

## **Oaks of Righteousness**

### *Growing Great Disciples*

*Isaiah 61:3*

#### “The Inescapable Trials of a Great Disciple”

Acts 14:21-22

“They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. ‘We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said.”

Acts 14:21-22 NIV

1. In the New Testament, believers and disciples are interchangeable terms.
  - “won a large number of disciples” v. 21
  - believer 26 times in NT; disciple 293 times (only used by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
  - Paul’s preferred terms of spiritual endearment: brother 129; church 65; saint 29; friend 5; son 3
2. Hardship awareness is an important part of discipleship training.
  - “we must go through many hardships” v. 22
  - 1 Peter 4:12; 2 Corinthians 1:8-9
3. Perseverance is one of the great qualities of a growing disciple.
  - “encouraging them to remain true to the faith” v. 22
  - Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4
4. The path of life for a disciple must be inexorably linked to the will and honor of God rather than cultural sentiment, personal pleasure or immediate gratification.
  - “to enter the kingdom of God” v. 22
  - Psalm 84:10; 1 Peter 4:1-2