



INVESTING *in* DISCIPLESHIP

A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR MEN

**INVESTING IN DISCIPLES: A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN
DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM FOR MEN**

Leader Guides

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Video: Rick Burgess

Video Production: Chris Adler

Leader Guide Authors: Eric Ballard, TJ Gilliam, Matthew Turberville, Josh Sisk, Clay Wyatt

Executive Editor: Andy Blanks



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CURRICULUM FOR MEN

BY RICK BURGESS



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DISCIPLESHIP INTERIOR

DISCIPLE MEN, CHANGE EVERYTHING.

There is a discipleship problem affecting Christian men today. Too often, men are absent from both the church pews and from the vital work the church is doing in the world. These men are not engaged spiritually in their homes and aren't making a Kingdom impact in their workplace. And it all points back to one major issue:

Many men aren't being disciplined.

But when men ARE being disciplined, powerful things happen as a result. They impact the church, their family, and culture. We have seen the influence godly men can have. The purpose of The Pursuit curriculum is to equip and empower men to become the man God has called them to be.

WHAT IS BE DISCIPLES ?

Be Disciples is a 40-week, video-driven curriculum designed to help men discover what it means to be a disciple. Be Disciples takes eight traits of disciples from Scripture and unpacks them through video and small group Bible Study.

Rick Burgess, best-selling author and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio show The Rick & Bubba Show, starts off each session with a 10-15 minute video introducing the session's focus. Then, for each small group session, there is a leader guide to help facilitate a meaningful time of discussion and Bible study.

The reason men aren't living a more authentic faith is simple: they have yet to embrace the call to real discipleship. By leading a group through Be Disciples, you're a part of the growing tide of leaders who are looking to awaken men to embrace their calling as Christ-followers.

EDGE ELEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



RICK BURGESS is the Co-Host of the nationally syndicated *Rick and Bubba Show*. He has co-authored multiple New York Times Bestselling Books covering topics such as politics, marriage, business, comedy, and what it looks like to be a follower of Christ in secular entertainment. Rick has appeared on the Fox News programs *Hannity's America*, *Your World with Neil Cavuto*, and *Fox and Friends*.

Rick speaks regularly at men's events and marriage conferences across the country, all while teaching youth and men's Bible studies on a weekly basis. Rick is married to the former Sherri Bodine, and they have five children: Brandi, Blake, Brooks, Brody, and Bronner. Rick's wife Sherri is the author of the book "Bronner: A Journey to Understand," a powerful story about what she and Rick learned about God through the earthly death of their youngest son, Bronner. Rick's eulogy for Bronner became the most-viewed video in the world on YouTube the week of the service.

ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO *BE DISCIPLES: INVESTING IN DISCIPLESHIP*

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:

RICK BURGESS
ANDY BLANKS
LES BRADFORD

EXECUTIVE EDITOR:

ANDY BLANKS

VIDEO PRODUCTION:

CHRIS ADLER

LEADER GUIDE AUTHOR:

ERIC BALLARD, TJ GILLIAM, MATHEW TURBERVILLE, JOSH SISK, CLAY WYATT

Main Passage: Luke 9:23-25; Matthew 16:24-26

Purpose: To understand and truly consider the requirements of being a disciple so we are prepared to make disciples.

Session Snapshot: As the crowds following Jesus grew larger, His teaching grew more difficult and direct. Christ communicated what it takes to become part of God's Kingdom in this passage. We have to be willing to ask ourselves, *Am I a disciple?* Are we willing to abandon ourselves and sacrifice all we are in the name of Jesus? As John the Baptist put it, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

- **In your opinion, what does it look like to deny yourself? How does being a disciple shift your focus away from you?**

- **How would your friends and family say that you have put aside or given up your desires for the Lord's desires or to advance His Kingdom?**

- **How does a love for Jesus lead to obedience to Jesus? Why do you think obedience to Jesus often leads to sacrifices for Jesus?**

- **How would you go about explaining to a nonbelieving friend or coworker the meaning of Jesus' paradoxical statement that those who try to save their life will lose it, but those who give up their lives will save it?**

When we choose to become a follower of Jesus, it's an "I'm all in" kind of commitment. Let's examine this passage more closely to see exactly what we're signing up for.

OPENING THE WORD

Luke 9:23-25

Author: Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian, and a companion of Paul.

Time frame: The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.

Purpose: Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God, and fully man. It is one of the

synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

- **This verse is almost identical to Matthew 16:24, except Luke included the word *daily* after the phrase, “take up his cross.” Why is this significant?**
- **What do you think it looks like to take up your cross daily?**
- **If God loves us as much as the Bible claims He does, why does He want us to constantly deny ourselves and make daily sacrifices?**

Jesus never claimed that following Him would be easy. He often expressed the exact opposite. While being a disciple will be difficult at times, it is the way to salvation. Only Jesus can save a life eternally.

Luke 9:24

- **What are some examples of ways men try to save their own lives?**
- **How can *losing* your life for the sake of Jesus feel like *winning*?**
- **How does your day-to-day life prove you live for an eternal life over this earthly one?**

Read Matthew 16:24-26

- **How do you think the temptations or riches of this world pull away at our souls?**
- **Luke uses the word “forfeits” (v25) in his telling of this passage. In what ways do we *surrender* or *give up* who we are?**

Even though He created every one of us, God allows us to choose what we do with the lives He gave us. Whatever we choose comes with a cost. There are requirements to following Jesus. There is a price to living in opposition to God. This passage of Scripture reminds us to consider the cost before we choose.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

- **One key application to being a disciple of Christ is the idea of denying self. We push our desires and needs to the side so we can follow God's desires and meet the needs of others.**
 - This week and in the weeks to come, ask God to help you see opportunities to put the needs of others above your own. Wash the dishes or pick up an extra household chore so someone else in your family doesn't have to do it. Volunteer to take on that responsibility at work that no one else wants to do.
- **Second, we have to understand that who we serve is who we've given our lives to.**
 - We have to evaluate if we make our daily choices to please the LORD or ourselves. How often do we consider God's will over our own at work, home, or at community events?

Main Passage: Mark 12:28-31

Secondary Passage: Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Mark 1:16-18

Purpose: To understand that our love and devotion to Jesus is the driving force behind being a disciple that makes disciples.

Session Snapshot: All commandments are wrapped up in loving the Lord with our heart, soul, mind, and strength and loving our neighbor as ourselves. As we devote our lives to pursuing these commandments, we will find that God has placed us in positions to be disciples that make disciples right where we are (i.e., home, work, gym, ball field).

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

- **How does loving the Lord with our heart, soul, mind, and strength work together? How can one influence or strengthen the others?**
- **Does your mind focus on Jesus? As a disciple of Christ, has your mindset changed to be more Christ-like?**
- **What keeps us from loving our neighbors as ourselves?**

- **How can we use what Christ has given us as our vocation to multiply and make more disciples?**

- **Why do we tend to talk more about other things (family, sports, hobbies, etc.) with those in our sphere of influence than we do about Jesus and how he changed our life? How can we remedy that?**

Pursuing and loving Christ with our whole being is a simple concept here. We often want to make it more complicated, but in reality, it's not. If our thoughts and actions are consumed with loving the Lord our God, that love is going to spill out into all areas of our lives.

Suddenly loving "thy neighbor" is much more achievable. Our devotion to God opens doors for us to make disciples in any and every circumstance.

OPENING THE WORD

Mark 12 and some additional Scripture

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.
- **Time frame:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50's AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.

Read Mark 12:28-31

- **What were the scribes and Pharisees trying to accomplish with their question of Jesus: "Which commandment is the most important of all?"**
- **Why do you think Jesus quoted from this portion of the Old Testament?**

- **The Jewish Law was founded on the Ten Commandments. How is it that Jesus boiled those commandments (and the 613 others prescribed by the rabbis) into just two?**

- **Why can't we just love God? Why did Jesus include loving our neighbors as a great commandment?**

Read Mark 1:16-18

- **Simon and Andrew were fishing for fish. Jesus called them to fish for men. Why do you think it's significant that Jesus phrased His calling to them this way?**

Jesus said, "Follow me." That same directive is meant for us today. Far too often, we interpret that command as "Come close to me and do things that are similar to what I might say and do." This isn't enough! Taking your family to church isn't enough. Sitting in worship isn't enough. Giving money to the church isn't enough. All of these things are good things, but they are not the heart of Jesus! When Jesus said "Follow me," He meant walk where I walk, do what I do, say what I say, teach what I teach, and what Jesus walked, did, said, and taught was discipleship. There were not many moments where Jesus was serving, teaching, preaching, or ministering that He did not have at least some of his disciples with Him. Being a disciple that intentionally makes disciples is what this is all about!

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

- **After listening to Rick and studying these passages of Scripture, some of us need to ask ourselves, "What does discipleship look like in my life? Do I need to be discipled more before I disciple others?"**
- **For others of us, the evaluation we need to engage in is how we live our lives. Some of us need to ask, "Am I actively involved in discipleship? Am I at the very least discipling my family?"**
- **Some of us need to evaluate how we're embracing our purpose. We need to ask, "I've seen and lived the advantages of discipleship. How can I encourage those I am discipling (or have discipled) to disciple others? Have I prepared them to disciple others?"**

Main Passage: Matthew 28:16-20

Purpose: To teach that disciples invest in multiplying disciples.

Session Snapshot: It is the role of every disciple of Christ to make disciples. We have put our faith in Christ Jesus, who Himself has been exalted above all. With this lordship in mind, Christ has commanded us, all of us, to make disciples. To aid us, He has given us His Holy Spirit, our Helper. Disciples of Christ are instructed and equipped.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

FIRST, play the video. You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.

THEN, when the video is over, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **Rick mentioned as we grow in our knowledge of Scripture, certain parts of God's Word that once confused us are now understandable. Have you experienced this?**

- **Many are intimidated by the idea of discipling someone, specifically as it relates to teaching them. Is this you? Or, maybe, it has been you in the past? What was the reason (or reasons) that you didn't feel up to this task?**
- **Building on the previous question, Rick mentions for many, it's a lack of biblical knowledge that causes some to feel intimidated by the thought of teaching (in the context of discipling). Health check: Do you have a hunger for the Word of God? Let's be honest with one another. Could this be what is holding you back?**
- **Who do we sometimes assign the role of discipleship to? Pastors? Sunday school teachers? While certainly a helpful part of the process, what is the danger of putting the entire responsibility of discipleship onto others? What are we missing out on?**
- **Everyone has a different life. We all have different spheres of influence. We all have different personalities. We all have different spiritual gifts. But regardless of these, the commandment to make disciples extends to us all. Think deeply about your life. Is there someone you have neglected to disciple that God has placed in your life for that purpose?**

The first book of the New Testament ends with a resurrected Messiah on a mountain top with his eleven confidants and, most likely, a multitude of others. It's quite a setting. And God has in mind to use this setting to deliver an important command for His children as it relates to discipleship.

OPENING THE WORD

Matthew 28:16-20. Matthew closes his gospel with a firsthand account of Jesus Christ delivering a final charge to His disciples, with a promise to be fulfilled with His ascension. It is both an inspiring and challenging passage of Scripture.

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his Gospel.
- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew's Gospel being written in the late A.D. 50s or 60s, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70.
- **Purpose:** Matthew wrote to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his Gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

- **Verse 17 shows us that while some worshiped, others doubted. Why is that important for Matthew to note?**
- **Jesus tells those with Him on the mountain that He possesses “all authority.” Why is this important to note in light of the command He is preparing to give?**
- **Continuing the idea of authority, how does the authority describe by Christ differ from any other way authority exists?**
- **Verse 19 begins a series of action words. Go. Make disciples. Baptize. Teach. Does one of these actions give you pause more than the others? What stands out to you personally?**
- **The latter part of verse 20 ends the chapter, and the book, with such a strong sense of comfort and security, knowing that this call, which can appear daunting, is not a call we answer alone. What is promised here?**

The great commission teaches us that we are all called to make disciples. And not only called, but we are also equipped. With the authority of Christ on one side of us ("all authority has been given to Me") and the presence of the Holy Spirit on the other side ("with you always"), we then go, to all, making disciples, baptizing, and teaching to obey. Jesus tells us here what to do and how we are to accomplish it.
A disciple of Christ makes disciples.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

Whenever we're faced with a concept like we have been studying today, it forces us to evaluate. As we wrap up our time here, there are three different questions we can ask to evaluate ourselves. These may be the simplest questions we'll ask in our entire time doing this Bible study curriculum. But I don't think it has to be any more complicated than this. Ready? Here are your questions:

- 1) Who is discipling you?
- 2) Who are you discipling?
- 3) What is the goal of your discipleship efforts?

Main Passage: Ephesians 4:11-16

Purpose: To challenge men to seize the moment and grow into spiritual maturity in Christ.

Session Snapshot: As men, we're hardwired to work. We want to put our hands to the plow and accomplish things. That's because God has put that deep within us. However, an epidemic plaguing the Church is men sitting on the sidelines. In this lesson, Rick challenges men to step out and grow up. We'll see that spiritual maturity starts with knowing more about Christ and then extends to teaching others about him.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

- **Why do you think we as men have let the call to make disciples pass by us without putting much effort forth?**
- **What subjects are you confident in, and how did you gain that? (Examples: cars, sports, outdoors, etc.)**
- **How would you assess your spiritual knowledge? Can you confidently have conversations with others about who Jesus is?**

- **What did Rick say was the best way to guard against false doctrine?**
- **How does it make you feel that you have a role to play in the advancement of the Church?**
- **How is “speaking the truth in love” countercultural to where we’re at in our society?**
- **Are there some specific areas in your walk that you need to spiritually mature in?**

God created each person to play a role in His grand redemptive plan. If we're not using our gifts for the Kingdom, then we're missing out on a big portion of how God wants to use us. Today, we'll explore how maturing in Christ comes through participating with the Lord in how He's wired you.

OPENING THE WORD

Ephesians 4:11-16

- **Author:** The Apostle Paul wrote the letters to the Ephesians. Of course, we know Paul as the one-time chief enemy of the Church. After his miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul would have a position of great importance in the early Church and beyond. He wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament.
- **Time frame:** Ephesians was probably written by Paul from prison in the latter years of his life, sometime around 60 or 61 AD.
- **Purpose:** Paul had a very close relationship with the church in Ephesus. It seems as if the motivation for the letter was simply that the church would know how he was faring in his imprisonment. But, true to form, Paul couldn't help but teach. The letter covers general teaching on the work of Christ to redeem believers, unity among believers, and how believers are supposed to conduct themselves.

- **What is the commonality of all team sports?**
- **Based on verse 11, how does God's creation of different roles/jobs within the body of Christ encourage you?**
- **What is the primary role of the leaders listed in Ephesians 4:11?**

Don't buy into the lie that if you're not in vocational ministry, then you're insignificant. Far from it! Peter calls Christians "the priesthood of believers" in 1 Peter 2:9. That's to say that Christ has made us all ministers to the lost world. In the book of Acts, the gospel spread like wildfire because ordinary men and women were overwhelmed with so much passion for Jesus that they couldn't help but speak of Him. God can use you just as powerfully, but it all starts at your walk with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:13-14

- **What should more knowledge of Christ lead us to?**

- **As verse 14 alludes to, what is the result of the man who is not grounded in Christ?**

- **What does verse 15 mean when it says that we are to grow up in every way into Him?**

- **What happens when we choose to sit on the sidelines instead of jump in the game?**

- **How would you characterize your commitment to serve God's people over the past year?**

It doesn't matter if you've been spiritually asleep the past year. You can't change what's in the past, but you can move forward with a new outlook. You can see that you're valuable to the mission. You can know that God has a purpose for you. You can live in the power of the Holy Spirit and see God doing some incredible things in you. However, nothing will change if you keep putting it off until tomorrow. There needs to be a resolution in your heart and an invitation to other brothers to hold you accountable. We all need this.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

- **A major application point to take away from our lesson today is that serving the Lord not only benefits others, but it also benefits ourselves!**
 - When we get in the game, we add to the witness of the Church and help meet the needs of others around us. While doing that, God does His transformative work in our lives where he supplies us with the fruits of the Spirit and develops our character more into His image. Everyone benefits!
- **Another application point is that we must dedicate our minds to the knowledge of God through the reading and study of His Word.**
 - As we fill our minds with His Word, we are more apt to fight temptation, have spiritual conversations, and see things from a heavenly perspective. Do you have certain scriptures you can lean on for certain questions? Can you talk about the Lord with confidence to others? It starts with our minds. When our minds are filled with truth, our hearts submit to it, and our hands become active.
- **The last application point is to just start!**
 - We can sometimes make grand plans and feel like we have a certain level of expertise before we start something new. Here's a timeless truth that still holds today: We are all bad when we're beginners. Michelangelo didn't paint the Sistine chapel on his first day of painting, nor did Michael Jordan dominate when he first started playing basketball. All you need is a willingness to let God use you wherever He wants to use you, and you'll be satisfied.

Main Passage: Romans 10:9-15

Purpose: To challenge men to not just be a disciple but to commit to making disciples.

Session Snapshot: The Gospel message is powerful. We are dead in our sins, and God makes a way for us to have life, both meaningful life on this earth and eternal life with God in heaven. At some point, you heard this message and believed it, and you were reborn, saved from your sins. Who told you this good news? Someone did. The expectation for each of us is that we would do the same thing for someone else, over and over again. There are people all around us who need the Gospel. There's no time to wait. This lesson will emphasize this truth and challenge men to get more serious about sharing the Gospel with those who need it most.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

- **The question was asked, “How do we not realize the gravity of this message that we are carrying?” Do you agree? Do we sometimes fail to realize the weight of the good news of the Gospel message? Explain your answer.**

- **Rick talked at length about those that say, “I let people see the way I live my life.” Most of us are likely guilty of this at some point or another. Why does it seem that this can become a default for us? Why is this a particularly harmful mindset for those around us?**
- **Can your good deeds save someone from spending eternity apart from God? What is the only thing that can?**
- **Rick gave a clear framework for sharing the Good News in the video. He said, "You're dead in your sin. You've lost hope. Jesus has sent me to tell you what He has done for me." How does this simple, clear framework help you as you prepare to be a disciple that makes disciples?**

- **In the video, we heard the tribal chief asking the question, "Why did it take so long for us to hear it?" Where or do you believe God is sending you in your everyday life that is waiting to hear the Good News?**

In our final session of this study, we will be encouraged to commit to being a disciple that makes disciples. For this to happen, we must understand the call of Scripture and be intentional with our lives. We must let our conviction of following the Lord determine our mission of telling others about Him.

OPENING THE WORD

Romans 10:9-15

- **Author:** Paul is the author of Romans.
- **Time frame:** Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- **Purpose:** Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, it was essential that a level playing field be given to all Believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.

Read Romans 10:9-10

- **How are you reminded of your spiritual journey when you read these verses? When did you first hear and respond to the Gospel?**
- **Why is it so urgent that we know this Good News message well?**

- **Romans 10:10 is the great clarifier. It's our heart and mind (these are interchangeable in biblical language) that must believe, and our mouth that must confess Jesus as Lord. The finality of this verse is our focus. What happens when you or someone else believes and confesses Jesus as Lord? Why is it important to know the power of the last two words of this verse?**

Read Romans 10:12-13

- **Paul wants the Romans to know that we are all equal at the foot of the cross. In verse 12, he says, "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek." This was a major statement then and is one now as well. What do these verses say to us about who we should be bringing the Gospel message to?**

- **Sometimes it is difficult for us to embrace the truth that the Gospel is for everyone. Well, if we're honest, that's not exactly it. We believe the Gospel is for everyone; we just have a hard time seeing ourselves sharing it with certain people. We'd much rather let others do that. Why is it difficult for us to take the message to those different from us? What does that tell us about our spiritual journey, and how do we go about aligning with the heart of God more each day?**

Romans 10:13 is powerful. It should give you hope beyond just the moment of salvation, but for every day moving forward. It should also create a sense of hope and opportunity. It should give you confidence in taking the message of Jesus to those around you. We must multiply disciples. It is our mission.

Read Romans 10:14-15

- **When these verses were being read, did you feel the urgency in the tone of Paul’s words? Do you feel the same urgency in you? Why or why not do think that is?**
- **How do these verses reframe the phrase, “Share the Gospel, and use words if necessary?”**
- **Practically speaking, what does “preaching” look like in your life’s context?**

- Verse 15 asks the question, “how are they to preach unless they are sent?” As a disciple, this is significant to consider. Who is doing the sending?

- Keeping in line with the last question: Who are you disciple-making?

The Lord's message is powerful. You were dead in your sin, and the Lord sent someone to you to tell what he had done in their life. Because of that Good News, you became a disciple, and now that same urgency and opportunity live with us. God may call you to another country, but He is for sure calling to you to reach out to your neighbor. There are people all around you that are waiting and will likely respond with, "Why did it take so long to hear this?" There's no time to wait. Live with a conviction that gives you an urgency to take the Good News everywhere you go.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

- **Be aware of those around you. Make note of who you have shared the Gospel with. Pray for those who do not believe know Jesus. And ask God to give you the strength to share your faith with them.**
 - We must be intentional about knowing and sharing with those around us. We can't let any excuse stop us from sharing.
- **At the end of the week, spend time praying that the Lord would instill a sense of urgency within you and provide opportunities to share with them within the next two weeks.**
 - There is an urgency in the Gospel. We only get so many interactions and opportunities, so let's take advantage of the time we have. Putting a time frame creates an opportunity for accountability. The Lord will provide the opportunity; will you be obedient in the opportunity?
- **Will you commit right now to not just be a disciple but to make disciples?**
 - This is the very essence of being a disciple. A disciple is someone who says what Jesus says to say and does what Jesus says to do. Here and throughout Scripture, He rescues people to send people. Your story is the same. You have been rescued and made new. Will you commit to not just being a disciple but to make disciples?