

A recent World magazine article, Words and Deeds by Van Kornegay in Malawi, quoted church leaders as saying that Africa's greatest need is discipleship. "The church has done a good job of evangelising but a poor job of discipling. Christianity here is a mile wide and an inch deep." Most of the pastors throughout Africa have no formal Bible training. Most pastors have no access to a library, and only a few books. Many do not even own a full Bible. Operation World reports that 100 million Christians in Africa do not even possess a copy of the Bible!

Africa is the poorest continent on earth, and the only continent that has actually grown poorer over the last thirty years. Most Africans do not even own the land they cultivate. In many countries in Africa the state owns all the land. Even where private leases of the land are allowed, there is often a time limit where after that the land reverts back to the state. Some economists have pointed out that the value of the "dead capital" in Africa, that is the property which cannot be capitalised because of lack of a title deed, is roughly forty times the foreign aid received worldwide since 1945. Corrupt predatory regimes and socialist economics have impoverished Africa and crippled its progress. Life expectancy in Africa has plummeted over the last decades. The holocaust in Rwanda, which occurred ten years ago, is a graphic illustration of some of the consequences of inadequate discipleship.

Frontline Fellowship continues to receive enthusiastic responses, to our [Biblical Principles for Africa](#) book. Even the Presidents of Malawi and Zambia have written to us expressing their appreciation for Biblical Principles for Africa. Both the Zambian and Malawian Parliaments have requested quantities of Biblical Principles for Africa to be distributed to their members.

Others encouraged us to go even deeper by giving the Biblical principles for individuals - a Discipleship Handbook.

In so many different ways, and from some very unexpected sources, the Lord confirmed that this was a project that we should put heart and soul into. As discipleship training has been a priority through most of Frontline Fellowship's 22 years, there was no shortage of material. Some chapters have been refined and developed many times over the years, others were crafted from scratch. The problem was knowing what to leave out! We wanted to limit the book

to 150 pages and pack it full of great insights, practical instruction and Biblical inspiration - to enable us to love God more wholeheartedly, to serve Him more effectively, to obey Him more consistently, to worship Him more acceptably.

The [Discipleship Handbook](#) is my third discipleship book in the series which began with Faith In Action in 1989 and [Putting Feet To Your Faith](#) in 1998. The Discipleship Handbook deals with the most important issues possible. There is no one more important than God and nothing more important than our relationship to God. This is what really, ultimately matters - that we know God, and that we make Him known.

"Only one life, it will soon be passed only what's done for Christ will last."
C. T. Studd

We need to work out our priorities in the light of eternity. When Jesus was asked what the greatest Commandment was, He replied: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...you shall love your neighbour as yourself." Mark 12:30-31

Our greatest priority is to love God above all else and more than anyone else. We need to get to know the Word of God and the God of the Word.

***"Teach us, good Lord, to serve You as You deserve,[]
to give and not to count the cost,[]
to fight and not to heed the wounds,[]
to toil and not to ask for rest,[]
to labour and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do Your will."*** []

True love is measured by sacrifice.

This is what really matters. To know God and to make Him known. To love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbour as ourself. To go and make disciples of all nations, teaching obedience to all things the Lord has commanded.

Revivals are not churches filled with people, but people filled with God.

A Christian is a free man, set free to serve Christ. A Christian is an athlete, in training for a godly life. Rid yourself from all unnecessary weight, free yourself of all known sin, throw aside every encumbrance and run with determination and endurance. Obey the rules, run to win, run straight, harden your body, control your movements. Run your best, run the full distance.

A Christian is a soldier. We have a spiritual enemy to fight, we have a spiritual war to win. We have spiritual weapons that are powerful to the destroying of strongholds. Therefore be disciplined, be prepared, be alert, use the sword of the Spirit, fight evil, resist the devil, attack the strongholds, set the prisoners free. Win the victory in Jesus' Name. "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." Romans 8:37

A Christian is a worker. As workers for the Lord we ought to do our best, wholeheartedly. A Christian is a farmer, sowing the seed of the Gospel. "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." Matt 9:37

As these Biblical illustrations show, any definition of a Christian must include: action, devotion, dedication, persistence, sacrifice and service.

"Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?" Ps. 85:6

No one is more important than God, and nothing is more important than our relationship with Him. We should schedule time with God in our diary. We should switch our cellphones off in church, during devotions and in prayer meetings. We need to build the Bible into our daily routine: The Bible before breakfast. Read a Psalm before lunch or Scripture before supper. Plan to read through the whole Bible in one year (By reading just 4 chapters a day you can complete the whole Bible in just one year).

Attend the Bible study and prayer meetings of your church. Make Sundays special. Receive evangelistic training. Volunteer some of your time to help your local church or mission.

For those who say that they do not have time for these Steps to Personal Revival, here is another suggestion: Disconnect your TV and stop reading the daily newspapers. That will provide most people with a couple of extra hours every day! What is your priority?

The centre of the Christian Gospel is the cross, and the salvation that God wrought on the cross is the greatest act in all the history of mankind. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."

He became like us
- that we might become like Him.
He was rejected
- that we might be accepted.
He was condemned
- that we might be forgiven.
He was punished
- that we might be pardoned.
He suffered
- that we might be strengthened.
He was whipped
- that we might be healed.
He was hated
- that we might be loved.
He was crucified
- that we might be justified.
He was tortured
- that we might be comforted.
He died
- that we might live.
He went to hell
- that we might go to heaven.
He endured what we deserve
- that we might enjoy what only He deserves.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." There are 278 references to fearing God in the Bible. The fear of God is mentioned more times than any other aspect of devotion. We should fear God because of who He is: our Creator, Sovereign Lord and Eternal Judge. "To fear the Lord is to hate evil". Prov 8:13

We need to know God and to make Him known.

"All Scripture is God breathed." Jesus is the only way to God. Jesus is God in human form. The disciple of Christ must learn and experience what it means to be filled with the Spirit; be led by the Holy Spirit; walk in the Spirit; pray in the Spirit.

The Word of God warns us to not grieve the Holy Spirit; to not quench the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit has given us life; He must also control our lives." Gal 5:25

"If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching..." The Ten Commandments teach us respect for God, respect for people and respect for property. The Ten Commandments cover our responsibility to God, to our parents and to other people. The Ten Commandments are foundational to all of life.

The Bible teaches that "sin is lawlessness." 1 John 3:4

"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7

"If you love Me, you will obey what I command." John 14:15

What is wrong with our world? Sin. Mankind is in rebellion to God. Instead of offering a weak, diluted, man-centred message of "believe and receive", we need to faithfully proclaim a Christ centred, Bible based and Holy Spirit message of "repentance and obedience." Rather than only making converts we need to "make disciples...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Discipleship is not complete until the disciple is discipling.

"Jesus said 'If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.' " Matt. 16:24

Give up your small ambitions - and follow Jesus.

The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you. Forgiveness of sin is not a substitute for restitution. Forgiveness does not transfer property rights to the thief. Repentance from sin and restitution are inseparable. Do a thorough job of repentance and restitution.

"The discerning heart seeks knowledge." Successful people read. Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. A person's character is to a large extent developed by the books he reads. Readers make leaders. Invest in renewing your mind. Buy Christian books.

"The Bible is worth more than all the other books which have ever been printed." The truly wise man is he who always believes the Bible against the opinion of any man.

The Bible is the number one best selling book in all of history. The Bible has inspired the greatest literature, the greatest art, the greatest examples of architecture, charity and self sacrifice in history.

"Whatever there is in civilisation that is worthwhile rests on the Bible's precepts."

Prayer is to the soul what breathing is to the body. If you are too busy to pray then you are busier than God wants you to be. Nothing is beyond the reach of prayer - except that which is beyond the will of God. So the Discipleship Handbook goes to the Puritans to learn how to balance head and heart, doctrine and devotion, for a dynamic prayer life.

"If you remain in Me, and My Word remains in you, ask whatever you will and it will be given you." John 15:7

If God can change you, then God can use you to change some part of this world. Until we know the Word of God, we can be easily misled. Truth is not determined by majority opinion, but by the Word of God.

History has a goal. Time has meaning. Our calendars should reflect that. If something is important then we need to work it into our calendar.

All animals belong to God. Jesus is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Jesus is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." We are answerable to God for our treatment, care and protection of animals. "A good man is kind to his animals, but the wicked are cruel to theirs." Proverbs 12:10

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. Protect the rights of all who are helpless." Proverbs 31:8

"I will set before my eyes no vile thing..." The average child watches over 2000 hours of TV every year. Violence in the media fuels violence in society.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for a good man to do nothing."

We need to redeem the media by supporting good films and refusing to support the bad. Redeem the time. Clean the screen. Know before you go.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is His good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:1,2

The Discipleship Handbook includes incisive guidelines on how to select and evaluate films and videos.

Adversity builds character. Everything is a test of character. Extreme situations expose and bring out the best, or the worst, in people. A person's character is accurately measured by his reaction to unfairness or bad treatment. Guidelines on responding to criticism and conflict resolution are also part of the book.

"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You." Isaiah 26:3

Missions require suffering and sacrifice. "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12

We seldom consider our personal suffering or world events in the light of eternity. Wherever there is danger - there are unique opportunities for serving God. God's army often advances on its knees in prayer and on its back in pain.

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. If you aim at nothing any road will get you there. In the light of eternity - what are my priorities? The Discipleship Handbook includes worksheets and questionnaires to help organise your priorities and your time.

Where God guides, He provides. Time is life - squander time, and you squander life. Don't settle for less than God's best.

Let us lay solid foundations and let our spiritual roots go deep into God's Word for a fruitful life of discipleship.

This article includes excerpts from the new [Discipleship Handbook](#) by Peter Hammond.

Frontline Fellowship
P O Box 74
Newlands 7725
Cape Town
South Africa
admin@frontline.org.za
www.frontline.org.za

Frontline Fellowship USA
P.O. Box 728
Manitou Springs
CO 80829