

A Brief History of *“A Tool for Personal Discipleship”*

Art Barkley and his wife Toni served as tribal missionaries in Bolivia for about 20 years with New Tribes Mission. That's where much of the groundwork for this discipleship material was set.

As Art explains it, *“Over the years one of the things that bothered me was watching many believers who had obviously accepted the Lord, were excited about their new Christian life, but within a few months would be involved with the things they did as unbelievers.”*

“During our times in the U.S., we would observe a similar pattern. Many believers who had enthusiasm and excitement at the beginning of their new life with the Lord, way too often, after a few months, when outside of a Christian setting, could hardly be recognized as followers of Christ.”

“I often felt there was something missing in the equation, but for years I couldn't figure out what it was.”

“Another thing that bothered me was the common perception on the part of many believers that the Christian life is too difficult to understand and live out. I have thought many times, if God designed salvation to be so simple that anybody could easily receive it, would He then design the Christian life to be so difficult to understand and live out?”

Then in 1990, God orchestrated circumstances in such a way that Art and Toni could not permanently return to Bolivia. He provided for Art to serve as an Associate Pastor at Reno Christian Fellowship for 7½ years. It was during this period that God led Art to start developing ‘*A Tool for Personal Discipleship*’, a work still in progress.

The purpose of this discipleship material is to provide believers who have a passion for the Lord, with a *Tool* to use, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to help other believers to grow and experience the joy of *the Normal Christian Life*.

“We have heard many believers lament, I would like to be used by the Lord to help other believers to grow spiritually, but I don't know what to teach”. This *Tool* is designed to help address that need.

During the past 12 years or so, Art has been involved to varying degrees in the personal discipleship of hundreds of men. He and Toni have seen God change lives and they count it a privilege to have a small part in God's plan to grow and use believers through Personal Discipleship.

Art Barkley is President of *Discipler Training International*, and his wife Toni is involved in spiritual counseling and discipling women.