a sacrifice to take away your sins.”

Paul sets the bar high. You can’t get the bar any higher than this. Paul in this verse doesn’t say follow my example. He says follow God’s example because he’s our Father and we are his children.

Paul later describes numerous characteristics of this new life style, but he begins with the supreme example – sacrificial love for others. And he gave us a human example of this, Christ, so we would know exactly what he’s talking about.

How do we sacrifice our lives for others? I think this is exactly what we do when we respond in obedience to go and make disciples. The process of making disciples like Jesus did will require that we abandon selfish pursuits and ambitions.

Sexual immorality, impurity, greed and other such sins must be completely eliminated. And a life of love and thankfulness must develop and grow. We know how to live this life because he has put his light in our hearts so we have no excuse and he has given us His Holy Spirit to empower and control us.

Near the beginning of his ministry Jesus called 12 men “that they might be with him” (Mark 3:14) and for the next 3 years they were together 24/7.
Jesus understood how important mutual accountability and transparency is. There are no Lone Ranger disciples. It just doesn’t work that way. We are mutually dependent. We need each other.

One of the benefits of the quads and triads is the richness of learning from one another.

Matthew 23:8 “Don’t let anyone call you ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters.”

Jesus warned that the hypocritical Pharisees loved to be greeted in the marketplace and to have men call the “Rabbi”. A Rabbi in Hebrew culture was an exalted teacher.

Jesus condemned the prideful seeking of position and recognition. It wasn’t that Jesus didn’t recognize the role of authentic leadership—he did.

And later in the NT the Apostle Paul pointed out that some would have a special gift of teaching (Ep 4:11). He also referred to himself as the spiritual father of the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 4:15). The error and the point Jesus is making is the blunder of self-exaltation and self-importance.

Jesus points out that we have but one teacher and that is him. He is the master teacher for the disciples and his Holy Spirit who lives in us will be our teacher and lead us into all truth.

When we talk about disciple making, we’re not trying to make for ourselves. We are just trying to help others to become authentic disciples of Jesus.

But because we are all indwelt by the Holy Spirit and on the same level, we can teach each other.

Paul says, “Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.” Colossians 3:16

Effective discipleship is generational, relational and 3rd, it is

**3RD INTENTIONAL**
Before Jesus called his first group of disciples he went up onto a mountain and spent the entire night in prayer. Jesus knew the importance of this decision. He knew that he would one day entrust his entire redemptive plans to a few ordinary men.

Many feel that the mission of the church is to merely be witnesses to a lost world. It is true that we are to bear witness of the risen Christ and His transforming power.

We are told in Acts 1:8 that we are to be His witnesses to the ends of the world. Again we are told in Mark 16 to preach the Gospel to every creature.

At the 1968 World Congress on Evangelism John Stott said, “the Church engages in evangelism today, not because it wants to or because it chooses to or because it likes to, but because it has been told to. Evangelistic inactivity is disobedience.

It is easy to determine when something is aflame. It ignites other material. Any fire that does not spread will eventually go out. A church without evangelism is a contradiction in terms; just as a fire that does not burn is a contradiction.

While the preaching of the Gospel is our responsibility, evangelism in and of itself is not the complete mandate of the Great Commission. Evangelism is just the beginning of the commission. Jesus clearly says we’re to make disciples.

What is a disciple? According to the ancient Hebrew Talmud a disciples was a student or learner. The NT uses the word disciple not only of Jesus’ followers but also those who followed Moses (John 9:28), the Pharisees (Mark 2:18), John the Baptist (Mark 11:2) and of Paul (Acts 9:25).

A Disciple is one who has a desire to learn from His Master; One that attaches himself to a given teacher. The original word was used first of those that learned a trade.

If you wanted to become a craftsman in a certain trade in biblical times you would apprentice yourself under the discipline and instruction of a master craftsman of that trade.

In the movie Karate Kid, young Daniel asks Mister Miagi to teach him karate. Miagi agrees under one condition:
Daniel must submit totally to his instruction and never question his methods.

Daniel shows up the next day eager to learn. To his chagrin, Mister Miagi has him paint a fence. Miagi demonstrates the precise motion for the job: up and down, up and down. Daniel takes days to finish the job.

Next, Miagi has him scrub the deck using a prescribed stroke. Again the job takes days. Daniel wonders, What does this have to do with karate? but he says nothing.

Next, Miagi tells Daniel to wash and wax three weather-beaten cars and again prescribes the motion. Finally, Daniel reaches his limit: "I thought you were going to teach me karate, but all you have done is have me do your unwanted chores!"

Daniel has broken Miagi’s one condition, and the old man’s face pulses with anger. "I have been teaching you karate! Defend yourself!" Miagi thrusts his arm at Daniel, who instinctively defends himself with an arm motion exactly like that used in one of his chores.

Miagi unleashes a vicious kick, and again Daniel averts the blow with a motion used in his chores. After Daniel successfully defends himself from several more blows, Miagi simply walks away, leaving Daniel to discover what the master had known all along.

Skill comes from repeating the correct but seemingly mundane actions. It was at this point Daniel ceased being a student and became a disciple of Mr. Miagi.

Luke 6:40 “Students are not greater than their teacher. But the student who is fully trained will become like the teacher.”

Disciples of Jesus must embrace spiritual disciplines; the practice of daily time in God’s Word, daily time in prayer, the scripture memory, and the willingness to be vulnerable and accountable to others for personal growth.

Paul in Ephesians 5:1 says, “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children...”
Dearly loved children naturally try to imitate their fathers but the standard Paul offers couldn’t be higher. We don’t just try to act like God; we must train to be Christ like.

We must develop training disciplines, set goals, submit to coaches, work with a team and make time for training. Godly living is counter our broken and sinful nature and faithful practice of spiritual disciplines is the only road to recovery.

First we challenge others to make the commitment to discipleship. Then

Discipleship is generational, it’s relational, it’s intentional and it’s

4TH TRANSFORMATIONAL

In Matthew 4:19 Jesus said “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” That verse can be broken down into three parts.

1st Follow me – that’s the invitation. 2nd I will make you – that’s transformation. That’s what Christ will do in us as we follow. The 3rd part is the mission – that’s what we will become; fishers of men.

The 2nd part, the transformational part focuses on change. The cool thing about Christianity, the unique thing is that Jesus unlike Mohammed or Buddha, Jesus is not dead. He’s not in a grave somewhere. He’s still alive and one of the clear evidences is changed lives.

People are still being changed by him. Drug users get clean. Alcoholics get sober. Porn addicts leave their addictions for a life of purity.

They respond to his invitation to follow and their lives are changed. Changed into what? Romans 8:29 says, “For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

God foreknew them; he knew in advance who would choose to follow his Son. How did he know that? I don’t know, but he knew. And he planned in advance that they would become like his Son, like Jesus.
That’s how we know that a person is really an authentic follower of Jesus. They are changing; they are becoming more and more like him.

They become fishers of men. They take on the character of their master. Jesus came to seek and save those who had lost their way and he came to make them into disciples.

We who are his followers do the same thing. I ran across a great verse in Acts 20. Paul is on one of his missionary journeys and Luke who wrote the book of Acts describes what’s going on.

Acts 20:4-5 “Several men were traveling with him (Paul). They were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. They went on ahead and waited for us (Luke) at Troas.”

I count 8 disciples there of Paul. And this is a list of only some of the men Paul gathered and disciples as he went. He took them with him and then sent them out on special assignments or assigned them as elders in various cities.

In v.28 he reminded the elders from Ephesus to feed and shepherd God’s flock – over whom the Holy Spirit had appointed them. Feed and shepherd – that’s discipleship again.

And Paul shows no hesitancy in ascribing his efforts to the work of the Spirit through him. Though Paul recruited and trained these men, he knows it’s really God working through him.

As we do our work assigned to us, whatever it is, we must remember to take others with us, as Paul did. We all do certain work but all of us are called to disciple.

Jesus and Paul were models and examples for us to follow. The kingdom of God spreads fastest through relationships, intentionally developed to train his followers and multiply disciples.

Effective discipleship is generational, relational, intentional and transformational. If you take the first letter of each word you spell GRIT. That’s what it takes to make disciples.

G - generational
R - relational
I - intentional
T - transformational

But remember, there’s no such thing as a grit. It’s grits, they don’t come by themselves. Disciples are made in groups.

Four hours, that’s all it took for Army cook Albert Gitchell’s symptoms to show up in dozens of others at Camp Funston in Fort Riley, Kan.

The mess sergeant awoke shortly before breakfast with a 103-degree fever, burning throat, aching muscles and throbbing head. Minutes after he reported to the camp hospital, another soldier walked in with the same ailments; Then another, and another.

Before noon that day, 107 others would be stricken with this mysterious illness. But the week’s end, 522 men would catch it.

And within a mere eight months, it would kill a staggering 20 million people worldwide, spread by troop movements of the 1st World War.

By the end of its brief yet devastating run the 1918 influenza Pandemic—a.k.a. the “Spanish Flu” virus—world affect more than one in four people living on the planet, killing an estimated 20 to 50 million people, making it one of the deadliest natural disasters in human history.

Today we use the word viral to describe everything from a YouTube hit to a tweet to a Trojan worm to a marketing sensation.

A viral video is one that becomes popular through the process of Internet sharing, typically through websites, social media and email. Some of you may remember “Charlie Bit My Finger.”

But long before any of this, Jesus created the first truly “viral” social phenomena. And like any virus it started small and seemingly insignificant.
For Peter, Andrew, James and John it began on smelly fishing boats, For Matthew, it was at his tax booth. For Zacchaeus, it was in a sycamore tree in Jericho. Each of these men heard a simple viral message: “Follow me.”

Like an infectious agent implanted deep inside, the call gripped their hearts and quickly took over. Those 11 of those handpicked men known as the first disciples proved to be contagious carriers.

Two thousand years later almost a third of the earth claims to be infected with this divine virus. Whether those exposed today to the Jesus virus are as contagious as His original strand is an important question.

Just how viral is your faith? Is what you carry inside so contagious that non-carriers see you and wish they had “it”? Are you such a disciple of Jesus that I look, sound, talk, act, and think like Him?

Do you allow the Holy Spirit to come pouring out of you when you’re in contact with others? God is still using humans to transmit this viral faith and we have the privilege of being his carriers.