

DISCIPLED
by JESUS

— + —
*Your Ongoing Invitation
to Follow Christ*

ROBERT GELINAS

It's been said that mentoring is "Come and meet with me," while discipleship is "Come and do life with me." When it comes to the latter, there is no better person to attach our lives to and be apprenticed by than Jesus Christ. Sorry; no celebrity Christian leader will suffice as a surrogate substitute. This is the point my friend Pastor Robert Gelinas excavates profoundly in this highly accessible book, *Discipled by Jesus*. I pray this gets a wide reading for generations to come!

BRYAN LORITTS, senior pastor, Abundant Life Christian Fellowship,
author of *Saving the Saved*

Robert Gelinas is revolutionizing everything we have ever known about discipleship. A clarion call to pursue a life of faith that is richer and deeper than we had ever imagined.

MANDY ARIOTO, president and CEO, MOPS International

A treasure chest filled with spiritual wisdom. This book is a much-needed course correction for the people of God. With so much religion around, Robert keeps pointing us back to Jesus.

DANIEL FUSCO, author of *Upward, Inward, Outward* and *Honestly*

One of the most exciting teaching pastors in the world invites God's church to welcome Jesus himself back to the exclusive role of making his own disciples—because nobody but Jesus can. As African American believers have sung for decades, "Can't nobody do me like Jesus!" For a church gone dry, Robert steps forth to offer its best teacher,

discipler, and leader: the living Christ. Dynamic, urgent, and inviting.

PATRICIA RAYBON, author of *I Told the Mountain to Move* and *My First White Friend*

Skillfully exposes some of the myths underlying the way many of us have thought of discipleship and then compassionately leads us to a vibrant walk of faith with the risen Christ. This book not only changed the way I think about discipleship; it changed the way I live as a disciple.

MARK S. YOUNG, president, Denver Seminary

Robert Gelinas, my pastor, hand-delivers Jesus' invitation: *Come. Follow Me. I will make you disciples.* Wait no more. Read on and discover all that is waiting for you when you accept the invitation to be discipled by Jesus.

ELISA MORGAN, speaker, author of *The Beauty of Broken* and *Hello, Beauty Full*

A powerful book that grasps the reality of Jesus being the one who transforms us!

JOHN H. SATHER, co-national director, Cru Inner City

I hadn't even made it through the introduction before my "steady as she goes" Christian journey started getting rocked. With a thoughtful spotlight on Scripture, *Discipled by Jesus* unwraps this beautiful and compelling reality: I can be discipled by the Messiah himself.

DAN WOLGEMUTH, president and CEO, Youth For Christ USA

Finally, a book on discipleship that invites readers not to know more, to do more, to be more, or to give more to Jesus, but simply and significantly to be with Jesus.

DR. MARK DEYMAZ, author of *Disruption: Repurposing the Church to Redeem the Community*

This book is not simply a shift in language; it's a call to encounter the risen Christ.

SCOTT LUNDEEN, program director, iSSACHAR Center for Urban Leadership

Robert Gelinas has done it again. I am touched by God every time I sit under his teaching. This book is liberating me in ministry and inspiring me to re-enroll in the school where Christ is the teacher.

TYLER JOHNSON, lead pastor of Redemption AZ

A prophetic pronouncement to all who want a fresh encounter with the resurrected Christ and the promised Holy Spirit.

BRADY BOYD, New Life Church, Colorado Springs, author of *Addicted to Busy* and *Speak Life*

Once again, the Jazz Theologian has delivered. Robert Gelinas connects disciple-making with the ongoing journey of deepening our intimacy with and identity in Christ.

EFREM SMITH, co-lead pastor of Bayside Church Midtown, author of *Killing Us Softly: Reborn in the Upside-Down Image of God*

Gelinas invites us to run down a road toward a discipleship revolution with him. In these pages he challenges our paradigms as he reminds us of the winsome love of Jesus. Ingest this book!

ALAN BRIGGS, pastor, coach, consultant, author of *Everyone's a Genius*, *Guardrails*, and *Staying Is the New Going*

Jesus is alive . . . for real! And because he is alive for real, we can have a real discipleship relationship with our Savior. Those who read this book will find themselves encouraged to a deeper walk with Jesus that takes us beyond following Christ's example to seeking to be discipled by Jesus himself.

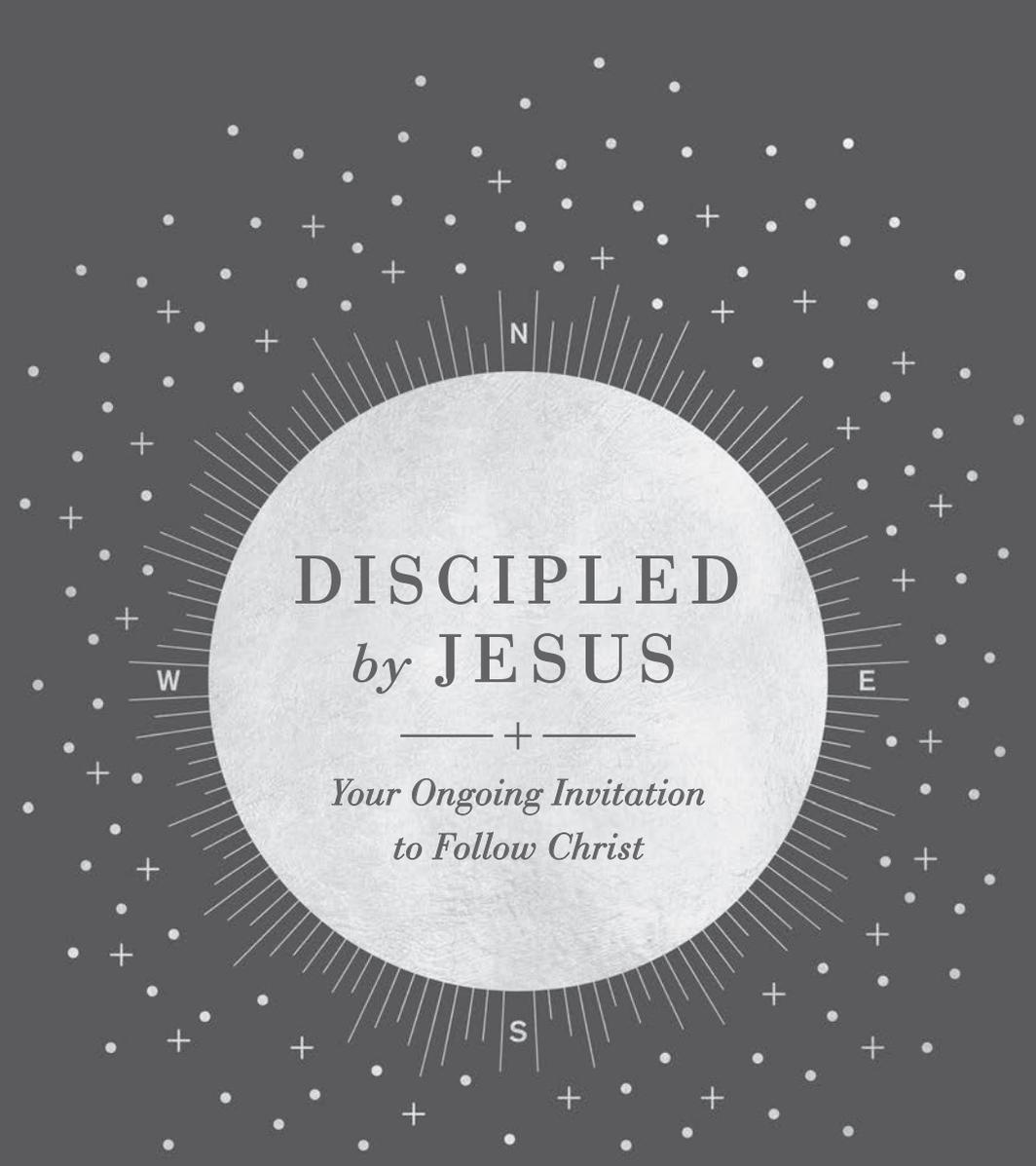
VINCENT BACOTE, author of *The Political Disciple*

The bar has been set much too low. We have settled for much too little. Jesus didn't call people to be "Christian" as the world defines that term. He calls people to follow him. I am excited about this book, which reminds us of this very fact: Jesus wants to disciple you.

BRIAN NYE, director, Legacy Disciple

So often we disciple the way that we've been discipled (if we were discipled), but we fail to reflect on whether or not we're discipling as Jesus would. As imperfect human beings, is it even possible to disciple as Jesus did? Or is there another way? In this book, Robert presents an alternative way forward, one where the role of the pastor is not to disciple people, but rather, to prepare them to be discipled by Jesus instead.

DANIEL IM, author of *No Silver Bullets: 5 Small Shifts that Will Transform Your Ministry*, coauthor of *Planting Missional Churches*, director of church multiplication at newchurches.com, and teaching pastor at The Fellowship, Nashville



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INTRODUCTION

The Coming Reformation in Discipleship



“Have you been discipled?”

That was a question I grew up with. I heard it frequently in the Christian circles I was a part of, along with its counterpart: “Are you discipling somebody?”

I didn’t quite understand either of these questions. What did it actually mean to “be discipled” or to “disciple someone else”? Nevertheless, I assumed, based on the questions, that my spiritual growth was dependent on filling in blanks: “I was discipled by _____.” “I am discipling _____.”

Maybe the blank was “John,” maybe “Su Lin,” or maybe “my youth pastor.” Whoever it was, no one told me that it might be *Jesus*.

This wasn’t a malevolent omission. No one was hiding Jesus from me. Rather, they were simply passing on a well-meaning but incomplete view of what Jesus meant when he said, “Go and make disciples.”

Jesus—as I will argue in this book—is still personally

discipling people today. This reality can be difficult for us to understand or accept, especially since Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9). We can be forgiven for thinking that discipleship is all up to us; however, before Jesus left, he made promises:

- He will be with us whenever we desire to connect with him (Matthew 18:20).
- He will be with us wherever we may find ourselves (Matthew 28:20).
- Jesus may not be immediately visible to us, but he is intimately present to all of us (John 17:22-23).

Jesus is ready, willing, and able to do for us what he did for the Twelve. And as we see with the original disciples, beautiful realities become possible when Jesus is discipling you. The early Christians stepped into a world in which women were owned, children were cheap labor, poverty was the lot of the majority, slavery was assumed, disabled people were discarded, religion was incarcerating, and government was oppressive. By the time Jesus' first disciples spilled their blood on the streets of Rome, they had turned their world upside down. They reintroduced love and covenant into marriage, providing a safe haven for women and children (Ephesians 5:25-33). There were no needy people among them because those who had much ensured that no one had too little (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37). Though the institution of slavery remained, it became obsolete as slave and owner

worshiped the one true Master together (Galatians 3:26-29; Philemon 1:1-25). Those with disabilities were recognized as full-fledged bearers of God's image, counted worthy to suffer like Jesus (Genesis 1:26; 2 Corinthians 12:1-10). Believers permeated the government, even in Caesar's household (Philippians 4:22), and new names were written daily in the Book of Life.

Three years with Jesus prepared them for all of that!

Jesus desires to do the same with us. We can be a part of that revolutionary movement of Kingdom transformation, bringing bucketloads of people into a relationship with God. If we allow him, he can show us what it looks like to live transformative lives in our world of terrorism, mass incarceration, fatherlessness, oppression, an overflowing foster care system, and racial divides both inside and outside the church. Jesus can do with our lives in three years what no church can do in thirty—what no corporation or organization has done in centuries, what no government or religion has done in millennia.

I love what it says in the book of Acts about those original disciples. When people watching them “realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been *with* Jesus” (Acts 4:13, italics added). There wasn't much to note about the first disciples. They were like you and me—typical folks. What *was* noteworthy was that they had spent time with Jesus himself. That's the way it was and is supposed to be. Christian community is essential, but when it comes to your discipleship, why would you settle for anyone else?

Off Course by a Few Degrees

There was a time in my life when I had to stop and ask, “What did Jesus actually mean when he said, ‘Go and make disciples?’” (Matthew 28:19). I’d been a Christian for decades (a pastor too!), but I’d never learned the meaning of discipleship. I was on autopilot, just accepting what others said about discipleship but never discovering on my own. Oftentimes, the essentials of the Christian life can become so familiar and commonplace for us that we fail to see the obvious, let alone the nuances of our faith.

I’ve read dozens of books on discipleship. Attended conferences. Pored over the research. My investigation into the meaning of “go and make disciples” has led me to believe that many of us are missing out on what Jesus is actually offering us.

- We have an insufficient definition of discipleship—we can’t know what a disciple is until we remember what a disciple was.
- Because the average Christian doesn’t know what a disciple is, we don’t really know how to lead others to become one.
- Despite deep desire for real-life transformation, most of our discipleship activities are falling short of our hopes.

What I’ve concluded is this: We need a reformation in discipleship.

During the sixteenth century, it became clear that when it came to how people enter into a relationship with God, we were missing the mark. The church was taking the place of Jesus in the salvation stories of his people. Then along came people like Martin Luther to remind us of what we already knew: namely, that we are saved by grace through faith alone in Christ alone. We remember this course correction as the Reformation.

Once again, the church has lost its way. Today, when it comes to discipleship, the church is sitting in the seat reserved for Jesus alone.

A ship off course by a few degrees at sea will end up at the wrong destination. Similarly, at the tee box, if a golfer's clubhead is slightly off at the moment of impact with the ball, the ball will wind up in the rough. In the short term, slight miscalculations don't matter so much. But as time passes and greater distance is traveled, the error becomes more pronounced.

When it comes to discipleship, the church has been slightly off course for a long time. "Making disciples" has become this thing we do to each other. We even made up a word: *discipleship*. You'll have a hard time finding this particular connotation of *discipleship* in the average dictionary because it's unique to us. It's the word we use to describe the things churches do in order to "make disciples." We are trying to do for others what Jesus ultimately desires to do himself.

This disciple-making development wasn't an intentional

miscalculation; as we'll discover, several factors made it difficult to stay on course. Nevertheless, somewhere along the way we took Jesus' place in people's discipleship, and we allowed other people to take Jesus' place in our discipleship.

How far off course are we? Today, average pastors assume it's their job to disciple people, and they in turn teach their congregation that they need to be discipled and that the programs and activities of the church are the means by which this should happen. Maybe you've had this experience: You began to attend a church—maybe you even became a formal church member—and then someone asked you to become part of a small group, or to engage in a midweek Bible study, or to meet one-on-one with somebody to work through a book together. There is nothing wrong with these activities, and as we'll see, they occupy an important place in the life of a believer. We need to know the Bible, learn how to share our faith, and understand the importance of generosity. But when their role is misunderstood, these activities become a wall around Jesus rather than a bridge to him.

We pastors sense that something is not working. We see that no matter how hard we try to get widespread participation in our “discipleship” programs, rarely is there full-fledged buy in. For those who do participate, the results are mixed. And if we're honest, we know that other forces in our culture (media and politics, for example) are more effective at influencing people's minds and behaviors. On our best days, we attempt to preach better sermons and strategize better

approaches. On our worst days, we blame those sitting in our pews for not being fully committed.

We tell people that they need to be able to answer questions like “Who am I discipling?” and “Who is discipling me?” instead of asking together, “How is Jesus discipling me?” and “How is he discipling you?”

Goon Park and Van Gogh

During the 1930s, the psychology labs at the University of Wisconsin were affectionately nicknamed Goon Park. Housed at 600 N. Park Street, the lab’s address when hastily scribbled looked like the word *goon*.¹ The moniker seemed to fit, however, for it was there that a young researcher by the name of Harry Harlow sought to prove a seemingly obvious thesis: Children need love from their mothers.

What seems like common sense to us was unconventional in Harlow’s day. Prior to 1950, psychologists, doctors, and even the government believed differently. John B. Watson, the president of the American Psychological Association, stated, “When you are tempted to pet your child[,] remember that mother love is a dangerous instrument. . . . Once a child’s character has been spoiled by bad handling, which can be done in a few days, who can say that the damage is ever repaired?”² In this era, it was even believed that “too much hugging and coddling could make infancy unhappy, adolescence a nightmare—even warp the child so much that he might grow up unfit for marriage.”³

Warnings abounded in pamphlets with titles like “The

Dangers of Too Much Mother Love.” Activities such as cuddling, kissing, and rocking a baby were considered bad parenting. Pediatricians warned that there were serious storms ahead for the over-kissed child. The guideline set for parents to follow? Don’t kiss your child more than once a year!⁴

In direct contradiction to the thinking of his day, Harlow believed that he could prove the importance of the mother-child bond. In one experiment, he constructed two artificial, surrogate mothers for infant rhesus monkeys. One was wiry, ugly, and cold, and provided milk to the infant monkeys. The other was warm and made of soft terry cloth, but provided no nourishment. A baby monkey was put in the cage with both “moms.” What would the infant choose? Food or security? Sustenance or softness?

If the prevailing perspective of the day was correct, the infant monkey’s choice was easy: It would bond with the “mother” that met its need for milk. That’s not what the babies did, however. Videos of this experiment show Harlow explaining that the baby monkey spent minimal time with the cold mother, basically only the hour or so per day that was necessary for the infant to drink the milk it needed. On the other hand, the infant spent almost twenty hours a day with the warm, affectionate, cuddly mother that provided no food.

Harlow took his experiment further, turning the warm, cuddly mother into a “monster mother.”⁵ When the infant sought to cuddle, the fake mother monkey would shake violently until “the teeth and bones of the infant chattered in unison.” Unbelievably, Harlow then added compressed air

to blast the infant, brass spikes to poke it, and “an embedded steel frame that, on schedule or demand, would fling forward and hurl the infant monkey off the mother’s body.”⁶ What happened? The baby returned continually to the comfort monkey despite the abuse she sometimes subjected the baby to.

The results were clear: Nourishment is a necessity—but so is affection. Children need more than the bare essentials from their mothers. Harlow demonstrated what we all now take as a given: A mother’s love matters.

Unfortunately, Harlow ignored another obvious question: What’s the value of a *father’s* love? By all accounts, Harry Harlow wasn’t a good dad. His four children from two different marriages mostly remember him as absent. He proved that a mother is more than a milk machine, but he failed to explore whether or not a father is more than a paycheck.

When it comes to discipleship, we, too, have failed to see the obvious. Many have sounded clarion calls declaring that we need better disciples. Conferences, books, and curricula highlight the importance of discipleship. Like Harry Harlow, we have sought to demonstrate the change that needs to happen. But along the way, we have made a mistake similar to his. We have overlooked an essential element to discipleship—Jesus.

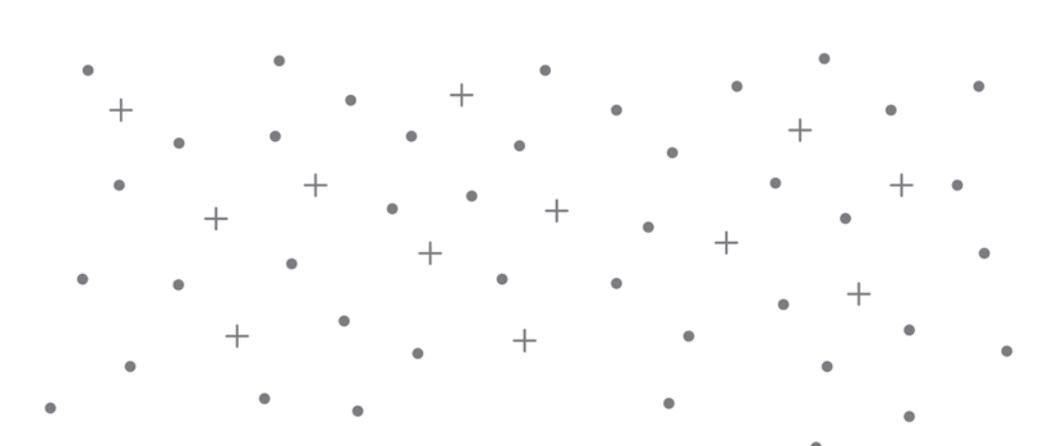
In his beautiful book *The Divine Commodity: Discovering a Faith beyond Consumer Christianity*, Skye Jethani wrote about Vincent van Gogh’s complicated relationship with Christianity. Van Gogh used the color yellow in his paintings

to symbolize the presence of God. In works like *The Sower* and *Olive Trees*, the color is lavish and prominent. Yellow virtually fills the canvas in his depiction of *The Raising of Lazarus*. He takes a much subtler approach with *The Potato Eaters* as a very slight yellow haze of faith illuminates the darkness.

Van Gogh's struggle, Jethani wrote, "was primarily with the institutional church, not Christ. In his final years, as his mental illness became more severe, van Gogh reveals a profound devotion to Jesus while remaining disillusioned with the church."⁷ Jethani draws our attention to *Starry Night*, a prominent painting from this period in Van Gogh's life, in which Van Gogh nestles a quiet countryside village beneath a swirling night-sky of brilliant blue and heavenly bodies in yellow. "The divine light of the stars is repeated in the village below, every home illuminated with the same yellow warmth. . . . But there is one building in van Gogh's imaginary village with no light, no divine presence—the church."⁸

I don't share Van Gogh's bleak view of church. While we may have flaws, I don't think we have locked God out. My experience is that most deeply desire God. However, I do see that in our eagerness to serve Jesus and make him known, we sometimes sideline him in the process. One way we do this is when we fail to see his ongoing, active presence in our spiritual growth. Too often we have missed out on the obvious truth that Jesus—because he is alive—is ready, willing, and able to do for us as he did for the original Twelve.

You and I can be disciplined by Jesus.



CHAPTER ONE

TWO WORDS

That Will Change Your Life

Two words worth underlining in your Bible: *Jesus himself*.

Let them inspire hope for what is possible in your relationship with God. Zero in on them and let them spark the imagination of your soul.

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, *Jesus himself* came up and walked along with them.

LUKE 24:13-15, EMPHASIS ADDED

Passover had ended. Like many of their fellow Jews, these two travelers had come to Jerusalem for the feast. Now they were traveling home. But as momentous as each Passover was, this particular feast had been singularly disruptive. Why were these two travelers so interested in what happened to Jesus? Because they were his disciples. They were engaged in deep dialogue as they attempted to figure out what happened to Jesus. While they were in Jerusalem, he was arrested and executed, but now they had heard the incredible rumor that he was, in fact, no longer dead. They debated the possibilities and probabilities and wondered aloud, “What does this mean for our lives?”

Then it happened. *Jesus himself* began to walk with them.

They didn't, however, immediately know who had joined them. We're not sure why they didn't recognize him. Perhaps their eyes were fixated on the ground, or maybe the sun, low in the evening sky, impeded their vision. We are told that they were “kept from recognizing him,” which might indicate that something supernatural was taking place (Luke 24:16).¹ What's clear is that *Jesus himself* was with them that day.

He walked with them. More than that, *Jesus himself* talked with them:

He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only

one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

“What things?” he asked.

LUKE 24:17-19

Jesus himself asked them questions, sparking conversation. And because they didn't know who he was, they began sharing with Jesus what happened to Jesus! They explained to him, “We pinned our hopes on this would-be Messiah. Then the Romans crucified him. This morning, some of our friends went to the tomb; they said he wasn't there, that it was empty. We're just trying to piece all of this together.”

Then *Jesus himself* gave them an opportunity to grow in their faith: “He said to them, ‘How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?’” (Luke 24:25-26). Such a brazen approach for a would-be stranger. But this was Jesus; he knew them—personally—and was inviting them to enlarge their view of what God can and cannot do. They were witnesses to the fulfillment of God's promises, but they were failing to connect the dots.

Then comes my favorite part, *Jesus himself* teaching them: “Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). He led them in a Bible study! They didn't have the New Testament (they were living it!), but the Old Testament contained plenty to point them to the Messiah. Jesus could have easily drawn a connection between the

Passover lamb and the Passover they celebrated just days before. If he had, perhaps he showed them that they had just seen the ultimate sacrifice that sets people free from bondage. Maybe he showed them where it says the Messiah would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver or how none of the bones in his body would be broken.²

During this Bible study, he most likely spent significant time with them in the book of Isaiah: “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities . . . by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). I wonder if he pointed out how Job pre-called his resurrection when he said,

I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;
I myself will see him
with my own eyes—I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!

JOB 19:25-27

Let this sink in: Jesus walked with, talked to, and taught them *himself*.

Is *Jesus himself* available to do these kinds of things in your life? Is this experience of God reserved only for those on the pages of our Bibles? Is living vicariously through them the best we can hope for?

Twelve Lucky Ones?

These travelers on the road to Emmaus weren't the first to be discipled by Jesus himself, of course. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were at work when Jesus showed up and called them to be his disciples (Matthew 4:18-22). Jesus ate dinner with Matthew the tax collector in Matthew's own home (Matthew 9:9-13). In all, he personally invited twelve people from different backgrounds into a direct discipleship relationship with him. It was intimate, face-to-face, and one-on-one. Jesus joked with them and assigned nicknames (Matthew 16:18; Mark 3:17). He sent them out on assignments and debriefed them afterward—coaching them in the ways of the Kingdom (Luke 10:1-24). They heard him teach and asked him questions about the meaning of his parables (for example, see Matthew 13:36). The Twelve saw Jesus tired, lonely, struggling, and anguished. When Jesus was disappointed, they were close enough to see it on his face. They knew firsthand that his love was real as they received training, instruction, correction, purpose, and inspiration from him. They were discipled by *Jesus himself*.

We find ourselves envious of these first disciples. We think, *If I were discipled by Jesus himself, then things would be different. I would be bolder in my witness, clearer in my mission, and closer to God. Faith would be so much easier.* But you and I weren't meant to gaze longingly at their incredible fortune. They weren't the lucky few who just happened to be born at the right time and place in history. Quite the opposite—they

were prototypes for you and me. Their experience with Jesus demonstrates what life is supposed to be like for all of us.

Sometime during the centuries between them and us, we lost sight of this beautiful reality. Our modern view of discipleship is deficient. We've busied ourselves with activities—many good and well-meaning—that, ultimately, are far less than what God had in mind for those who abide in his Son. It wasn't unreasonable for us to assume that what they had was special and that we have to settle for something less now that Jesus has ascended into heaven. After all, they existed at the same time in history and occupied the same geographic space as Jesus. Jesus was physically present with them. But Jesus promised his real presence to us, too. Jesus told us that he will never leave us and that he will be with us for all time (Matthew 28:20).

When we forget this, we give honor and respect to Jesus when it comes to our spiritual growth while at the same time seeing him as peripheral, unnecessary. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his classic treatise *The Cost of Discipleship*, wrote, "Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship."³ Bonhoeffer saw that discipleship was inextricably linked to the active involvement of the resurrected Jesus. As Bonhoeffer so eloquently wrote, "Discipleship without Jesus Christ is a way of our own choosing."⁴ We must go back and reclaim a first-century view of what it means to be a disciple if we are going to experience what the twelve disciples, two fellow travelers on the road to Emmaus, and many others learned from *Jesus himself*.

Any definition of discipleship that does not recognize the real presence of Jesus misses the point. *Discipleship is a direct, one-on-one relationship in which we are led by, taught by, and loved by Jesus himself.*

Biblical discipleship requires face-to-face encounters with Jesus, and that, for us, requires a risen rabbi. Discipleship, then, is inseparable from the Resurrection. Unfortunately, too much of what we call discipleship could happen with or without the one who was crucified, died, was buried, and on the third day rose again.

Eyes to See

Luke Timothy Johnson's book *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel* opens with this sentence: "It makes a big difference whether we think someone is dead or alive."⁵ He goes on to explain that if we think someone is dead, then we don't expect to have actual interaction with them. Our relationship with them is based upon who they were and what they've left behind—past tense. However, if they are alive, then we expect a current, present-tense relationship. "The most important question concerning Jesus, then," Johnson continues, "is simply this: Do we think he is dead or alive?" If we truly believe Jesus rose from the dead, "what we learn *about* him must therefore include what we continue to learn *from* him."⁶

Continuing to learn *from* Jesus: That should be our expectation and experience. Jesus is still with us. He is available right now to teach us the ways of the Kingdom in a way

that we will experience the *living* nature of God's Word. Our hearts will burn inside, for our rabbi is near.

The reality is this: *Jesus himself* is walking and talking with us. *Jesus himself* is teaching us directly. However, the Emmaus road story does leave us with this question: Do we recognize that it's him?

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

LUKE 24:28-31

Jesus is available to us as he was to these first-century disciples. However, what we learn from them is that it is possible to have Jesus fully engaged in our spiritual growth and yet, for any number of reasons, not recognize him. Sometimes it takes a special moment when our eyes are opened to this reality.

There is much we need to unlearn about discipleship, for there are many myths and misconceptions. What's clear is that he is present even now in this very moment. As we continue, ask Jesus to reveal himself to you.

*Jesus, you are near.
You are that fellow traveler
who has always been with me.
Father, help me to see your Son,
not just as the one
who died on the cross
but as the one
who rose from the dead
and is actively involved
in my life right now.
Spirit of the living God,
open my eyes.
Amen.*

