

## THE PASSAGE

Matthew 28:19 Go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.

### 1) Christians make disciples

- as Christians, as a church, this is what we have to do well; something which without it, everything else we do is useless.
- we can raise money, build buildings, write songs, have the best kids ministry, but if we don't make disciples we fail.
- discipleship is the core of the GREAT COMMISSION both for us as a church and for you

### 2) Go, Make Disciples, and teach them everything I commanded

- In Greek, the words "go" baptize" and "teach" are all participles which derive their force from the one controlling verb "make disciples"
- This means, "going," "baptizing," and "teaching," are only good insofar as they contribute to making disciples.

### 3) Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism

- "The great commission is not merely to go to the ends of the earth preaching the gospel, nor to baptize a lot of converts into the Name of the Triune God, nor to teach them the precepts of Christ, but to 'make disciples' - to build men like themselves who were so constrained by the commission of Christ that they not only followed Jesus themselves, but led others to follow him, too."
- The criteria upon which any church should measure its success is not how many new names are added or how much the budget is increased, but rather how many Christians are actively winning souls and training them to win the multitudes.

### 4) How to Become a Disciple-Maker

1. Own the assignment
2. Understand the method: life-on-life
3. Be ready with a plan
4. Make the invitation
5. Stop. Making. Excuses
6. START somewhere!

# QUESTIONS AND SCRIPTURE FOR FURTHER STUDY THIS WEEK

## Learning to Make Disciples of Jesus: The Calling of Every Believer

Adapted by Thomas A. Tarrants, Vice President of Ministry C.S. Lewis Institute

Have you ever been discipled by another believer? That is, did anyone help you in the process of coming to faith? After you came to Christ, did anyone help you grow more like Jesus, either informally or in some organized fashion? Or, from the other side, have you ever been in the discipling role, helping someone come to faith in Christ or grow as His disciple?

If you answered yes, you already have some level of experience with disciple making. If you answered no, fear not, for help is at hand. *Help? Why do I need help? you say. I am not called to a ministry of disciple making.* That's somebody else's job. If this is your reaction, you have lots of company. Many in the church today think that disciple making is someone else's ministry. But Jesus doesn't give us that option.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples, told them that universal authority had been conferred on Him, and commissioned them to a universal mission:

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt. 28:18–20).<sup>1</sup>*

This was, and still is, Jesus' plan to spread God's kingdom throughout the world, and you and I have a part to play. Simply put, they were to reproduce themselves by taking their disciples through the same basic teaching and training that Jesus had given them in their apprenticeship with Him. Let's look at Jesus' call to make disciples and how we are to do it.

### What Is a Disciple?

The standard lexicon of New Testament Greek defines the word *disciple* as a “learner, pupil, adherent.”<sup>2</sup> With that basic definition in mind, we must go on to observe how Jesus adapted and used the word to serve His unique purposes. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the word in the Gospels, Professor Michael Wilkins says: “a *disciple of Jesus* is someone who has come to him for eternal life, claimed him as Savior and God, and has embarked upon the life of following him.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, a disciple of Jesus is not simply someone who has made a profession of faith, or even someone who has learned the teachings of Jesus (or the Bible), but someone who has come to repentance and faith and is seeking to follow His teaching and example.

### What Is Discipleship and Discipling?

Discipling is a ministry to which all believers are called in some fashion. Someone has said that each of us needs to be in relationship with at least one person who is like a “Paul”—a more mature believer who can disciple (spiritually mentor) us; at least one like “Timothy”—a person younger in the faith whom we can disciple; and one or two peers like “Barnabas” (who encouraged Paul) to cheer us on.

### How Do We Make Disciples?

#### Going

Going is the initial stage in making disciples. A literal rendering of the Greek text reads, “having gone, make disciples.” But because this participle has imperative force, the best way to express its meaning is to use the word go as does the English Standard Version. It is a command, not a suggestion. On a practical level, this means that we must take initiative, that we must be intentional about going out to make disciples.

#### Baptizing

This brief, one-time event is the doorway into the fellowship of the church. We should do all we can to encourage converts to be baptized as soon as practically possible. Becoming a member of a healthy church, a community of disciples, is not optional; it is essential for spiritual survival and maturation.

#### Teaching

As you disciple people, remember that simply learning Jesus' teachings doesn't make one a disciple. The true disciple *obeys* Jesus' commands. How well the disciple engages in this process largely determines whether he or she will be a good disciple or a poor one.