

“GO INTO THE WORLD & MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS...”

Discipleship Evening – Tuesday 2nd November:

What comes to mind when you think of the word “Disciple/Discipleship”? What IS it?

“A person who learns from another, especially one who then teaches others”
en.wiktionary.org/wiki/disciple

What words might we associate with “Disciple or Discipleship”?

Cost, minority, hardship.....

Where did the idea of ‘discipleship’ come from?

296 times in Bible: (the majority about Jesus’ Disciples):

Can get False Ones:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. – Matthew 7:21

Can follow others more than Christ:

Then John’s **disciples** came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your **disciples** do not fast?” Matthew 9:14

Is Costly:

Then Jesus said to his **disciples**, “Whoever wants to be my **disciple** must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” Matthew 16:24

Takes Courage:

“But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the **disciples** deserted him and fled” Matthew 26:56

Takes Faith:

He said to his **disciples**, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” Mark 4:40

The Great Command/Commission: Matt 28:18-19, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-47, John 20:21, Acts 1:8

Exercise 1: Look up the verse your group has been given – what do the words (in your verse) bring to mind: ie “all authority”, “to obey everything”, “..I am sending you”, “will be preached”

Consider the varying emphasis:

1. Matthew 28:18-19 defines the **Authority & depth** of the Great Commission. *Then Jesus came to them and said, **All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.***
2. Mark 16:15 emphasizes the **breadth and quantity** of the sowing. *Go into **all the world** and preach the good news **to all creation***
3. Luke 24:46-47 shows the **surety** of the Great Commission. *He told them, This is what is written: The Christ **will** suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins **will be** preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*
4. John 20:21 shows Jesus as the **model** of the Great Commission. *Again Jesus said, Peace be with you! **As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.***
5. Acts 1:8 speaks of the **extent** of the Great Commission. *“Be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, **and to the ends of the earth**”*

The Command to Follow: Read Matthew 4:18-19:

“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men**” (KJV).

“Follow me...and I will make you....fishers of men”

Discipleship is:

- 1. “Follow me” – Someone who knows and follows Christ**
- 2. “and I will make you” – who is being changed by Christ**
- 3. “fishers of men” – committed to the mission of Christ**

Exercise 2 Questions:

Is it possible for us to be stuck at the first stage? (Or even half way?) - Having made a commitment and not actually opened ourselves up to be transformed/changed?

There are millions of Christians who are unsure where to ‘start’ when it comes to discipleship or see it as ‘someone else’s job’ – where are you at with this?

Discipleship Stories: Bethel Folk:

Intro to Jesus’ use of stories with a meaning (parables):

“Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in **parables**; he did not say anything to them without using a **parable**”. Matthew 13: 34

Exercise 3: Get into groups – with someone volunteering to tell a story (of an event that happened to them) – the group will then be asked to feed back the story to the meeting.

**Discipleship – Growing into Maturity:
Stages of Christian growth & development:**

“The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature...” Luke 8:14
(from the parable of the sower)

Pre-Christ – Spiritually Dead – unbelief

Infant – characterised by ignorance

Child – characterised by selfishness

Young Adult – characterised by service

Parent – characterised by intentionality

Exercise 4:

Look at the statements below typifying each stage – where do you (honestly) see yourself? Are you surprised?

How does this fit in with our original definition of a disciple?

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Infant: Characterised by Ignorance:

ignorance, confusion, dependence

- "Why do I need to go to church regularly?"
- "I have been hurt by a lot of people, so it's just me and God. I don't need others."
- "I don't need anyone else, just me and Jesus."
- " if I pray and read my Bible, will I be good enough?"
- " I provide for my family. I don't have time for church."
- "What should I do about my old friends who don't believe?"
- "I didn't know the Bible said that."
- "I know that Jesus is lord and saviour but is karma real?"
- "Does God let dead people, such as my grandma, visit us to give us messages from Him?"

Child: Characterised by selfishness:

Self-centredness, idealism, over-confidence or under-confidence

- "I believe in Jesus and my church is in the woods, just Him and me."
- "Don't branch my group into two groups. It is comfortable for me just as it is."
- "Who are all these new people coming to our church? The church is getting too big."
- "I love my small group; don't add any more people to it."
- "My small group is not taking care of my needs as they should."
- "I don't have anyone who's spending enough time with me. No one is discipling me."
- "I didn't like the music today. If only they did it like..."

- "I am not being fed in my church, so I am going to a church that meets my needs better."
- "The pastor looked right at me and didn't even say hello."

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Young Adult: Characterised by Service:

Humility, serving others with joy, God-and-others centred, sacrificing for others

- "I love my group, but there are others who need a group like this."
- "I think I could lead a group with a little help. I have three friends I have been witnessing two, and this group would be too big for them."
- "Look how many are at church today – it's awesome! I had to park miles away, the car parks full."
- " they both missed the group so I called to see if they are OK. Their kids have the flu, so maybe our group can make meals for them. I'll start."
- "In my devotions, I came across something I have a question about."
- "I noticed that we don't have an old folks' visitation team. Do you think I could be involved?"

Parent: Characterised by Intentionality:

Intentional, reproduce disciples, feed themselves, humility, value other team members

- "the chap at work asked me to go and explain the Bible to him. Please pray for me."
- " we baptise someone from our small group tonight. When is the next learn your faith course? I want to get them Linked in to something"
- "Our small group's doing an outreach I've given each person a different responsibility."
- "I have realized discipleship happens at home too. Will you hold me accountable to spend time discipling my kids?"
- "I have a person in my small group who is passionate about children. Do you have anything for them in your children's ministry?"

We all need to move on to the next step of maturity in Christ – where do we start?

Right where God has placed us! Look out for the 'equipping' evenings – looking at methods, resources and opportunities (in and out of church!).

The Great Command/Commission:

Matt 28:18-19

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