

## Making Disciples

My father was hardly around, always somewhere else but never at home; so basically, my mother stepped up as a “single” parent selling fish in the marketplace along with real estate to provide the very basic necessities for the children. My older brothers and sisters would wear the same clothes for months and sometimes not eat for a few days, so that the younger ones could eat. Post Korean War was difficult for everyone, but my father was able to find a job. He worked, but used the money he earned on everything else except his family. Even after we came to America, he still lived his own life, so the family had to find ways to keep living and working with no “head” support.

I grew up never knowing my father, and when he died, I had many regrets. . . . Children, especially boys, need the emotional along with the physical presence of their fathers to guide, direct, and protect them, and to give them wise counsel through life’s situations, and without them boys will struggle to become men.

So, when I closed my eyes to pray, this was the

emptiness that was running through my heart. I needed a solid male role model and a father who would guide and help me understand what it meant to become a man. At 17 at the Christian retreat center, I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and be the male role model that I was so desperately seeking. Tears started to roll down my cheeks and my heart was filled with peace and joy. . . . That unforgettable night was the day that I truly met God who transformed my heart to know Him as a personal God. . . . Many came and congratulated me; however, after the retreat, it seemed that everything went back to life as usual with some basic changes. I participated more in youth events and Sunday worship, but no one really guided me on what I was supposed to do next after I accepted Christ. I was basically told to just read the Word, pray, go to church on Sundays and continually seek God. . . . Church leaders and volunteers are in the same boat as the pastors, too busy to disciple.

**[Joseph Choi and Jae Lee, *New Beginning— I’ve Accepted Christ, Now What?* Pp. 2-3]**

## For Discussion

***Are we making disciples today like Jesus intended? Why or why not?***

# Encounter

Read God's word so He can speak to you.

## Matthew 28:18-20

*18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

## Luke 6:40

*A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.*

# Examine

what the passage says before you decide what it means.

Read it carefully **three** times.

Underline anything you see as important. Write any questions you have.

# Explore

God's Word by asking questions of what you saw.

The notes that follow may help you think through these questions.

1)

Jesus was a disciple-maker. What does that mean?

- How did He do it?

2)

If a disciple of Jesus is to become like Him, what does that look like?

- Is it really possible? Explain
- How long does it take?

# Explore (con't)

3) Jesus told us—His followers—that we are disciple-makers. How are we to do it?

4) When Jesus said “everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40), He was not so much talking about us becoming like Him, but others becoming like us. What does that mean? What does that look like?

- How does this happen?

5) According to Matthew 28:18-20, what is the process of making disciples?

6) Here is a definition of discipling: *Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside others in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ.* What are some key words or phrases in this definition?

- Restate this in your own words.

7) Making disciples involves relationships. What is required in each of these relationships for you to become like Jesus?

- Intimacy with God
- Community with believers
- Witness to those far from God

# Notes On The Passage

(Adapted from Thomas Constable, *Expository Notes*)

## Matthew 28:18-20

**18** - Notice the repetition of "all" in verses 18-20: all authority, all nations, all things, and all the days. Matthew stressed the authority of Jesus throughout his Gospel (7:29; 10:1, 7-8; 11:27; 22:43-44; 24:35). God restricted Jesus' authority before His resurrection because of His role as the Suffering Servant. Following His resurrection God broadened the sphere in which Jesus exercised authority (cf. 4:8-10). He became the One through whom God now mediates all authority (cf. Dan. 7:14; Phil. 2:5-11). This was Jesus' great claim.

**19-20** - He gave them a new universal mission in keeping with His new universal authority. Previously He had limited their work to Israel (10:1-8; cf. 15:24). Now He sent them into all the world. They could go confidently knowing that Jesus has sovereign control over everything in heaven and on earth (cf. Rom. 8:28).

In the Greek text there is one imperative verb, "make disciples" (Gr. *matheteusate*), modified by three participles, "going," "baptizing," and "teaching." All three participles describe what is required to make disciples, and all are understood as a command. Making disciples involves bringing people into relationship with Jesus as pupils to teacher. It involves getting them to take His yoke of instruction upon themselves as authoritative (11:29), accepting His words as true, and submitting to His will as what is right. A good disciple is one who listens, understands, and obeys Jesus' instructions (12:46-50). Disciples of Jesus must duplicate themselves in others. Jesus' disciples should make disciples among all people without distinction.

Baptism implies evangelism that preceded it. When the preached gospel is believed, then baptism publically demonstrates that identification with Christ by faith. Discipling also involves teaching followers everything Jesus commanded His disciples. As Matthew has already shown, that includes Jesus' interpretation of the Old Testament as

God originally intended (e.g., Matt 5). Disciples must not just understand what Jesus has commanded, as foundational as that is. They must also obey it.

This Gospel ends not with a command but with a promise, or rather a fact. Jesus will be with His disciples as they carry out His will. This is His great commitment. Immanuel is still God with us (1:23; cf. 18:20). The expression "to the end of the age" (Gr. *pasas tes hemeras*) literally means "the whole of every day." Jesus promised to be with us every day forever. And until He returns to begin the Kingdom on earth, we (Kingdom citizens) have a mission to keep in this foreign land: make disciples.

## Luke 6:39-42

**39** - In this parable, the leader evidently represents a disciple, and the person led is someone the disciple is seeking to guide into the way of life. If the disciple is "blind," he will not be able to help other "blind" non-disciples find their way. Both disciple and non-disciple will stumble tragically. On another occasion, Jesus called the Pharisees blind guides (Matt. 15:14). However, here He compared His disciples to blind guides. The disciples could become blind guides if they did not follow Jesus' instructions about loving (vv. 27-38).

**40** - Changing the figure momentarily, Jesus compared a disciple of His to a teacher. It is proverbial that a pupil cannot rise above his teacher in knowledge. The fact that some pupils do excel their teachers is an exception to the rule. The people whom the disciples would instruct in the truth that Jesus taught them would normally advance no further than the disciples. This was especially true before the widespread availability of books. Therefore it was imperative that the disciples pay careful attention to Jesus' teachings about love and apply them. The progress of the disciples' learners depended on it.

# Notes On The Passage (con't)

**41-42** - Jesus returned to the figure of limited perception (v. 39). It would be

easy for a disciple to criticize those he was instructing, and fail to realize his own faults, since he was in the position of a teacher (v. 40). It would be not only dangerous, but hypocritical, to try to help a learner overcome his deficiencies, without first dealing with one's own failings. If a disciple tried to teach his learner the importance of loving as Jesus taught, but did not practice that kind of love himself, he could not remove his learner's knowledge deficiency. His sin would be greater than his learner's ignorance.

Thus Jesus stressed the importance of His disciples applying the truths He had taught them *before* they tried to teach them to other people. Their failure to do so would make them the spiritual equivalent of blind eye surgeons. They would be judging others but not themselves (v. 37; cf. Rom. 2:1-3).

## Going Further

One thing we can do to train ourselves to remember, is to memorize a part of what our Father has said to us. The Holy Spirit can use this to change our thinking so that our "heads" are more like Jesus.

**This week, memorize** Matthew 28:18-20 .