

Lifelong Learning

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Dawson Trotman, founder of The Navigators, was a lifelong learner. His commitment to learning led him to develop practical ministry tools for helping others grow in their walk with Christ. It also made him a man of the Word, who humbly allowed the Bible to shape his life continually. His philosophy was simple: Disciples should never stop learning.

How can you become a lifelong learner—and guide those you disciple to do likewise?

- **Start with your attitude.** The heart is mentioned more than 700 times in Scripture. Lifelong learning begins with a heart that desires change, wisdom, and application. Are you inviting God to change you, or do you resist change because it's uncomfortable?
- **Ask questions.** Learners ask good questions. They possess an insatiable curiosity—a longing to know, discover, inquire. Ask questions that get below the surface. Examine your assumptions and beliefs; place them under the scrutiny of Scripture.
- **Join others.** Learning should be a team sport, not an individual quest. Collaborative learning—in classes, small groups, with friends and colleagues—allows us to benefit from diverse perspectives and approaches. People are a gold mine of learning that is tapped through conversation.
- **Check out the other side.** Take time to examine and understand another point of view, even if it radically contradicts yours. You may see things in a new light, or you may have your old convictions strengthened. Personal convictions that have never been tested remain flabby.
- **Read broadly.** Include a diversity of books, authors, and topics. Resist the temptation to read only those books that reinforce what you already believe.
- **Keep a journal.** Recording what we learn captures our growth in wisdom.
- **Experiment.** Try new approaches and ideas. Age does not affect your ability to learn. An 80-year-old can learn to surf the net like an 18-year-old.
- **Apply what you know.** Our depth of understanding is often directly related to our ability to apply what we've learned. Application takes knowledge from the head to the heart.