

others who even now were making their way up to the altar. In those moments my heart was strangely warmed. Deep emotion was rising in me, yet at the same time I was aware of an interior struggle taking place. I knew that I had something important but difficult to do.

Inside me a light was dawning, and it took the form of this strange thought: While I knew I had given myself to Jesus, I knew also that I had never really given myself to people. Something in me had always held back, guarded, insecure, stilted, untrusting. Whereas Jesus seemed approachable because He offered unconditional love, people were a mixed bag. In many ways I had learned to let go and let God, but with people I could never quite let myself go. Accordingly, while my faith was ever so spiritual, I was lacking in simple human warmth.

Years before I had come close to entering a monastery, only to fall in love and get married instead. But marriage, too, to my great surprise, had turned into a rather comfy sort of monastery, a place where I could hide from my sense of social inadequacy. Now I felt the Lord calling me to come out of my monk's cell, to walk forward into the arms of my inadequacy, and to give myself to people. Moreover, it was time to stand up and make a public commitment to this effect, just as I had stood at the altar with Karen and publicly exchanged wedding vows.

So I answered this call. That day, along with all those who went forward to give their lives to Jesus, I rose before the assembly and gave myself to the people ... For me this was a tremendous and mysterious step. I could not know all that it meant, nor did I feel any special strength to carry it out. But I'd been running from people all my life, and it was time to turn around and walk the other way. Having invited Jesus into my heart, it was time now to invite people in. *For the conviction had overwhelmed me that this is what it means to be a Christian.*

**Application**—What do you feel the Lord is saying to you through this study, and what action steps do you feel He would have you take?

## ***Born to Reproduce***

The Navigators Disciplemakers For Life (D4L) Mission

Dawson Trotman, founder of The Navigators, in his classic message *Born to Reproduce*, talks about how God in the physical realm of life has made each person in whom He has placed the breath of life capable of reproducing physically. And at the same time, in the spiritual realm, He has made each person in whom He has placed the Holy Spirit capable of reproducing spiritually. If I am a human being, God made it so human offspring would come from my life. If Christ lives in me, God made it so spiritual offspring would come from my life. My life, reproduced in another, physically. The life of Christ in me, reproduced in another, spiritually.

Start by listening to Dawson Trotman's podcast *Born to Reproduce*. When done, answer the following questions:

<http://turret2.discipleshiplibrary.com/1A.mp3>

1. How did Trotman illustrate the comparison between physical and spiritual reproduction and multiplication?
2. What experience convinced him that follow-up of a new Christian is essential?
3. What is a spiritual parent, and what does he/she do?
4. What are five reasons why Christians do not reproduce?
5. Write down three of what you think were the most powerful statements in the message.

Read Matthew 9:36-38...

- a. As Jesus looked at the crowds that came to hear Him, what did He feel about them?
- b. How did Jesus describe the need as He saw it in the world?
- c. What did Jesus encourage His followers to do to meet that need?

The Lord Jesus said in John 20:21, “*As the Father has sent me into the world, so send I you.*” What insights do the following passages give as to how God wants us to live as His *sent ones* in this world?

Matthew 4:19

Luke 9:23

Matthew 5:13-16

Luke 19:1-10

Mark 2:15-17

Mark 10:42-25

The Greek word for *laborer* in the Bible is *ergos*, the root word from which the word *erg* is derived in physics, a measure of energy. By implication, a laborer is one who is willing to spend energy impacting the lives of others.

As one who belongs to Christ, in what ways are you spending energy from your life to impact the lives of others? What new things do you feel the Lord may be asking you to do to be used by Him to impact the lives of others more deeply?

### Further study (optional) ...

The Apostle Paul said, “Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ. For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me” (Colossians 1:28-29). He also told the Corinthians, “I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls” (2 Corinthians 12:15). What do you think would motivate Paul to live His life in this way?

What motivation do we find in the following verses to live our lives in this way?

John 21:15-17

John 4:34-38

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Luke 16:9

Matthew 25:20-21

Isaiah 58:6-12

Daniel 12:2-3

Following is an excerpt from the last chapter of the book *Practicing the Presence of People* by Mike Mason. The chapter is entitled *The Day I Married People*. Read over the excerpt, then think about the personal application question at the end:

One Sunday morning I happened to attend an evangelistic service. Toward the end the minister issued an altar call, inviting those to come forward who wished to give their lives to Jesus. I was already a Christian and felt no need of making a fresh commitment. However, as the song *Just As I Am* began to play, I felt another kind of stirring in my soul. It was a feeling, I think, similar to what was going on inside those few

(continued on back...)