

Bible Passage**Matthew 28:19-20**

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

1. Go and Make Disciples**Outline**

- a. **Engagement Beyond Comfort Zones:** The call to step out of our comfort zones and engage with all people, emphasizing the radical inclusivity and the breaking away from cultural and religious exclusivity.
 - b. **Nurturing a Multiplying Movement:** The multiplicative aspect of discipleship, where our mission is not just to share beliefs but to nurture a faith movement that transcends boundaries.
 - c. **The Role of Love in Discipleship:** The commandment to love God and others is foundational to our mission, serving as the driving force behind our call to make disciples.
- 2. The Power of the Holy Spirit**
- a. **Guidance and Empowerment:** The Holy Spirit guides and empowers us in our mission and our partnership with God in the work of making disciples.
 - b. **The Spirit's Role in Witnessing**
 - c. **Waiting for the Spirit's Leading:** The importance of waiting on the Holy Spirit for guidance and empowerment,
 - i. The disciples' experience in Jerusalem before Pentecost.
- 3. Baptizing and Teaching**

- a. **Baptism as a Beginning, Not an End:** The analogy of a wedding to describe baptism as a joyous celebration that marks the beginning of a new life in Christ, leading to a lifelong journey of growth and obedience.
- b. **The Daily Commitment to Christ's Commands:** The importance of teaching and obeying all that Jesus commanded as an integral part of discipleship, challenging the notion that discipleship is only about initial conversion.
- c. **The Joy of Discipleship:** The joy and fulfillment found in living a life of obedience to Christ, and the deep satisfaction that comes from walking closely with God.

Notes

Being a disciple of Christ is not only understanding or following His teachings; it's an active, participatory journey that challenges us to extend beyond ourselves. This journey is not isolated to an individual mission but is a collective mission that we, as a community of believers, are called to undertake together. At the heart of this calling is the mandate to love - a commandment that Jesus emphasized as foundational to our identity as His followers. This love, however, is not an end in itself but a means through which we fulfill our greater purpose: to make disciples.

This mission, as outlined by Jesus, is not just about spreading a set of beliefs or practices. It's about nurturing a generative, multiplying movement of faith that reaches all people, transcending cultural, national, and racial boundaries. The directive to 'go and make disciples of all nations' signifies a radical inclusivity and a breaking away from the confines of cultural and religious exclusivity. It calls for engagement, for stepping out of our comfort zones, and for the willingness to share the transformative power of the Gospel with everyone we encounter, regardless of their background or beliefs.

Understanding this, the Great Commission becomes a call to action, not just for the early disciples but for all of us. It challenges the notion that faith is a passive inheritance or a personal treasure to be hoarded. Instead, it's an active, dynamic force that compels us to engage, to teach, and to baptize in the name of Christ. This engagement isn't about

converting others to our way of life or culture but inviting them into a deeper, more profound relationship with God, where love is the universal language that binds us all.

This mission is daunting, not because it's beyond our capability but because it demands a shift in perspective. It requires us to see beyond the immediate, beyond the confines of our cultural or political identities, to a broader vision of the Kingdom of God. It's a reminder that our faith is not just about personal salvation but about participating in God's larger plan for humanity. It's about being part of a community that is not defined by geographical boundaries or cultural markers but by a shared commitment to living out the love and teachings of Jesus in every aspect of our lives.

In embracing this mission, we're invited to partner with God in the transformative work of making disciples. It's a partnership that doesn't diminish God's sovereignty but rather affirms our role in His plan. It's a call to action that resonates with the very core of our being, urging us to live out our faith in a way that not only transforms us but the world around us. In this, we find our true purpose and the path to genuine fulfillment.

In my journey of faith, I've come to understand that the essence of discipleship isn't confined to a solitary endeavor or a mere transfer of knowledge. It's deeply intertwined with the command to love — love God and love others. This mandate propels us towards an active participation in our communities, where every interaction holds the potential to nurture a disciple for Christ. The realization that our neighbors are ripe fields for discipleship challenges us to

rethink our approach to ministry. It's not just about the formal proclamation of the gospel but engaging in genuine, meaningful conversations that address the heartaches, struggles, and questions of those around us.

This task isn't solely ours to bear. The Holy Spirit plays a pivotal role, guiding and empowering us to carry out this mission. The beauty of this journey lies in the collaborative effort with God, where our actions, however small, are amplified by His transformative power. Witnessing to our neighbors doesn't necessitate a grandiose display of theology but rather authentic relationships that demonstrate the love and compassion of Christ.

Moreover, the concept of making disciples transcends cultural, national, and even political boundaries, challenging us to broaden our horizons beyond our comfort zones. The Great Commission, as illustrated in the Acts of the Apostles, underscores the importance of waiting on the Holy Spirit's empowerment before embarking on this mission. This waiting is not passive but a state of readiness and anticipation for the Spirit's guidance.

The journey of discipleship is a dynamic and communal pursuit, anchored in love and propelled by the Holy Spirit. It calls for a willingness to step out in faith, engage deeply with those around us, and embrace the joy and fulfillment that comes from participating in God's redemptive work in the world.

Being a disciple of Christ is not merely about following a set of doctrines or rituals, but about actively participating in a living, breathing mission of love and replication of faith.

It's clear to me that the essence of discipleship goes beyond the act of loving God and others; it's about embodying this love in such a way that it propels us towards the creation of more disciples. This is not a passive reception of faith but an active, generative process where our love for God and others catalyzes the expansion of this discipleship across cultures, nations, and generations.

It's not by our strength or eloquence that people come to faith, but through the Spirit's work in their hearts. I am reminded that my role is not to convert but to witness, to live out my faith in such a way that others are drawn to Christ through me. The waiting for the Holy Spirit's leading, the stepping out in faith to share the gospel, and the joy of seeing people transformed by Christ's love are all integral parts of this journey.

The act of baptism and teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded further deepens my understanding of discipleship. It's a process that encompasses both the initial step of faith symbolized by baptism and the lifelong journey of growing in obedience and faithfulness to Christ's teachings. This is the blueprint for making disciples—a dynamic, ongoing process of being transformed and transforming others, all under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

The Great Commission is not a solitary endeavor but a collective calling. It's about the church, in all its diverse expressions, coming together to live out the mission of God in the world. This vision of discipleship challenges me to look beyond my personal faith journey to see the broader

picture of God's work in the world, inviting all who follow Christ to participate in this grand, divine narrative of redemption, love, and transformation.

The excitement and communal joy of baptism mirror the celebration of a wedding day, marking the beginning of a new identity and journey. However, the true essence of discipleship unfolds in the daily, often challenging, commitment to live out this new identity, akin to the unfolding journey of a marriage. The beauty of discipleship lies in its complexity and depth. It's about moving beyond the celebratory moments of spiritual milestones to embrace the rigorous, sometimes mundane, process of spiritual growth and maturity. This journey involves a deep engagement with Scripture, a commitment to obey Christ's commands, and a transformation that impacts every aspect of one's life.

In this understanding of discipleship, there's a beautiful paradox: while it demands our active participation, effort, and obedience, it's ultimately a journey of joy, fulfillment, and deep satisfaction in God. It challenges the notion that discipleship is burdensome, instead revealing it as the path to true life and joy in Christ.

This perspective has revolutionized how I view my faith and my role within the church. It's not just about being a passive recipient of God's love and grace but about actively participating in God's redemptive work in the world. It's a call to a deeper, more meaningful engagement with my faith, where every aspect of my life is an act of worship and obedience to Christ.