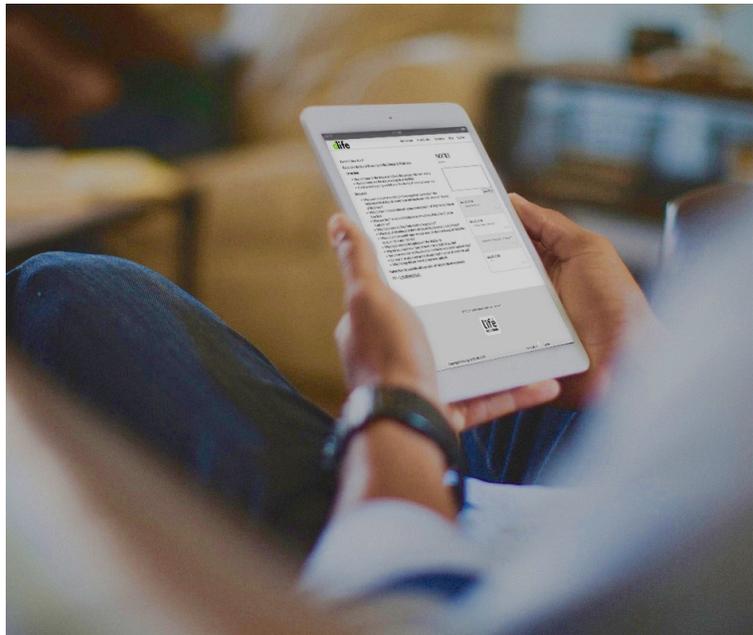




dlife



Living the D-Life

Discipleship. Anytime. Anywhere.

Dr. Bill Wilks

D-Life Training
Life Bible Study



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Let's Talk about Living the D-Life

Lesson One

What is your purpose? Do you know? Many people struggle to know what their purpose in life really is. They travel through life without a clear sense of direction.

It is very important to find clarity on this. There is one person who can tell you what your purpose in life is. He is your Lord and He speaks with great authority.

According to Jesus, your purpose in life is one main thing. It is two words—**MAKE DISCIPLES**.



Jesus has called us to a lifestyle of making and multiplying disciples. The problem is that disciple-making is not a strength for many Christians or churches. We should be greatly concerned about this.

- **There is a common misconception about discipleship.** Many think of discipleship as either evangelism or teaching. Discipleship does involve evangelism, but is not evangelism alone. Likewise it involves teaching, but it is not teaching alone. We must not separate the two. The discipling process of Jesus joined together both evangelism and teaching in a relational small group environment that included mentoring and accountability.
- **We need a process of multiplication for discipleship.** Few believers today live a lifestyle of reproducing disciples. Most churches do not have a simple process for equipping believers to make and multiply disciples. Rarely do churches have any ministries at all that are truly multiplying. For the most part, we are attempting to reach the world by addition and we cannot keep pace. Jesus' plan for world evangelization was not one of addition, but one of exponential kingdom growth through the remarkable process of multiplication. This is why, in His three short years of ministry, Jesus literally poured Himself into the discipleship of twelve men. He invested His life into twelve ordinary men who would continually reproduce as trained disciple makers and have a significant impact on the world for God's kingdom.

This is the purpose of D-Life. D-Life is an organic, intentional, and simple process for equipping all believers for a lifestyle of making and multiplying disciples. It is birthed out of a pastor's heart to see the church and all believers return to our God-called purpose, which is to make disciples.

Living the D-Life means living a lifestyle of discipleship. This lifestyle will not compete with other great ministries in your church; it will complete them.

The Main Thought...

Living the D-Life is not a program; it's a lifestyle.

In Mark 3:13-15, Jesus Christ is our model for living the D-Life. Here, Jesus officially began His personal journey of making disciples and modeling a lifestyle of discipleship.

Mark 3:13-15 - *And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve (whom He also named apostles) so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.*

At the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, He called together a rather ordinary group of men to be His first disciples. They were not highly educated or greatly gifted. Jesus chose common people to be His first disciples to show us that anybody can live the D-Life.

1. D-Life is your supreme purpose in life.

The Gospel of Mark tells us that Jesus called twelve men *"so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach."*

- **Making disciples is Christ-like.**

D-Life is your supreme purpose in life, because you are called to be like Jesus. Few things are more Christ-like than "making disciples." The bulk of Jesus' three-year public ministry was involved in His personal investment in these twelve men. He intentionally trained them to be disciples who would go out and make other disciples.

- **Making disciples is commanded.**

Secondly, D-Life is your supreme purpose in life, because Jesus commanded you to "make disciples." The first command of Christ to His followers is found in Matthew 4:19. Jesus said, *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."* If you are not fishing for men, then you are not following Jesus. Fishing for men means making disciples. This was Jesus' way of communicating to a group of fishermen that He was calling them to a lifestyle of making and multiplying disciples.

The last command of Jesus to His followers is found in Matthew 28:18-20. In His resurrected body just before He ascended back into Heaven, Jesus said, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

As Jesus gave His final instructions to His followers, His words were emphatically clear. In the Greek, there is only one verb in Jesus' Great Commission. That one verb is "make." Jesus commanded us to "make disciples."

The Great Commission is not a great suggestion! It's a command. It is the one main thing Jesus has called all of His followers to do.

According to Jesus, your life should involve a never-ending process of making disciples who make disciples. This is your supreme purpose in life.

2. **D-Life has a simple plan to follow.**

Jesus modeled a simple plan for living the D-Life. Jesus made it so simple that the motley group of men He called as His first disciples could follow the plan. If they could do it, we can do it.

Jesus called His disciples to simply be "with Him." For His three years of public ministry, they did everything with Him, and Jesus literally poured His life into His discipleship group of twelve men.

In D-Life, we refer to a discipleship group as a "D-Group." A D-Group is a small group of three to eight people who meet anytime and anywhere for the purpose of intentional discipleship. Jesus had twelve in His group, but we are not Jesus. For us, D-Groups of three to eight people are best for our success.

By reading the Gospels, we learn there are six practices of discipleship that Jesus modeled for us with His disciples. These six practices are the basics of living a lifestyle of discipleship. If we want to live the D-Life, we must follow these six practices that Jesus modeled.

The six practices of D-Life are fellowship, teaching, prayer, ministry, multiplication, and accountability. Jesus modeled all six of these practices in a highly relational environment of a small discipleship group.

To live a lifestyle of discipleship as Jesus modeled it, every D-Group should participate in all six practices of D-Life.

- **Fellowship**

Intimate fellowship is the first basic practice of living the D-Life. D-Groups provide small relational environments where three to eight people can experience intimate fellowship.

Like Jesus, to start living the D-Life, you must take the initiative to prayerfully invite others to join with you in a D-Group. D-Groups can meet anytime and anywhere. They can meet at a workplace, a church, a restaurant, a home, a park, or a gym. Sharing coffee, a meal, or even working out together can provide a great opportunity for genuine fellowship. Diversity in age and spiritual maturity can enhance the dynamics of your D-Group.

- **Teaching**

Teaching the Bible is the second basic practice of living the D-Life. Jesus taught His disciples using simple stories called "parables." He kept His teaching simple. When He met with His disciples in private, they would discuss the things He taught.

In living the D-Life, we too must keep it simple. The Bible is our only textbook. D-Groups will commit to daily Bible reading and to joining together weekly for an interactive Bible study.

Getting men, women, and teenagers to read their Bibles daily is a main priority of D-Life. The simple goal of every D-Group is to read one chapter a day five days a week. In addition, D-Groups will meet together once a week for an interactive Bible study that will come from one of the Bible chapters read that week. The goal is to involve everyone in a group discussion of the Bible passage.

- **Prayer**

Praying together is the third basic practice of living the D-Life. Jesus prayed with His disciples and taught them how to pray. Likewise, D-Groups will pray together and practice the discipline of fervent prayer in their daily lives.

D-Groups will incorporate meaningful prayer times into their weekly meetings. We will take prayer requests and pray for one another, our families, our churches, our leaders, our nation, and our world. A weekly priority of every D-Group is to pray for revival and spiritual awakening in our land.

- **Ministry**

Ministry and evangelism outside the walls of the church is the fourth basic practice of living the D-Life. Jesus and His disciples often participated in ministry together. Likewise, a minimum goal of every D-Group is to participate together in one community ministry and evangelism project every two months.

Genuine discipleship requires more than a classroom. We must go out and do ministry together. Ministering together as a D-Group is a vital part of discipleship.

- **Multiplication**

Multiplication is the fifth basic practice of living the D-Life. Jesus often informed His disciples that He would not remain with them forever. His goal was for each of them to live a life of making and multiplying disciples. He expected them to reproduce.

A major goal of every D-Group is to multiply within one to two years. Remaining together until Jesus returns is not our purpose. The goal is multiplication.

- **Accountability**

Loving spiritual accountability is the sixth basic practice of living the D-Life. Jesus provided loving accountability to His disciples.

Spiritual accountability is vital in a relational environment committed to genuine spiritual growth. All who participate in a D-Group must open their hearts to loving accountability. We must hold one another accountable to the six practices involved in living the D-Life.

In John 13:15, Jesus said, *“For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”*

3. D-Life has the spiritual power to transform lives.

Mark 3:15 indicates that Jesus gave His disciples *“authority to cast out demons.”* People today still battle with Satan and demonic spiritual strongholds.

Through Christ we have authority over Satan. Powerful spiritual transformation can occur through the loving accountability of D-Groups. Spiritual strongholds related to alcohol, drugs, pornography, sexual identity issues, and many others can be conquered.

In John 14:12, Jesus said, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.”* Apart from His death and resurrection, the main work of Jesus was that of discipleship. He literally poured out His earthly life into the discipleship of twelve men and into equipping them to live a lifestyle of discipleship.

Jesus said that His followers would do these same works and that they would do even “greater works” than these. Because of what He did for us, Jesus’ followers will do greater works of discipleship than He did. What a great word of assurance! With this truth in mind, we must live the D-Life. As we live a lifestyle of discipleship, the Holy Spirit will do great works and many lives will be transformed.

You may be asking, “How can I live out my supreme purpose in life? Am I really able to do this? In your own strength and ability, you are not able. You must believe that Jesus will empower you to do what He has called you to do. He has clearly called you to a life of making and multiplying disciples. You can be certain that He will be with you and He will empower you to live the D-Life. He will use you to do *greater works* than you can imagine if you will do two things.

- **Believe** that you can live a life of making disciples.
- **Be** equipped and empowered for a life of discipleship.

Takeaways from Lesson One...

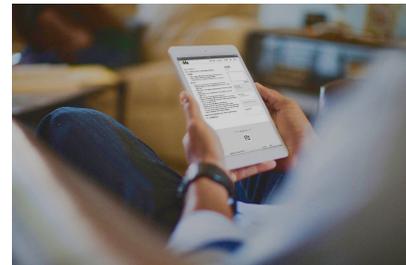
- D-Life is **not** a program; it’s a lifestyle.
- Living the D-Life involves living a **lifestyle** of discipleship.
- Living the D-Life is our **supreme** purpose in life.
- Discipleship can happen **anytime** and **anywhere**.
- Jesus radically **changes** lives through the six practices of D-Life.

The Bible and the D-Life Web App

Lesson Two

With the D-Life Web App, you place at everyone's fingertips the power to live a life of discipleship—anytime and anywhere.

Content on the D-Life Web App includes four years of annual Bible reading plans and weekly study guides for discipleship groups (D-Groups). The study guides come in both printable and electronic formats. Study notes can be kept electronically or on the printed guides. Electronic notes will sync automatically with all your devices. For more on how to use the web app see the article on *The D-Life Blog* entitled, "Using the D-Life Web App...It's Easy!"



The Main Thought...

The Bible and the D-Life Web App are the only tools needed for living the D-Life.

In D-Life, the Bible is your only textbook. Because the Bible and the D-Life Web App are the only tools you need to live the D-Life, the possibilities for starting D-Groups are endless.

1. The D-Life Web App includes brief content on each of the six practices of the D-Life.
2. The D-Life Web App contains information on weekly note keeping.
3. The D-Life Web App contains the weekly study guides with your annual Bible reading plans and weekly interactive Bible study questions.
4. The D-Life Web App includes a simple plan for sharing the Gospel.
5. The D-Life Web App includes the D-Life Blog with helpful articles on living the D-Life.

Takeaways from Lesson Two...

- The Bible and the D-Life Web App are the only tools one needs for living the D-Life.
- The D-Life Web App is a simple tool that will place at everyone's fingertips the power to live a life of discipleship—anytime and anywhere.