

# KANSAS COMMUNITIES MINISTRY UPDATE

*"My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever-increasing depth and to make disciples and develop laborers at all times, under any conditions, in every place I go."*

## Genesis 17:1-2

"When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, 'I am the Sovereign God [El Shaddai]. Walk before me and be blameless. Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and I will give you a multitude of descendants.'" (NET Bible—used by permission)

## Growth in Christlikeness

Christian growth and development is a lot like a baby growing up. When a baby is born, they know nothing of the world around them. They must be taught how to do many things. They must be protected. They must be given milk to drink, not meat.

So it is with the new believer. When a person comes to Christ for his/her salvation, they are babes in Christ. They are vulnerable to attack by Satan and must be protected. They must be taught many things, patiently and with love.

If a person does not grow and develop it is a very sad thing. If a new believer stays in the state they started – as a babe in Christ – it is also a very sad thing. Who do you know that you could invest in? As Jim Morris is quoted as saying, "There are two types of people in the world: those who need to know Christ and those who need to know Him better."

## What is a Disciple?

by Richard Spann

A Learner, A Follower  
and A Reproducer —  
Howard Hendricks

There have been many descriptions of a disciple over the years. The above comments by Howard Hendricks were made over forty years ago and my mind keeps returning to them as I consider this subject. To reflect on this more fully we need to turn to our Lord's comments on these three aspects of discipleship.



Learning is addressed in Matthew 11:28-30. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." In the Middle East at the time of Christ the older oxen bore the weight of the work while the younger oxen in training was simply fastened to the older oxen by means of the yoke. The direction of the oxen as they pulled together was determined by the course of the older oxen, not the one in training... These conditions for learning then, include closeness of association, observation, and participation in all His activities... This process is described in II Corinthians 3:18. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (KJV)

Jesus describes the importance of following Him as being necessary to discipleship in several locations in scripture... In Luke 9:23, the Lord relates that prior to following Him, one must deny themselves and pick up the cross. The inner hidden choice of denial of self must be followed by open identification with the cross in our lives. He dealt with three obstacles to discipleship in Luke 9:57-62. The first of these was material possessions, the second was other relationships, and the last was turning back. (continued on page 3)

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## Goads and Nails

*Excerpt from Goads and Nails*  
Vol. 2, pp 1-4

*"If my people ..."*

Three decades ago, Francis Schaeffer authored a book entitled *How Should We Then Live?* It depicted the history of the world and our country in its progressive departure from God in all areas of life over the last several centuries. He chronicled the stages that occurred showing that each generation was more decadent than the preceding one. Since his time, our country has not slowed in its downward spiral... The word "tolerant" is being redefined to mean that anyone else's viewpoint is as valid as our own...

The healing of our land, then, according to this passage, must be initiated by God's people. It begins with the instruction to humble ourselves. Deuteronomy 8:2-3 describes this process of humbling. "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands..." This humbling was initiated by the Lord in order for them to realize that the Lord was their only resource that they needed. -Richard Spann

## The Names of God

by David Dennis

Each year the Kansas Navigators follow a study schedule, typically according to a theme. Each week we read a passage of scripture, do a study on it called "Search the Scriptures" and then memorize a portion of that passage. At our weekly Team meeting we then discuss what the Lord has been teaching us through that passage and how we can apply it.

This year we are looking at the names of God found in Scripture. Here are a few examples and some thoughts and passages on each one:

**El Shaddai:** "God Almighty" or "All Sufficient One": Genesis 17:1-2: "When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, 'I am the Sovereign God. Walk before me and be blameless. Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and I will give you a multitude of descendants.' " The patriarchs knew of God as El Shaddai (Lumina Bible notes online at <https://netbible.org>). In Scripture, El Shaddai is the name associated with God providing as the source of life and fertility. It is also associated with God as the sovereign King who blesses and protects.

**Jehovah Jireh:** "The God who sees" or "The God who provides": Genesis 22:14: "And Abraham called the name of that place 'The Lord provides.' It is said to this day, 'In the mountain of the Lord provision will be made.' " In Genesis 22, God commands Abraham to sacrifice his only son on Mount Moriah. As Abraham in obedience raises his hand to kill Isaac, God miraculously intervenes and provides the ram as a substitute.

**El Elyon:** "The God Most High": Psalm 57:2: "I cry out for help to God Most High, to the God who vindicates me." From the study notes on <https://netbible.org> for this passage: "The divine title "Most High" (עֶלְיוֹן, 'elyon) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked."

**Adonai:** "Lord" "Master": 2 Samuel 7:18: "King David went in, sat before the Lord, and said, 'Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you should have brought me to this point?' " Adonai is plural and is typically used in the context of calling upon the Lord as Lord and Master.

In Old Testament times, names not only served as identification but also as identity ([https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/misc/name\\_god.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/misc/name_god.cfm)). With this in mind, we can rejoice in the marvelous character of the God of the Bible, the God who is All Sufficient, Who Sees and Provides, Who is Most High and Whom we can address as Lord and Master. No matter what you and I are going through, knowing this God personally is vitally encouraging.

## What is a Disciple? (continued from page one)

In Luke 14:25-35, the Lord again mentions three hindrances to following Him which are our possessions, other relationships, and our personal freedom.

Sometimes the simple songs we sing as children capture truth vividly for us. The truths of Luke 9:57-62 were made evident to me some years ago when my wife and I took two of our grandchildren out to lunch at a nearby restaurant. Our granddaughter, who was four at the time, stood up in the booth and began singing the following in her clear soprano voice.

*I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, No turning back. No turning back.*

*The world behind me, the cross before me, the world behind me, the cross before me, The world behind me, the cross before me, No turning back. No turning back.*

*Though none go with me, I still will follow, Though none go with me, I still will follow, Though none go with me, I still will follow, No turning back. No turning back.*

Her message was clear and understandable. All that remained for us to do was to say Amen, collect an offering and give the Benediction to the surrounding tables!

Our Lord's words to us on being a reproducer are found in Matthew 28:18-20. "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' " One of our speakers at a recent Navigator conference, Bill Hull, remarked that the disciples were simply told to "make more of what you are." To make more of what we are we need to be available, to be vulnerable, and to persevere. First of all, we need to manage our time wisely so that we are available to others. Jim Morris stated repeatedly that "Discipleship is more caught than taught." Our contact should be such that we can say with the Apostle Paul, "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you." (Philippians 4:9) Our lives, furthermore, must be so transparent so that others can clearly see that Christ is living in us. "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." (II Corinthians 4:7) We also must learn to persevere with others. "But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop." (Luke 8:15) Our work with others is not completed until we can see four generations through their lives. "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." (II Timothy 2:2)

In Matthew 28:17 it is noted that "When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted." Those who worshiped had their eyes on the Lord. Those who doubted had their eyes only on themselves. Jesus said, "All authority is given to Him." With our eyes on Him, we need never doubt His ability to make disciples through us as we learn, follow and reproduce our lives in others. (From: <https://kansasnavs.org/what-is-a-disciple/>)

## Spotlight on Online Resources

### ◆*Kansas Navigators Media:*

Bill Heatley spoke to the Men's Retreat at Crosswind Conference Center in April 2011 on the topic of "The Gift of Work." His messages included "God's Foundation for Work," "Kingdom Living," "Redefining Success," and "Discipleship and Work." Listen here: <https://kansasnavs.org/media/2011-spring-mens-retreat/>

### ◆*Kansas Navigators blogs:*

What is real? What do you really believe and is it really real? Read this provocative blog by Dr. Spann here: <https://kansasnavs.org/do-you-really-believe-that-what-you-believe-is-really-real/>

### ◆*Podcast "Making Disciples Naturally"*

Our 12-15 minute podcasts are published weekly each Saturday morning. We just finished a 5-part series on the topic of "heaven." Upcoming podcasts will include fascinating interviews with people who are still growing in the Lord and still making disciples, even at age 92! Find those podcasts at <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts> or subscribe via Apple Podcasts, Overcast, Spotify, etc. (On our website you'll need to place your cursor in the list of podcasts and "slide" them down to find the correct episode number.)



## Featured resource: God Space by Doug Pollock

You know you should be introducing your friends and loved ones to Christ. You know you should bring up spiritual concepts and conversations but how do you do that without being just plain weird? How do you do that without shutting down the conversation?

In this very practical book, Doug Pollock shares ideas and principles for bringing God into the conversation. From the Amazon description:

*"Where the Holy Spirit can do amazing things through everyday conversations. Where honesty and transparency allow for discovery and deep connection. Where lives are challenged and changed."*

*Connect with these real-life stories of how ordinary people learned how to engage others in rich spiritual conversations that open doors instead of slamming them shut. You'll find fresh insights and practical tools for connecting with others about the things that matter most."*

