

Focus On Discipleship

By Shannon Kraft

History of Mission, September 2026

[Editor's note: The *history of missions* is also by nature a *history of discipleship*! Why? *"Discipleship is the process a person goes through to go from being an unbeliever to a committed believer in Jesus Christ. Unbelievers are mainly committed to finding joy and fulfillment in things other than God, but committed believers are committed primarily to bringing glory to God and finding their joy in him."*¹

The core of what we call the "Great Commission" is the call to "Go and MAKE DISCIPLES of all the nations (*ethne*)... (Matthew 28:19). So, the history of Global Mission is also the history of discipleship as it unfolds in a new culture with new believers! Shannon and Nick Kraft of Go Missions International (GMI) are focused on discipleship in Peru and Bolivia, and they work diligently at doing this calling well! ALWM is delighted now to work with them, and to have an affiliated ministry in South America. They are also beginning to consult with ALWM in our disciple making in Bangladesh. I pray that you enjoy their article as they write about discipleship!]

¹ www.theologyfortherestofus.com/discipleship-biblical-definition-history-what-it-is-today/

Discipleship: The Real Calling of Missions

Discipleship is the real calling of Missions and it's the hardest, most dedicated action a Christian can do. In these selfish times, to take time out, to put resources and inversion into a small group, rather than a large one, doesn't seem cost effective. However, it is the filling of the Great Commission that demands we take up our cross and claims our lives daily.

I heard a podcast recently of some Missionary Kid (MK), who grew up in Papa, Indonesia, with a tribe. They had lived in the tribe for five years learning from their culture and language before they could even share the story of Genesis. One of those Mk's commented that the fulfillment of the Great Commission isn't parachuting into a tribe and spending an hour preaching at them with a translator. It's actually taking on the labor of Love to Incarnate, as Jesus did. *"The word became flesh and lived among them..."* (John 1:14).

This presents a two-fold problem. We need to be more like Jesus in our waking and breathing; our directing and loving, and in our correcting. Counting it all as loss these earthly things that seem to call for our attention. The other problem is the "living among them". **Them** being people who, because of their long history

of not walking with Jesus, are rough around the edges, full of sin and sometimes lacking in refinement and Christian culture.

CORE

CORE is a 10-week internship of “living among them”. Students who are complete strangers, of different ages and with completely different cultural backgrounds come together to grow into Christians who want to — and need to — share the Gospel. We begin working at 6am and finish at 11pm. The house becomes theirs and everything — and I mean *everything* — is extended for the sake of them knowing Christ in the fullest way.

In the morning hours we root down into Him. We set our intention on what is lacking. We exercise away complacency. We breathe in the morning, causing a focus, a hunger and a desire for more of Him. What was asleep, awakens with the sound of the morning birds. Breakfast is eaten in chipped clay pots at round tables where we learn the art of communion as Jesus takes center stage, becoming our everything.

Devotional time is 20 minutes on a **value** that every believer should emanate. Even the speaker is being challenged, convicted, and formed as the Word becomes a mirror into our souls. On the heels of that mirror, everyone is sent out into God’s creation to find a spot to meet with Jesus. They are simply before Him, with His Word (no cell phones), a notebook and a pen. Nothing else. The quiet hour grows in them over the weeks. It starts as a grueling hour of sitting still and grows into a hunger and a thirst for more...more time.

In Core, time is plentiful. We live in a world that has us on a merry ground of distraction and cell phones and media, comparing ourselves and filling ourselves with information that does not transform. In CORE there is nothing but time. Time to learn, to laugh, to play, to do art and to practice what we are learning. The weeks pass and pretensions fall. We know each other’s weaknesses. We see each other’s strengths. When one is down an extended hand comes to meet them. This *Discipleship Culture* is a safe place, a place where people’s lives become dependent — not on endorphins and acknowledgments— but on Jesus and His people. Transformation begins in the trust of a transparent community.

Areas of Learning

The classes are designed in three areas.

Love: The first area is learning to love God above all, to love yourself and to love your neighbor. Some students come to find their identity — the who and why of their existence. Many come for healing. They need Jesus to come into the dark places, for His light to shine there and for forgiveness to flow. They begin to walk lighter and understand their position before their Creator. This year, the students grabbed onto the words *Coram Deo*, which means *living in the presence of God*.

Serve: As students find their true selves and live in the presence of God they find their gifts, their talents, their area of service. They begin to understand by the example of Jesus that service is sacrificial and joyful at the same time.

Go!: The last section of learning is GO! Matthew 28:19: *“Now Go ye therefore and follow my example and put it into practice”*... and they did. The students traveled two days on a bus, a 4x4 and a long boat to the Huambis tribe on the Peru/Ecuador border, and they “lived among them”. For us leaders these became our proudest moments, when all the sacrifice, frustration, and patience lost became like dirty rags, and our rag-tag army put it all on the line. It was in this place that a seal came and stamped their hearts forever. No longer just **Hearers** of the Word (James 1:22-25), but now with all that they had learned, **Doers**. Exercising their faith, with their swords extended, feet shod (Ephesians 6:15), willing to die for the cause and for each other.



The love students share as a group in CORE



A Valentine's Day in CORE



Huambis village

Below: On the outreach with Cornejito – he's the clown



Graduation comes fast after that... and all the climax becomes the challenge to live it out every day. CORE is the machine God uses to transform us all.

From student to leader, we will never be the same CORE 2026 has had its way with us — sluffing away the old and un-needed and igniting an eternal fire for the Lost.

Join Us!

If you'd like more information on being a student or a leader in CORE discipleship in mission; we invite you to contact us at Gomissioninternational@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook or Instagram.

To learn more about Go Missions International, contact us:

Email: gomissionsinternational@gmail.com

Phone: 253.514.7900

Mail: PO Box 1786, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

To partner with GMI, click here:

<https://www.gomissionsinternational.com/give>



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