

“We train disciplemakers...”



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# Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

*Making Disciples  
Naturally* Podcast  
&  
Richard Spann's  
blogs are found at  
[KansasNavs.org](http://KansasNavs.org)

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**Men: Mark your  
calendars for the Spring  
Men's Retreat  
March 27-28  
at  
Cross Wind Conference  
Center, Hesston**

## “Tightening your shot pattern” to be theme for Spring Men's Retreat

Ron Bennett will be our guest speaker at this year's Men's Retreat, March 27-28. Ron is a long-time friend and supporter of the Kansas Communities Ministry. He brings over 50 years experience in discipleship, ministry leadership, and coaching to his speaking engagements. Born and raised in Iowa, Ron developed a passion for disciplemaking while attending Iowa State University, where he was introduced to The Navigators. After earning a degree in Aerospace Engineering, Ron worked for Boeing Aircraft in Seattle and served as a U.S. Army officer in both infantry and military intelligence, including a tour in Vietnam.



After his military service, Ron joined The Navigators staff, where he pioneered the collegiate ministry at St. Cloud University in Minnesota. Over the next twenty years, he led and mentored ministry teams across Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, and Missouri. In 1982, Ron became the Navigator Regional Director for Missouri and Kansas, overseeing teams involved in ministries to universities, the military, and the marketplace. He has written several influential books, including *Intentional Disciplemaking*, *Opening the Door*, and *The Adventure of Discipling Others*. He also co-authored with his wife, Mary, the *Beginning the Walk* Bible study series for new believers, published by NavPress.

Be sure to read the extended article on page 3 of this newsletter which details exciting information about this year's unique retreat.

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“Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue but in deed and truth”

— 1 John 3:18 (NET Bible)

# *Thirty Years that Changed the World*

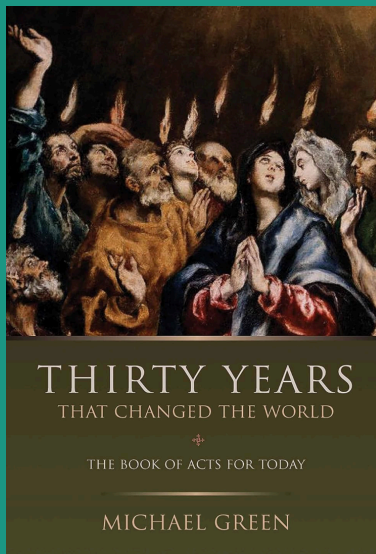
The Book of Acts for Today

by Michael Green, Pub. William B. Eerdmans, 1993, 2003

In this insightful book, Michael Green approaches the book of Acts not as a commentary per se, but rather as a guidebook for today. He persuasively argues that those 30 years were profound and unique in how God changed the world.

He groups the concepts found in the book of Acts into several helpful and intriguing categories. For example, some of the chapters include *What of their lifestyle? What of their message? What of their church life? What of their leadership? What of their hardships? What of their priorities?*

In the chapter on their *lifestyle*, Green notes how the lifestyle of the believers stood out in comparison to those in the surrounding culture. The lives of the



believers were characterized by dedication to obey the Lord no matter the cost. They knew the risks involved, yet obeyed what they knew the Lord wanted them to do. They were propelled by the events of the day of Pentecost to greater witness for the Lord. Their lives were joyful, despite lack of material goods and frequent persecution. Paul and Silas singing hymns at midnight, even after being beaten, was one example.

In the chapter on *hardships*, the author discusses difficulties through disasters, disease, outright opposition from secular society, political pressure, syncretism and cynicism. Remarkably we have much

in common with those early believers and much to learn from their example.

In each of these analyses, Green relates what the early Christians learned and lived, to how we today should live for the Lord. While I do not always agree with every point he makes, there is no question but that God mightily used those early believers and changed the world forever in those 30 years.

## Goads and Nails

(excerpt)

By Richard Spann

*We are as close to God, not as we wish we would be, but as close as we choose to be. — Howard Hendricks*

(Excerpt from Vol. 4, pages 1 - 4)

These words produce an immediate conviction to our hearts. They clarify what we know to be true. There are times when we are aware of our closeness to the Lord, but the times are many as well when we are not as close as we once were, or as close as we wish we would be. Although convicting, it is also reassuring that we can, indeed, be as close as we choose to be. Does the Lord not say, “Come near to God and he will come near to you.”? (James 4:8) Do we not read in Jeremiah that “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”? (Jeremiah 29:13) ...

Many have undertaken to instruct us in walking closer to God. Scripture itself instructs us in Psalm 24:3-4, “Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.” We understand by this that it is the fear of God demonstrated by walking in His ways that brings us close to Him. Many expositors state that much time spent with God is also necessary to experience closeness to Him...

As I examine my own life I find that any lack of closeness to God is due to satisfaction with my current distance from Him. This satisfaction is created, I think, by a reliance on self rather than on Him. I cry out to Him in times of need, but other days are characterized by some degree of dependence upon my own resources. Am I looking to my own experience and training for any adequacy? ... Am I concerned about my own accomplishments rather than His? If I would walk close to God, I must repent of this independence.

To know Him more deeply is the work of the unfolded ages which are before us. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3 KJV) This journey of drawing close to Him need not wait until we are with Him in heaven. It can begin today, as we turn from independence to dependence, looking to the LORD as our portion, and worshipping Him, not only for what He does for us, but for who He is.

In Christ, Richard Spann

## Spring men's retreat information: Tightening Your Shot Pattern

This year's spring men's retreat will be a unique training opportunity for those wishing to understand better how to invest in others. We will be examining both the "how's" and "why's" of making disciples during this fantastic and practical retreat. This will be a conference on kingdom focus, disciple-making and lasting impact.

Navigator Ron Bennett will be leading our time together. In addition we are privileged to have Navigator Doug Simmons join us to lead one of the workshops.



Ron will be helping us understand what the "bullseye" is as he helps us re-center on the Great Commission. He notes, "Every serious marksman knows the difference between hitting the target and hitting the bullseye. Activity alone is not success. Precision matters. Jesus made the target unmistakably clear: 'As you are going, make disciples... *who make disciples.*' (Matthew 28:19-20)"

The question this conference asks is simple—but significant:

***Are our lives and ministries aimed at the center of the target—or drifting toward the edges?***

**Why does this conference matter?** Most churches, ministries, and believers are busy. Many are faithful. But few are reproducing.

This conference is designed to help leaders, mentors, and everyday believers:

- Clarify the end goal of discipleship
- Identify why drift happens—even with good intentions
- Re-align personal lives and ministries toward generational impact

Leadership teacher Stephen Covey famously stated, "Begin with the end in mind." This conference will help us rediscover the biblical "end"—and aim accurately.

### **Who Should Attend?**

- Pastors and church leaders
- Ministry staff and volunteers
- Small-group leaders and mentors
- Anyone longing for a faith that multiplies beyond themselves

*(continued on next page)*

"How do you know if you are a servant? By how you react when someone treats you as one."

~ Dawson Trotman, Visionary Founder of The Navigators ©. Quote found at [https://www.azquotes.com/author/24943-Dawson\\_Trotman](https://www.azquotes.com/author/24943-Dawson_Trotman)

## Men's Retreat: Tightening your Shot Pattern (continued)

### Main Session Titles

1. Clarifying the Target
2. Creating Your Playbook
3. Developing the Heart of a Disciple-maker

**Workshops:** We will also have three outstanding workshops for smaller group interaction:

1. **The Wheel** as an assessment tool
2. **The Ways of the Alongsider:** Foundational concepts and best practices for significant investment in established disciples, leading to their own fruitfulness as disciplemakers.
3. **Sharing Jesus** without losing your cool: Evangelism for today



### Conference Takeaways

Participants will leave with:

- Renewed vision for disciple-making that lasts
- A clear, biblical framework for kingdom impact
- Practical insight into building a three-generational spiritual lineage
- Encouragement to keep aiming—especially when results seem slow



It's Not About Doing More — It's About Aiming Better

Join us as we re-center our aim, recover the joy of generational disciple-making, and once again aim for the bullseye.

Because hitting the target is good.  
But hitting the bullseye changes generations.

Mark your calendars: March 27-28, 2026, Camp David (formerly *Cross Wind Conference Center*), Hesston, Kansas. Registration will be open soon and you will also be receiving a brochure in the mail.

“You are either in the Word and the Word is conforming you to the image of Jesus Christ, or you are in the world and the world is squeezing you into its mold.” — Howard G. Hendricks, Author, Professor, Theologian. (Quote found at [https://www.azquotes.com/author/22943-Howard G Hendricks#google vignette](https://www.azquotes.com/author/22943-Howard_G_Hendricks#google_vignette))