

# Reproducing Disciples with Bill Hodgson

## Opening

**Josh Yates:** Welcome Friends to another episode of Sonlife Everyday Disciple Makers Podcast and in the studio is my co-host Wayne. It's great to to see you and to spend some time talking about disciple-making.

**Wayne:** Yeah, I am like super excited to be here. You know, we're wrapping up summer. My kids have been back in school. Many kids are going back to school soon. And Josh, I heard that you got to have a chance to have kind of like one last summer getaway and spend some intentional time with your son. Can you tell us about that?

**Josh Yates:** Yeah. I mean, I, I love summer. I love summer because we can kind of go into another pace of, of being with friends getting outside, camping, biking you know, whatnot. But one of the things. That's kind of been a pattern of mine of, since my son, my son's turning 14 since he was five, his first year we did this kind of intentional weekend.

And I learned this from a mentor of mine, Mark Edwards, and he always had this idea. Hey, as a youth pastor, We spend all this energy thinking, preparing, creating intentional experiences for our students. Think through a theme retreats, you get the t-shirts you bring in a speaker, you bring in the band, you go out on a missions trip, you're doing all these things to develop and form a disciple, your students.

And so he challenged me years ago. When you have a family of God or bless you with kids, what will you do to intentionally develop and invest into your own kids? And so it kind of took that to heart and started dreaming and praying about that, what that might look like. And so, so yeah, this is kind of my, my essentially kind of dad camp.

I take my kids and we do something intentional with them. And this was three days of mountain biking. We rented an Airbnb and we spent a lot of time just talking through. This year was, how has God made you as a man, a man in the making?

And what's it mean to be a godly man and focused in on Proverbs five 15, which says drink from your own cistern flowing water from your own well, and that proverb comes right out of, kind of the idea of temptation and just as men.

What are we drinking from and how do we, how do we protect and steward the well to which God has, has given us. So, so yeah, it was a, it was a fun experience great conversations and opportunities to be on the trail together, but more importantly, to, to return our hearts towards Jesus.

**Wayne:** I love that. And I love that we're able to share about some of the things that, that we do in our ministries and with our families and, and for our listeners. Josh and I, aren't perfect.

We're not, we're not trying to tell you exactly how you need to do everything. We just want to be able to share some of the things that, that we do to try and be intentional in our families and our ministry. So we hope that it encourages you, that it maybe gives you ideas.

If there's things that you do we'd love for you. Send us an email at [podcast@sonlife.com](mailto:podcast@sonlife.com) we'd love to learn from you as well.

And today we have our conversation with Bill Hodgson. Bill Hodgson is the national strategy director for power to change and power to change as part of a Concentric, which is a worldwide Alliance of ministries that Sonlife is connected with. So here is today's conversation.

## Interview with Bill Hodgson

**Josh Yates:** Well friends, I'm a super excited to have Bill Hodgson from Melbourne Australia on today's podcast. Bill it was probably 10 years ago that I met you for the first time on a global study trip, in Calcutta, India. And I remember that moment just as we are talking through the life of Christ and five phases your enthusiasm, your excitement for the things that Jesus was infectious.

And so I've really helped today's listeners really enjoy today's interview with Bill. So thank you for joining today's podcast.

**Bill Hodgson:** Ah, my, my pleasure. I'm looking forward to our conversation.

**Josh Yates:** Yeah. So Bill, why don't you just give our listeners a brief, introduction, maybe your ministry scope and context to what you're doing now in Melbourne.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. Thanks, Josh. I do remember that connection in Calcutta was a real formative experience. But I don't normally walk through fields in Calcutta. I have a far more mundane location. I'm sitting here in Melbourne. I have a 42 year veteran with a mission organization called Power to Change in Australia.

It's known as Cru globally, or campus crusade for Christ. Yeah. My first 20 years with them was founding and developing their youth ministry, working with churches and youth ministries to develop disciple-making movements that reach kids across the country that went international as well for connections.

Then I was a national director for 15 years of the organization and six years I've developed the church movements strategy of the organization. Which is focused on churches to help churches and leaders and younger and older leaders make that shift from doing more and more ministry to actually doing ministry that leads to movements of disciple-making.

So I got a small team and we have a lot of fun wrestling that to the ground as best we can with the power of God at work.

**Josh Yates:** One of the things Bill that I've, that I've appreciated your, your heart and ability to take some of the things as complex and just bring it back down to really, almost like about sitting across the table from you in a coffee shop, I can imagine you're pulling out a napkin and just scribbling out some things.

And here's what it looks like. Here's what it means. And taking complex things and making them you know attainable and are standable to the common man. And we look at the five phases or ministry or Jesus's making model. There's a lot of the words and things we talk about, whether it be in Sonlife any of our global partners around the world, we had the shared DNA of disciple-making movements.

So if you and I were sitting across a coffee shop and I was a young leader stepping in, just, you know what would that conversation look like in terms of man, help me understand disciplinemaking from the framework of, of Jesus as my model.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. You know, I, I typically do sit down with a napkin and do some drawing. I'm a bit of a visual thinker and so I can't help, but pull out a napkin and a pen, and I love those coffee shops that have, you know, white paper on the table and just invite you to draw all over it. That's my favorite kind of coffee shop.

I think for me, what animates me in this topic, Josh is the profound simplicity that it begins with. And it's got to operate out of the center of simplicity, not end up complex. I mean, it does, there's complexity there, but if we lose the simplicity we just end up in all sorts of just circles that are ever forever circling and never landing.

And when I say the simplicity, I take people back and I say, you know what does it mean to actually follow Jesus and to live and minister and multiply like Jesus did. So the simple question, yeah, that seems obvious people say, well, we're all doing that. Aren't we?

But when I actually did say what I learned, just looking at the question, how did Jesus actually start, where did he start with? Whom did he start? And how did his ministry day one week, one month, one year one. How did it develop and progress over time?

Now that that's the question. The chronological question is the question that most younger leaders have never really dug into. And once you then do that simple little timeline, the chronology, and you say.

This is what I learned that were our, has for me along the way, for example, that it wasn't until 18 months, possibly or more into his ministry that he actually issued the follow me and I'll make you fishers of men call. At that point, the leader is going like, what? Now? Hang on. That's not right. That's the first thing that happened.

So it, it, it shakes up their presuppositions and now they've got an inquiry now. They think he will, oh, really? Well, if I got that wrong, what was happening before that? And then why did that come, so late, what happened after that? So it starts this curiosity about the sense of the, the real progression. Of Jesus' ministry that he didn't just go in and go, bam hit the ground.

And there it was, you know that Jesus started, it started with a seed. It grew tenderly it, then produced fruit and then it multiplied and that's, that's how ministry happens in real life. So I start by just helping the leader get into the sense of, you know, what, how did it unfold in the, the humanity and the incarnation and the timeline of Jesus.

So that that's the first place where I would start. And we kind of go from there.

**Josh Yates:** Yeah. I love that. Sometimes we don't understand or think through the chronology of the timeframe that, that people have to start crawling before they begin to walk before they begin to run. And there's this natural progression Jesus does with his disciples. It's the often You know unseen it's so, so silent. It's an assumed.

But as ministry leaders begin to understand Jesus and their eyes are opened up to kind of, this Jesus is my model. What are some of the things that then you, as you're walking beside a ministry leader, you go, okay, you hear this often, or, you know, it's coming because of your years of ministry experience, how do you help a ministry leader, their eyes and their hearts be open to really disciple-making is there.

Other things you would sketch out on that napkin that would unlock maybe a young person's framework on this.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah, definitely. So as well as that framework of the chronology, where we're talking about the, the, the progression of Jesus movement and how it developed, and those key transitions that, you know, leadership appointment came after. He'd already done ministry training with people, you saw who to invest in, and that came after he'd already gathered groups of people.

So there's this progression, but the other thing. We used to talk about is really mapping out the it's, the Stephen Covey stuff, the classic leadership stuff begin with the end in mind. So the question is what was the end Jesus had in mind in terms of his ministry and the. The big one obviously is that he began with the very express intention of not just doing ministry and not just revealing the kingdom and seeing transformation in the power of the gospel revealed. But he began with the express intended outcome that he would launch a movement that would go beyond him.

What did that. Well, that required that he had a group of people who were in that position of being able to be disciple makers. Well, what did that require while he started with people who he hadn't had any connection with. And in a course of time, in his case, three to four years, he took people from people who didn't even know who he was, but with seeking hearts through that process of connecting, winning, building, training them to fish for others, and then equipping and stepping them to, they would be multiplies in themselves.

So for the young leader, They're often we're often thinking. Yeah. Yeah, of course. But Hey, Hey wait, wait. You know, news flash, when you, when you begin with a end in mind that I'm going to reproduce in the life of others, this passion and skillset and lifestyle of making disciples who make disciples. When that's in the thing in the end point that you're aiming, it, it, everything becomes far more focused and suddenly it's like, well, if I'm just running big, broad events, as good as they are, if it's not bringing that outcome, I'm not getting closer to the essential goal.

Jesus knew that he was going to well, his case, he wasn't going to just go somewhere else. He ascended, he was withdrawn from the movement and it had to keep going. With the presence of the spirit. So it's this end product. What is this end point we have in mind.

For, for our people in Australia will often make it super, super in focus and we'll say, okay. So just assume someone comes to Christ, a non church. We have to be able to take non-churched disconnected people. Help them connect relationally. This happens, come to Christ, equip them in the basics and help them quick as possible turn around and start to do the same within non church friends.

How does that circle of multiplication happen and how do we see that happen and plan for it within one to two years of them becoming a new believer. Now, when we push that with a question. It, it changes the, it changes the co the cogs start to click over in a very different fashion.

Because it's very specific so that we say, well, do you know someone in your congregation, who's a new believer. Do you know someone who in your relationships who doesn't know Jesus who's, who's close, who you, who you're reaching out to.

Okay. So start with a name, right? What will it take for that person? From the moment they become a believer to learn how to do the same thing. With their non church friends, and it can't include bringing them to the church service. They will do, but that's not, what's going to teach them to multiply. So then it becomes, how do we do these very specific, it's like a pathway of disciple making, a primary pathway that helps those new believers get established.

Start to reach out to others, do it in community with with peers and, and reproduce that. That's the movement edge, without that in the frame of reference of our local ministry, it stays ministry, but it never becomes movement.

**Josh Yates:** I love that because I think so often we prepared and we read books and we do training go to school to do ministry read the commentary. You learn how to teach, learn how to preach. But what you're saying here is a different framework that Jesus end in mind is thinking movements, not simply just, you know, the classic ministry.

Is that, is that kinda what you're getting at?

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. Yeah.

I think often I think sometimes our default is we, well, it often happens with church planters. I've seen this and we've talked about this in our organization globally. Sometimes you send out people as church planters, they go out, they have to do the micro skills to start with, they're doing connecting, prayer walking, finding people of peace. They're, you know, doing the groundwork to find those people.



And then they perhaps see people come to Christ and then they form something of a, of a house church. And, and often if they have a pastoral mindset or a Western church training mindset. They almost feel like the home base is when you get a congregation, that's big enough to support you so you can preach.

And then they settled down. Then they have a congregation and then we have ancillary ministries. We start with other things, you know, things for kids and all that's wonderful. But the point of doing disciple-making is not to end up with a church. The point of doing church is to end up with disciple-making we've we've flipped the thing, the wrong way, you know?

How are we stop when we've got a sizable viable congregation just blows me away. I think. Wow, wait a second. You haven't stopped. You've just gathered. Now how do you release your people? How to, how do we see individuals reaching other individuals? How do we see you know, affinity groups reaching other the others in their affinity group?

And so it's that kind of edge of the disciple making multiplication component, which is always done by people with names, faces, contexts families, social networks. It happened through real people in real places in real time. It does it can't be driven from a centralized gathering. It can be supported, but it can't actually happen.

**Josh Yates:** Yeah, let's, let's break that down Bill. I think that's where we get stuck is really have a heart of evangelism. We often just kind of hear it say, well, I don't, I don't have the gift of evangelism that's for somebody else. But what you're saying here is that actually all of us need to have the names, the faces of people around us that we're engaging with in the context of everyday, everyday life.

So how what's that look like? And for you, in terms of evangelism, what are the pressures, what are the things you're experiencing? You're seeing kind of on the ground when it comes to Christianity and the church? Maybe,

maybe from the lens of Australia, but maybe from a human, from a global movement.

I know you spent a lot of times and Europe as well, training ministry leaders there, but what's this really look like with boots on the ground.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah.

It's a great question. Upfront I'm not an evangelist, so I don't have the gift of evangelism. But I love to share my faith. I'm always praying for opportunities and I'll take them and make opportunities every chance that I get. But and so this is not something that is for the the, kind of the, the Christian spiritual equivalent of the SWAT team.

You know, the kind of the, the hyperactive, you know, out there people. As good as those people are, we have to base our models and our training and our assumptions on what can the, every person do. What can the ordinary believer do? And so the, an exercise that we have our pastors and leaders do that are going through our shift M to M journey through the life of Christ.

We have this process called shift M2M. We take the chronology chronological view to the life of Christ and we help leaders start to think differently from doing just ministry to shift, to actually doing movements. That's the tagged, so there's my ad. But one of the questions we ask them to think through is they map basically they're the names of all their people within their scope of their ministry.

For some, that's a big job for some, it's not. And we get into map it around what you guys might call the four chairs. We have a, what we call it, an arrow, a shift arrow, and it has the connect, wind build, train, multiply sections. And then they also map their current programming around that same thing.

And what they usually discover is that they have this big thing we call the pond in the middle with nearly all of their people and nearly all of their

programs and activities are in this building. In Australia, we find a lot of churches have a lot of names and connections in the contact level or the connect level who are non-churched not saved people.

Because we have a lot of programs in the community, with you know young moms groups, we have feeding programs. We have chaplaincy programs. We have a whole lot of connections serving the community. So we know a lot of people, but the interesting disconnect is that the people we have. Church groups in the build level have pretty well, no relationship with the names that we put down in our connect level of at church.

So the names in our connect level of programming of people that the programs have connected to, or the professionals have connected. But they're not the friends of the people who actually come every week and are involved in our small groups in our Bible study. Those names aren't mentioned anywhere in our program chart.

And so the first thing we say to the pastor is what do these people here, do they, do they have any friends who aren't a part of the church. Often the answer is very few, which is pretty sad. So we have this insular Christianity where we're, we are just friends with ourselves. It's like the exclusive club, unfortunately. But for the leader to even think that question, oh, who are the, so we nominate, well, tell me about Mary.

I see Mary's there at the build level. Well, Mary Mary's been a believer for many years. She's one of our lovely ladies. She runs her lady small group and blah, blah, blah. Okay. And then we'll use the thing we call the Daisy. It's a, just a picture of a flower. We put a little circle in the middle and we put Mary's name there.

And then we, we put petals like Daisy pedals around that center. And we asked that the leader, what areas of life is Mary involved in? Oh, well other than church, we put churches the name of one of the things. Her family is

name of one of the pedals. You know, Mary's got grandkids, Mary's got blah, blah, blah.

She runs the group for the young mum. She, we, we list Mary's social networks and affinities, and then we're really asking, okay does Mary know any people in those circles? Well, the answer is obviously everybody has a network, Right.

And could Mary know more if, if you supported the idea for Mary?

Get to know you, Daisy, who are the people in your world. And then what if, what would it take for the church ministry and structures and services and preaching to actually help Mary realize Mary, you are the center of God's mission for us as a church here, it's you at the center of this Daisy. God has placed you, they, who are the people, Mary, that he has got for you to reach out to, and then how do we provide the training and how do we provide the supportive programs? Mary actually connect with two or three people in her circle of influence. And so it, it shifts that thinking from everything's about bringing people here, you know, Mary should tell her people to come to the Easter service. That's how we helped Mary. Well, she says that every year and they say I'm stuffy Easter service.

I'm not interested in Easter service. Right.

Stop asking me about it, but how do we help Mary connect with the people in her circles? So it's this shift of thinking that is, is it's not complicated, but it's often just not being explored and then it hasn't been practically supported. So then the questions is, well, how do we train Marry?

Because currently we haven't trained, married to. And then we have that conversation, but th that's one of the key things that helps put a fixed point outside the circle that helps realize it's about equipping our people to be ministers of the gospel, where they are rather than they're not just sheep dogs, to bring everybody in here.

**Josh Yates:** Yeah. What, what are some of the sticking points maybe as you're working with minister leaders, they go, yeah, I get this. What I want to train Mary. I want like the Mary's I want to get and make sure that they can see their pedals around there and I'm all in. Maybe they take it back to them. The church leadership councils or they come back and they get distracted with busy-ness of, of doing things.

What are some of the things, the common things that you're working with young leaders to, to not let kind of that passion, if you will fade

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. Yeah. You. Cause it's tough Australia, much like the U S from what I understand, but it's it's tough soil out here in the sense. I mean, I don't even like saying that because it is the soil that we have and we will farm the soil we have. But, we need to encourage people and that they don't beat themselves up.

You know? I think the first thing I do is we want to help leaders start to live that lifestyle themselves, take the pressure off. You don't have to produce this thing in a big hurry, but who are we get them to work at their own diagram who are the people that God's placed in your heart, who are the people you're reaching out to?

So when I sit here at my desk, for example, I look across the street and a young family across the road, I'm constantly reaching out to them. We've the, the guy who lives next door you know, just on Sunday, shot him a text, say, Hey, you up for a walk or any let out for an hour. A day for a walk within five kilometers he's alone.

I'm alone at the moment is my wife's away. So it's, Hey, do you want to go for a walk? We regularly do that and have conversations. But I'm thinking of this family across the street. I haven't had the really detailed gospel conversation yet. And I need to work that to a location and a setting that, that, that makes that. So I'm engaged and excited about what's happening around me.

I'm praying for what's happening around me and I'm reaching out. And I, I asked my team to hold me accountable to how are you going with this Bill? You can't just be teaching others. So that's the first thing it's exciting when we see God at work in someone's life around us. And when we see God use us, that that's where the motivation comes from.

But the second level of motivation is for younger leaders is just start with someone, find a Mary. Find who are, who are the early adopters, so to speak the people who are frustrated at that lack of connection with non-church people and who just want to start form a team and just quietly without a big announcement.

Just start supporting each other at reaching out to those people, praying together. The third thing I'd say is rethink our evangelism training. Because when we do evangelism training and churches off and I've campus crusade powder to change, right. W we do evangelism training, right. Well often the evangelism training we do is kind of always predicated on the fact that we're going to go out and talk to strangers.

We're going to go out into the, you know, the city streets and make contact. And so it's people, we don't know, we have no relational affinity with them, particularly it's not in the context of their social community or network. And therefore it tends to be about ideas. And so it's very apologetic based. Typically, how do we win the day argument?

And then not that it doesn't produce fruit, sometimes miraculously it does, but simply said that training someone's training, Mary had to do that. Mary will never do that because she's not that type of person. But even if she learned to do that, how does she use that with her friends and her family that she sees every day? Or every week it's she needs to be trained in a much more of a incarnational lifestyle. And so we teach the leaders how to teach their people a very simple process. In fact we call it my friends, lifestyle training, and the very fact we call it, my friends is because this is designed to how you reach your friends.

How do you be living a lifestyle of mission like Jesus. Amongst your friends. But with the goal, not just having God conversations, but of potentially them experiencing a touch of God as you pray with him about needs. And you're looking to form a group around discovery Bible for them to discover God in his word.

**Josh Yates:** So Bill, real quick. You mentioned my friends and discovery Bible. Are those tools, practical tools that, that, a resource that you use through power to change? Or is that something that you guys have developed? Unpack that a little bit. If you can.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. I'll we'll do Internationally in the, in the in the mission worlds where they talk about whether it's the church planting world or the disciple making movements world, where you see explosion of disciples and multiplying groups and churches there is typically a few things of best practice.

One of them is starting with persons of peace. People who ha are held in high regard in their social network. It's who you begin with is, is key for multiplication. Secondly, that you help those people who are interested in the gospel, gather their friends to have a journey together, and they do it through simple discovery Bible study is what it's called or discovery Bible reading, which is a very simple model. You can Google that and you can find out about it. It's set questions, one text, and you can only engage with what's in the text. And it really is giving space for the Holy Spirit to speak to seekers through his word through simple inquiry.

And it's not trying to dump a whole lot of content or conclusions. It, it helps him discover Jesus in his word said discovery Bible reading that those discovery Bible reading groups are best held in the social network or the community of the seeker. In other words, they don't happen at church. You don't bring a person to a church building or even to the leader's house to do it it's best in their territory.

And then they have it in their context and then seeking to help those groups that are formed. Then as people come to Christ, then there, the real movement bit happened when you can see groups that group multiply.

Now in Western context Australia, United States, et cetera. To see those groups formed is a slower process as more challenging. And to see those groups multiply is also more challenging. It's definitely not impossible, it happens and we're seeing it happen.

And some parts of the world it's happening in spectacular ways. But the point of this is it will never happen if we don't see the groups form. And it's less likely to happen if it's not formed and owned by the, the S the, the seeker, if it's our thing, the church thing, rather than their thing, it's very unlikely to to multiply in a sense it's kind of a mission, missiologically it, it's more indigenous.

If it's formed around the seeker, in their context, in their cultural setting, with their connection. Then, if it's an eating their food, so to speak metaphorically, then if it's in the church's context and the church has cultural setting, cause they can't replicate

**Josh Yates:** Yeah.

Yeah. You just see that. I just see an example all over in the life of Christ with the women at the, well, you'd see that, you know, she invites Jesus come and Jesus remains there for a couple of days and stays within that. India. You just see that the, the questions, the community the movement in that is is, is beautiful.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah. And you see it. And often we don't read that in. We're kind of so used to reading a devotional messages in the Western church into what Jesus is doing. We just miss the obvious. Like when Jesus calls the, sorry, the four followers to become fishers of men, you know Peter, Andrew, James, and John.



And then he goes on what we often call is six fishing trips. You know, we just follow the gospel of Mark there. We have leaders go through this. I'll be having a group of guys. I'll take two senior pastors through it tomorrow, in fact. And we asked the question, what do we learn? What do we see? And then we asked a very simple question.

What, what is the setting of these things? How many of these settings are religious? Like church settings? Well, the synagogue that one's obviously, but the rest of them are not the rest of them, they're nothing to do with church. Their workplace down at the docks. Peter's home. Peter street and the neighbors.

And then they go off and th th the touring around, Yeah, you're speaking in the synagogues, but that's one, you know, that that's not all they were doing and then they're back.

So, so much of it is in the spaces where the people that people own those spaces. It's not even Jesus' spaces whose food they're eating the people's food, whose homes are they in? They're in the people's homes.

And it's this, it's this kind of sense that Jesus is immediately. This incarnational, you know, pushing out into where people are. Jesus' incarnation, didn't just stop becoming born as a baby every day, he was moving into other people's space. He was still coming. And that's what he's asking us to do.

So how do we help our people capture the fun, the joy, the excitement of just, wow, how do we live the lifestyle out there? And the simple training that can help them do that?

**Josh Yates:** Hmm. I love that that Jesus didn't just incarnate, but it's continually incarnating into moving into the lives of people and that we should be modeling that love that, that framework bill, as you, as you invest

into ministry leaders, as you talk through kind of this. You know, these foundations of a movement and the seeds of a movement.

Is there anything else here that maybe we just maybe miss, maybe I'd let you down a different path in terms of this idea of my friends and the the Daisy piece. Is there anything else here that that's coming to surface in your heart that you're like, Hey, Josh, I don't want to miss out on this. This is something that's so key to really the seeds of a movement.

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah.

I would say that as a definitely have in mind that it's about helping people to multiply. To see disciple to a discipling of new believers, to help that new believer be able to have a process they can learn to reproduce that simply transferable within a year or two of them becoming a believer at the most. And have minimalist simple tools that are reproducible by a new believer that don't require theological knowledge. They just know, I know Jesus, and this is how I can help someone else know Jesus. So. The mechanics and the tools simple, and it must be modeled.

It needs to be their experience. They need to have experienced it coming through. Because people will reproduce their experience on the other side of things we have to bathe it with prayer. We have to think, where are we going to start with? Whom are we going to start? When we start to see those, those new initiatives in you beyond the church walls, if you like, which, which social group will we prioritize?

Because. Just like Jesus. We can only be in one place at one time. So we have to be discerning prayerful led by the Spirit to we'll, which social group will we connect with, who are the people of peace. And just because we know people doesn't mean that they're necessarily the people of peace.

Never forget, where did Jesus begin his ministry? It wasn't Nazareth and it's spent 30 years. It's weird. We knew everybody. But there was no people of

peace in Nazareth that would same. The spirit led him to other places and he was discerning and obedient as he pried into where father, where is it with whom have you already prepared?

So that prayerfulness, that discernment, that research, if you like is really key.

Working with a young church planter and just coaching him in terms of where does he begin? And he's in a, in a new suburb, a new city. So he can just go frantic and just do evangelism all over the place. Or else we can say, now take a moment, do some homework, pray, do some research.

What would seem to be the most responsive people in your community? What would seem to be groups that you have least distance between you and them? What would seem to be, needs that you actually have the capacity to meet. In other words, by just simple research before you jump in. And it can sometimes mean that you're going to land in a place that is more prepared, more ready and less distance to travel than other places that you could work at forever.

In other words, you could end up in a Capernaum instead of a Nazareth, right? Just by some careful research and some prayerful discernment. And then finally I'd say that the keep focused on finding like parable of the soils, right. Finding good soil people and, and stay prioritized. You, if you want to see a movement develop, then you're not there just to meet needs.

You're there to find the people, God is raising up and to help them get mobilized because they will far exceed what you're able to do yourself. Because they're, they're they're people of that culture of that subgroup. Find good soil people and invest in them, prioritize them and nurture them to be effective, not in running programs that they see at the church, but to be primarily and firstly effective at making disciples amongst their networks.

Once that's going, then you can feel that I can promise you, you're going to have bigger gatherings. You got to have, you're going to have to structure all that stuff, but you gotta be structuring around life and multiplication and disciple-making rather than structuring around programs. And so That'd be some of the, some of the tips I would be saying, because that, that young church planter, he's going to expend every energy he's going to expand every day.

He's going to have no time left, but just because we work hard, doesn't mean that we're going to see the outcomes we need to be working in partnership with the spirit of God. And be discerning around that.

**Josh Yates:** Wow. Lots of powerful wisdom and truth uh, years of ministry experience Bill. This has been for me really encouraging. I love that structuring around life and around people, not around programs. The thought I had here kind of, and then I'll just ask this last question, any resources where we can find you on socials, but I just wonder if we would just think more like a church planter, you know.

If you think like a church planter who's coming in Spirit dependent. Prayerful asking God for who are, who are the persons of peace? Where's the good soil who can I multiply my life into to see a, to see now I don't want to plant a ministry I'm plant of movement. And that's what I'm hearing you say. If I can summarize that, I'm hearing you say, man, we got to think more like a strategy.

Going into a village, going into a town and saying, God, where are the people you have for me? And I think that would maybe shift our thinking to be more, more like movements rather than ministry.

So Bill, this has been man, it's been great for me. And so where, where would you suggest people find more resources, maybe things, articles how can people connect to you?

**Bill Hodgson:** Yeah, they can definitely just go to our website it's [www.powertochange.org.au](http://www.powertochange.org.au) [powertochange.org.au/church](http://powertochange.org.au/church) movements. And that'll take you to our web page. You can find out information about our shift, M2M training, the life of Christ stuff. You can find some information there about my friends that lifestyle of mission training and other things.

There's various resources there. They can look up. We also have recently launched a podcast where I'm just having conversations with other practitioners in the same sort of topic. And that's called making the shift is the name of the podcast, making the shift.

And you can find that on anchor or other, your favorite podcast, streaming service. That'd probably be the, the places you can, you can track us down.

**Josh Yates:** We'll post those links into our show notes. But Bill, I really appreciate your time, your ministry praying for you in your ministry efforts. So again, thank you for, for joining Sonlife everyday. Just help makers podcast.

**Bill Hodgson:** Thanks Josh.

## **Closing**

**Wayne:** man, Josh. I enjoyed that conversation with, with Bill Hodgson. I think anytime, anytime somebody has an accent, it's just easier to, to listen to that conversation. I don't know if you feel that way, but that's how I feel about people from other parts of the world. Like I kind of have to listen a little bit more carefully because like he speak in English, but he's not always speaking my English.

**Josh Yates:** People say that a lot about me. So I don't know. I hear you talking, but I have no idea what you're saying, Josh. So if I see you listening intently, then I know why,

**Wayne:** Right. Yep. Always just trying to pay attention. And man, one thing Bill said there towards the end of the conversation, he said just because we work hard doesn't mean that we're going to see the outcomes we need to be working in partnership with the spirit of God and being discerning around that.

I think so often in ministry, you know, we, we attend the conference or reread the book and we're like, well, this worked for this person in this context. So I need to. I need to do this and God will move in that same way.

It's easy to learn what we should do and then do it. But, but especially for some leaders, I think it's hard to take that step back and say, God, what, what do you have for me? God, what do you have for me in this season so that we can be working? In step with the Holy Spirit and what God is calling us to.

Not just looking for, you know, 10 hacks to grow your ministry to 1000 by the end of the year. So I just really love that dependence on the spirit. What do you have from a takeaway with this conversation

**Josh Yates:** Just, just even, yeah. Even that with with Wayne, I think it's so true. I love that insight. are. So oftentimes the people who who've written a book or have the the platform, you know say, Hey, here's the steps do it. And we can be inspired by that. And we can come back and try to apply that.

Or we listened to even a great podcast or read a great book. But I think listening to what does the Holy Spirit have to say to you in light of that? And. Otherwise it's gonna become just manufactured energy. You're just going to try to, to, to create some kind of momentum and a, not necessarily to be the momentum that comes from the dependence of the Holy Spirit.

And I think tying into that for me, what he said that was such a great reminder is that Jesus is more about building a movement than building a

ministry. And there's a lot that's out there on building models of ministry, how to build your ministry tips, tricks, tools of the trade, which we need, I'm not diminishing those things. But I think the end of the day, it's, we're thinking about how do we build movements of disciple-making?

Well, that's gotta be a prayerful and spirit dependent. And so for me, that was a great reminder hearing Bill, just just talk about evangelism, reaching out to his neighborhood, his community, and and he is in a very, if you know, Currently the, the, the lockdowns in Australia pretty, pretty intense.

So hearing him just talk about his love for evangelism in, in the context that's, that's challenging.

We really hope that these conversations are encouraging to you. So please share them with a friend and reach out to us at podcast at Sonlife dot com. But stick around and to listen to our, disciplinemaking moment.

## **Disciple Making Moment**

**Jay Fast:** Well, Hey, my name is Jay fast. I'm Sonlife international ministries coordinator. And I'm excited to be here with you today for another disciple-making moment. As I've been thinking recently about transitions and especially coming through 2020 into 2021 and the whole COVID 19 thing, I know we're all probably sick and tired of hearing about it.

But we've we've been having to navigate some significant transitions. Regardless of our ministry role, our ministry position whether you're on staff in a local church or with a ministry of some sort or whatever that looks like we all go through different seasons and different transitions.

And and so not necessarily specifically tied to COVID-19, but As I think about this idea of transitions, a few thoughts have come to mind some principles from the life of Jesus, how to come through transitions, how to navigate

transitions well so we can continue to stay focused on making disciples who will make disciples.

And so just a couple of things that I've been thinking about and just want to run these ideas past yet today, as we think about this disciple-making moment together. In Matthew three we see Jesus coming to John to be baptized at the beginning of his ministry.

And he's, he's transitioning at that point from the first 30 years, what we would call at Sonlife we call the preparation period in his life. Those first 30 years are all about the Father preparing him for the ministry that's coming the ministry. And so he comes to be baptized and, and the first principal that I see here in Jesus, as he heads from this transition out of the preparation period into what we call the ministry foundations phase of his ministry, is that he's keeping the mission in clear view. That he comes to John and recognizing there are lots of agendas that people have lots of agendas that could have pulled Jesus off the mission.

Including John, John, the Baptist himself, you know, as, as Jesus's engaging with him there at the Jordan river it seems like John is saying, man, you should be baptizing me rather than the other way around. And, and Jesus doesn't get sidetracked. He doesn't get distracted. He stays laser focused that this is the right thing to do.

Let it be. So now it's, it's it's to fulfill all righteousness. It's the right thing to do. And so Jesus really keeps keeps laser focused on the mission. He keeps the mission in clear view.

Second a second principle I see from Jesus's as we look at some of the transitions that he went through is that he really took his time working through transitions.

He didn't, he didn't rush through. Hurry through those transitions in Matthew chapter four, we see them transitioning out of the ministry foundations



phase after about a year and a half or so. And, and he moves to and settles in the town of Capernaum. And this is going to be his new ministry base of operations from this point forward for the rest of his ministry.

And, and that, that word that, that appears in, in Matthew chapter four, verse 13, that he settled in Capernaum is really important that he didn't just move there. And then, you know, the next day jump right back into ministry, but he took some time and he settled. He, he got to know the people that he was living with.

He arranged the furniture in the house, whatever it is, whatever settling looked like in the first century. Most of us can imagine, and most of us have probably experienced some sort of a move and in our life. And so we know what it's like, and we know how long it takes to really settle into a new place. And Jesus did that. So he took his time. He didn't rush through those transitions.

Third principle I see is that Jesus didn't make hasty decisions in the midst of transition. So in Mark chapter one, we see the transition from phase two, again, from the, the ministry foundations phase into phase three and four ministry training and an expanded outreach.

And Jesus is calling Peter and Andrew and James and John to continue following him. And he's gonna, he's gonna teach them how to fish for people. And, and what Jesus doesn't do is he, he doesn't dump his ministry team that he had started building up and started working with for the first year and a half of his ministry.

He doesn't say I'm done with that. I'm just going to start over and get a, get a whole new team. You know, things went kind of bad at Nazareth, you know? And so I'm just gonna, I'm just going to start from scratch. He doesn't, he doesn't make a hasty decision there. He says, you know what, I'm going to continue investing.

I'm going to continue keeping focused on the mission that the father has given me, and I'm going to continue walking in that. And so we don't want to make hasty decisions.

The fourth principle I see from Jesus is that he's just always listening to the. So in Luke chapter six, Jesus goes up on the mountain. He spends a whole, a whole night in prayer before choosing the 12.

Heading into phase five, the, the leadership multiplication phase, the last 15 months or so of his ministry. And, and he just spends time listening and talking with his father. He spends time in. This is something that's super simple, but so often overlooked in, in our ministries nowadays.

And so we need to spend time. In, in prayer with the father, listening to his voice, allowing him to speak in. So just a few, a few principles from the life of Jesus from, from those transitional periods in his life and his ministry as, as you're transitioning, as you're working to come out of the COVID fog or whatever, it might be, whatever the next transition might be in your various seasons of ministry.

I want to encourage you and challenge you to keep looking at Jesus for what it looks like to transition well.