

The Three Dimensional Christian

The 3-D Christian

In Christ - In Mission - In Fellowship



An *Equipping Track* resource - www.equippingtrack.com

To all those students, congregants and friends who have encouraged me over the years and especially to those who have nagged me to put some of my reflections into a book.

To Dora Maria,
mi regalo de Dios.

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INTRODUCTION

I first arranged to meet Paul at a famous fast food outlet. We sat drinking coffee and discussed his interest in attending the Bible School GAP YEAR I was running.

Paul had been a Christian for about three years. He had a powerful testimony of how he had met Jesus. However since his conversion he had done little more than sit at the back of a church on Sunday mornings.

Did God have more for him? Does God have more for you?

The GAP YEAR proved to be a life-changing experience for Paul. Two years later he was leading International Short-Term Mission teams; and the following year he was appointed my Associate Pastor. Within one year Paul had progressed from being the man who couldn't join in with the worship, because he didn't know the songs, to a wise and prophetic disciple of Christ with a passion for evangelism and a pastor's heart.

Paul's not alone. There are many others who have a similar testimony. Sadly there are far more of Christ's disciples still sitting passively in some church meeting on a Sunday morning or at a mid-week home group, experiencing little and sharing less of the great adventure - which is, *living life to the full with Jesus*.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

The *Three Dimensional Christian* is the result of pastoring and equipping believers for more than 20 years, in church-based ministry, bible schools and international missions. During these years I have become increasingly determined to assist individuals in becoming *effective disciples* of Jesus. Drawing on much of the material that encouraged and empowered my friend Paul, the *Three Dimensional Christian* is an interactive 12 week course that allows believers to be established and matured in their walk with God.

The *Three Dimensional Christian* has a memorable structure to communicate, simply, the calling upon every believer's life to live effectively as a disciple of Jesus.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Peter 1:8

This verse from 2Peter suggests that the New Testament church had problems with ineffective and unproductive believers. Today, we may have an ever expanding knowledge of Jesus, but do we have the tools to process and apply that knowledge?

THE COURSE

This course expands the three key components of the *Three Dimensional Christian* with each section lasting four weeks.

WEEKS 1-4	In Christ
WEEKS 5-8	In Mission
WEEKS 9-12	In Fellowship

An explanation of each component is given in detail within the daily studies of WEEK 1.

THE STRUCTURE

The structure is based on a 'five day week' (each week contains five sections of daily notes) to allow for the irregular routines of weekends and to give the space and opportunity to 'catch up' if you miss a day.

The course is not designed to be read as a text book. It's structure over twelve weeks is deliberate so that you have time to *learn, apply* and *grow*.

The daily notes contain interactive material. Again this is deliberate so that you engage in different ways with the themes and the issues they raise.

Ideally you should do this course with at least one other person, a mentor or in a small group. In addition to the daily notes you'll find at the back of the book, the guidelines for small groups and mentors. These notes will give you helpful hints to get the most out of your corporate times together. Having a weekly time where you are free to share and discuss your journey is an invaluable part of the overall exercise in completing the course.

Finally,... "TWELVE WEEKS does not one GAP YEAR make."

However you'll be astonished to see what God can accomplish, in these coming weeks, as you commit yourself to HIM and to supporting, and receiving the support of, OTHERS. Don't be a flat Christian, be a *Three Dimensional Christian*.

Therefore to get the best out of the *Three Dimensional Christian* you are required to:

- make a 12 week commitment to the course
Don't be tempted to read and rush ahead ..!
- interact with the material
Get a Bible, a pen and a notebook, to write, scribble & doodle ..!
- share your findings with others
Share & prayer - grow with others and help others grow ..!

...And Paul if you're reading this, thanks for your encouragement to get me to put some of this stuff into a book - let's pray it works and blesses many other 'back-row-believers' into finding the wonderful adventure that is: *Becoming an Effective Disciple of Jesus*.

Simon Rennie
February 2010

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In addition to my wonderful and inspirational wife, Dora Maria, the following people have personally helped to shape my spirituality and envision my ministry, as a result, many of their insights appear in different guises in this book: Godfrey Birtill, Arthur Blessitt, Teresa Lasky, Victor Lorenzo, Neil Loxley, Roger and Sue Mitchell, Jane Rennie, Martin Scott, Ed Silviso, Laurence Singlehurst and John Swindell. I also want to acknowledge with lasting gratitude the ministries of Mike Bickle, Joel Comiskey, Dutch Sheets, George Verwer and John Wimber.

INSTRUCTIONS

WATCH FOR THE SIGNS

To help you interact with the *Three Dimensional Christian* material certain symbols are used in the text to highlight specific tasks:



The book means that you need to look up a Bible reference. Many texts are already written out in full within the notes. All such texts are taken from the New International Version, unless otherwise stated. Any additional or alternative words included in the text for clarity by the author are contained within square brackets. Always have a Bible with you, when going through the studies, so that you can look up other needed texts. The more you use your Bible the more it will help you in getting to know it.



The pencil signifies you that you're required to write something. Fill in BLANKS, TICK boxes, contribute your own thoughts or make a list. Avoiding these exercises (to keep your book tidy and looking unused) will actually prove to be detrimental. The book is designed to be interactive. In terms of education, when you link reading *with* writing you will learn and retain far more.

Always have your Bible, a notebook and pen with you throughout the course.



The question mark suggests a question in the notes. This may be something to answer specifically (by all means write the answer in your book). Or sometimes something more rhetorical, ... something just to ponder.



The road sign 'men at work' alerts you to having to do some work! This may be an exercise of some sort that requires your immediate attention but probably does not require you to write.



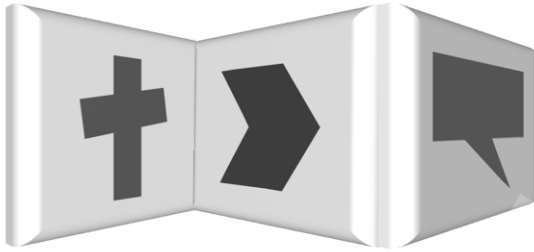
Pray. You don't need to close your eyes and bow your head, but in the next 12 weeks you will develop an ever increasing ability to PRAY!



In France this sign with the exclamation mark, is often accompanied by the single word - 'MANIFESTATION'. When you see this sign in the notes it is most probably highlighting something of particular importance - something to note.

In English grammar the exclamation mark is used to place emphasis on a statement or to communicate that written dialogue is to be expressed with force. SAY IT LOUD! This symbol may be used to encourage you to speak out loud a Bible verse or biblical truth. Say it out loud. Profess the truth with your mouth. Make a clear declaration. Sometimes it will be helpful to repeat the phrase or verse -

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Philippians 4:4



The Three Dimensional Christian

WEEKS 1-4

IN CHRIST

1. The Three Dimensional Christian
2. Out Through The In Door
3. Three Anointings
4. Life Changing Days

WEEK 1: THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

DAY 1: LOVE LOVE LOVE

Perhaps one of the greatest revelations you could ever receive from God is that HE LOVES YOU. God loves you unconditionally. He can't love you anymore than He does right now and He can't love you any less.

You may often hear people in churches say, "Christianity isn't a religion, it's a relationship." - that's true. So to start this 12 WEEK journey of personal spiritual development we will begin with the topic of love and probably the most famous verse in the entire Bible:

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

It all revolves around God loving the world; and because God loves the world, that means He loves you! The life, ministry, death and life again of Jesus, that allows us to find forgiveness, adoption into God's family and life everlasting ... all happened because of God's love for us.

Therefore if we are going to follow Jesus, 'love' is undoubtedly going to be a key component.

In the Gospels we discover Jesus presenting three love commandments.



Fill in your answers

The greatest commandment according to Jesus can be summarised as:

_____ GOD

Jesus said that the second commandment is like the first:

_____ YOUR NEIGHBOUR

The 'new commandment' is a call for us to:

_____ ONE ANOTHER

The concept of the *Three Dimensional Christian* is based upon these three love commandments:

LOVE GOD

Our first calling is to love God. Biblically this is only made possible by understanding that God first loves us (1John 4:10). Perhaps the first true step we can take in loving God is to thank Him by acknowledging and accepting His

unconditional love for us. Much of our maturing, as believers, is directly connected to understanding God’s love and our new identity ‘in Christ’, as we accept, believe and confess Jesus as Lord.

Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me?...
John 14:10

... Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you sent me. John 17:21

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2Corinthians 5:17

... as believers we have a wonderful new identity: we are **IN CHRIST**.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Here the commandment is to love others, our neighbours. Jesus used the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) to explain the meaning of the term ‘neighbour’. The term is totally inclusive crossing all cultural and ethnic boundaries. Jesus calls us to love everyone. In normal usage our neighbours are those ‘next door’ outside of our own household. Therefore, the focus of this second commandment is not on Christians loving other Christians, but rather on Christians loving those outside of their community of faith. In this regard, every disciple of Jesus is called to be **IN MISSION**.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Note that in John 13:34 Jesus is talking specifically to the disciples, thus this ‘new commandment’ is aimed at those within the community of faith, that is those that we are already **IN FELLOWSHIP** with.

... thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.
2Corinthians 2:14



Praise God! Thank You Lord, that You always lead us (those ‘in Christ’) in triumph. And through us (Your church... Your followers... Your worshippers... Your redeemed...) You spread Your fragrance (Your anointing... Your message... Your presence...) everywhere and to everyone. This relationship I have with You, cannot be contained, You designed it from the very beginning to be spread. Thank you Lord Jesus.



The box in the margin begins ‘God loves me’, in no less than 20 words complete the paragraph below:

I LOVE GOD _____

God loves me, not because He's God and He has to, but because I'm me and He wants to. The sacrifice of Jesus proves His love to me. God loves me. I am both created in His image and unique in His creation.

WEEK 1: THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

DAY 2: A CHRISTIAN DEFINITION

After a number of years as a church pastor I sat down one day and asked myself the question, "What is a Christian?" I didn't ask the question because I was in some personal doubt over the issue. But I was concerned that many Christians, although certain of their salvation and quite knowledgeable in the Bible, were living a very passive spiritual existence. I thought to myself, "This can't be right - can it..?!"



How would you define a Christian?

DEFINING A CHRISTIAN

The apostle Paul writes:

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

Is that it...? Simply a statement that comes out of our mouth linked to a belief in our heart...?

If we examine this verse more closely, looking at the original Greek words used, we will discover a far more detailed and challenging definition.

- The word 'confess' - *homologeō* - means more than the recital of a statement of fact. It implies a 'binding public declaration by which a legal relationship is contractually established'. Therefore the short statement that 'Jesus is Lord' is the announcement of a commitment to a relational process to establish the Lordship of Jesus in our life.
- The word 'believe' - *pisteuo* - also means more than giving acknowledgement to a fact or doctrine. It implies a belief so strong that it leads to responsive and appropriate action.

Therefore, Romans 10:9 is a wonderfully concise verse showing how someone in becoming a Christian, is more accurately, becoming a 'disciple'.

CHRISTIANITY IS NOT A SPECTATOR'S SPORT



Matthew 16v13-19

In Matthew 16 we find Jesus talking to His disciples about the church. The words of Jesus here give us great insight on how He saw the church, and also how we ought to see ourselves as Christians.

In summary Matthew 16:13-19 tells us the following: Jesus asks the disciples who they think He is. Simon (by revelation from the Father) declares Jesus to be **the Christ, the Son of the living God**. Then Jesus responds by announcing His desire to build His church on this revelation. The place of Death (Hades) will have no defence against this church, and we will receive Kingdom keys to bind and loose spiritual activity that manifests in the physical realm.

The church begins with a revelation of who Jesus is. A revelation that comes spiritually. Once we have grasped who Jesus is, we are called immediately into a task, and equipped for that task. Christianity is not a spectators' sport. The task is not simply to go to church on a Sunday! The task is invading the place of *death* in order to loose people into *life*. In these verses we discover **three key components** to the life of a believer:

- their understanding of Jesus,
- which leads them to become part of a growing church
- and then their immediate commissioning into the task of evangelism (which is described in Matthew 16 in terms of spiritual warfare.)



Do these three components sound familiar in any way?

ANSWER: In Christ, In Fellowship, In Mission,

PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY DISCIPLESHIP AND MISSION

In the Gospels, Jesus talks to us, He tells us things, makes wonderful statements and asks questions: 'Follow me', 'I will make you fishers of men', 'where two or three meet in my name there I am with you', 'Do you love me?', 'Love one another', 'you will do even greater things', 'whatever you ask in my name...', 'with God nothing is impossible.'



John 15:15

As Christians we are being drawn into a wonderful relationship with the creator of the universe who calls us 'friends'. The God, who can do the impossible, wants to be our friend. God is willing to go out of His way for us...! He's already proven this on the Cross - His sacrifice, His willingness to 'pay the price' for our redemption - so we're forgiven, accepted and adopted into His family. Wait! There's more... there's the promise of His Holy Spirit to dwell inside of us, to equip us, empower us and strengthen us. This means, that in all things we can work in co-operation with the God of the universe. Never forget ...

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1John 4:4

Whatever we face,...

God is with us.

Whatever our past,...

God is our healer and redeemer.

Whatever the future,...

God can be trusted, to guide and sustain us.

WEEK 1: THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

DAY 3: THE 3-D CHRISTIAN

The concept of the *Three Dimensional Christian* is based on the findings from Romans 10:9, combined with the words of Jesus from Matthew 16 and the three love commandments we looked at in DAY 1.

Remember from DAY 1..?

- Love God
- Love your neighbour
- Love one another.

So the *Three Dimensional Christian* is a believer who is:

- In Christ
- In Mission
- In Fellowship



Read the following paragraphs below explaining the different aspects of the *Three Dimensional Christian* and then in the space provided write down your own thoughts concerning your present condition and situation and how it compares to the expectations of being a *Three Dimensional Christian*.

IN CHRIST

Living in the reality of our new identity in Christ.

... I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Philippians 3:12

Therefore, we are passionately pursuing God. Seeing the lifestyle changes that Paul mentions throughout his epistles, such as Ephesians 5:18, not getting drunk with wine, but being filled with the Holy Spirit. Nurturing a relationship with our Father God, developing a passion for Jesus and learning to minister in the power of His Holy Spirit.



IN CHRIST (your thoughts and status)

IN MISSION

The calling on all believers to be witnesses. To minister with the keys of the Kingdom. To be apostolic and evangelistic in our discipleship. To carry the heart of God for the 'lost', the 'least' and the 'last'. To connect with the world around us as 'salt and light'. To invade the spheres of society to reflect a Christian ethos in the areas of: marriage, family and work. To announce 'Good News', address social injustices and demonstrate the power of God's Kingdom.



IN MISSION (your thoughts and status)

IN FELLOWSHIP

Being rooted into a healthy expression of church. Growing into the responsibility of mutual edification - *to build and be built*. Understanding it's not good to be alone, but to place ourselves in a corporate setting where we can receive the blessings of: corporate discipleship, the dynamics of team, shared responsibilities, support, love, and that extra something of anointed synergy. Synergy is the concept that: the 'whole' is greater than the 'sum of the parts'.



IN FELLOWSHIP (your thoughts your status)

BE ENCOURAGED!

The explanations outlined above of the *Three Dimensional Christian* are quite 'full on'. They may seem to place a lot of expectation on the individual believer, yet in reality, they seek to capture the true potential already 'seeded' within every believer of Christ.

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2Corinthians 5:17

In the coming weeks the truth of this verse *will* be made manifest increasingly in your life - *Praise God..!*

2Corinthians 5:17
THEREFORE: as a result of, an automatic condition.
ANYONE: totally inclusive, including you!
IN CHRIST: a new identity and a powerfully new relationship.
NEW CREATION: a remarkable transformation.
THE OLD HAS GONE: freedom from the past.

WEEK 1: THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

DAY 4: THE 4-D BELIEVER

How many times have you sought to begin something new - an attempt to turn over a new leaf, or to make a new year's resolution? Have you ever heard the phrase, 'the diet starts tomorrow' ..? As Christians we can find ourselves constantly seeking to start again. Even this book (that is designed to help you) could become, to some, another sad and failed episode in their Christian life.



Let's make a **DECISION**, now, that that is not going to happen.

THE 4-D BELIEVER

The 'D' in this title does not stand for 'dimensional' but for four, easy to remember, words beginning with 'D'.

Sometimes we want God to wave a magic wand over our lives so that everything changes for good. Sometimes we hear stories of how God miraculously transformed someone's life. God can do the most amazing things - that's true.

We saw in DAY 1, that Christianity is a relationship. God has not forced us to love Him by programming us like a robot. Jesus gives the call to follow ... we then must decide what our true heart response will be. We need to make a **DECISION**.

The Bible promises us:

Come near to God and He will come near to you... James 4:8

The invitation has gone out - it's now our **DECISION**.



Have you guessed what the first word is?

DECISION

Every effective change that you allow into your life begins with a **DECISION**.

Educational **DECISIONS**:

- The **DECISION** of what to study

Major life **DECISIONS**:

- The **DECISION** of where to live
- The **DECISION** of who to marry

Spiritual **DECISIONS**:

- The **DECISION** to follow Christ
- The **DECISION** to use this book
- The **DECISION** to use a mentor or friend to help you through this material

Once you have made your **DECISION** you then need the **DISCIPLINE** to follow it through. That's where the different components of this study book help. The daily notes, the interactive material and the strong suggestion that you meet weekly with someone or some others to chat about the material. All of these things bring **DISCIPLINE** to your **DECISION** which in turn will help you succeed. But what about God's help in all this ..? Well of course He will help, if you make the **DECISION** to ask for it and put in place the **DISCIPLINE** to pursue it.



Matthew 7:7-8

In all three of the commands in these verses the onus is on us 'to do'. Though preachers may want to tell us ... 'God created us human beings not human doings.' ... even the ability to simply 'be' in the midst of the day's activities comes only as the result of the **DECISION** and **DISCIPLINE** to do so.

1. Ask
2. Seek
3. Knock

These three terms are pro-active and they command a blessing - God *will* answer.

DISCIPLINE is a means to make sure that a goal is reached.

DESIRE is also a strong motivation to see that a goal is reached.

Certain sin can be avoided, because we have the **DISCIPLINE** to resist the temptation OR we no longer have the **DESIRE** for such sin. Jesus says,

If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching... John 14:23



Is that a command to obey OR a statement of fact that love will automatically motivate obedience?

FROM DISCIPLINE TO DESIRE

If we stay in the realms of **DISCIPLINE** we are in danger of becoming religious. Our life with God will be motivated out of acts of disciplined self-control, rather than outrageous gestures of personal **DESIRE** - such as overwhelming love for God and a heart for worship.

Once God has become our **DESIRE**, He will be our **DELIGHT**. What separates these two words is the sense of 'yearning for' and 'resting in'. We normally **DESIRE** that which is not yet. Whereas we **DELIGHT** in a present reality.

So the journey is complete: I made my initial **DECISION** and **DISCIPLINED** my first steps. Then a growing **DESIRE** emerged that drove me forward to the place where I now **DELIGHT** in God's presence.

We are on a journey and at each new juncture one of these four 'D' words will describe how we will continue to make progress as a believer.



What **DECISIONS** do you need to make to get the most out of these studies?

How might certain **DISCIPLINES** help you?

Now **PRAY**, inviting God's help and grace to anoint your plans.

WEEK 1: THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

DAY 5: CHECK YOUR WIRING

If it's cold outside having an electric fire inside is only of value if you plug it in..!



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

If you just skimmed over that last verse,... READ IT AGAIN. Read it out loud. It's good stuff. We are *blessed* with EVERY spiritual blessing IN CHRIST.

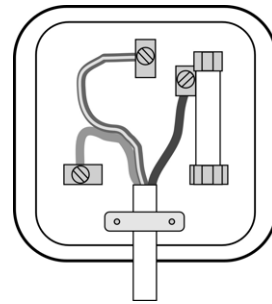
If the truth of that verse is not manifesting in your life then get PLUGGED IN. And if you think you are plugged in - then CHECK YOUR WIRING!

The three components of the *Three Dimensional Christian* are not options for 'advanced disciples', but essentials for every Christian believer.

When we are not...

- In Christ
- In Mission
- In Fellowship

... we become dysfunctional.



CHECK YOUR WIRING

Like an electric plug that has not been wired correctly, we fail to function in the fullness of who we are meant to be in Christ Jesus. In the UK, domestic electric plugs have three pins and serve as a helpful illustration for understanding the *Three Dimensional Christian*. If the plug is not wired with the earth, live and neutral wires correctly attached to the right pins, when the plug is put into the electric socket nothing will happen.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Hebrews 13:8

God's ability and availability has not changed. If we're not living under the empowering presence of the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) then the problem is more than likely to be with us than with the 'Heavenly Grid'.

Today we're going to check our wiring.



IN CHRIST

1. In the last six months how have you matured in your walk with God?

2. What DECISIONS have you taken and/or what DISCIPLINES have you put in place to develop your relationship with God?

IN MISSION

3. Are there non-believers that you interact with on a weekly basis

- YES
- NO

4. Have you been instrumental in leading someone to the Lord?

- YES
- NO

5. Are you able to share the Gospel with someone and then pray for them?

- YES
- NO

IN FELLOWSHIP

6. Are you meeting regularly with other believers where you are blessed and encouraged?

- YES
- NO

7. Are you meeting with a group of other believers where you can share freely your joys and struggles, of being a Christian, for the mutual benefit of all in the group?

- YES
- NO

THE THREE DIMENSIONAL CHRISTIAN

8. How would you describe your present spiritual condition?

On the page opposite is a diagram showing the wiring of a UK domestic electric plug. It just so happens to reveal another helpful picture...



Can you see how the *Three Dimensional Christian* flows out

from the R of R

Take the time now to flick through the past week's notes to remind yourself of what God has been saying to you, then *pray*.



Pray about your walk with God - IN CHRIST

Pray about being a witness to those around you who don't know Jesus yet - IN MISSION

Pray about your life with other believers - IN FELLOWSHIP