

Essentials For Making Disciples

Luke 1:1-4

“ESSENTIALS FOR MAKING DISCIPLES”

or

“THE DOCTOR’S CURE FOR THE GREAT OMISSION”

(Luke 1:1-4)

*“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” (King James Version) **

“Since (as is well known) many have undertaken to put in order and draw up a (thorough) narrative of the surely established deeds which have been accomplished and fulfilled in and among us, Exactly as they were handed down to us by those who from the (official) beginning (of Jesus’ ministry) were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word (that is, of the doctrine concerning the attainment through Christ of salvation in the kingdom of God), It seeming good and desirable to me, (I have determined) also after having searched out diligently and followed all things closely and traced accurately the course from the highest to the minutest detail from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, (My purpose is) that you may know the full truth, and understand with certainty and security against error the accounts (histories) and doctrines of the faith of which you have been informed and in which you have been orally instructed.” (Amplified Bible)

*“Since many writers have undertaken to compose narratives about the facts established among us, just as the original eye-witnesses who became ministers of the message have handed them down to us, I too, most excellent Theophilus, because I have carefully investigated them all from the start, have felt impressed to write them out in order for you, that you may better know the certainty of those things that you have been taught.” (Williams translation) **

*“The author to Theophilus: Many writers have undertaken to draw up an account of the events that have happened among us, following the traditions handed down to us by the original eyewitnesses and servants of the Gospel. And so I in my turn, your Excellency, as one who has gone over the whole course of these events in detail, have decided to write a connected narrative for you, so as to give you authentic knowledge about the matters of which you have been informed.” (New English Bible) **

* Since this text is so technical and full, it would be wise to read and re-read these printed texts several times, seeking to catch every word and every inflection of the phrases. The text is

limitless and fathomless, and needs and deserves maximum attention.

Psalm 119:18 records this prayer: “Open Thou mine eyes, that I might behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” Let me urge you to pray this prayer continually for yourself as you read and study this message. Psalm 119:130 says, “The entrance of Thy Word gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” May this be so as we study together.

Let’s begin our study by looking meditatively at the progression of this line:

WORD > FLESH > WORD > FLESH > WORD > (put your name here) > WORD > FLESH

This progression represents the manner of Gospel advance among men throughout the history of the Christian movement (Romans 10:14). It began with the “Word,” the “Logos,” becoming flesh and dwelling among men (John 1:14). Every advance thereafter is a modified form of the same formula, the Word becoming flesh. In process of time, by a miracle of God’s grace and power, His salvation was “in-fleshed” in *you*. At that point, your name went into the progression as suggested in the line above — and both your *destiny* and your *vocation* changed forever. Now a practical question arises. Since your name has been entered into the progression, will the progression from the past to the future continue through you? Or will the link break with you at the time of your death? Will it look like this: **FLESH > WORD > FLESH**? Will the intended progression end with you?

Face the question again: Will the progression continue through history because of the role you played in your slot while you were alive? If the progression is to continue with you, there is a vocation which you must learn, and it is already prescribed for you in the Word of God. If you only win another person to Christ, the link will probably break with the person you win. If you win someone and train him without a full awareness and implementation of “the standard” (of world-visionary, world-impacting multiplicative disciple-making), the progression will probably break with the person you win and train. Indeed, you will only make him a “better Christian.” It is only when you win and train someone according to the revealed Biblical standard that God will guarantee that the chain will not break, and you yourself will guarantee its continuation by laying the foundation for many generations.

The Gospel of Luke, written by the only Gentile writer of Scripture, is a monumental text which breathes through and through with world-impacting disciple-making. World-visionary, world-impacting disciple-making *is* the standard of Gospel advance in the New Testament. Keep in mind that Luke was not an apostle, not a preacher, not an evangelist, not even an ordained deacon. Luke was a Gentile, a scientist, a medical doctor and an amateur historian made infallible by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Pause over the word “amateur” in the preceding sentence. The word certainly fits Luke as an historian. The word describes a person who engages in an activity for the sheer *love* of it. Dr. Luke stands forever as one of the greatest examples of the **WORD TO FLESH TO WORD** standard of the New Testament. The first four verses of the Gospel according to Luke form an introduction to the document, and seem (by the grammatical wording of the text) to have been written after the body of the document was

completed. In these verses, we may see one of greatest examples of disciple-making in the Bible.

In his remarkable introduction, Dr. Luke demonstrates four essential characteristics of a world-visionary, world-impacting, multiplying disciple-maker. Any disciple who is to experience the reality of God's big vision for himself, his generation and future generations must incarnate these four characteristics in his own life and must, in turn, build them into any disciple God gives to him.

Dr. Luke accepted *personal responsibility* for building Theophilus, engaged in *painstaking research* on behalf of Theophilus, developed *precise resources* to equip Theophilus, and did everything humanly possible to generate *persistent reproduction* of other world-visionary, world-impacting, multiplying disciples through Theophilus. Read this last sentence with great care, giving it much thought. "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (II Timothy 2:7).

I. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

If you are to follow the New Testament standard, **YOU MUST TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUILDING PEOPLE INTO NEW TESTAMENT DISCIPLES.**

Luke began by acknowledging the commendable efforts of others to compose an account of Jesus' life and ministry. Though others had put forth extreme effort and hard work to draw up a narrative of Jesus, Luke said, "It seemed good to *me* also...." The Holy Spirit was working through Luke to do much more than Luke could imagine. *Luke saw one man* — Theophilus. *God saw many generations, including us!* Luke wrote one document to one man. *God prepared an incredible Gospel for all future generations!* We may only see a disciple, but God sees the masses the disciple will impact.

The history of the Christian church proves that this Divine concept is tragically easy for human minds to miss. If you do not make disciples, you disagree with the standard of Jesus and disobey the command of Jesus. If you do not build your disciples to the point of world-visionary, world-impacting, consummate, reproducing disciple-making, you have not agreed with nor conformed to the standard of Jesus — regardless of whatever else may be true of your life! The Gospel itself is predicated upon agreement with God (Romans 10:9; Matthew 10:32, where "confession" means agreement with) concerning our complete *lack of conformity* to His standard. Then, we are brought by the Holy Spirit to agree with God's assessment of His Son, Jesus. Our entire life thereafter is to be an agreement with God and His will. When we examine His command and His standard for making disciples, we see that it isn't enough for an individual Christian to just start ministering to people, being nice to people, seeking to meet people's needs, or just be a good, faithful churchgoer. We must choose against ourselves ("deny ourselves", Matthew 16:24) and fully agree with God. And since we are told to fulfill the Commission of Jesus "as we are going," we must not take one more step without implementing both His Mandate and His Method for fulfilling it.

Consider the words of our Master in John 15:16: “You (major emphasis) did not choose Me, but I (major emphasis) chose you, and appointed you, that you (major emphasis) should go and bear (continuous action) fruit (major emphasis) and that your fruit should remain (present infinitive), that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.” What is the practical use of fruit? A tree which bears fruit never eats its own fruit; it is for *someone else*. One part of the fruit is for food, but the other part is for reproduction. The seed in the fruit perpetuates the process of the production of food and the reproduction of fruit. How many seeds are there in a mango? Only one! How many mangos are in one mango seed? Only God knows!

You have been brought into the Kingdom of God *to take personal responsibility for the next available man*. Yet, there is nothing automatic about it! Today you will cross paths with countless people in the crowds of life who might be available to the disciple-making process (given the right enlistment, information and training) — and you might not even notice a single one of them. Unless you “see and hear” *from God’s point of view* you will never fulfill your personal responsibility for the next available man.

May I remind you that the question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” was addressed to God from the self-defensive and hate-filled heart of the world’s first murderer! If I do not join Jesus in assuming personal responsibility for building the next available man for world impact, I necessarily side with the sentiment of a murderer. The Divine answer to Cain’s question is, “Yes, you are your brother’s keeper. More importantly, you are your brother’s *brother!*” So how are you doing with your Abel? May you say with Luke, “It seemed good to *me*, also. I assume personal responsibility for the man God has given me.”

II. PAINSTAKING RESEARCH

If you are to follow the New Testament standard, **YOU MUST ENGAGE IN PAINSTAKING RESEARCH OF THE WORD FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR DISCIPLE**. Jesus said, “For their sakes, I sanctify Myself,” and your life must echo His. It is not enough to simply study the Bible. There are people everywhere involved in Bible studies who will never build one reproducing disciple-maker who will impact the world. Why? The reason is simple: neither the perception of the teacher of the Bible nor the student of the Bible accommodates a vision for world impact. Those involved in the Bible study do not see it as a means for world impact nor do they form curriculum from the Bible study to intentionally build world-impactors. Instead, they study the Bible to merely “learn more” and to be “better Christians.” It is even questionable as to whether those are worthy motives for a Christian. They smack too much of the “consumer friendly” Christianity, or the “Tupperware mentality,” of the western church. Most tragic of all, this produces *terminal intake* of the Gospel, instead of *germinal planting* which will reproduce vast spiritual harvests to the ends of the earth until the end of time. Anyone can read the Bible for himself. However, world impact only emerges from the lives of those who intentionally engage in diligent research for the purpose of truly knowing and following Christ and making Him known to others.

Look at verse three and notice the word “investigated” (NIV/NAS). This word carries the same intensity as “rightly dividing” in II Timothy 2:15 and is the same word as “fully known” in II Timothy 3:10, where Paul said to Timothy, “You have fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience ... ” The Greek word in Luke 1:3 and in II Timothy 3:10 is *parakolutho*, which means “to accompany side by side, to follow closely, to attend to carefully.” Metaphorically, *parakolutho* means *to follow closely a mental trail clearly set forth by one who has frequently traveled the terrain, investigating every detail and leaving no stone unturned*. Let the reader meditate at length on this last sentence. Again, “consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things” (II Timothy 2:7). The mental trail or course in the text is comprised of the actual events involving Jesus Christ from eternity to eternity. When Jesus left Heaven and entered time and space, He blazed a trail in the hard and fast terrain of history. Each Christian is to mentally and spiritually follow that trail, investigating every detail so that he can reproduce the details in his own life and build from these details both a course and a curriculum for his own disciples. This will require painstaking research.

The word *parakolutho* carries another shade of meaning. It means “to trace.” The idea is conveyed in the tracing of an outline or a picture by a child. The child overlays the picture he wants to reproduce with a thin sheet of paper and methodically and meticulously traces every line, every stroke, every shade. The finished product is then a carbon copy bearing the image of the original — down to the minutest detail. So Luke sets out to trace the character and reproduce the heart and passion of Jesus of Nazareth. When Luke removed the writing instrument from the last page of his Gospel, the beauty of Jesus, His humanity and His compassion for mankind stood revealed in radiant splendor. Luke’s finished product is unlike that of any other Gospel writer. It was the Holy Spirit Who guided each movement of Luke’s pen to trace out the image of God in the humanity of Jesus. We, too, are to follow Luke’s guidance in tracing out the character of Jesus, the course He followed, and the curriculum He used in impacting men — and we are to go and do likewise!

Earlier, we mentioned II Timothy 2:15. The Greek word used there and translated, “rightly dividing” in the King James Version, is closely related to *parakolutho*. It is the word *orthotomeo*. Ponder this word for a moment. Think of the other words you know that begin with the prefix, *ortho*. Orthodontics means, “straight teeth,” or “right teeth.” Orthopedics means “straight bones,” or “right bones.” The term *orthotomeo* is a compound Greek word, *orthos* meaning “right,” and “temno” meaning “to cut, to divide, to handle skillfully.” Luke was surely a very competent and skilled medical doctor, one who had been made acutely aware of the crucial importance of technical details through his vocation. Luke understood that if one sign or symptom went undetected, it could mean death to his patient. He was a responsible steward of skills and information and applications in dealing with life-and-death matters. And he knew that his present subject was a life-and-death, heaven-and-hell matter!

The best historical research indicates that Luke was scientifically trained at the medical school at Tarsus (in fact, some scholars have suggested that Paul, Luke, and Theophilus may all have been *fellow-students* at the university there), and thus he had received the best available

training in the medical field at that time. At any rate, it is quite possible that Luke, a stellar medical student, knew Saul, an accomplished scribe and theologian, before they met in the Book of Acts (Acts 16). It would seem that Paul, due to a serious medical problem (the Book of Galatians suggests a very serious eye problem), went to obtain the services of Dr. Luke. It seems probable that Paul (perhaps in the course of the visit) shared Christ and the Gospel with Dr. Luke. While Luke was treating Paul's eyes to correct their deficient vision, God the Holy Spirit broke into the darkness of Luke's *spiritual blindness* with "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God" (II Corinthians 4:4). The same "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" shone into the doctor's heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6)! A short while later, when Paul announced his intentions to depart from Troas with his missionary team to another assigned destination, Luke asked to accompany him. Paul might have said, "But Dr., you have your medical practice here; you can't just leave it!" And Dr. Luke might have answered, "No, but it is a good practice, and I can easily put it in someone else's hands." So Luke disposed of his medical practice and joined the Apostle Paul on his remaining missionary journeys!

Luke was the only Gospel writer who was professionally trained in the art of medical science. Now Luke turns all of his scientific training and expertise to advantage in gathering the facts of the story of Christ from those who were eyewitnesses of Jesus. Through his travels with Paul, and surely through some independent traveling of his own, he met these eyewitnesses in Asia Minor, in various parts of Palestine, and especially at Jerusalem. Little by little, Luke's notebooks began to bulge from the many personal interviews he conducted. Incidentally, it is almost a rule of thumb: One true mark of a visionary disciple-maker is an ever-enlarging, bulging notebook! Luke's notebook was filled with what Jesus said and what He did. Whenever Luke met anyone who had spent time with Jesus, had met Jesus or observed His miracles, He would ask key investigative questions: "Did you personally know Jesus?" "What was Jesus doing when you saw Him?" "What did Jesus say?" "Tell me everything that you know about Him." Some of the people he questioned closely were Peter, James, John and others of the original twelve Apostles. He most certainly conferred with John Mark, who may have been completing his Gospel (the Gospel of Mark) at the time. There is much strong evidence that Luke had substantial conversation with Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Doctor wrote most extensively of all Biblical writers on the virgin birth of Christ, and medical doctors aren't easily convinced of virgin births! A writer named William Hobart wrote an extensive book concerning the medical language of Dr. Luke, in which he points out over four hundred distinctive technical medical terms that Luke used in composing his Gospel and the Book of Acts. The Doctor became perfectly convinced of the virgin birth of Christ on the basis of powerful and unanswerable evidence. He received great insight into Jesus' birth through interviews with Mary herself.

Now, with scientific precision, the skilled physician set forth an orderly account of the Master's life. He gives an extensive and detailed report of His birth, His life and teachings, His death, His resurrection, some events of the forty days after His resurrection, and His ascension. Luke clearly made great effort to research the Person, teaching, deeds and accomplishments of Jesus. In Luke 1:3, the word "perfect" is the Greek word *akribos*, which means "diligent,"

“careful,” or “circumspect.” Luke researched Jesus from the top (*akron*, the topmost point; compare the word “Acropolis,” which means, “high city”) to the bottom (*abussas* or “abyss”). “Theophilus,” Luke says, “I have spared no effort in researching Jesus from the highest detail to the deepest truth.” Luke was confident that he had given his best effort to research every detail of Jesus’ life — from top to bottom.

The four Gospels of the New Testament were not written in a sterile vacuum, but in the rough and tumble of life. Though each Gospel is inspired of the Holy Spirit, it nonetheless has upon it the distinctive earmarks and eccentricities of its human writer. John still sounds like John, Mark sounds like Mark, Matthew sounds like Matthew — even if each is writing a document that is perfect, and even if each document concerns a perfect Subject. In Luke 1:1, the Doctor said that his account contained things concerning Jesus that were totally and completely accomplished right before the eyes of those he interviewed. Another Gospel writer, the Apostle John, said in his first general letter that these eyewitnesses had *seen*, *heard*, and *touched* Jesus. Thus, they presented the evidence of *visible*, *audible* and *tangible* testimony. The Greek word for “eyewitnesses” in Luke 1:1 is *autoptes*, a compound word which means “self-see.” It’s the same root word from which we get the word “autopsy,” which means that the examiner sees for himself the real cause of a person’s death. The accounts that Luke heard from these eyewitnesses were so powerfully persuasive to him that he was confident they would persuade, convince, and satisfy anyone who would investigate them fully. In the Book of Acts, he refers to them as “many infallible proofs,” or “unanswerable evidences” (Acts 1:3). He writes his Gospel to present the compelling evidence of these accounts.

Furthermore, Luke tells us that he had solicited information and testimony from the original *ministers* of Christ, many who had given their lives or would give their lives soon thereafter, sealing their testimony concerning Jesus with their life’s blood. The word “ministers” in verse two is the Greek word *huperetes*, which means “an under-rower.” This word was used for a galley slave on board a ship, one who occupied the lowest place *to deliver someone else to his desired destination*. A galley slave was carried to the bottom of the ship and chained there with only one vocation. His only assignment was to behold the cadence captain and row in unison by the captain’s command with the other slaves. These “ministers” were so convinced concerning the Person and majesty of Jesus Christ that they became galley slaves on the “good ship of Grace,” living to behold and obey the Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ. Their only purpose was *to deliver someone else to his final destination*. Luke powerfully demonstrates this vocation and lifestyle when he researched the story of Jesus and wrote this *incredible (incredible!)* document to deliver one man, Theophilus, to a desirable destiny in this life and a desirable destination in the life to come. Both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts bleed through and through with the disciple-maker’s paradigm — **somebody else, somebody else, somebody else ...** Every Christian should see himself as a locked-in galley slave, doing whatever is necessary to master this Gospel, follow its directions, develop a curriculum, and build disciples, all in order to get *somebody else* to his final destination.

III. PRECISE RESOURCES

If you are to follow the New Testament standard, **YOU MUST DEVELOP PRECISE RESOURCES TO BUILD OTHER DISCIPLES.** Luke had promised to give Theophilus an orderly, detailed written account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Here in verse one Luke uses a military term, *anatassomai*, which means a placing of soldiers, or things, or facts, into their proper order. Luke sought to place the truths concerning Jesus in proper order like an army of soldiers arrayed and arranged for total world conquest. Luke reminded Theophilus that he had researched Jesus from top to bottom and placed his findings in “consecutive order.” No thinking disciple can escape Luke’s clear purpose to precisely systematize curriculum for maximum efficiency in the life of another.

Luke, like Paul his discipler, set out to build men who could rightly divide the Scriptures — *orthoscripturists*, if you please (II Tim. 2:15). Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 3:10 that “you have fully known my doctrine.” Paul had systematically arranged the great truths of the Gospel so Timothy could fully grasp them and be anchored firmly to them, and correctly reproduce them in somebody else. Luke was disciplined by Paul and now Luke provides a perfect example of the rule of Jesus, who said, “When the process is completed, the disciple will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). Also, Luke profiles in these verses the perfect example of a disciple building a curriculum to make other disciples. He had “compiled an accurate account” and “in consecutive order” of the facts about Jesus for the sake of indoctrinating, enlisting, building, and deploying *one man* to world impact. F. F. Bruce states that “this expression points to a connected series of narratives in order, topical or chronological, rather than mere isolated narratives.” Prior to this letter, Luke (or *some other Christian*) had “instructed” (verse 4) Theophilus by verbal witness concerning Jesus. The word *katecheo* is the Greek word from which we derive the word “catechize,” or the word “catechism,” which means to *instruct systematically*, especially by questions, answers, explanations and corrections. Luke demonstrates the absolute necessity for both a systematic verbal presentation of the Gospel to win the disciple to Christ and a systematic written curriculum for building the disciple in the faith and the Christian vocation.

Luke did all this in order that Theophilus would come to a full, complete understanding of Jesus Christ resulting in an unshakeable certainty concerning Him. Alfred Plummer commented on the word “certainty” in verse four, “Theophilus will know that the Gospel has an impregnable historical foundation.” We, too, should begin formulating a curriculum and forming an illustration file (compare the parables of Jesus which Luke records in his Gospel), using every Scripturally sound item we can find to build our disciples upon the unshakeable foundation of the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many good, well-meaning, knowledgeable Christians who will not intentionally build one world-visionary, world-impacting, reproducing disciple. Why? They will never take seriously their responsibility to build (or find) a systematic, precise curriculum for the purpose of getting *someone else* to his final destination. Lest a “layman” should seek to dodge this truth, F. F. Bruce reminds us that Luke was “a Gentile layman, not a preacher.” Luke was an excellent medical practitioner with a very demanding schedule! Yet he found time (no, he *made* time) to “set forth in order” a “consecutive” account of our Lord’s life, ministry, teachings, accomplishments, and assignment — **for one man.**

IV. PERSISTENT REPRODUCTION

If you are to follow the New Testament standard, **YOU MUST DO ALL THAT IS HUMANLY POSSIBLE TO PROCURE PERSISTENT REPRODUCTION OF DISCIPLES.** Every visionary disciple-maker must do all that is humanly possible, with full dependence upon God, to facilitate and perpetuate the reproduction of disciples. These disciples must clearly see the world as their field of operation, and must intentionally live to impact that world. Any visionary disciple knows that he cannot make anyone else see the standard or pursue the object without God's miracle power, but he also knows that unless he himself runs to the limit of his light in pursuing the standard, God will not cause anyone else to run with him. Augustine's rule holds, "Without God, we cannot; without us, God will not."

Luke has given us an unforgettable example of a consummate disciple-maker. He perfectly understood the importance of what he was doing. Luke made diligent inquiry into the life of Jesus of Nazareth, sought for perfect accuracy in his accounts, and knew the importance of a systematic order. Luke devoted himself to the task, assembled all available facts (written and oral) and wrote this document to *one lost man* — Theophilus.

What did Theophilus do with the document? He became so convinced of its truth that he received it fully, trusted the Person and message which it presented, and *sought to preserve it and pass it on to others.* Though this document was written to only one man, *you hold a copy of it in your hand today!* What an incredible example of the disciple-making, world-impacting standard of Jesus — a standard which He commands each of His followers to pursue. We call His command "the Great Commission."

Luke won Theophilus to Jesus Christ by writing to him what we now call "the Gospel According to Luke." When Theophilus responded in personal faith in Christ, Luke immediately set out to disciple Theophilus *by writing another document, twenty-eight chapters in length,* which we call the Book of Acts, to introduce Theophilus to the world-impacting mandate and method of Jesus. What an *amazing and awesome example* of God's **word to flesh** standard! Remember that this standard was practiced by a layman who practiced medicine to pay the bills but whose whole vocation was "turning people into disciples."

A pastor friend named Jim Davidson shared this illustration with me, which I shall quote in entirety: "My great, great grandfather Isaac Kilgore enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1862 at the age of eighteen. His first major battle was at Shiloh. To give you an idea of the fierceness of that battle, thereafter, whenever a soldier was describing how terrible a battle had been, he likely would say of it, 'I was more scared than I was at Shiloh.'

"Ike went on to fight at Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, Franklin, and Nashville, to name a few. Awful fights. And for some of the time, he was the regimental color bearer. The color bearer was the man most likely to get shot, yet Ike survived even that. Over six hundred twenty thousand men died in the Civil War. *Consider how that has*

effected the population today.

“After Ike mustered out at the end of the war, he walked from North Carolina to Walker County, Alabama, where he married twice and had seventeen children. ***Consider how that has effected the population of today!*** And because he lived through the war, he reproduced multiplying generations of descendants. One of them is me, and I have two children, who likely will also have children. But what if Ike had died in the war?

“The key for you is this: If you receive the proper training as a good soldier must, and if you do not succumb in the war — and it is a war — you will reproduce persistently, generation upon generation, for Jesus Christ. But you must consider this as well: You will reproduce those generations for Jesus Christ *only if you do die to self*. Jesus said, ‘Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds and many harvests.’ Will you assume personal responsibility for this, engage in painstaking research to accomplish it, develop and use precise resources to build New Testament disciples, and devote yourself to God to generate persistent reproduction through coming generations? Both God and the world of men are waiting for you!*

*I express my deepest thanks to my dear Timothy/brother in Christ, Clint Davis, for his great work in getting this study into writing and ready for publication. Clint, may God graciously give you world impact for many generations!

