



DARC: 101



*An Introduction and Orientation to
Visionwriters International*

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INTRODUCTION

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and burning with spiritual zeal, he spoke and taught diligently and accurately the things concerning Jesus...

ACTS 18:25 AMP

- ❖ The Way of the Lord is the Visionwriter's way.
- ❖ The Word of the Lord is the truth undergirding the vision of the Visionwriter.
- ❖ The Life of the Lord is love's presence in every Visionwriter's life.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

JOHN 14:6 NIV

To further expand the Visionwriter's way, I'm borrowing from an old Chinese proverb:

I hear, I forget.

I see, I remember.

I do, I understand.

After over thirty years of practicing the way we do it here, I'd like to amend the 3rd line of the proverb, and add one more to create a version suitable for Visionwriters:

I hear, I forget.

I see, I remember.

I write, I understand.

I choose, I become.

The rest of this booklet will weave my amended proverb into the D.A.R.C. (Discipline, Accountability, Relationship and Community)—the foundation every Visionwriter builds upon.



CHAPTER ONE

DISCIPLINE

I HEAR—I FORGET

For if anyone only listens to the Word without obeying it and being a doer of it, he is like a man who looks carefully at his [own] natural face in a mirror; For he thoughtfully observes himself, and then goes off and promptly forgets what he was like.

JAMES 1:23-24 AMP

That which we all long to remember lives deep within our hearts, hearts that God invites to awaken to their intended purpose: to enjoy a personal relationship with Him through Christ. The choice to accept this invitation or not belongs exclusively to each individual; faith is the heart's "yes" answer.

The heart's "yes" answer enters communion with God's own light and truth, and terminates not in formulas or words, but in God. Here awareness is heightened beyond mere memorization while resting in the presence of God.

The use of formula is not an end in itself but a means through which God can communicate truth to us. The means should be clear-cut, like a clean window allowing the light to come in, but not be so obsessed with verbal accuracy that we never go beyond the words to the indescribable reality they attempt to transmit.

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

HEBREWS 5:12-14 NIV

At first God's love constantly disciplines us in the doctrine of righteousness, whereby we mature consistently. In this process we learn to fully exchange our old identity for Christ's. In other words, we progressively recognize our true selves, and come to understand that, for us, to live *is* Christ.

Milk drinkers don't comprehend God's righteousness, because their hearts are still asleep to His loving discipline. Even Paul determined that too many believers weren't maturing or producing fruit in their lives because they were asleep to righteousness. No one is made righteous by what he does but by Whom he knows and by how he knows Him; yet a great mul-

titude of believers *try* to be righteous through good behavior. Good behavior doesn't make a person righteous; righteousness is the cause of good behavior. We experience righteousness when we receive God's love and not when we achieve a better performance. Righteousness is a gift from God.

I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full.

PROVERBS 8:20-21 NIV

God's discipline, sated with love, is a wake up call to righteousness. A renewed mind can't grasp a revelation by itself; it takes a heart awakened by the voice of His love to understand that God's way of doing and being right summons a change of heart and life. When the eyes of the heart are fully opened the heart can then ascend to its God given place above the mind, where both heart and mind unify, for neither heart or mind can harmonize without the other in its appointed place.

The point many believers need to grasp is that discipline is God's love coming to awaken both the heart and mind. If we only renew our minds while neglecting our hearts, a huge void will still be felt. Made in God's image we won't remember who we are until our hearts fully remember God's love, and we will not hear His voice resonating from within until we allow ourselves to acknowledge our emptiness without Him.

For a man's ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths. The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.

PROVERBS 5:21-23 NIV

The barrenness we feel is the ache of a silent God, or, we could also say, the ache of a mislaid love. It comes with the confusion that haunts our days and keeps our minds on a treadmill seeking definition and direction. Yet a heart that has been awakened by God's love understands what the mind is searching for and satisfies it with knowing (faith), not with guessing (reason). God grants conviction to the mind under the guidance of His love, which the mind can rationally accept, and He guides the heart with discipline that works by love. The fact is; our lives don't make sense until God makes sense to us. When we see God as He is, and not as we presume Him to be, we experience Him wholly with heart and mind. This is when our hearts offer peace to our minds, and our minds render service to our hearts.

GOD IS CALLING US TO FREEDOM

We are continually bidden to come to the One who fills the ache and eases our burdens.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon

you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

MATTHEW 11:28-30 NIV

There are three stages we pass through on our journey into the saving awareness of Christ; the Bible covers all three. The first is the “Christ for us” stage. This is where we learn that God sent His only begotten Son to the cross “for” us, and in this stage we receive forgiveness for sins. The second stage is the “Christ in us” stage where we realize God’s word is a mirror reflecting Christ in us; this is the stage James is addressing, where we learn to hear and receive God’s word spoken within our hearts as meat—as if spoken directly and personally to us, until we understand righteousness and act from who God says we are. The third stage is the “Christ as us” stage where we fully recognize our death in Christ and when Galatians 2:20 opens the eyes of our hearts to the fact of our union with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But for now we are concerned with the second stage, because a great number of believers are stuck here.

For if anyone only listens to the Word without obeying it and being a doer of it... (if a person hears and receives God’s word spoken intimately and honestly within his heart but doesn’t act on what he hears...or if he soon forgets that his passivity stems from mistaken beliefs about who he is), he is like....James goes on to describe this person as double-minded and unstable in all his ways. Yet he who hears and believes on God’s vision of himself will be transformed in his faith, never forgetting who he is, because he faithfully continues to act from his true self.

...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

ROMANS 10:17 KJV

Faith comes and grows within those who, under discipline, hear and hear and hear the word of God about who they are in Christ. God’s love causes them to hear the truth until they know (remember) the difference between right and wrong—the difference between the true self and the false self.

And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 AMP

Beholding ourselves in the word of God “as in a mirror” transforms our hearts into the image of who we truly are. The phrase *continued to behold* indicates discipline.

A VISIONWRITER EMBRACES DISCIPLINE

We begin by employing a specific structure, not just to help us gain knowledge about God, although initially that is necessary, but to go past the formula so we can move on to weightier matters. With so much to learn, without discipline, it would be impossible. For instance, not everyone wants a college degree, but those who do understand the kind of discipline it takes to receive one. In a sense many believers aspire to a spiritual degree because they want a deeper experience of God. Visionwriters are among this number. We want to press on to the mark of the high calling where God reveals Himself in us *as us*--the stage where we are meat for others. Yet we have to make progress through every stage—each one a necessary step toward maturity.

Every aspiring disciple approaches the Bible—God’s training manual for heart and mind--to receive milk as babes and meat as those continuing to mature. We drink our milk and eat our meat in written forms of conversational dialogue that we call *visionwriting*--a discipline that helps us to run *a long obedience in the same direction*. Discipline is a natural aspect of the desire to delve deeper into truth in order to obey it. Although our obedience isn’t always perfect, it is always intended.

My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.

Because discipline is intrinsic to love’s nature it does not invite us to live on ‘easy street’ but asks us to train in what often seems difficult, but it always delivers the knowledge of righteousness and the experience of peace.

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons...No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it...Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. “Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

We are asked to endure our training to the end, because the final prize of living in grace is just too valuable to ignore. If we decide to run with diligence, we need to make the path level and clear.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...

EXCERPTS FROM HEBREWS 12: NIV

AN ANALOGY

A sea captain has freedom of the seas as soon as he becomes a slave to the compass; until that time he is destined to remain in sight of the shore. Obedient to compass ‘discipline’

however, he is free to sail wherever a sea worthy vessel can take him.

Like a sea captain, the way of the Visionwriter is to sail the seas of love with the compass of God's word. Because we want to wake up to God's love for us, we are going to bear down and do whatever is necessary to stay the course. Although we won't always feel like doing it, we will return to the compass that leads to freedom again and again.

Faith works with a disciplined persistence that keeps hearing God's word while calling things that be not as though they already are, (see Romans 4:17) and after a season of training, we realize that *they are*. So with eager anticipation we practice discipline...

By love—not legalism.

By "I want to"—not by "I should, I ought, or I'd better".

By "I choose this"—not with a solemn attitude that says "I have no choice."

Summary: I hear, I forget. Our journey into God begins by waking up to righteousness or a true heartfelt understanding of who we are in Christ. We cut teeth and develop our capacity for the meat of this, and even weightier matters, as we submit to discipline—a word we now understand is replete with God's love. Discipline trains us to hear and to continue hearing. Still, if all we do is hear, we soon forget, so the way of the Visionwriter is to hear and finally see...



CHAPTER TWO

ACCOUNTABILITY

I SEE, I REMEMBER

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

EPHESIANS 1:18 NIV

Created by God to see with the eyes of our hearts, we desire to be shown the way so we can know the way. For this we need His words to bring new and true vision. We are tired of hearing about truth with our minds; we want our hearts to see and possess the truth, for it is the heart that remembers. God's love opens the eyes of our hearts and prepares us to receive. The only question now is, are we ready?

The disciples came up and asked, "Why do you tell stories?" He replied, "You've been given insight into God's kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn't been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That's why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight."

MATTHEW 13:10-13 MESSAGE

Insight is the substance of life; the very stuff from which faith grows. What stories and examples will God use to nudge us toward receptive insight? What word pictures will create readiness in our hearts? Stories are repeated throughout the Gospels about blind men asking to receive their sight, and believing, they received. We too want to receive our sight, and we too want to believe and receive.

First we need to see God as a personal God. When we bypass reason to hear with our hearts, we hear God's word as though written just to us. There we perceive truth without attaching prior judgments or religious experience to it, and our eyes see His love as we've never seen it before. After the men on the road to Emmaus heard Him speak personally to them, they saw with the eyes of their hearts.

And they said to one another, Were not our hearts greatly moved and burning within us while He was talking with us on the road and as He opened and explained to us [the sense of] the Scriptures?

LUKE 24:32 AMP

How can we see God as personal and pertinent to us? The men on the road to Emmaus didn't at first recognize the One taking the walk with them, neither do we recognize Christ taking the walk with us until our hearts are prepared to see and receive Him, day after day after day.

The eyes of the heart require help from the mind, which God originally created to serve the heart, but an un-renewed, untrained, and undisciplined mind stands in the way of the heart.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh (the carnal mind), and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (the born again heart).

JOHN 3:6 KJV EMPHASIS ADDED

When in the fall man's mind fell into judgment, it lost its sense of God as He is; he lost his God consciousness and was hurled into sin consciousness. But now, because of Christ, our minds can be retrained and renewed to serve our new hearts.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:1-2 NIV

Therefore, at Visionwriters we employ a strategy to train the mind to hush and serve Christ in the heart, while the heart's eyes are in process of being awakened by love. It isn't with strong will that the mind obeys; it obeys in submissive response to Christ—the true Authority—the Word of God.

In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself.

JOHN 1:1 AMP

See what power Christ has over our minds and hearts:

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts.....and intents of the heart.

HEBREWS 4:12 NKJV

When we receive the Bible as a personal word from God a powerful distinction is made between soul and spirit—mind and heart—joints and marrow and, in time, this distinction releases heartfelt understanding. While in waiting we long to understand who we are and how to be our true selves, but reason alone can't comprehend truth, because faith is the highest comprehension there is and it belongs to the heart.

The truth that comes as our eyes gradually open is that, if God is love, then love must be the definition of us since we also are made in His image. Why is such a love seemingly lost to

us? Its essence is like a foreign language waiting to be spoken, and it will not leave us alone. Its absence leaves an ache we can hardly bear. What can we do? How can we who are so hazy about love ever learn to articulate its language? Will the true vision of ‘us’ ever be clear enough to speak and remember?

God’s invitation to return to His love is without repentance, which means He will not take it back—and until we return—it hurts! He is that serious about getting our hearts back. Thus, the unrelenting ache of this unquenchable thirst we feel is the God issue deep inside waiting for our answer, and although we can choose not to answer, returning to His love with our hearts is the only action that will permanently satisfy the ache.

Deep calls unto deep...

PSALM 42:7 NKJV

This too describes the ache—deep calling unto deep, or truth calling unto truth. It is a call that won’t be satisfied until it sees its own face in the mirror. Since God desires truth in our inward parts, our true self must be remembered.

When I was a little girl I loved to dress in my mother’s beautiful dresses, hats, and nylons. They were too big for me, but putting them on helped me remember the vision of a time to come when I would be like my mother.

God’s heavenly closet is full of spiritual clothes that speak the language of the heart, showing us how we can become...

But friends, that’s exactly who we are: children of God. And that’s only the beginning. Who knows how we’ll end up! What we know is that when Christ is openly revealed, we’ll see him—and in seeing him, become like him.

1 JOHN 3:2 MESSAGE

When I was grown I entered God’s closet and began to see what Christ’s spiritual clothing looked like. I admired His love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control. I tried them on but tripped over the extra material that dragged on the floor. It was ‘too much’ for me then, but I kept pretending I was like Him; that’s how little children do it.

And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

MATTHEW 18:3 NIV

Children love to imagine what they’ll be like when they’re fully grown. But just as four-year-old doesn’t turn thirty by putting on her mother’s clothes, so we don’t move to the reality of “Christ *as you*” without going through a process. We journey little by little from what we imagine today to the reality still waiting to be revealed. If we are going to see and remem-

ber all of it, we cannot skip one stage of our journey. Pretending to be there may seem good for a season, but in the fullness of time there will be no more pretending. Growing in the knowledge of Christ, He is predestined to become who He is within us, and we are predestined to know Him in our own form.

When my faith was little I didn't recognize Christ as Spirit; I only knew Him as a person who was here on earth a long time ago. I didn't realize that He ascended to the Father so He could send the Holy Spirit to be with me and to convince me that to live *is* Christ. I didn't understand that it was the Holy Spirit's job to convince me of Christ's presence here right now, but as I continued to receive visions and chew them like a dog chews a bone, the marrow of Christ's essence "with" and "in" me was granted, and still is.

I have said that Christ is God's personal word to us, but we also need to realize that we will never see the whole picture by ourselves alone.

In the multitude of counselors there is safety.

PROVERBS 11:14 AMP

The heart's essence is to include others. Part of the ache we have is due to the way the carnal mind excludes others. With its never ending catalog of judgments and opinions, it cannot comfortably include others unless they conform to its mental pictures about right and wrong, or righteousness. But this is not the way of the Lord, nor the way of the heart, nor the way of the Visionwriter.

A VISIONWRITER EMBRACES ACCOUNTABILITY

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

HEBREWS 4:13 NKJV

Don't tell us what you know, show up in a local or online class and let us see who you are. Then our hearts will see how to include you, and you, and you, and you, and you.

We need you. When we see you we remember the truth. When we see you, and you, and you, we remember even more. *You* are part of the infinite variety of Christ, and when you show up with your presence, we are reminded once more of Christ in His manifold wisdom and beauty. You give us another example of how this personal relationship looks, and we are inspired by you.

Sometimes showing up is uncomfortable; it can even be painful to an ego uncomfortable with change. But having made our heart choice, we are willing to experience this pain with others, for how else will we learn? It is in the midst of our troubles, in the midst of the distasteful souls we work with, or those who live around us, in the midst of our exact situations and cir-

cumstances that we learn. Our life together is the place God has appointed us to suffer and learn love. In *this* place we learn to be patient, generous, kind, and unselfish. We are not to lament the hand molding us into the still-too-shapeless image of Christ waiting to manifest from deep within. Ours is to lovingly embrace the life we are in right now. The simple fact is we need one another. We need to learn what you alone can teach us, just as you need us for the same reason. In good times and in bad, we need one another. The fullness of love's nature is built through ceaseless practice with one another.

Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together, as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.

HEBREWS 10:25 AMP

Accountability begins with showing up. Showing up is basic and compulsory to balance and maturity. To show up with an attitude of commitment, and not just interest, is important. Interest isn't enough, because it means we will only come when it's convenient. Committed however, we don't accept our own excuses and we even disdain our emergencies. Committed, we choose to love and belong. We choose a 'breakthrough' for our hearts. We want God's love to win them, no matter what it takes. We commit with others to the renewing of our minds and to realizing who we really are in Christ.

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

LUKE 12:32 NKJV

The way of the Visionwriter is to gather weekly (locally or online) with other Visionwriters to share love, energy, time and spiritual insight. In this way the flock invites a heightened sense of Christ's presence, while decreasing the corporate ego. Thus, true multiplication of life occurs when a group is built-up in Christ. In this atmosphere loving each other is inevitable, for God's kind of love is contagious. With others we discover what resources are available to increase God's kingdom on earth. Showing up with 'heart' intention, we can't be false to any man, for we practice accountability...

- ❖ By love—not by “I don't feel like going because...”
- ❖ By generously giving of ourselves—not by submitting to a self pity determined to isolate us from the flock God gave us.
- ❖ By sacrifice—that remembers “I am a self for others who will be there for my comrades.”

Summary: I hear and forget, but awakened to righteousness I see and remember how God's love calls me into accountability, not just to Him, but to others. Still, there is more. Some recollection of love is beginning to return. My hunger for God is increasing, and I want to understand...



CHAPTER THREE

RELATIONSHIP

I WRITE, I UNDERSTAND

I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected. Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith."

HABAKKUK 2:1-4 NKJV

God wants to engage us in a personal relationship with Him until our connection is so strong we can fly, or, as Habakkuk wrote, *run*. In the preceding passage God gives Habakkuk another means for making the connection. He tells him to "write the vision" and, in essence, to write until the vision is so clear in his understanding, that running with it is imminent. The Lord then promises that the vision is indeed with him and will in fact come; but that he should patiently wait for it. Habakkuk is vexed with questions that need answers. The Amplified version reads, "I will watch to see what He will say within me..." (I will wait on that which is deep within my heart to understand what God wants to communicate.)

From the Old Testament book of 1 Kings we read that God spoke to Elijah in the still small voice; He didn't speak through fire and wind but with a gentle and quiet whisper. The point of the passage makes it clear that God resides in silence. "Be still and know that I am God" we read; if we want to hear God we will learn to value silence. His voice is seldom heard audibly, because He wants a deep personal connection with the silent or knowing place inside our hearts.

Habakkuk wanted to possess himself in God; he wanted to speak from his heart and express his true self. Ultimately, God leads us to possess ourselves until all pretense stops. Shakespeare wrote this truth profoundly: *This above all, to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man*. Possessing ourselves comes from an ever deeper understanding of how we are loved.

We love because He first loved us.

1 JOHN 4:19 NIV

We won't see to how be ourselves and offer love to others until we are first personally smitten by God's love for us. Being smitten doesn't happen by mental gymnastics. We may intellectually assent to the fact that God loves us, but mental assent is not the same as understanding. Understanding comes by the faith that lives in the heart.

Habakkuk did this exercise from his heart while expressing his desire to see what response he would, in turn, give to God after receiving God's correction. Habakkuk understood that before he could speak words that would pierce his listener's hearts, God needed to clear the way for the love that was the thrust behind his words. Habakkuk wanted God's love to flow through Him, but he also understood his need for correction, so he sought the truth because he wanted his life to make a difference. Remember, Habakkuk wanted to *run*.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

GALATIANS 5:6 KJV

Since faith works by love, love is the force behind faith. Habakkuk recorded that an upright soul lives by faith, or, in essence, by love. Faith is the infinite understanding of a love that never tires of waiting for the manifold visions of God to unfold.

We are more readily smitten by God's love for us as we continue to *behold* the One dwelling within. Over the course of time we trust more, love more, and go from one degree of trust and love to another and another and another. As we continue to contemplate God's love our hearts grasp what reason cannot grasp; this occurs when we are living by faith.

(Please see appendix C for more on the subject of faith.)

A VISIONWRITER EMBRACES RELATIONSHIP

The way of the Visionwriter is to aim high in our relationship with God and others. We aim high because no one goes any further by aiming low. As we are ready to explore truth and see ourselves as we are, we can give our entire selves to God.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

1 JOHN 1:7-10 NIV

IF WE CLAIM WE HAVE NOT SINNED

If we claim we have not sinned we deny the truth and are not honest. We say, "God is the liar, not I." He is not at home in our hearts. Honesty is the point of the passage. Those who are being made holy are being made honest and open. How can we recognize the truth in others

until we possess it in ourselves? And what will we ever understand before honestly applying the truth to our lives?

The game of “pride” is played with dishonesty. The object of the game is to deceive rather than be deceived. Who is the best pretender? Who wears the mask that most makes us feel they are more real than we are? And what masks do we put on to make us feel more substantial than others? If we claim we do not do this, we make God out to be a liar, and we have no fellowship with one another.

With honesty we openly admit our faults to one another...admit we play the game, and receive forgiveness. With honesty we face our enemy who will go to any length to preserve our ego at the expense of our relationships. With honesty we face limiting beliefs, past experiences, and misused personality traits that helped to shape the lies that formed our current experience. We honestly admit that the best offense is no defense.

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

MATTHEW 3:8-10 NIV

The pen is a remarkable ax for pruning the tree, and, in the spirit of truth, it is mightier than the sword! Until we repent and return ourselves to God, we won't discern the truth in anything. Beforehand we are confused, double-minded and unstable in all our ways, but when we leave the race to impress our friends and enter the race to possess our souls, we are ready to understand and produce fruit.

"All this," David said, "I have in writing from the hand of the LORD upon me, and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan."

1 CHRONICLES 28:19 NIV

With axe in hand the Visionwriter visionwrites to internalize God's voice and awaken his or her heart to love. This is when it becomes clear that the truth that once seemed to tarry has surely come to set us free.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 NIV

Note: Handling God's word with humility is vital for becoming thoroughly equipped for every good work; a potential for error exists whenever someone begins to magnify the method rather than the goal the method serves.

You search and investigate and pore over the Scriptures diligently, because you suppose and trust that you have eternal life through them. And these [very Scriptures] testify about Me! And still you are not willing [but refuse] to come to Me, so that you might have life.

JOHN 5:39-40 AMP

We soon get on the wrong track when we lose sight of Christ and get our eyes back on ourselves and what we are doing. Our true goal is to see God, connect to His word, and recognize Christ clearly for us, in us, and as us. God's word is food that nourishes the hope we have for reaching our goal. We need to constantly remember that the glory of what we are doing belongs to Him.

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

MATTHEW 4:4 NIV

It is written. When God wanted us to know something He preserved it through the writings of men lead by the Holy Spirit. This provision means we can eat these words again and again and again. In fact, we can count on these words, because they will never go stale or become obsolete.

Summary: I hear and forget, but awakened to righteousness by love's discipline I am brought to remembrance. Because my connection to God is personal I see how I am accountable to bring my relationship before others and hold them accountable for their relationships as well.

Because all of us want to run with the vision of God's love we visionwrite to allow the Holy Spirit to help us sort out our thoughts and integrate Gods truth into heart and mind and practice making choices that are right for us and others. Together we live on the path of discipline, accountability and relationship. Still we crave the larger picture; we want to fully recognize who we are in Christ; we want to utterly and unconditionally become one with God and each other...

(Please see Appendix A for the orientation on visionwriting.)



CHAPTER FOUR

COMMUNITY

I CHOOSE, I BECOME

God's original intention declares that all are made in His image, but central to His image is free will. A God without a choice would not be God, but the God who *is*, has forever *chosen* to be who He is, and subsequently He never changes who He is for anyone.

People, however, choose to be according to who they *think* they are, but those who run with the vision of Christ soon become aware that their 'chooser,' is free to make choices according to who God says they are. Either way, each person chooses according to the way he or she knows themselves.

For many are called (invited and summoned), but few are chosen.

MATTHEW 22:14 AMP

...choose you this day whom you will serve...

JOSHUA 24:15 KJV

Making choices is about considering alternatives and then selecting one or the other. But we have to be aware of the alternative before we can make a responsible choice that is right for us. We make hundreds of choices every day, from what to wear or have for dinner to how to respond to a remark or even a 'look' cast in our direction. Whether we choose proactively or reactively depends on how we perceive ourselves. Reactive behavior stems from perceiving ourselves separate from wholeness or God, while proactive behavior stems from perceiving ourselves as one with God or wholeness. There is no higher awareness given to man than what God knows of Himself within our awakened hearts, thus giving us the freedom to choose according to His will.

With the eyes of our hearts opened we have fresh awareness and the freedom to choose what is right for us and, ultimately, for others. To be or not to be; this is the ultimate question based on the issue of awareness.

Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:34 KJV

Either asleep or awake to God, our journey takes us through stages based on various levels of awareness. Waking up is the process of beginning to be who God says we are. It is our journey into the recognition of "I am."

Not all who are nudged or called to wake up choose to get out of bed. Some hit the snooze button and pull the covers back over their heads. “Many are called...” is God’s declaration that numberless people are invited, but few are chosen by the mere fact that they don’t respond to the wake-up call. Christ died for everyone, so ultimately salvation is possible for all, but our potential is only realized after we return ourselves back to Christ and not by the fact that Christ made it possible.

Asleep to God—to life—to truth, many aren’t ready for their hibernation to be disturbed, and they growl if anyone tries to wake them up, so God leaves them alone, waiting for a future day when their hearts will be ready to respond. Others open their eyes for a short time—look around, but then quickly fall back to sleep. Several even slip in and out of hibernation, while others stay awake for long periods of time. In each case God’s love never fails to wait patiently through all stages of recognition.

Those on the threshold of awakening communicate what they see to one another. “I see men as trees walking” a blind man healed by Christ once said. Things were still hazy, but at least his eyes had begun to open. When we begin to see, it’s because something has clicked for us—the bear is waking up so to speak, and we are ready to leave hibernation to eat and be with one another. This is when community is not only possible but anticipated.

Community is a gathering for those waking up to righteousness, and it fast serves as a school for learning effective communication through a commitment to be there, for it’s as we learn to stay in the awakening process that our lives take on new meaning. With a new sense of joy we bring insights and even material possessions to share with one another.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS 3:16-19 NIV

Community is the place God’s promises are realized and our ache is finally filled, for it is to community that God’s fullness comes. Each one is a part of the puzzle, and no one is filled without receiving the other parts.

You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you’re still one body. It’s exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said goodbye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his

resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain— his Spirit— where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves— labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free— are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive. I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. If Foot said, "I'm not elegant like Hand, embellished with rings; I guess I don't belong to this body," would that make it so? If Ear said, "I'm not beautiful like Eye, limpid and expressive; I don't deserve a place on the head," would you want to remove it from the body? If the body was all eye, how could it hear? If all ear, how could it smell? As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it. But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-19 MESSAGE

The fullness we gain together is experienced over the course of our entire lifetimes. This is similar to a husband and wife who learn to submit to one another in good times and bad, rich times and poor—going through the entire adventure of life with one another, they learn to see things through rather than trying to see through things. By simply remaining in the process no matter what, in time a sincere commitment to community, like to marriage, softens the hearts that have been asleep for a very long time. Here we learn to love and respect one another, to mature and receive the abundant overflow of a much grander love.

But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children--

PSALM 103:17 NIV

Though the vision seems to tarry, we wait for fullness together; and as we go we keep looking forward to the day of a complete awakening when we will share God's kingdom together.

A VISIONWRITER EMBRACES COMMUNITY

A community that remains awake to righteousness is the safest place to grow, because it refuses to see one another outside of Christ, yet it patiently allows each of us to shed the ugly crust of the old man, or the ego that still can't admit its own death. We are waiting to recognize more and thereby grow, but in speaking of growth, I personally prefer the term awareness, because progress is only made in higher levels of *awareness*. Heightened awareness is what 1 Corinthians 3 means by "going from glory to glory." Growth means going to a higher level of insight and discernment than we have right now.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 JOHN 1:7 NIV

I've often said the only thing that changes about us is the way we see God. This is why the way of the Visionwriter is to remain close to God's word, for Scripture is the light God casts upon us, and being in His light together is what makes deep fellowship possible.

Each of us knows ourselves and God according to the light we currently have. New opportunities constantly arise to nudge us toward the next level of awareness, but God respects our freedom. We can either hold tight to the level of light we currently have or release ourselves to the stage inviting us to move on. The main reason we are prone to remain in a holding pattern is because the mind of the flesh resists God in its service to ego. Change threatens the ego by taking away its illusion of control. This illusion is what the carnal mind must protect in order to keep the ego feeling alive. God's righteousness reveals that the ego or false self was slain in the death of Christ, and that a renewed mind is needed to serve the heart and God's community.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

PSALM 17:15 DARBY

Being aware that people in our community are in different stages of awareness is crucial for maintaining kindness, acceptance and patience. Few operate out of their true identity in Christ, while most still need specific answers for living their lives. The great number of sleeping believers was apparent in New Testament days when Paul addressed many of his letters to specific issues. These letters are still very much needed today. Yet Paul also wrote deeply of the greater issues of identity, such as in Galatians, Romans, Ephesians and Colossians. Until all are able to operate from their true identity, community is us helping each other see where we are going. We do not intend to forever be the "blind leading the blind"; we want Christ to heal our eyes until the vision of who we are in Christ is clear. In the meantime we trust God to bring people to a place in which they are received and encouraged to pass from glory to glory as they pass through each stage of recognition.

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

REVELATION 21:5 NIV

In the final analysis, choosing to see and become 'who we really are' is the same as *doing* in a *being* sort of way. When a community excessively links the word "do" and "obedience" with "performance" and the "law", it eventually loses sight of its Source, for if we

keep *trying* to be what we already are, we are sentenced by default to failure.

But hearing and seeing, even with dim understanding, occurs before we make a choice, because first we have to be made aware of the alternatives. To choose love over judgment, and righteousness over the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is to choose right. A faith that doesn't choose is dead.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

EPHESIANS 4:14-16 NIV

A community that won't speak the truth in love will not last very long. Flattery is short lived among those who "pretend" community; they soon divide and separate from one another. Speaking the truth in love is what holds community together. Love, by its very nature is open, honest, respectful, forgiving and kind, but it is also caring, and that means it doesn't withhold what is necessary to increase the awareness of the whole. God's love is a wild adventure into the unknown, but it is also the only reason we want to wake up and live another day. To love forever is to live forever. There is no higher reason to want to live than to love and be loved in and by our own community.

ONE LAST THING

A Visionwriter is rooted in honesty and a willingness to face our limiting beliefs. One common limiting belief has to do with money, a subject many of the newly initiated are not ready to awaken to. Yet while love is not forceful, neither is it neglectful. Love—having no need to coerce others towards obedience, has no need to defend itself either. Love's influence is as powerful as it is patient. Love never fails. This is the kind of love that moves mountains and hard hearts toward the overwhelming goodness and benevolence of God.

Love, using money as its example, reveals in Matthew 6 and 1 Timothy 6 that it's not money but the love of money that **has the power to blind us spiritually**. Because the way of the Visionwriter is to hear, see, write, and choose to be who God says we are, we don't close our eyes to the matter of money. Summoned to speak the truth in love, we address the subject with love to those whose hearts are ready to be opened to God's total kingdom treasure.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

MATTHEW 6:21 NIV

Community is the place where everything comes together and the whole is equal to the

sum of its parts. One person accomplishes little compared to what two or more can accomplish together. Community is the place where teamwork glorifies God and advances His mission.

Summary: We hear and forget, but awakened to righteousness by love's discipline we are brought to remembrance. Because we are accountable for our personal relationship to God, we bear it in front of others and see how to help hold others accountable. We deeply want to run with the vision, so we visionwrite God's word and allow the Holy Spirit to help us sort out our thoughts and integrate His truth into our lives until, by conforming to it, we understand the true meaning of relationship. We come to the knowledge of righteousness to live our lives in peace and joy. We unashamedly remain on this path and become stable kingdom dwellers, living in community, fully prepared to offer God's kingdom to others. Together we live on the path of discipline, accountability, relationship...and community.

Note: If you like what you've read about the Visionwriter's way but still haven't participated in a local or online class, may I suggest you take the plunge? Visit our website for class locations. If there is none in your area, consider an online class. You may find you want to become a facilitator of our classes in your church or local area. Our website has information on how to become a Visionkeeper (facilitator) of this unique structure.

www.visionwriters.com



APPENDIX A

PHILOSOPHY OF THE DARC

D = DISCIPLINE

God's discipline, sated with love, is our wake up call to righteousness. A renewed mind can't grasp the revelation of righteousness alone; this revelation requires the heart to be awakened by the voice of His love. "Today if you will hear My voice..." (Hebrews 3:7-8). To hear with disciplined intent is to not only agree that God initiated a covenant with us, but to finally agree to fully and personally receive it. A long persistence in the right direction is required if we are going to 'see' the place to which God calls us to abide. We write the vision out of our deep longing to "understand" and then "do" what we see our Father doing.

A = ACCOUNTABILITY

Each one of us is accountable for our own personal relationship with God as we bear it in front of others. Because we genuinely want to read so we can run with the vision, we surrender to the Holy Spirit and He leads us to what helps us sort out our thoughts and let go of what isn't true; then we can integrate what is true into our hearts and lives. Here we begin to learn the freedom of open and honest relationships.

R = RELATIONSHIP

Our relationship with God is central to everything and everyone. It is intimate, up close, and personal. Therefore we are ready to explore ourselves the way God knows us and to drop human judgment in order to receive others and encourage them toward the recognition of all God knows them to be. We are "response-able" as we proclaim the truth—here as "selves for others."

C = COMMUNITY

We need one another; God made us that way. So community is the place all things finally make sense—where God's promises are realized—where the corporate ache is filled. As we operate in union with Him we lose ourselves and get nothing less than our true selves back. This is when we begin to deeply experience our self-giving nature and where "the whole is defined by the sum of its parts."



APPENDIX B

VISIONWRITING

As a lion growls, a great lion over his prey...

ISAIAH 31:4 NIV

LIKE A DOG CHEWING ON A BONE

Whenever I gave my dog “Dickens” a bone, he carried it away from the house to meditate it under a nearby tree and became totally absorbed with the marrow. I could almost see his invisible “do not disturb” sign on the nearest branch informing everyone to keep their distance.

When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

PSALM 63:6 KJV

Christ is the core of God’s word, and to visionwrite is to meditate Him to the marrow until visions of His glory surface for our enjoyment and enrichment. Here we *deliberately* write the vision to fix our attention on the One Who matters most. In writing we more plainly think through the implications of Christ’s life and its limitless possibilities within us. We listen as He speaks, and then we write down what we hear so we can slowly digest the truth. As we repeatedly rehearse His words they actually lessen our hardships and assist our intention to understand the meaning of Christ as our life.

When visionwriting is introduced along with a reliable structure such as the one Visionwriter’s offers, it introduces a refreshing new discipline to assist us in receiving the presence of God and His kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy. Like the children in the wilderness who gathered manna to eat every morning; they were instructed to eat “fresh” and not to save the leftovers, for even God’s word turns stale in the hearts of those too lazy to gather daily—who refuse to prepare their appetites for a brand new supply each day. Since our lives are inundated with daily challenges we need a fresh supply of answers, because new situations and circumstances are different than the old ones, and what worked yesterday won’t necessarily work today. Besides, God wants a fresh relationship with us, not a stale one relying on past old events. God has fresh vision, revelation, and solutions to feed us. Would you like to have a relationship with your living spouse and children where you hardly ever see or think of them but merely recall old memories of them? Of course not. And believers who enjoy a rich relationship with God hardly consider a mere once a week visit enough. God wants a daily fellowship and

dialogue with us; He wants us to constantly have Him in our thoughts, as we are constantly in His. A structured visionwriting class (local or online) helps connect us to a vibrant and fresh relationship with God.

Visionwriting also aids in accelerating the renewal of our minds with accurate thoughts (“My thoughts are not your thoughts,” says the Lord in Isaiah 55). By meditating on God’s word and allowing the Holy Spirit to come through our pens to help us sort things out, many destructive obsessions can be prevented. By plainly writing the truth as dialogue we more easily recognize potential dangers than by trying to deal with thoughts swimming in our heads and never airing them out. But writing to acknowledge what’s happening in our interior is only the beginning; as we move towards deeply absorbing God’s love through the words He speaks emphatically and personally to us, we receive the faith that drives conviction to action. Much peace is realized in this way. But even that’s not all; visionwriting in accountability with others keeps us pressed towards the goal of the high calling where we finally and completely realize and possess our true selves.

Offer: What if the way we do it here opened your eyes to fundamental points you have missed about God’s love and how to recognize the ‘you’ He originally created you to be; would you study, listen, show up, and apply the knowledge, at least until you reach the point of making your own enlightened decision about it? It’s your choice, and only you can see if it works for you or not, but I offer this promise: If you truly and objectively apply our courses, structure, tools, and strategy, it will change the way you see God and yourself forever.

Disclaimer: You don’t need to be a good writer to be a Visionwriter. The motive isn’t to become a better writer but a truer person—true to who God says you already are. Please remember that the kingdom of God belongs to simple people. Please don’t complicate the process by being religious or legalistic with it. If you don’t want to write every day, don’t. You still belong. Never try to force God to speak; you’ll hear Him when it’s time. Don’t pretend. God didn’t bring Visionwriters on the scene to build an empire of visionwriters; Visionwriters is simply an aid to help you connect to God, but God Himself is the real deal. Be open and willing; God will employ what He wants to employ when He is ready to employ it. Our structure exists to serve God’s purpose, period. Whether or not you write every day or complete every assignment found within our courses, you always belong to God and one another, so show up and rest in Him, no matter what, and trust Him to take care of the rest.

If you would like more instruction on how to enjoy written dialogue with God, please download the booklet entitled, “Visionwriting: 101.”