

“We train disciplemakers...”



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Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

Spring Men’s Retreat Registration Open

Registration is now open for the 2026 Spring Men’s Retreat at Hesston’s Camp David (formerly Cross Wind Conference Center), March 27-28. You can register online or download, print and send in the registration. Information about the retreat, including registration is found at KansasNavs.org/conferences. Online registration fee is reduced by \$10. Deadline to register is March 10.



Ron Bennett will be our guest speaker at this year’s retreat. 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. 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. **Podcast episodes 318 & 319 of Making Disciples Naturally feature Ron discussing the retreat topic. Please share with a friend!**

Tightening Your Shot Pattern is the theme this year. This retreat is unique as we are looking at it as a training time for those wishing to focus on making disciples who then make disciples. Please see [last month’s newsletter](#) for a more complete description of the retreat. Register today!

Making Disciples Naturally Podcast & Richard Spann’s blogs are found at KansasNavs.org

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Men: Register today for the Spring Men’s Retreat March 27-28
Cross Wind Conference Center, Hesston
[Click here](#)

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“So you, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be competent to teach others as well.”

Giving Jesus Away

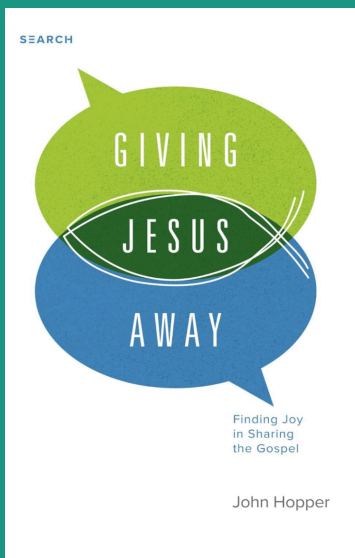
Finding Joy in Sharing the Gospel

by John Hopper, Pub. September 13, 2023

This wonderfully practical and encouraging book should be read by every thoughtful believer who wants to learn how to naturally share Jesus with others. John Hopper is Executive Director for *Reach*, the evangelistic arm of *Search*, a ministry that has been changing lives since the 1980's (searchnational.org)

The premise of this book is that God's desire is for everyone to hear the gospel and that every individual is important to Him. That certainly is a key element of the Kansas Communities Ministry as well.

Hopper reminds us that there are two key principles when it comes to sharing our faith: evangelism is a process and God is responsible for the results. He recognizes that most of us may want to help others find the Lord Jesus as Savior, but that there are many roadblocks for us.



For example, he cites the following concerns: “I get too nervous,” “I don’t know how to start the conversation,” “I tried once, but it wasn’t well-received,” “I’m afraid I won’t be able to answer people’s questions,” “I don’t want to come off as a pushy, religious type.” Many of us can easily identify with one or more of these!

Through examples and instruction, Hopper relates the importance of developing authentic friendships with people, stepping out of our comfort zones to ask questions and really listen for the heart of the people with which we interact. Evangelism is much more than presenting the plan of salvation per se. Evangelism is often a series of interactions that lead to helping someone see the Lord and His love for us.

This book is highly recommended as a practical guide to helping us get a picture of how we can love people well by sharing the Good News of Jesus with them.

Goads and Nails

(excerpt)

By Richard Spann

The Battle is the Lord's

(Excerpt from Vol. 4, pages 5 - 7)

Few things have been as important to the Lord's servants throughout the centuries as knowing that the battle is the LORD's. Each generation is faced with new difficulties and perils which threaten our confidence in the midst of the battle in which we are engaged. In David's situation, the entire nation of Israel, its King and its army were paralyzed as they contemplated their enemy Goliath. Yet David demonstrated his confidence in three things as he faced this battle. The first was his confidence in the name of the LORD. "David said to the Philistine, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.'" (I Samuel 17:45) He also had confidence in the victory of the LORD. In I Samuel 17:46 he declares, "This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head." The third thing ... was in the weapons provided by the LORD. "Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine." (I Samuel 17:40)

Our battles today are not with visible giants, but with forces which are as real and as opposed to the work of God in our world as was Goliath and the Philistine army. The more we contemplate these forces in our world and even in our own nation, our hearts may become like those of Saul's army, fearful and unwilling to be engaged in battle. Knowing that the battle is the LORD's, however, gives us confidence in His Name, confidence in His victory, and confidence in His weapons which He has given us for battle...

As David had confidence in the weapons the LORD led him to use, so we can have confidence in our weapons. They are described in Ephesians 6 as "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." (Ephesians 6:17-18) ... These weapons can break down every proud argument against God and every wall that can be built to keep men from finding him...

In Christ, Richard Spann

Four Generations by Richard Spann

Discipling to the fourth generation, as described in II Timothy 2:2, has been one of the goals of the Navigators Ministry since that organization began. Unless discipleship is transferred to others in a way that is continually reproduced, it will cease to exist. If the ones we disciple do not disciple others, a whole line of generational impact is lost. No population can survive if there is no reproduction. The Christian faith is always, and only, one generation from extinction. One of the most sobering verses in the Bible is found in the book of Judges. “After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.” Judges 2:10

It is not uncommon for those involved in the ministry of our Lord to have had the opportunity to disciple and also bring to faith others to disciple. What is less common, however, is the fruit that also comes from the lives of those who are disciplined. All too frequently the reproduction and disciple making stops with the second generation. It would be profitable, therefore, to examine some of the reasons for this occurrence and to consider possible ways to prevent this from happening.



In II Timothy 2:2, we are directed to commit our lives to those who are “faithful.” To this word we have, over the years, also added two other words which are “available” and “teachable.” In his book, *The Fuel and the Flame*, Steve Shadrack has also mentioned two others which are helpful. These are “initiative,” and “heart.” By heart he means a heart for the lost, for the word of God, and a heart for the Lord. These additions then spell out the word “FAITH.” Some of those I have spent time with over the years have not met these criteria. Sadly, over the process of time I have discovered them to be lacking in one or more of these five criteria. This calls for a more careful evaluation of those to whom we commit our lives and our time. Before choosing the twelve, it is recorded that the Lord spent the night in prayer before making the selection in the morning. (Luke 6:12)

Prayer is one of the most effective tools which we are given in the process of seeing four generations through our lives. Howard Hendricks once commented that it is more important to talk to God about men than it is to talk to men about God. Prayer must be a regular investment for those we are actively discipling. Prayer should be offered on their behalf for each of the five areas in FAITH. It must also touch other aspects of their lives, including their marriage, occupation, hobbies, and financial situation to mention a few. These all have a bearing as to whether or not their faith will be reproduced in others. In addition to our own prayer, we must enlist the prayers of others in our discipleship teams to pray for them as well. Of primary concern, however, is that we teach them how to pray for themselves in all these areas.

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“These men were His work. His ministry touched thousands, but He trained twelve men. He gave His life on the cross for millions, but during the three and a half years of His ministry He gave His life uniquely to twelve men.” — Leroy Eims in *The Lost Art of Disciplemaking*. Leroy was an early Navigator leader, author and disciplemaker.

Four Generations (Continued)

The word of God is central to the process of a disciple who is learning to disciple others. A regular intake of God's word, including memorization and meditation on verses dealing with evangelism and discipleship is critical to their reproduction. Booklets such as *Born to Reproduce* by Dawson Trotman are helpful. Other books such as *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, *Disciples are Made, not Born*, and *Living Proof* are invaluable in assuring that the person you are meeting with will reproduce their life in another person.

One of the most influential factors in this process is the impact of our own lives. What do they see in our lives? Are we continuing to invest in others? Do we continue to pray for them? In any relationship, others learn from what we do, not what we say. Discipleship is caught more than taught. The *generational element* of discipleship is also caught more than taught. In addition to the impact of our own lives, they will benefit from contact with others who live the lifestyle that communicates the value of generational influence. We need to introduce them to other individuals who are actively producing multigenerational fruit. Not only can this be done person to person, but we can take them with us to conferences such as retreats and other meetings in which they can observe this in the lives of additional individuals. I have found it helpful with some individuals



to simply introduce them to others who need discipling. I do this by offering the idea as a suggestion for them to pray about and encourage them to begin the relationship. Another good way to get them started is to ask them to assist you with a class at church, or an Every Man a Warrior group, Memorize the Word, or a Topical Memory System study. The goal of such an invitation is to get them acquainted with someone who needs to be discipled. I relate to them that one of the goals of my teaching such a group is to find a FAITH-ful individual in whom to invest my life. I encourage them to pray about the same investment with someone as well.

It is necessary for them to share their faith-journey with others. This conversation with others can lead to opportunities with those who are interested in a closer walk with the Lord, or those who are still on a journey to faith. One man who I was spending time with years ago came to faith and immediately shared it with his office staff. They did not need to be told a thing about his new birth. His foul mouth was immediately taken away by the Lord and they were amazed at the transformation! His closest friend was so struck by the change that he trusted the Lord the next day. During the next week, his friend's wife also came to the Lord. Four generations in less than a week! New believers in Christ have a wide range of non-Christian friends and can be great instruments of evangelism and discipleship in the hands of the Lord. Any person who has recently come to the Lord is usually a key person to consider spending time with. They are teachable, have non-Christians friends, and their changed lives will make an impact.

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“There is something infinitely better than doing a great thing for God, and the infinitely better thing is to be where God wants us to be, to do what God wants us to do, and to have no will apart from His.” ~ G. Campbell Morgan, British Evangelist, Preacher, Bible teacher (1863-1945) (Quote found at: https://www.azquotes.com/author/24165-G_Campbell_Morgan#google_vignette)

Four Generations (Conclusion)

In John chapter 21, Jesus asks Peter three times, “Do you love me?” Based on Peter’s affirmative response, he then gives him three things to do. “Feed my lambs,” “Take care of my sheep,” and “Feed my sheep.” The basic requirement, then, for our ministry is love of our Lord. Unless the disciple with whom we are meeting is in love with the Lord, his faith is unlikely to be reproductive. I have found benefit from regularly spending time with others by simply looking at the person of Christ. Books such as *Crises of the Christ*, by G. Campbell Morgan is very beneficial, as are the works of A.W. Tozer, Andrew Murray and Jerry Bridges. They all point to Him as the Source, the Life and the Person that must occupy our continual worship and praise. Only a life centered on Christ in all areas of our life will allow His life to live through us and produce consistent fruit that lasts.

Multiple seemingly non-spiritual aspects of a person’s life will alter and determine the spiritual influence of their life. Their use of time, treasure, their thought life and what they trust in at the deepest level of their lives, all have an impact on their availability to Christ and to others. A burden of debt and lack of financial freedom hinders some. For many, a lack of margin in their lives prevents their availability to disciple others. Each of us has different challenges that we face. I have found that Lorne Sanny’s priority evaluation of an individual’s life is an important tool in helping develop margin in their lives. This consists of evaluating their life in view of what is Essential, Necessary, Good, Delegate and Eliminate.

Finally, we must not neglect self-evaluation during the course of preparing others for their ministry. Are we fully committed to accomplishing the task of preparing others to be disciple makers? Have we counted the cost involved? Are we willing to self-sacrifice our lives to see it finished? Is there any issue in our lives that prohibits us from fully following Christ and being available to Him for others? We should consistently ask the Lord to deal with us in our own lives so that we will not be a hindrance to others achieving the Lord’s best for their lives.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23-24)

As we work with others, our eyes should continually be on Him, with the intent of adding a diadem to His crown, not attempting to bring glory in any measure to ourselves. “LORD, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us.” (Isaiah 26 :12)

“Help me, O LORD my God; save me in accordance with your love. Let them know that it is your hand, that you, O Lord, have done it.” (Psalms 109:26-27) May the Lord multiply the fruit through your lives as you follow Him. To Him be glory both now and forever.

In Christ, Richard Spann