

## **Discipleship Landmarks**

### **Using this Training**

#### **Personal Obedience**

A trainer is simply an apprentice who has already learnt a training story, is living in obedience to it and now wants to pass it on.

These stories can only be effectively taught by an apprentice who has made the story their own and has come to love the good news it contains. Each story is followed by the simple question "What good news is in this story?" It is up to the trainer to have prayed over the story and listened to Jesus so they can guide their apprentices in discovering the good news.

Trainers must understand what the training is about. They must know the training stories well and understand how each story contributes to the training message. If you are not sure why a story is relevant to the training subject, ask other trainers what they think.

Do you have a passion for people to learn the training? Then don't take shortcuts!

#### **No Experts**

Experts do all the training because they are the best at it. But experts only grow by addition, not multiplication. So don't give in to the temptation to do all the training yourself. Jesus did not say make experts, but make disciples! People learn best by teaching, so let new apprentices teach. You need lots of practiced apprentice trainers.

#### **Growth Groups for Discipleship**

This training is a carefully selected series of Gospel stories that Growth Groups can use to help disciples (apprentices) grow in the essential landmarks of discipleship. There is much that the Holy Spirit can teach us through each of these stories, and sufficient time and attention should be given to each story, before moving on to the next.

There are two essential and separate steps. First a trainer teaches the story to the GG. This Training Step is NOT a GG and does not use the GG questions. It is normally much briefer than a GG meeting would be. Don't let it drag on or degenerate into preaching.

The second step is for the GG members to meet to discuss the story and learn to be obedient to it. They may continue discussing the story for several weeks before they are ready to move on to the next story. They should not rush.

#### **Do NOT train people to be disobedient!**

Jesus said that the wise builder is one who hears **and obeys** his words (Luke 6:46). The aim of this training is to raise up disciples who are obedient to Jesus.

For this reason, this training should **not** be rushed through. If you progress through this training too quickly without ensuring that the hearers are being obedient to what they are learning, you will train them to be disobedient! They will think that hearing or understanding is all that matters, and obedience is optional.

## **Tell me the same story**

We strongly recommend that both the trainers and GG members learn the training stories by heart so the Holy Spirit can keep speaking to you through them.

Most stories can easily be learnt word-perfect, but for the longer stories, being able to retell the story in your own words is sufficient.

Whenever you teach a story, if it is something Jesus said, start it with "Jesus said: ". That way the person learning will know that these are the words of Jesus.

1. Use actions as much as possible each time you tell the story and get the apprentices to copy your actions.
2. Recite the story from memory twice.
3. Get the apprentices to say every detail they noticed in the story.
4. If they miss anything ask questions to see if they remember the detail.
5. Recite the story from memory twice more.
6. Say, "**Tell me the same story**" until they have got it right.

After teaching every story ask "What good news is in this story?". This reminds both the trainer and the apprentice that the Gospel is Good News.

## **An Example Training session**

*Example for training D3:*

Today we will go through the next training in Discipleship-Landmarks. It is called D3-Four Soils. Let's say the motto together: "Love one another – Go and make disciples".

The first story is from Luke 8:5-8,11-15.

*Follow the "Teaching the Story" instructions above.*

*If they miss out any detail in step 3, ask questions like these:*

Who sowed the seed? How did he sow it? Where did some wasted seed fall? What happened to it?  
Where did the next seed fall?

Now **tell me the same story**. Let's say it all together... Luke 8:5-8,11-15 "A farmer went to sow his seed..."

*Instead of the GG questions, ask "What good news is in this story?" Don't rush this. They need to see the good news so they will want to spend time in their GG discussing it.*

*At the end of the training use the Conclusion questions.*

The best way to learn the story is to teach it! So will you teach this story to someone else every day this week?

### **Summary of How to Train:**

1. Training Pathway name: "Discipleship-Landmarks"
2. Training Number and Title: "D3-Four Soils."
3. Motto: "Love one another – Go and make disciples"
4. Story reference and recite the story from memory twice.
5. Ask lots of simple "What is in the story" questions.
6. Recite the story from memory twice with them copying your actions.
7. "Tell me the same story" until they have learnt it and can say it on their own.
8. Ask "What good news is in this story?"
9. Ask the conclusion questions.
10. Encourage them to teach the story to someone else every day this week. The best way to learn the story is to teach it!

### **Progressing through the Training**

Teach D1-Discovery and D2-Growth Groups in one session if possible.

If they agree to meet in a GG, arrange to meet with them the first time to help them use the four GG questions. Start with the first training story as the text. Let them lead the discussion, but be careful not to let it drag out into a long boring session. Encourage them to pray and listen to Jesus.

Once the disciples are regularly meeting on their own as a GG and have gone over the D1 & D2 stories, you can then teach them the next training. Progress through the training at a rate that suits their growth in obedience. If you cannot give them the next training as soon as they are ready for it, encourage them to keep meeting in their GG and to go through Luke's Gospel from the beginning.