

A photograph of a man with a full, light-colored beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit jacket, white shirt, and red tie. He is shaking hands with another person whose hand is visible in the foreground. They are seated at a wooden table. On the table, there is a dark mug of coffee on a wooden coaster, some papers, and a pen. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

A Beginner's Guide To Missionary Discipleship

Marcel LeJeune

CatholicMissionaryDisciples.com

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INTRODUCTION

“The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: "All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks." Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven."”

-CCC 1816

What a bold statement, that many of us miss when reading the Catechism - our very salvation is dependent upon how we serve and witness to the faith! Still, if you are anything like me, you may lack the drive to witness to Jesus at every moment. This book aims to lay out some basic principles about evangelization and missionary discipleship. If you want the TLDR version (too long didn't read) - *“go and make disciples”* will do it. Ultimately, missionary discipleship is about being faithful witnesses to the love that God has given us and building up others to do the same.

Jesus came while we had no way to get to heaven. He opened for us the doors to salvation, not because we could ever deserve it, but because the Father's love spilled over and he lavishes us with grace. This love can't be contained in heaven and so it comes down to earth. We, Jesus' disciples, are called to offer this same love to the world that desperately needs it. This book won't be the sole motivation for you to change how you operate. It won't make you a greater disciple, by itself. Only God can do change your heart. In fact, He is waiting on you to say “yes” to the call to be a great evangelist and disciple-maker. I pray you step out in faith.

-Marcel LeJeune

CHAPTER 1 - A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

When I was dating my wife, I wanted to spend as much time as I possibly could with her. Why? Because I wanted to know her personally. I wanted to know what she liked and what she didn't. I wanted to get to know her pet peeves and what her passions were. I wanted to know everything I could about her. But, above all, I had to learn how to make choices that showed I loved her.

This is what happens when you love someone – you want as close, intimate, and personal of a relationship as you can; appropriate to the kind of relationship it is, of course.

The same goes with Jesus. If you are a Christian, you are called to have a close, intimate, and personal relationship with him. But, many are unsure about what this is all about. If you are one who is not sure how to do this, it is simple:

1. As with any relationship, you choose how close you want to be with someone. It is a choice only you can make. Your parents (once you get old enough to do it yourself) can't choose faith for you. Nor can the Church as a whole. Many who are Catholic (and other Christians) have merely an intellectual or emotional connection to God, but not a personal one they have chosen in faith. To intellectually know Jesus (to know *about* Jesus) or have a movement of the emotions (to *feel* good about Jesus) isn't enough. Remember that even the demons know about Jesus and that we will all have times we don't feel good about Jesus ("take up your cross").
2. This is why we must *choose* Jesus in faith, with is done through an act of our will. Of course, faith is really a response to grace, and thus us being able to say "yes" to Jesus is only possible because God has chosen us first.
3. Once you choose Jesus in faith, you have to do it again and again. It isn't a one-and-done deal. This relationship is lived out primarily in prayer, participating in the Sacraments, growing in virtue (primarily love of God and others), service to God and others, and to help others come to know, love, serve, and follow God. Jesus is Lord of all and as a servant to our King, we must serve Him and others. This is what He commands of us.

This concept of having a personal relationship with Jesus sometimes sounds too “Protestant” to some Catholics. That simply isn’t true, it is as Catholic as all concepts. We have been using the language long before our Protestant brothers and sisters were ever around and the universal Church has never lost touch with this language, even if some individuals or communities have. For example, here are some quotes from some of our most recent Popes and one from the Catechism and one from Vatican II:

“Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life! If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms. If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won’t be disappointed. If following him seems difficult, don’t be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do.” -Pope Francis

“Being a Christian means having a living relationship with the person of Jesus; it means putting on Christ, being conformed to him.” -Pope Francis

“It is necessary to awaken again in believers a full relationship with Christ, mankind’s only Savior.” Pope Saint John Paul II

“Christian faith is not only a matter of believing that certain things are true, but above all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.” -Pope Benedict XVI

“Only in this personal relationship with Christ, only in this encounter with the Risen One do we truly become Christians.” -Pope Benedict XVI

“This mystery (of faith), then, requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer.” -CCC 2558

“This conversion must be taken as an initial one, yet sufficient to make a man realize that he has been snatched away from sin and led into the mystery of God’s love, who called him to enter into a personal relationship with Him in Christ. For, by the workings of divine grace, the new convert sets out on a spiritual journey, by means of which, already sharing through faith in the mystery

of Christ's Death and Resurrection, he passes from the old man to the new one, perfected in Christ.” -Decree on Missionary Activity, §13. Vatican II

But, this language isn't a recent phenomenon. Here is a sampling from various sources through the many years of the Church:

“Hope in him, all you assembly of the people. Pour your hearts out before him (Ps 61: 9). Dont give in to those who are asking you, Where is your God? My tears, the Psalmist says elsewhere, have become my bread day and night while they say to me everyday: where is your God? And what does the Psalmist say there? These things I considered, and I poured out my soul above me (Ps 41: 4-5). I remembered what I hear, Where is your God? Seeking my God, I poured out my soul above me so that I might reach him; I didnt remain in myself. Hope in him, all you assembly of the people. Pour your hearts out before him, praying, confessing, hoping. Dont restrain your hearts inside your hearts: Pour out your hearts before him. What you pour out is not lost. For he is my protector. Cast your care upon the Lord (Ps 54:23), and hope in him. Pour out your hearts before him, God our helper.” -St. Augustine

“Should you, my child, ever be attacked by this evil spirit of sadness, make use of the following remedies. ‘Is any among you afflicted?’ says Saint James, ‘let him pray.’ Prayer is a sovereign remedy, it lifts the mind to God, Who is our only Joy and Consolation. But when you pray let your words and affections, whether interior or exterior, all tend to love and trust in God. ‘O God of Mercy, most Loving Lord, Sweet Savior, Lord of my heart, my Joy, my Hope, my Beloved, my Bridegroom.’ – Francis de Sales

“Whosoever is a LITTLE ONE, let him come to me.’ (Proverbs 9:4) And so I succeeded. I felt I had found what I was looking for. But, wanting to know, O my God, what You would do to the very little one who answered Your call, I continued my search and this is what I discovered: ‘As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breasts, and upon the knees they shall caress you.’ (Isaiah 66: 13,12) Ah! Never did words more tender and more melodious come to give joy to my soul. The elevator which must raise me to heaven is Your arms, O Jesus! And for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain little and become this more and more.” St Therese of Lisieux

“Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends. Speak to Him often of your business, your plans, your troubles, your fears— of everything that concerns you. Converse with Him confidently and frankly; for God is not wont to speak to a soul that does not speak to Him.” —St. Alphonsus de Liguori

“If you have learned everything except Jesus, you know nothing. If you’ve learned nothing but Jesus, you have learned everything.” – St. Bonaventure

So, not only should we not be scared of talking about a personal relationship, we need to continue to work on our own. Think of it this way – every time you do the following things you are working on your personal relationship with Jesus (as long as you *choose* Him intentionally):

- Set time apart daily to pray.
- Go to Mass
- Go to Confession
- Read and pray with the Bible daily
- Choose to act virtuously
- Perform an act of mercy or kindness
- Share your faith with others
- Etc

When I promised I would love my wife in our wedding vows, it wasn’t merely an emotional act (it was and there is nothing wrong with that) or that I know a lot about her (there is and that is good). Rather, I chose to love my wife that day and every time I choose to love her again, I affirm that initial commitment I made in my vows. The same is true for my relationship with Jesus. This is how you have a personal relationship with Jesus. As Thomas a Kempis says:

“You cannot live well without a friend, and if Jesus be not your friend above all else, you will be very sad and desolate. Thus, you are acting foolishly if you trust or rejoice in any other. Choose the opposition of the whole world rather than offend Jesus. Of all those who are dear to you, let Him be your special love. Let all things be loved for the sake of Jesus, but Jesus for His own sake. Jesus Christ must be loved alone with a special love for He alone, of all friends, is good

and faithful. For Him and in Him you must love friends and foes alike, and pray to Him that all may know and love Him.”

A close, intimate, and personal relationship with Jesus doesn't happen by accident. You must choose it and that choice must be intentional.

“Choose this day whom you will serve...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” -Joshua 24:15

“Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry” -2 Cor 6:2-3

CHAPTER 2 - WHAT IS EVANGELIZATION?

“Just as the whole economy of salvation has its center in Christ, so too all missionary activity is directed to the proclamation of his mystery.”

-Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 44)

In its simplest form evangelization is sharing your faith with another person. A simple definition of evangelization comes from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It says evangelization is, *“The proclamation of Christ and his Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ’s command.”* (CCC, 905) While simple to understand on the surface, once we begin to unpack the definition we will find that there is more to it than what appears on the surface.

However, before we get into the different aspects of evangelization it is important to remember that in many ways we can make evangelization too complex. With this complexity comes inaction all too often. Jesus kept it very simple. He called his followers to heed his words and to follow his example. This example included evangelizing others and calling them to radical conversion which leads to following Jesus by word and deed.

This formula of evangelistic discipleship and helping others do the same is evangelization in its simplest form – PERSONAL WITNESS + PROCLAMATION = EVANGELIZATION. If we look deep enough we will find that the Church’s understanding of evangelization maintains both simple and complex dimensions. If we are to fully grasp, believe and implement the complexities of evangelization we must be firmly grounded in the fact that spreading the Good News is simple as well.

Several years ago I had an exchange with a very well-educated non-Catholic acquaintance. We had a long history of exchanging apologetic arguments back-and-forth without either of us giving much, if any, ground. During one of our discussions he asked me how I understood the Gospel and he challenged me to tell him what it was.

After a deep breath and a shrug of my shoulders, I started to impart to him a theological treatise that would bore St. Thomas Aquinas. After I was done with my

presentation of pride and wind I waited for his gratitude to come spilling out in order to stroke my ego one more time. That isn't quite what happened.

Rather, he simply asked why I thought the gospel was so complex. He then asked how I would be able to proclaim the good news to "all the nations" with such a long-winded and confusing presentation on the need for Jesus, which all of us have. He also questioned how I would be able to bring a simple uneducated person who may live a very modest life to faith in Jesus if it took several college degrees to understand what I was saying.

At the time, his challenge didn't do much to change my mind, because I was too proud to see God working through my "adversary." Over time, though, I was found that he was correct to challenge me. I was presenting the need for Jesus in a much too complex manner. There is a great need to present the gospel message in a simple fashion. While the depths of Christianity and the understanding of Christ and his Gospel can in fact be infinitely deep, we must not plumb those depths at the beginning of our evangelical efforts or we risk leaving many people behind who are not able to understand all of what we are saying. There can be a failure to understand that the gospel is first and foremost the message of God becoming man and he lived, died and rose from the dead in order to draw us to his Father. As St. Paul tells Timothy,

"This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." -1 Tim 1:15

We must not fail to keep this simple message of faith at the front of our minds. The great commission is a call to all of us to heed the call to evangelize:

"All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."
-Matt 28:18-20

A Witness Through Life & Words

So, what do you think of when you hear the word "evangelization"? Some images that may come to mind are door-to-door missionaries, street corner preachers, or those

in foreign mission-lands. While these are certainly a part of proclaiming the good news, they do not make up the whole of it and are the more extraordinary forms of evangelization, not the normal day-to-day ways we are called to witness to others about Christ.

The first way we witness to others is through the witness of life, which is the initial act of evangelization, and is indispensable. As Pope Paul VI says, “*Above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness.*” The witness of the Christian life is done by conforming our human will to the divine will of Jesus. In living out our faith daily, we point to the one that gives us the strength, joy, and love that draws people to seek the source of our joy and love.

This cannot be done without growth in holiness, prayer, conversion and continually seeking grace in the sacraments. It is rarely seen in grand acts of holiness, but rather quiet and humble acts of love. Still, the kerygma, or preached Gospel, is also a necessary part of evangelization. In fact, evangelization is incomplete until the declaration of the saving message that Jesus commands us to proclaim to others is pronounced.

This is, of course, the part of evangelization that is most intimidating to the majority of people who become frightened when called to vocally witness to others. I am one of many modern Catholics who grew up in the Church, fell away, and now has come to love the faith after an initial conversion as an adult and later through an intense study Catholic teachings, prayer, repentance, and growth in virtue. This study of the faith helped me to understand what the Church taught, but like many Catholic evangelists, I made many mistakes when I answered the call to share my faith. The mistake I can most readily identify with is using my the truth as an offensive weapon in order to beat others into submission. This is the antithesis of true evangelization.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen evangelized according to the fitting motto, “*win the argument, lose a soul.*” If we aim to win, we are not sharing our faith out of love, but pride. I am blessed to be able to see numerous young adults fall in love with Jesus and the Catholic faith. Many of them take hold of their faith, like other Catholics, and then feel the need to share and defend it. Nevertheless, many continue to fall into the trap that I did. We mistake offensive volleys against others as a defense of the faith. Yet, most need to be loved into the Church, not argued into it.

I am certainly not saying that there is not a great need for defending the faith or being able to “*give a reason for your hope*” (2 Pet 3:15), but we must not forget the second part of the passage that says to do it with “*gentleness and reverence*.”

We have all been created to share in the ministry of Christ to all souls on earth. Do we share the gospel with others when we have the opportunity through both our deeds and words? Let us pray that Christ will give us both the opportunities to witness to his truth in our everyday lives and the grace to do share the saving message of Jesus with love.

Begging The Answer

What I have found works best when evangelizing others is to really listen to where they are coming from. Not in order to prove them wrong, but rather to truly accept the person who is in front of you as a son or daughter of God, made in His image and likeness, and uniquely made to glorify His name. When we are able to do this, we can marvel in their creation and truly love them where they are at, in order to help them grow closer to God. It isn't my job to convert anyone – I can't! Only God's grace, chosen through a free act of the other person's will, can faith happen. Thus, I am a limited instrument in the hand of God, who is called to love the other person and help them grow closer to God. True love for another person means I will always seek their good. Asking probing questions can help.

So, I submit that when we evangelize, we ought to ask more questions than the other person. Here are some I have found helpful in different situations. Note, not all questions are appropriate for every time in a person's life. I highly recommend you study the different thresholds of conversion, discussed in the amazing book “*Forming Intentional Disciples*” by Sherry Weddell. These thresholds can help you determine which questions are appropriate for individuals who are in different places and with different needs.

QUESTIONS TO ASK OTHERS WHEN EVANGELIZING

QUESTIONS FOR ALL:

- Tell me about what kind of role faith played in your family growing up, if any?
- How would you describe your idea of Catholicism (or Christianity)?

- Who do you look up to? What personality traits are most attractive?
- How do you handle the rough parts of life?
- What are you passionate about?
- What brings meaning to your life?
- What makes you happy?
- Would you like to continue our conversation?
- Would you be interested in learning more about God, Jesus, The Bible, the Catholic Church, etc?
- Do you pray? If so, would you mind describing it for me? If not, have you ever prayed in the past?
- Do you believe a relationship with God is possible?

QUESTIONS FOR NONBELIEVERS (atheists, agnostics, etc):

- Can you tell me about the god you don't believe in?
- If you have heard of Jesus, what do you know about Him?
- What do you mean by describing yourself as ____?
- What do you think Christianity adds to the lives of others?
- Do you believe in any kind of universal or higher power?
- Have you believed in God in the past? If you did and don't any longer, why did you stop believing?
- If you did believe in a god, what kind of god would you believe in?

QUESTIONS FOR NON-CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS (Hindu, Muslim, Mormon, etc):

- What are the different ways you pray?
- Can you describe what you find most fulfilling about being ____?
- Tell me about God? How do you describe God to others?
- What do you know about Jesus?
- Is there anything about Christianity that you find attractive?

QUESTIONS FOR NON-CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS:

- Could you describe what you believe about Jesus?
- Is your faith something you practice every day?
- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus?
- Is there anything about Catholicism that you find attractive?

- What do you know about the Catholic Church?

QUESTIONS FOR CATHOLICS:

- Can you describe what it means to be Catholic, in your experience?
- Do you have a personal prayer life? If so, how do you pray?
- Is God someone you would say you have a personal relationship with?
- Have you had any kind of moment when you felt particularly close to Jesus? If so, can you tell me about it? If not, have you ever wanted to?

To be a good evangelist we must have good discernment about how we might best help a person in each situation we encounter. So, there are no techniques or strategies that will always work. But, there are a few things we must always do.

1. We must pray for others we are evangelizing.
2. We must live what we believe. Being a good Christian takes a lifetime of work, but is indispensable.
3. We must look for the opportunity to proclaim the Good News. This is essential to being a good evangelist. Without this proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus, our evangelization will remain incomplete.

CHAPTER 3 - PREACH THE GOSPEL ALWAYS

I am sure you have heard the oft-quoted statement, which is attributed to St. Francis: “Preach the Gospel always! When necessary, use words.”

It might surprise you to know, he never said it. There is no documentation for hundreds of years after his death with any attribution of this quote to St. Francis. It is one that began to be attributed to him and the origins of it being attached to him have several theories (which we won't explore)

The sentiment behind the quote is pointing out that Christians who don't live as they ought to should work on this aspect first. This is true enough. All of us need to work on how we treat others, what we do with our time, how we live out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, growing in virtue, etc. Everyone knows that hypocrisy sterilizes evangelization.

St. Francis would agree, we all need this personal change and transformation of life through a conversion to Jesus. Francis decided he wanted to live a radical life of poverty and service to Jesus Christ. He started to cast off all the trappings of the world and lived for God alone. In the poverty of spirit, which he formed, he found a great call to help others grow closer to the love of Christ.

This love propelled him out into the world to preach Good News to others, while loving them with acts of service. His preaching was powerful, not only because he was a good orator, but because his love for God was reflected in his deeds.

Both his life and his words were a critical part of his mission as an evangelist.

Would He Have Said It?

St. Francis never said the phrase above and I don't believe he ever would have, because it leaves out the heart of evangelization – helping others come to know Jesus – by proclaiming His name! Imagine if St. Francis never spoke about Jesus. Imagine if the 12 Apostles never spoke about Jesus. We wouldn't be Christians today.

Others cannot know Jesus unless we talk about Him!

St. Francis knew (and so does the Church) that evangelization is NEVER complete, until the saving message of the Gospel is proclaimed. The Church repeats this over and over. Here are but a few statements (emphasis added):

*“Jesus began to **preach and say**, ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” Matt 4:17*

*“Always be prepared to **give an answer** to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”
– 1 Pet 3:15*

*“Woe to me if I do not **preach the Gospel**” -1 Cor. 9:16*

*“Go into the whole world, **preach the Gospel** to every creature” -Matt 28:19*

*“For we do not **preach** ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord” – 2 Cor 4:5*

*“Those who have received the Good News and who have been gathered by it into the community of salvation **can and must communicate and spread it.**” -Paul VI, EN*

*“even the finest witness will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified – what Peter called always having “your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have” – and **made explicit by a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the Lord Jesus.** The Good News proclaimed by the witness of life sooner or later has to be proclaimed by the word of life. **There is no true evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed.**” -Paul VI, EN*

*“a necessity lies upon the Church, and at the same time a sacred duty, to **preach the Gospel.** And hence missionary activity today as always retains its power and necessity.” -Vatican II, AG*

*“an apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one’s way of life; **a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by***

words addressed either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life. “For the charity of Christ impels us” (2 Cor. 5:14).” -Vatican II, AA

We can see there is overwhelming evidence that evangelization is not effective or complete until the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

St. Paul tells us that he was an “*ambassador for Christ*.” (2 Cor 5:20). An ambassador, in the time of Paul, was a person given the full authority of the leader they represented. Therefore, Paul was an emissary for Christ and carries the saving message of the Lord with him. He is commanded and empowered to share it to others. Yet, it is not only St. Paul and the other apostles who were given this charge, but all who are baptized into Christ.

We, who have been baptized/confirmed, are made part of the evangelical ministry of Christ to all souls on earth. Do we share the gospel with others when we have the opportunity through both our deeds and words? Let us pray that Christ will give us both the opportunities to witness to his truth in our everyday lives and the grace to do share the saving message of Jesus with love.

St. Francis pray for us!

CHAPTER 4 - RABBI JESUS

Like any relationship, a relationship between a discipler and a disciple has several elements that ought to be in place, for it to thrive. In the time of Jesus, it was understood that a disciple of a Rabbi would make their human relationship the most important one of all. It even took precedent over family, as the following passage from the Mishnah indicates.

When one is searching for the lost property both of his father and of his teacher, his teacher's loss takes precedence over that of his father since his father brought him only into the life of this world, whereas his teacher, who taught him wisdom, has brought him into the life of the World to Come. But if his father is no less a scholar than his teacher, then his father's loss takes precedence....

If his father and his teacher are in captivity, he must first ransom his teacher, and only afterwards his father—unless his father is himself a scholar and then he must first ransom his father. (Bava Metsi'a 2:11)

Some might be shocked by this, but when we decide to follow Jesus, all other relationships must be ordered behind that of the relationship with Jesus, who is our Lord and God. With this goal in mind, we can see that the human-to-human discipleship we do, must have some very strong bonds as well, in order to help others truly be close followers of Jesus. If we examine the model of how Jesus formed and nourished the relationships he had with his 12 apostles, we can find 6 key elements in each one of those relationships.

6 Key Elements of Discipleship

1. **Intentionality in the relationship.** If you don't have an intentional purpose for why you are both in the relationship, then you will never be able to properly be discipled or disciple anyone. The clear purpose of making disciples of Jesus needs to be at the forefront of every part of the relationship. Jesus told his disciples that if they followed him, then he would "make them into fishers of men". This was a process, that wasn't completed until they received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. With that end in mind, his intention was clear.

2. **Availability to the other.** You can't exactly grow in a relationship if you are not available to one another. This means making time for one another and prioritizing the time it takes to build such a relationship. Jesus spent 3 years in a nearly daily walk with the 12. We too must invest deeply in others, in order to model Jesus method of discipleship.
3. **Authenticity.** To grow closer to God together, you will have to be authentic with one another. This means showing that you are trustworthy, reliable, and personable. Jesus let his disciples see him weep, get angry, argue with others, heal, perform miracles, teach, etc. They saw how he lived his life and that was the mark they were to aim for. He didn't hold back. He was always authentic, in every aspect of life.
4. **Vulnerability in communication.** After you start to build up a relationship, there needs to be an appropriate level of vulnerability. This doesn't mean bearing your deepest secrets, but rather taking off the masks that we sometimes hide behind and showing the reality of who we are. Letting someone else really get to know you takes time. Others will need you to model what this looks like. Just as Jesus modeled what it looked like, when he would take the 12 apart to pray with them, teach them, and talk to them.
5. **Accountability between one another.** Once we are vulnerable, we can start to have real accountability. Accountability isn't a wagging of the finger when someone messes up, but a holding up of one another to the goals that we each set for ourselves and ask the other to help hold us to. Peter sinned greatly in denying Jesus. But, that didn't mean he wasn't fit for ministry to others. Rather, it meant he could learn and grow from it. Even Paul chastised him later on, and held him accountable.
6. **Responsibility to the Gospel.** To be a disciple means to have a mission. Every Christian disciple should have the Gospel at the core of their mission. This means every disciple needs to take on their own shoulders a part of the responsibility we have in sharing Good News. We are made to "make disciples" and this means we need to work together.

While these aren't the only elements of discipleship, all of them are oriented toward the following goals.

3 Goals of a Discipleship Relationship:

1. **Spiritual Conversion/Growth** – this is what every Christian needs to aim for. But, we can't do this in a vacuum. We need others to help us, support us, challenge us, and be with us on the journey. Continued conversion is key. That is, we can't be disciples of Jesus and do it our own way.
2. **Relationship / friendship with Jesus and others** – While being in a relationship with another person is great, if it isn't centered around growing closer to Jesus, then that friendship isn't a Christian one. This intentionality in the relationship needs to be at the forefront of what we do and how we work with others. You can't accidentally be in a discipleship relationship.
3. **Mission-oriented relationship** – Which means it is not about just being ok. but about having a purpose of helping fulfill the mandate of Jesus to evangelize the nations. We need a big picture. Jesus came to save the world, taught his followers what to do, then left it in their hands to complete his work. It is our turn!

AUTHOR

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As a Catholic evangelist, international speaker, and award-winning author, Marcel loves to share his greatest passion - helping others come to know the love of Jesus and how to share that love with others.

Marcel served as the Associate Director of Campus Ministry at St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M University for 11 years, the largest campus ministry in the country. Previous to that position, he was the Director of Campus Ministry at St. Elizabeth's University Parish at Texas Tech University. He holds a Master of Theological Studies, specializing in Pastoral Theology.



He is the author of three books and has contributed to several others. Marcel's articles have been published in many national Catholic magazines, newspapers, and websites. He is a regular guest on EWTN radio and Relevant Radio. He has also been featured on EWTN Television. His book, "Cleansed: A Catholic Guide to Freedom From Porn" was a 1st place winner in the Catholic Press Association's book awards.

The most important part of his life, and his vocation, is being a husband and father. Marcel and his wife, Kristy, have five children.