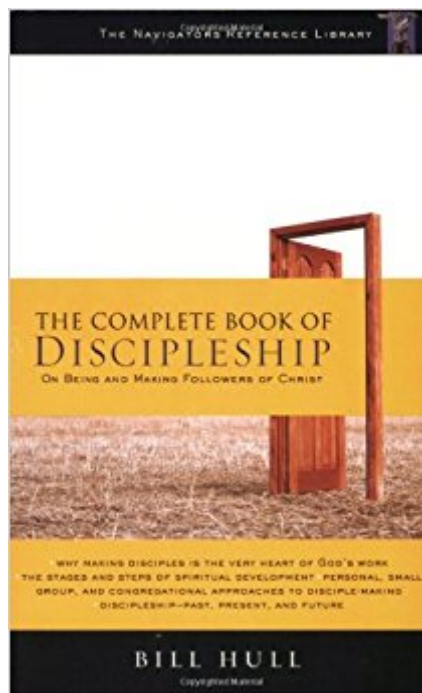




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# **The Complete Book Of Discipleship: On Being And Making Followers Of Christ (The Navigators Reference Library)**



## Synopsis

Well organized and readily accessible, The Complete Book of Discipleship pulls together into one convenient, comprehensive volume relevant topics to discipleship such as: Spiritual growth Transformation Spiritual disciplines Discipleship in the local church and beyond Indexed for easy reference

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Complete Book of Discipleship is the definitive A-to-Z resource on discipleship for every Christian. It pulls together into one convenient, comprehensive volume relevant topics such as spiritual growth, transformation, spiritual disciplines, and discipleship in the local church and beyond. Best of all, it's produced by The Navigators, the internationally respected organization with more than seventy years of practical discipleship ministry experience. Well organized, fully indexed, and readily accessible, The Complete Book of Discipleship will help you gain a wealth of insight from experts in the field, whether by reading it cover to cover or by finding immediate answers to specific questions.

Bill Hull's efforts as a pastor and writer has been focused on being a disciple and making disciples. He has written several groundbreaking books for leaders and churches. Bill and his wife, Jane, have been married since 1969 and are the parents of two grown sons.

This is one of the favorites on discipleship. It began with the biblical foundation, to tell readers

“what is discipleship. The unique characteristic of Jesus’ discipleship is elaborated. It’s the radical transformation of disciples. His popular four phases of discipleship are enlightening: come and see, come and follow me, come and be with me, and remain in me. The practical aspect of coaching and mentoring was given, from small groups to congregations to future generations. The author is keen to list what he thinks is important, including the “ten commandments of coaching.” The need to do it right is stressed, and it is to reproduce and multiply. In his appendixes, different successful models of discipleship as practiced by churches were given. The value of this book for the project, as the title suggests, it’s a complete book on discipleship, or may be better called, a handbook on discipleship. I have since, read the book at least twice.

Our church has been pursuing Christ’s call to disciple making in earnest for about three years now. What a sad testimony that is! Why did it take so long for us to get on track with God? Well, at least we are walking in step with Jesus now regarding the Great Commission. God has taught us a lot, but the biggest room in our house is still the room for improvement. Bill Hull’s book came to my attention at just the right time. Doesn’t that sound like the Lord? Let me share some highlights from this treasure trove on discipleship. First of all, Bill has been on his discipleship journey for about forty years. He has been writing about this topic for a long time, too. I found that he sees things quite a bit as God has been teaching us, except he has a greater depth and breadth that are helpful and inspiring. This is one of those books from which you will be quoting. Not only is there a wealth of information, but Bill challenges his reader to the core. Bill deals with the “elephant in the room” - consumerist non-discipleship Christianity. He shows how this capitulation to our culture has robbed the church of her obedience, power, and vibrancy. He also addresses the false notion that discipleship can be thought of as a program for new believers that can be checked off the list and moved beyond. Discipleship is a lifetime journey. Bill gives his readers a brief overview of the history of discipleship in the church, beginning with the Greco-Roman world up through Dietrich Bonhoeffer. At the end of the book he catches us up on present thoughts and practices. He also covers the marks of a disciple, the stages of discipleship, what is involved in spiritual transformation, the various approaches to disciple making, the role of small groups in the process, how discipleship works in the church, leaving a generational legacy through discipleship, and, finally, the future of discipleship. At the end of the book, referring to some of Barna’s research, he gives five examples of churches which seem to be doing a good job at making disciples, each one doing it a different way. Some of the “gems” that I have taken from my first reading of this book are below. I suppose

everyone will be impacted slightly differently, depending on where we are in our own journey, but I believe any serious disciple will benefit from giving this work a chance. Bill shares that most churches do a pretty good job at focusing on growth in the knowledge of the Bible, learning ministry skills, and focusing on inner character transformation. Where we break down is usually in the area of being personally accountable to a mentor and in making a commitment to invest in at least one other person at any given time. At our church, we probably need to focus on being accountable to someone we love and trust. We have talked about it a lot, but it is still fairly rare. Bill talks about entering into training rather than simply trying harder. He emphasizes the importance of cultivating the inner life, something that is a little foreign to many evangelicals formed by our consumer culture. Bill also is big on having a manageable way to measure progress. This is another area in which we can improve. This does not mean we become regimented or program-oriented, but it does require giving some thought to providing a way to facilitate growth. One of the best sections for me addresses the need for leaders to "detox" by giving up the "gods" that traditionally rule over our concept of church "success" and which militate against true discipleship. The first of these is the worship of attendance. Quoting Dallas Willard, Hull writes: We must flatly say that one of the greatest contemporary barriers to meaningful spiritual formation into Christlikeness is overconfidence in the spiritual efficacy of "regular church services."... One way to give up the god of attendance is to replace it with a different goal. When our goal moves from wanting recognition from others to the transformation of others, we put the god of attendance in its place. (p.265) Secondly, leaders must stop bowing down to the god of "increase." I will quote one line: "Perhaps the toughest place to decrease is in the influence and power we hold over people around us. Any leadership based on increasing the leader is wrong." (p.267) The third "god" that must be dethroned in our lives is "competence." The culture honors competence. But the myth of competence is thinking that we'll outgrow our weaknesses, sins, fears, and disappointments. The myth is that we'll reach a place of spiritual competence where we'll "get it together." Those times never come. In fact, as we become more like Jesus, our dependence on God increases... Our wounds and weaknesses are real; our inabilities are exposed for others to see. When we lead with our weakness and our wounds, we gain a powerful way to touch others around us. (p.268-9) Hull exhorts leaders to focus on the development of the inner life and giving ourselves over to the principle of discipleship. "The principle of God's plan of discipleship is the impact of one life on another - the character, skill, and perspective of one godly person influencing another willing person." (p.270) A final benefit is that this book provides a wealth of lists of reading materials for the person who wants to go deeper into learning about this most interesting and important topic. You really should read this book! Seeing

## God's Smile

An excellent treatise on what Jesus followers should be engaged in as part of running the good race. This book provides great historical references to the church fathers as well as some extremely practical guidance on how to develop a local ministry in discipleship in keeping with Matt 28:19-20. Start here and start local to develop believers in maturity in their relationship and obedience to Our Savior.

Hull approaches the subject of discipleship in a refreshing way rooted in biblical and historical material. My apprenticeship to Jesus was challenged, refined, and renewed as a result of Hull's thoughts and observations of biblical discipleship. I highly recommend this reading for young believers seeking to go beyond event-based, production oriented, consumer Christianity to organic apprenticeship to Jesus.

There is a great emphasis in many evangelical churches on trusting in Christ for salvation but little emphasis on following Jesus. There is much more emphasis in many of the most influential churches on life management and maximizing our success. But Jesus clearly said that those who know Jesus follow Jesus (John 10:27). When we read the Scriptures we clearly see that those who are called Christians are those who follow Jesus, not simply those who make a "decision for Christ." Of course, the Bible says we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Yet, when one is a Christian, there will be change in one's life as a result of knowing Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). However, honest Christians will acknowledge that we don't always know where or how to begin with following Jesus. Enter Bill Hull's excellent work *The Complete Book of Discipleship*. Hull gives us the biblical basis and historical background for the life of discipleship in the church. Hull discusses the work of discipleship for the individual and in small groups. He highlights how pastors and churches can recapture a passion for discipleship that goes beyond programs to reaching people. There were two especially helpful parts of the book for me. First, I was reminded of my favorite quote from Bill Hull, "Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning." This line always reminds me of the fact that God has given means which he expects me to put to use in my life as a disciple, never out of a desire to earn His favor, but simply as a consequence of His work in my life. The other part of the book that was so helpful to me and I would recommend to everyone, is chapter 12 "The Future of Discipleship: Living the Jesus Way." I appreciate Hull's writings and this book is one of his best. Highly recommended.

Great book & valuable resource....we are learning the How To's & the How Not To's, from this book

Mr. Hull does an excellent job in covering the various topics on discipleship, providing good depth, suggestions for further study, and most importantly, focused on following the way our Master taught us to Mae disciples.

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