

Life in the Narrow Gate

Dr. Jay Zinn • River's Edge Church • 1/16/11

Matt 7:13-14 - Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and **narrow the road that leads to life**, and only a few find it. **NIV**

Elisha's Call — 1 Kings 19:19-21

- Elisha, a farmer found behind 12 yoke of oxen (a wealthy house).
- Elijah threw his cloak on Elisha (I'm your new mentor, receive my covering)
- Elisha slaughtered the oxen and burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat to celebrate.
- He then set out to follow Elijah and served him as an attendant.

Matt 4:18-22 —As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "**Come, follow me**," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. **NIV**

Matt 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**." **NIV**

Rob Bell: Covered in the Dust of Your Rabbi

- The Rabbi's rules were called his yoke.
- When you studied under a Rabbi, you took his yoke upon you. You took on his rules and lists to live.
- Jesus came and said His yoke was easy. That he wasn't about endless lists of rules and regulations.
- He spoke as a Rabbi would.
- This was the highest honor among young Jewish men. To be chosen to follow a Rabbi and walk in his dust.

Elisha's Request — 2 Kings 2:1-15

- Elisha served and followed Elijah (more caught from serving and practice than teaching alone).
- Wax on/Wax off
- (Jacket) Throw it down/Pick it up/Put it on/Take it off/Hang it up (Repeat steps)
- The mentor's job is to reproduce his life practices into the life of another.
Example: "IP Man" ...schools of martial arts masters. True story/Bruce Lee's kung fu mentor.
- To attend to a Rabbi/Master is to learn their fundamentals until it becomes second nature
- To attend to a Rabbi/Master requires focus and attention to his disciplines and way of life.
- To attend to a Rabbi/Master is to be obedient, even when you don't understand the lessons.
- The master/rabbi/mentor/coach has a yoke he himself has learned to bear and carry.
- Elijah had such a yoke for Elisha to carry—his cloak and mantle.
- Elijah: "Stay here." No, I'm not leaving you, said Elisha.
- The prophets knew it, Elisha knew it, too—that God would take Elijah from him today.
- Elijah said again: "Stay here." Elisha: "No way."
- Elijah: what do you want?
- Elisha: a double portion of your spirit.
- Elijah: It's yours if you see me when I am taken.

- Elisha: My father! (I can now see what you see!) The chariots and horsemen of Israel!
- He took the cloak and struck the waters which divided as it had for Elijah.
- The company of prophets watching: “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.”
- You will take on the mantle and spirit of your mentor/master/Rabbi – Jesus, if you don’t take your eyes off him.
- Jesus to the disciples wanting to call down fire: “You know not what spirit you are of.” (Luke 9:54-56)

Moses mentored Joshua

Solomon mentored his children (Proverbs)

Elijah mentored Elisha

Paul mentored Timothy:

2 Tim 2:1-7

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 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. 3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer. 5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. 6 The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. 7 Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you *insight* into all this. NIV

2 Tim 3:14-17

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. NIV

- These are the words of a father to a son, to reproduce in others what was taught to him.
- To make disciples of others, to teach the disciplined life of a soldier and an athlete.
- To reap the fruit of a farmer who has tilled the soil and planted the seed.
- The insight is about the life of a disciple which is like a **pupil**, a **soldier**, an **athlete**, and a **farmer**.

My story:

- I would not have made it as a Christian if I did not have a family of older brothers and sisters in Christ.
- God gave me spiritual parents right away.
- He gave me a company of devoted brothers and sisters right away.
- He got me in the Word, in witnessing, and in prayer right away to get to know Him and his ways.
- In all areas of my gifting (teaching, art, guitar and writing) God provided mentors along the way to help me:

Jim Quigley – my first pastor

Tim Quigley – my pastor’s son who taught me how to play guitar alongside him at home meetings

Dick Benjamin — my apostle, who mentored me by phone, almost weekly for my first two years of pastoring

Dick Strutz and Kevin Conner — my theological teachers who spent countless hours answering my questions

Jerry Tarr — my Elder who trained me in preaching at his house

Mrs. Acton — my grandmotherly art teacher who invited me to her house on Saturdays for advanced art work

Byron Birdsall — Alaskan Watercolorist who took me into his house every year to watch him paint

Cec Murphey — national bestselling author who took me under his wing in writing in a writer’s group.

- Not to mention my other mentors found in the writings of:

66 books of the Bible

Moses (the Law)

David (Psalms)

Solomon (Proverbs, Eccles. & Songs)

Matthew, Mark, Luke & John (Life of Christ)
Acts (of the Holy Spirit through the apostles)
Paul (the epistles on doctrine and life)
Oswald Chambers (Utmost for MY Highest)
L.B. Cowman (Streams in the Desert)
Biographies of famous Christians (God's Generals)

Though I failed miserably in my earliest Christian days to disciple others (I lacked the patience and wisdom), I have tried to find ways to mentor and disciple as many people as possible along the way, but now to a more intentional degree through the technology we now have that I didn't have in my earlier years of discipling others.

- Bible Schools
- Writings
- Approached by so many people who wanted me to disciple them, but I didn't have the time for all.
- I've been called to disciple many, but incapable of doing it for many.
- I believe I am to disciple, it is my duty as a leader to disciple others to Jesus.
- But I can only do it through creating a system and tools as a resource and opportunity for others.
- So I invite you to join me on a journey into becoming a disciple "from a distance."
- I'm going to provide everyone with the opportunity to receive weekly assignments.
- You can either keep up each week with the assignments, or go at your own pace.
- I want to show you how I have grown, and what I have learned along the way.
- I will help you learn the fundamentals and disciplines in a wax on/wax off kind of way.
- I will have you read books that will count, and hopefully become your own life books, as well.
- I will give you reading assignments and study assignments and book assignments.
- For the best results, I would encourage you to find an accountability partner.
- An accountability partner will keep you on track and talk with about your discoveries.
- The goal is to provide you with the knowledge and tools to inspire you to know God better.
- You will build a foundational library of life books you'll use as a reference guide in the future.
- For those who are local, I will open up the doors every Saturday to learn and practice more.
- The hours will be from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm (for ages of students from high school on up).
- The first hour will be devoted to the ongoing study of eschatology (a real motivator for discipleship)
- The second hour will be centered on the practice of spiritual disciplines, spiritual gifts, and evangelism.

For those who want to be on the weekly list of disciples, email me at jay@jayzinn.com. I will send you the MP3 files of the Saturday classes and the weekly assignments. I will not monitor your efforts—that will be your job, at your pace, and the collaboration between you and your accountability partner. You must make the choice, as did Elisha, to not take your eyes off the **prize**.

Paul:

1 Cor 9:24-27 — Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the **prize**? Run in such a way as to get the **prize**. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. 27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the **prize**. NIV

Phil 3:12-14 —Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the **prize** for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. NIV