

Enlist Participation

As we saw in week two, Barnabas disciplined Saul who ultimately became Paul. A close look at the biblical record reveals a gradual but intentional baton pass from Barnabas to Paul.

Barnabas Initiated, Saul Followed

After Saul sat on the bench in Tarsus for at least two years, Barnabas reached out to him. What happened because Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch? (see Acts 11:25–26)

Barnabas Taught, Saul Assisted

The Lord used Barnabas greatly in Antioch. His teaching ministry grew as more people came to faith in Christ. When it got to the point where Barnabas could no longer handle the teaching needs alone, he brought Saul into the ministry. How long did Saul initially help Barnabas in Antioch? (see Acts 11:26)

Barnabas Taught, Saul Taught

Eventually Saul was recognized along with Barnabas as two of five standout teachers and prophets in the church at Antioch. Who were the other three? (see Acts 13:1–2)

Twice in this passage Barnabas' name is listed first and Saul is last. What might this suggest?

Paul Taught, Barnabas Listened

Soon into Barnabas' & Saul's 1st missionary journey, Paul assumed the primary teaching role. Acts 13:6–13 describes the day Paul took center stage. Examine this passage and determine if this was God's doing or man's?

Paul Initiated, Silas Followed

After 3+ years in a discipling relationship, Paul was prepared to disciple others like he had been disciplined. Who did Paul invite into his life? Why didn't he just go out and do the work of ministry alone? (see Acts 15:36–40)

Can This Still Work Today?

So what do you think? Is a gradual and intentional mentoring model still applicable today? Is it best to slowly pass the baton of responsibility & authority on to others? Can you speak from your own experience?

How does the following model compare to Barnabas' & Saul's relationship?

Apprenticeship Model

1. I do. You watch.
2. I do. You help.
3. You do. I help.
4. You do. I watch.
5. You do. Someone else watches.

Submit to the Spirit

Before the Disciples got into making more disciples, Jesus told them to wait until they received the Holy Spirit. He knew the work before them could not successfully be done in their own strength. They needed heavenly power. They needed to be filled, enabled, and led by the Holy Spirit.

As promised, the Holy Spirit was given to all Christ-followers. And from them on, God's Spirit played a prominent role in discipleship. Using the verses below, describe the place the Holy Spirit had in Barnabas' & Paul's disciple-making efforts.

- Acts 11:24
- Acts 13:1-4
- Acts 13:9
- Acts 13:49-52
- Acts 16:4-10

How do the following verses also speak to the importance of the Holy Spirit in making disciples?

- John 14:26
- John 16:8

The Ultimate Baton Pass

When it comes to disciple-making, the Holy Spirit can do a better job at this challenging task than we can. Jesus said as much when He told His disciples the following:

John 16:7 - But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Jesus wanted His followers to know that having the Holy Spirit in them, was better than having the Lord beside them. How so? _____

It follows that the Holy Spirit's work in a person can do more than we could ever do. That's not to say God does not want to use us to make disciples. He does! But it should put our role into its proper perspective.

Like we saw in week one, the ultimate goal is for a disciple to walk in complete dependence upon God. Paul saw what that meant in Barnabas, his spiritual mentor, who was full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:24).

The final baton pass is complete when the one being discipled looks to the Lord for direction and the strength to carry out what God wants done. Check out the following verses:

- Galatians 3:3
- Galatians 5:16
- Galatian 5:22-24
- Galatians 5:25

It's a Relay

Relay races are often won or lost in the baton pass. If the baton is dropped, defeat is pretty much guaranteed. However, a skillful baton pass along with a race well run could lead to a life-changing win.

If you're a Christ-follower, God placed a baton into your hand. The most important baton you will ever hold. This Gospel baton is meant to change your life and through you impact the lives of others – believers and non-believers alike.

It's vital that you embrace this fact – your race must include getting the Gospel into the hands of another. And then another... You are in a relay race, not an individual sprint or marathon. You must try your best to get what you've been given into someone else's hands.

If you're doing that, you know the absolute joy of helping others get it. And grow up. And become the Pauls the Lord intended for them to be. What Barnabas did for Saul, we must do for others. And when our task is done, and they are living fully in the care and power of the Lord, there will be someone else to pass the baton to.

B.R.I.D.G.E.S Disciples Making Action Plan

Begin with Prayer

Reach out to Unbelievers

Invite Others into your Life

Determine Their Need

Grow Them Up

Enlist Participation

Submit to the Spirit

Time to “Be One, Make One!”

After all Jesus taught and did, His followers could have dropped the baton. But they didn't. They ran their leg of the race well and passed their faith on to others. Will you do the same? Will you be a disciple who makes disciples?

For Further Reflection

1. How did the Gospel baton get into your hands? How has it made a difference in your life?
2. Who in the past have you passed your faith on to? Was the baton pass successful? How do you know?
3. Who in your life are you currently discipling? Can you see any similarities in your discipling relationship to Barnabas' and Saul's relationship?
4. How can you apply the five discipleship stages seen in Barnabas' and Saul's relationship to your discipling?
5. Knowing the Holy Spirit is the ultimate disciple-maker, what can you do to help the one you're discipling grow in their dependence on the Holy Spirit's work?
6. Now that we have completed our “Be One, Make One” series, what do you plan to do with what you've learned?