

Cultivating Leaders: A Case Study in Disciplemaking with John Mark

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Cultivating Leaders / Discipleship; Mentor; Leadership; Apprentice; John Mark / Acts 12:12; Acts 12:25; Acts 13:5

The Apostles Peter and Paul show us they identified a disciple in John Mark, invested in him, and provided an internship from which to help him grow into a disciplemaker.

[Acts 12:12](#); [25](#); [13:5](#)

Discipleship Memory Verse

[2 Timothy 2:2](#)

2 Timothy 2:2 NKJV

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Searching for a certain type of believer.

1. Faithful
2. Available
3. Teachable
4. Reproducible

Acts 12:12 NKJV

¹² So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

Acts 12:25 NKJV

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.

Acts 13:5 NKJV

⁵ And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as *their* assistant.

Before we get into the meat of the sermon, let's take a minute to unpack a small portion of John Mark's background.

- We know his name is made up of a Jewish name (John) and a Greek name (Mark).
- His mother, Mary, was probably wealthy.
 - She had a large house that could accommodate the church.
 - The house had an outer gate. [Acts 12:13](#)

Acts 12:13 NKJV

¹³ And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.

- She had a servant girl
- His father was most likely deceased as he is not mentioned.
- Mary is the aunt of Barnabas which makes Mark his cousin.

Identify Reproducible Disciples ([Acts 12:12](#))

[Acts 12:12](#) (NKJV)

Acts 12:12 NKJV

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How did Peter and the apostles identify John Mark as a potential reproducing disciple?

1. He was among believers and identified as a believer. **He was Faithful**
 - a. We see in [Acts 12:1-3](#) that the church was praying for Peter as he was in prison for preaching the Good News of the gospel.
 - b. We also see that he was named among those who were praying.
 - c. John Mark was specifically mentioned as the son of Mary whom was hosting the prayer gathering and church meeting.
2. We see that **John Mark was Available**.
 - a. When the brothers left for their next trip to spread the gospel, Mark was available to go with them.
3. We see that **he was Teachable**.
 - a. People who are teachable learn from the past and present.
 - i. Mark ended up leaving their mission early. ([Acts 13:13](#))
 - ii. Paul wasn't too happy with his actions. [Acts 15:39-40](#)
 - iii. Barnabas (his cousin) gave him a second chance.
4. We see that **he was Reproducible**.
 - a. Mark wrote a gospel account of his own, showed boldness in doing so, and was faithful to present Christ as Savior, as well as his own mistakes.
 - b. He was passing on what he'd learned to faithful men and women.

How might we identify potential reproducing disciples?

Ask yourself four questions that we just covered. Potential disciples will fit within the first three and as you go, another disciplemaker will be found when all four are answered in the affirmative.

1. They are Faithful.
 - a. They are active in or desire fellowship, are hungry for God's Word, and show up when the Saints gather. They are eager to learn.
2. They are Available
 - a. They are ready to learn and prove this by actually meeting with you when you agree.
 - b. They say no to some things in order to say yes to growing as a disciple.
3. They are Teachable
 - a. They have a spirit of humility.
 - b. They desire to study the scriptures.
 - c. They have an understanding that you as the discipler are someone from whom they are able to learn.
4. Potential Disciplemakers are Reproducible.
 - a. Unfortunately, not all disciples are potential disciplemakers.
 - b. How do we know this? Most Christians don't reproduce themselves.
 - c. When you find a hungry disciple who wants to reproduce themselves in the lives of others, you'd better treat them differently!
 - i. Pour into them.
 - ii. Give them extra to read, listen to, and view.
 - iii. Send them to conferences and buy them material.
 - iv. Hold them accountable and continually encourage them to ask the Lord this question, "who is the next person You want me to disciple?"

Friends, we see in [Acts 12:12](#) that Peter identified a new disciple and in verse 25 Paul Invested in and Trained new disciples.

Where do I find FATR Christians?

- Begin by praying that the Lord will send someone to you.
- Look among your family (Barnabas and Mark).
- Those in your church.
- Your neighbors or coworkers.
- Those you meet as you share the gospel.

I like to ask these questions:

- Of pastors: “who are you discipling right now? Did you have anyone intentionally disciple you as a new believer?”
- Of Christians: “are you in an intentional discipling relationship with anyone right now?” “What are your thoughts on growing closer to Jesus in the context of a one on one or small group setting?”

Identify Reproducible Disciples

Invest in and Train new Disciples ([Acts 12:25](#))

Acts 12:25 NKJV

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.

Most of us understand the basics of financial investing language.

- We take some of our money, give it to someone else who we trust, to make it work for a potential return.
- If we invest, we understand that we may lose money for a time, but not long-term.
- Nobody invests in things that have all the warning signs of “danger!”

Friends, much is the same when we are investing in another person for the Kingdom's sake.

[2 Timothy 2:2](#) (ESV)

² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

What are some presuppositions we have prior to investing in another person?

1. Desire: We have a desire to do so.
2. They are a good investment: This is why the first point that I talked about is so important. If someone is missing one of the first three (FAT), I'm not too inclined to disciple them. I.E. they are a bad investment of my discipling time.
3. A return: There is a potential return on our investment. We pray that our time and effort will result in a stronger Christian who desires to know Jesus more, follow Him more fully, and learn about and utilize the gifts that He has given.

How do we know Peter, Paul, and Barnabas invested in John Mark?

They took him with them!

[Acts 12:25](#) (NKJV)

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and **they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.**

When we invest and train a disciple, we are following and obeying scripture and understand that the Lord will honor our effort.

1. Whenever a person passes the FAT(R) test, we...
2. Begin investing in and training them. We spend time and energy.

3. We also understand that everyone is different. We all falter, make mistakes, and get hurt.

Let's look briefly how Mark illustrates this point:

[Acts 13:13](#) (NKJV)

¹³ Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and **John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.**

[Acts 15:36–41](#) (NKJV)

³⁶ Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see how they are doing.*” ³⁷ **Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark.** ³⁸ **But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work.** ³⁹ **Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus;** ⁴⁰ **but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God.** ⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

When we invest in and train, we have identified those who are FAT(R), and we are walking with them, even as they falter.

Notice how Barnabas hung with Mark. Lest we think we are righteous by carrying an attitude of “that guy burned me, so I’ll never work with him again,” notice that Paul didn’t give up on Mark.

[Colossians 4:10](#) (NKJV)

¹⁰ Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: **if he comes to you, welcome him**),

[2 Timothy 4:11](#) (NKJV)

¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, **for he is useful to me for ministry.**

[Philemon 24](#) (NKJV)

²⁴ *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, **my fellow laborers**.

Identify Reproducible Disciples

Invest in and Train Disciples

Provide an Internship, or Opportunity for the Disciple ([Acts 13:5](#))

Acts 13:5 NKJV

⁵ And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as *their* assistant.

In John Mark's case, we see that Paul and Barnabas brought him with them and provided what we might call, "on the job training."

They took him with them, and he witnessed as they:

1. Traveled and talked ([Acts 13:4](#), [13](#))
2. Preached and taught ([Acts 13:5](#))
3. Witnessed to the Proconsul ([Acts 13:7](#), [12](#))
4. Rebuked Elymas the sorcerer ([Acts 13:8](#))

When we have identified, are training, and are providing opportunities we are doing multiple things at once:

- Strengthening our own leadership capabilities.
- Teaching and leading another believer.
- Strengthening the local church.
- Multiplying our own ministry.
- Most of all, being faithful to the commands of Christ!

Further Resources for Teaching/After Sermon:

Principles to Begin Multiplying Oneself

- 1. Start by praying daily to be a [2 Tim 2:2](#) discipling believer.**
- 2. Set up structures for a future discipling ministry NOW.**
 - a. Read biblical accounts and learn about your biblical responsibility.
 - b. Read a few discipleship/making books.
 - c. Interview a few pastors or believers who are currently active in this ministry.
 - d. Study a few discipling methods and get prepared to give one a try.
 - e. Brainstorm your own “Leadership Lab,” “Pipeline,” or “Internship.”
 - i. Bivo/Covo pastors and other small church staff/leadership can do this!
- 3. Look for FATR 2-2-2 believers within your church.**
 - a. Faithful, Available, Teachable, Reproducible

Action Steps

- What are you doing to identify any Faithful, Available, Teachable, and Reproducible believers in your church?
- What steps do you need to take to make time to begin discipling another believer?
- Friend, have you been born again? Have you repented of your sin and placed your faith and trust in Christ alone for your salvation

Connect!

www.tobydehay.com/discipling