

MAKING DISCIPLES

“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...” — MATTHEW 28:19

What comes to mind when you hear the word ‘disciple’? Some may think of the twelve disciples of Jesus, or of a biblical figure in a stained glass window. You might even think of a disciple as someone bordering on being fanatical. But do you ever think of yourself as a disciple?

Before the Lord ascended to heaven, He gave His disciples these marching orders: “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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Since then, this mandate has been passed from generation to generation and is now in our hands.

The church of Jesus Christ has one job description - “to make disciples”. Anything less is fraudulent to the purposes of Jesus Christ. Making disciples doesn’t mean acquiring new members for our church or getting people into heaven with very little expectation of change here and now. That’s the popular Gospel, but we cannot become disciples or make disciples on our own terms. When we say ‘yes’ to Jesus it is with full surrender to God, which may involve cost. We need to realize true discipleship is not a sentimental journey of faith, but a denying of oneself to the purposes of God. It means helping people come into a living relationship with Jesus Christ that transforms their lives and equips them to be effective and fruitful in this world.

The Apostle Paul left many disciples in his wake. He was a pioneer for Christ, bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles and founding the first Christian churches throughout the Mediterranean world. He never stayed in any one place with intentions of settling down, but moved on,

leaving men and women of God to build up the church. He knew he could take himself out of the equation and it would be “Christ in them” who would bring to completion the work God had started. Paul’s strategy was simply leaving them Jesus, and that is the true nature of making disciples.

The call of every Christian is to make disciples and though it will undoubtedly involve personal cost, it is a lifestyle dynamically alive and meaningful as opposed to having beliefs we try to follow and don’t pass on.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I know that being a true disciple involves ‘making disciples’. Grant me opportunities to share the Gospel in such a way that others are indwelt by your Spirit and they, too, pass the Gospel on. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Who have I shared the Gospel with lately?