

The Whole Truth and Nothing But: Discipleship in a Post-Christian Age

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Introduction

Being given a topic as open-ended as Post-modernism and Discipleship paralyzed us with options. Both terms are essentially indefinable and therefore potentially as wide as the ocean, high as the heavens, and deep as the sea. A little like, but far short of, God's self-sacrificing love. One tangible place to begin our quest seemed to be at the beginning, with Christ's commission to His followers as He was leaving them to begin the next stage of their discipleship.

In the book of Matthew, Christ is recorded as saying to those assembled on the hillside, "Go . . . [into the pre-Christian world] and make disciples of all the nations" (28:18, NKJV). In Mark, He is recorded as stating it this way, "Go into all the [pre-Christian] world and preach the gospel to every creature" (16:15, NKJV). We deduced from these verses that making disciples begins with sharing the gospel in some way to those around you as you move about in your culture. But our next question was "What is the Gospel"?

When we asked this question of Google, we were pointed to several enlightening thoughts. John Piper (thegospelcoalition.org) states that the gospel is six-part: 1) it is a plan, 2) an event in history, 3) an achievement of something

between the Son and the Father, 4) a free offer to the world, 5) an application to a specific human, and 6) for the purpose of bringing us to God.

R. C. Sproul (www.ligonier.org) states that, objectively it is the message of who Jesus is and what He did, and subjectively it is the answer to the question, How do the benefits of Jesus get appropriated to us?

Those definitions started us on a good train of thought, but we were particularly intrigued by a secondary definition of the word “gospel” in its lowercase form that the Oxford Dictionary provided: “a thing that is absolutely true.” Herein lies our conundrum in a post-Christian era (Ogden 2003, Nelson 2006, 2008]. The prevailing thought is that there is no confidence in the existence of an absolute truth or a grand meta-narrative in the postmodern ethos (Grenz 1996). However, the idea of personal narrative or story is an important one today. Therefore, rather than first sharing propositional truth which we relate to a meta-narrative we call the Great Controversy, it seems preferable to share a personal story of how our belief in this meta-narrative has resulted in happiness, well-being, and the filling of a great heart-longing. We share our small story with postmoderns through fellowship and example, and lead them to the meta-narrative—God’s plan for the restoration of humanity to Himself through the ministry and example of Jesus Christ.

In a down-to-earth analogy, asking someone to read a book such as *The China Study*, which outlines research pointing strongly to the benefits of a plant-based diet, is probably not as effective in convincing them to try a change of their lifestyles as is asking them to watch the documentary *Fat, Sick and Nearly Dead*

and join the Reboot Your Life internet community. The documentary does not share all the irrefutable research, it shows the personal life change of someone who applied the empirically proven truth to their own lives with great personal results of health and happiness. The truth is “proven” to the viewers by the experience of someone who accepted it enough to try it out. Many viewers are then inspired to belong to the group that is happily changing their lives.

It is the proposition of this paper that, to be considered for personal application by a post-Christian postmodern: 1) truth must be presented holistically in the context of personal discipleship and then in the context of the Great Controversy between the Kingdoms of Christ and Satan. It is not as effective to present truth as single, seemingly unrelated propositional truths without a clearly defined and embodied context; 2) and, to be believed, truth must have had a tangible effect on the lives of the truth-tellers, individually and collectively. It must be evident that their personal discipleship is active and effective—that their understanding of truth is changing their personal and corporate lives (John 13:35).

The Whole Truth

It is often said that in the postmodern ethos, there is considered to be no absolute truth. It may be more accurate to say that there is a despair that there is no all-encompassing truth because all there seems to be is “a host of conflicting interpretations” (Grenz 1996:163). The world seems to be a collection of incompatible and competing local narratives. Since no final criterion is accepted for evaluating the various interpretations, if a specific interpretation is considered

at all, it tends to be judged on the basis of whether or not it “works” for the person sharing it and/or the person with whom it is being shared.

As Christian disciples of Jesus Christ, we believe that there is a grand narrative that explains all the local ones—encompassing everyone in all times. It is the “story of God’s action in history for the salvation of fallen humankind and the completion of God’s intentions for creation,” according to Grenz (1996:164). As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we might describe it as the great controversy between God’s principles of self-sacrificing love and Satan’s principles of self-centered pride.¹

There are many elements of postmodernism with which Christians can resonate, such as 1) a “distrustful stance toward human reason,” 2) the inability of a human observer to “stand outside the historic process,” 3) and, the understanding that an explosion of knowledge “is not going to produce a utopia” (Grenz 1996:166). However, we cannot let the story of God’s action in Jesus Christ for the saving of all humanity become just another conflicting interpretation of reality rather than “an expansive missionary message” that would provide “the fulfillment of the longings and aspirations of all peoples” (Grenz 1996:165).

Our calling as Seventh-day Adventist Christian disciples of Christ includes assessing the ethos that shapes our post-Christian culture. What emphases in our articulation of the gospel message would most resonate with the “longings and aspirations” of those in the culture around us? We resonate with Grenz’s

assertion that Christians should “embody the gospel in a manner that is *post-individualistic, post rationalistic, post-dualistic, and post-noeticentric* (1996:167).

Nothing But

A Post-Dualistic Gospel

Taking what Grenz calls “contours of the gospel” out of his order, we would like to first affirm the fact that Seventh-day Adventists have been preaching a biblical holism from the very beginning. Our health message, and our emphasis on educating the heart, head, and hand are aspects of the gospel that should resonate in the postmodern culture. This biblical holism also includes the social and environmental context of a Christian disciple’s life, as well as an understanding of our relationship to nature, others, God, and a correct relationship even with ourselves. Adventists do attempt to take Christ as their example in relating to people as whole persons.

A Post-Individualistic Gospel

The period of history after the Dark Ages, which is frequently labeled “modernity,” or the Enlightenment, was characterized by individuality—the elevation of the individual. There is, of course, much in Scripture that emphasizes the importance of the individual to God, and the individual’s accountability to God. However, there is also much gospel truth to the concept of individual-in-community. Most Bible stories are told in an individual-in-community context. And, over half of each epistle of Paul is dedicated to instruction about how disciples are to live in community. “One-anothering” is an essential element of

exemplifying that we are living in God's kingdom of self-sacrificing love, rather than the kingdom of this world, which is hallmarked by self-centered pride. Examples of what the behavior of those sharing a post-individualistic gospel would look like are quite a bit more explicit in the New Testament than simply the ten or more direct commands to "love each other" (John 13:34-35, John 15:12, John 15:17, Romans 13:8, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, Hebrews 13:1, 1 John 3:11, 1 John 3:23, 1 John 4:7, 1 John 4:11-12, 2 John 1:5). Much more explicit commands about how to love one another are found throughout the New Testament as well.ⁱⁱ

The postmodern culture compels us to evangelize in the context of a community of faith, not just in the context of individuals being asked to make a cognitive decision for or against propositional truth understood primarily rationally. Verbal presentations of the gospel are not what impress the post-Christian culture, "what they want to see is people who live out the gospel in wholesome, authentic, and healing relationships" (Grenz1996:169). Adventists, along with other Christians, still have problems in many local church communities with the phenomenon that our General Conference Secretary, G. T. Ng, has called "infanticide" (Brauner 2009). "Before baptism, we shower [new church member] candidates with love and attention," Ng states. "After baptism, most new babes in Christ are left to sink or swim."

Too often the corporate witness of local fellowships of believers does more to negate the whole truth about God's Kingdom of self-sacrificing love than do all evangelistic attempts to attract postmoderns to the Gospel. The postmodern world calls us to reconsider the importance of the community of faith in our evangelistic

efforts. The next generation is unimpressed with what we say about the gospel if we do not live the gospel—the good news of Christ’s self-sacrificing love and His offer to enable us to live the principles of His Kingdom.

A Post-Rationalistic Gospel

During the Age of Reason, Christians worked diligently to prove that the Christian faith was reasonable, that one did not have to be non-thinking in order to be a Christian. The gospel shared today, in the postmodern context will not deny these gains, but the postmodern assessment is that we as humans do not have only a cognitive dimension, are not solely a “rational animal.” The gospel we preach in the post-Christian culture, while still reasonable, will engage with all aspects of our humanity. We can’t remain stuck on the idea of disseminating propositional truths to the exclusion of demonstrating and teaching what it is like to live in the Kingdom of God’s self-sacrificing love in the midst of the kingdom of this world (or Satan’s kingdom based on self-centered pride).

We cannot cut truth up into 28 small pieces, no matter how rational and appealing to the intellect, without taking into consideration other aspects of our being as well. Our understanding of our faith must be much bigger than to believe that it consists simply of correct doctrine or fundamental belief. “It is in [the] context of making sense out of life by means of recounting the story of a transformative religious experience that doctrinal propositions find their importance” (Grenz 1996:170). Our walk with God is both facilitated by and expressed in the fundamentals that we believe. They cannot be separated.

A Post-Noeticentric Gospel

This contour of the Gospel for which Grenz calls is a bit difficult to define. It has to do with knowledge and wisdom—sometimes very mystical and spiritual. It comes from a Greek word “*nous*” which has no exact equivalent in English. It comes closest to “inner knowing.” What we believe Grenz is speaking about getting past is an accumulation of spiritual knowledge for its own sake. Right thinking and correct beliefs are essential for us in Christian living. However, we must not be accumulating a wealth of even spiritual knowledge for its own sake. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 (NKJV) “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, this one is known of Him.”

Commitment to Christ cannot remain an intellectual exercise, as much as we love to “rightly divide the word of truth,” and to dig for hidden treasure in God’s Word. If this knowledge does not make its way to our heart—to our living, and loving all those in the world around us—it is simply the beating of drums and the clanging of bells. Christ Himself tells us that just saying we know Him will prove nothing to Him when He returns. Only what we have done to the least desirables in our world will speak of our commitment to Him.

This is where the cliché that Christians are often so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good might be appropriately used. Unless the truth we teach is sanctifying us, unless passive reflection about God’s goodness turns into active love for others, we will not have anything to say that postmoderns will be able to hear. But the reverse is also true. Overt altruism without spiritual transformation will also fail of spreading the whole truth. “The Christian gospel is concerned not

only with the reformulation of our intellectual commitment but also with the transformation of our character and the renewal of our entire lives as believers” (Grenz 1996:173).

Just as the gospel of Jesus Christ was the answer that needed to go to the whole pre-Christian world, so the gospel is what will bring hope to the post-Christian world. It is the answer to the heart-longing of every generation and every culture. However, as disciples, we must both “be” the gospel and “tell” the gospel. We must share the whole truth, and nothing but the truth must be evident in our lives. That means we not only tell the meta-narrative of God’s Kingdom which is based on the principle of self-sacrificing love, we show what that Kingdom looks like lived out in a culture based on secular values of self-seeking pride.

Discipleship in a Post-Christian Age

Given these contours of the Gospel that Grenz asserts need to be emphasized as that gospel is articulated and embodied in today’s culture, it seems apparent that we Seventh-day Adventist Christians need to be more intentional about packaging our message, not simply as propositional truths or fundamental beliefs, but also in the context of lived out discipleship. First of all, we need a framework within which to understand lived-out-discipleship in our own lives so that we can “embody” the gospel, and we also need that type of framework to use as we “articulate” what discipleship looks like for those with whom we share the Gospel. Many church members confuse adding new members with making disciples—which is actually the process of nurturing and development that should

continue after a person joins the church. According to Ng, secretary of the world church. "Going, baptizing and teaching contribute to the accomplishing of the commission, but they are not the end in themselves" (Brauner 2009).

An attempt to formulate a discipleship model and framework has been taking place over the last seven years. Many of the General Conference ministry departments, along with the Discipleship and Religious Education department at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary have been involved. The Together Growing Fruitful Disciples modelⁱⁱⁱ is based on four processes in which all committed Christians should be involved. These processes, while described one by one, are not linear or sequential. Each disciple, no matter what his or her level of maturity, should be growing spirally in each of the processes simultaneously. And, although the fourth process involves individuals, it is acted out in community.

The First Process—Connecting

This process is relational, and focuses on the connection between the disciple and his or her relationship with God, self, and others—in other words, it has a post-individualistic contour. Jesus described this contour in the Gospels in statements such as, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35), and, ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37-39). This process involves not only the way we relate to God, but also the way we relate to ourselves, our families, our fellow believers, and our neighbors. It also involves how we function: joined

together, as the visible body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; and 2:16). This kind of connecting has a social and communal dimension (Acts 2:44), which allows the church to function fully as an organic whole.

Christian discipleship occurs in relationships. It begins with responding to Jesus' call to connect with and abide in Him. Through this transforming connection with Him, we come to know ourselves as Jesus created us to be, we appreciate our infinite value to Him, and we grow into a more balanced view of our strengths and weaknesses. We are then able to connect with those around us in more tangible, healing, and redeeming ways.

A dynamic and deepening relationship with Jesus through His Spirit is the bedrock of growth in discipleship. Commitments to that growth include developing an individual identity complete in Christ, developing Christ-centered and tangible relationships within our families and within the local and global body of Christ, and developing positive relationships with those outside the body of Christ with whom He wants to be reconciled. We thus become avenues for administering God's grace in its various forms, as we continue to strengthen our connections with God and all of the children He has created.

The Second Process—Understanding

This process is cognitive and rational, but it includes the experiential as well as the intellectual—it might be said to have a post-rationalistic contour. It was articulated by Jesus thus: “So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine’”

(John 8:31), and, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4).

Relationships grow through deepening by both parties of the understanding of the core identity of each person. It’s the same in a relationship with Jesus. Through Scripture we encounter God and come to understand more clearly the character and mission of Christ. Thus, disciples need to learn how to study the Bible, find Jesus in its pages, hear Him speak, and follow Him. Reading, contemplating, and obeying the Scriptures, along with praying, are methods by which we access the teaching and transforming presence of the Holy Spirit. In the broadest sense, we learn through the Word what God intends us to be and to do, both individually and corporately. We come to understand how our personal story fits into the great meta-narrative of God and His salvation.

For a growing disciple, encountering God through Scripture and learning of Jesus’ invitation to be His disciple are vital. He calls us to “come and reason” with Him (Isaiah 1:18), an encounter which must precede a full and heartfelt obedience to His Word. Through a deepening understanding of God’s Word, disciples experience a growing realization that: (1) God, as the source of life, created the world and its inhabitants; 2) Humans rejected Him 3) He suffered and died; 4) God implemented His plan of redemption; and 5) God provides everything needed to restore human beings to His original design for them. This biblical worldview is foundational to knowing God and to being transformed into His image.

The Third Process—Ministering

This process relates to service and evangelism. Jesus expressed it this way: “The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even the least of them*, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:40), and, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (28:19, 20).

In response to God’s love, disciples minister to others. As they connect with Jesus and learn of His self-sacrificing and unfailing love, they are eager to invite others to share in the joy that they experience as His followers. They are compelled to share the story of the Holy Spirit’s work in their lives and of their blessed hope of salvation from sin through faith in Jesus.

For a growing disciple, seeking daily opportunities to minister to others is essential. Other commitments to the process of ministering include recognizing and responding to the needs of God’s suffering children locally and globally; sharing the story of Jesus with community members, friends, and co-workers; supporting ministries of the local and global church with one’s personal resources; and embracing the evangelistic mission of the church—definitely a post-noeticentric contour to spreading the gospel.

The Fourth Process—Equipping

This process combines the personal and the communal aspect, and is the responsibility of both individual disciples and the corporate body to which they belong. The Apostle Paul described this process and how it was to be

accomplished in the life of the church: “Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:15, 16, NIV).

Christ described the church as His body to illustrate the interdependence of the members in achieving its mission. This metaphor helps disciples to understand their role in supporting, nurturing, and strengthening one another. It is within the church that we are discipled and then equipped to disciple others.

The Connecting, Understanding, and Ministering processes are all nurtured and supported by the Equipping process. Growing Christians have the unique opportunity, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, to be discipled by other Christians and in turn, to invest themselves in helping other members to grow spiritually. Equipping commitments represent the actions of those who are fulfilling the Great Commission to “make disciples” by “teaching them to obey all things” (Matthew 28:19).

For a growing discipler, helping other disciples learn how to connect with Christ through his Word in a transformational devotional life is an essential commitment. Other commitments include helping other disciples to build Christlike relationships, to study and obey God’s word, to live a contagious, holistic Christian life; to discern where God is working in all aspects of his or her life, and to use one’s spiritual gifts in fulfilling a personal call to mission and ministry.

Because the first command of the gospel commission is to *Go*, the “going” has often been emphasized apart from the discipleship making and teaching-equipping process, which are strongly commanded in these verses as well. This has been dubbed “the great omission,” as is evident in their absence from many models of Christian formation or spiritual development. This discipling-teaching aspect of Christian growth, like ministering, involves serving others. But its key role in the gospel commission, as well as the frequent biblical references to building up the community of fellow believers in all three other processes, led to designating Equipping as a separate item in this model.

According to the Together Growing Fruitful Disciples model, the individual processes will function fully in the lives of the individual members of the Christian body only to the extent that the corporate process is functioning, and vice versa—a symbiotic relationship. It is important at every level of spiritual maturity for a growing disciple to be concurrently discipling and being disciplined by others. The positive influence of encouraging, equipping, and challenging one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ should flow most strongly from the seasoned disciple to the post-Christian postmodern, however, it should also have a clear channel to flow in the opposite direction. The Holy Spirit is no discerner of “years of membership.”

Christian churches implement the fourth process, equipping, in a variety of ways. Aspects of it can be seen in the church’s various ministries (pastoral, children and youth, education). But the concept of equipping is often neglected in these activities. Ministries can become hierarchical instead of reciprocal, and

programmatic rather than relational. While many church ministries are planned in this way (Sabbath School classes, youth and Bible study groups), the very structure often obscures the need of those ministering or leading to also be disciplined and ministered to in some other venue. Everyone in the church is to be growing as a disciple no matter the levels on which they also minister.

The church's attempt to implement the process of equipping can also be seen in religious education, whether it be formal (denominational schools), non-formal (at church and camps, etc.), or through socialization (home and society). Education happens in all aspects of life. Wherever it occurs, it must not focus on the cognitive to the exclusion of the relational—favoring information over the sharing of personal faith and story.

Relational stories of personal faith, although often left untold, have a profound influence in the discipling of others, especially postmoderns. However, religious educators in the formal, non-formal, and social settings may not recognize that a form of equipping (or discipling) also happens through, or is sabotaged by, the “hidden curriculum” of the lives and attitudes of fellow believers.

The embodied faith (or lack thereof) of members of the body of Christ which others see and often imitate becomes a “hidden” part of the curriculum that can go counter to the planned discipling curriculum. It is for this very reason that in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) the adults were told to have the commands of God “on their hearts” before they were told to “teach them diligently” to their children. The nature of belonging—to a family, a congregation, a society—

influences a person to be like the group. “The regular interaction of church members is a powerful form of education because it influences the perspective by which members interpret the Christian faith (Nelson 2008:97). This is especially true in the postmodern context.

Equipping, as defined in this model, focuses on Christians helping one another grow through the three individual processes of Connecting, Understanding, and Ministering. In the New International Version (1994), 72 passages include the phrase “one another,” with more than 40 referring to the process this model calls Equipping. From these basic concepts grew a framework that can be used to be intentional and balanced about how we grow ourselves as disciples and how we help and guide postmoderns to experience and then believe the meta-narrative of God’s Kingdom of love.

The Framework

Because discipleship happens in the arena of daily life, and occurs within the loving relationships in the body of Christ, the processes and content of discipleship cannot be reduced to statements in a framework or grid. Thus, the *Together Growing Fruitful Disciples Framework* is designed to serve as a skeleton of basic characteristics of discipleship (growingfruitfuldisciples.com). It provides a structure around which individuals, groups, and churches can organize experiences that edify the followers of Christ. Those who disciple others can use the framework to create learning events for many areas of discipling such as parenting, mentoring, teaching, or facilitating small groups.

In the *Together Growing Fruitful Disciples Framework*, *commitments* for the growing Christian are articulated for each of the individual processes.

Commitments are further divided into key aspects of spiritual growth called *indicators*. These *indicators* are statements describing what a lifetime of following Jesus can look like.

This Framework of *processes, commitments, and indicators* serves as a guide to outline the scope of discipleship and discipling. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, both can be somewhat evaluated using this *Framework*.

Some *commitments* and *indicators* may have been strongly addressed in a particular context in which we do church, while others may have been overlooked. An evaluation based on this Framework can help in making informed decisions for improving discipleship and discipling in the body of Christ—at church, at school, and at home. Teaching potential postmodern disciples the whole truth of the gospel, with all its contours, requires this type of post-linear model and not just a list of fundamental beliefs.

Conclusion

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been carried by His disciples in every era since He ascended to Heaven, leaving us the commission to make more disciples. In the pre-Christian culture, the disciples carrying the gospel were fully engaged. They embodied the gospel as well as articulating it, often facing persecution for having counter-cultural beliefs and lifestyles.

During the Enlightenment, or modern era, following Christ became a rational endeavor, with “disciples” working hard to show a culture that glorified

reason that the Christian faith could be credible. The focus of sharing the gospel was on its propositional content and logical methods by which to present it. And, little by little Christians ceased being active disciples, embodying and articulating the Gospel, and became “consumers of religious goods and services” (Hull 2006:41)

Now, as we head into the “uncharted terrain of postmodernity” there are “grave implications for those who seek to live as Christ’s disciples in the new context. We must think through the ramifications of the phenomenal changes occurring in Western society for our understanding of the Christian faith and our presentation of the gospel” (Grenz 1996:162) to a post-Christian world. However, in many respects, post-modern beliefs parallel underlying Christian beliefs. Modernism with its over-intellectualization, and insistence on emphasizing the “thinking” rather than the “being” and “doing” of humanity propelled the understanding of faith from the heart to the head. A discipleship framework, which helps us view our message in a holistic manner from post-dualistic, post-individualistic, post-rational, and post-noeticentric points of view just may help us grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus as well as help us understand just what the good news is that we have to share with the world—a gospel that we personally experience, and know will resonate with the longings, concerns, and aspirations of the secular and postmodern world.

At the time of writing:

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ⁱ Interestingly, Ellen White described the elements of the great controversy this way in a message to the men and women of the Iowa Conference in 1901.

“All sin is selfishness. Satan’s first sin was selfishness. He sought to grasp power, to exalt self. A species of insanity led him to seek to supersede God. And the temptation which led Adam to sin, was the false statement of Satan that it was possible for him to attain to something more than he already enjoyed. . . . Thus seeds of selfishness were sown in the human heart.

God desires every one to understand the hateful character of selfishness, and to co-operate with Him in guarding His human family against its terrible, deceptive power. The first result of the entrance of sin into the world was the birth of principles of selfishness. The design of the gospel is . . . to confront this evil of selfishness and destroy its destructive power by establishing enterprises of benevolence.

As a remedy for the terrible consequences into which selfishness led the human race, God gave His only begotten Son to die for them. And in this gift He gave Himself. How could He give more? “I and My Father are one,” said Christ. . . .

Sin extinguished the love which God placed in man’s heart. The work of the church is to rekindle this love. She is to co-operate with God by uprooting selfishness from the human.

The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 1763

ⁱⁱ Love each other deeply, from the heart (1 Pet 1:22).
May your love increase for each other (1 Thes 3:12).
Be at peace (1 Thes 5:13, Mark 9:50).
Be devoted to one another (Rom 12:10).
Be humble and gentle (Eph 4:2).
Be kind and compassionate to one another (Eph 4:32, 1 Thes 5:15).
Be sympathetic and loving (1 Pet 3:8).
Stop passing judgment (Rom 14:13).
Don’t keep biting and devouring each other (Gal 5:15).
Don’t provoke and envy each other (Gal 5:26).
Don’t lie to each other (Col 3:9).
Don’t pay back wrong for wrong (1 Thes 5:15).
Don’t slander one another (James 4:11).
Don’t grumble against each other (James 5:9).
Live in harmony with one another (Rom 12:16).
Have equal concern for each other (1 Cor 12:25).
Honor one another above yourself (Rom 12:10).

Submit to one another (Eph 5:21).
Accept one another (Rom 5:7).
Agree with one another, be united in mind and thought (1 Cor 1:10,
Wait for each other when you eat (1 Cor 11:33).
Bear with each other and forgive (Col 3:13).
Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other (James 5:16).
Offer hospitality without grumbling (1 Peter 4:8, 9).
Clothe yourself with humility toward one another (1 Pet 5:5).
Serve one another in love (Gal 5:13).
Speak to one another with music in your heart (Eph 5:19).
Look to each other's interests (Phil 2:4).
Encourage each other (1 Thes 4:18, Heb 3:13, Heb 10:24, 25).
Build each other up (1 Thes 5:11).
Instruct one another (Rom 15:14).
Teach one another with wisdom and gratitude (Col 3:16).
Spur one another on toward love and good deeds—all the more as you see
the day approaching (Heb 10:24, 25).

ⁱⁱⁱ This explanation (with minor wording changes) of the Together Growing Fruitful Disciples model first appeared in the *Journal of Adventist Education*, Summer, 2012 (Vol 74, No. 5).