



Candlewood Church



Do As He Did: Multiply

September 27, 2026

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BIG IDEA – As a follower of Jesus we are with him to be like him, but also to do as he did through the Holy Spirit. We are created to be fruitful and multiply.

Scripture Focus – I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but **it was God who made it grow**. 1 Corinthians 3:6

GOD MATH. God has his own math. We get addition; we can even handle multiplication. Financial planners light up talking about compound interest: invest early, then just watch it grow! God works the same way with our lives. Jesus didn't just hand us the model; he lived it for three years with his apprentices: **Be with him. Become like him. Do as he did.** And **when we do as he did, God starts compounding.** Make one disciple; someone who sees Jesus at work in your life; and watch the dividends roll in. Make one. Let God do the math!

Be fruitful and multiply!
I just thought God meant SEX and KIDS.

I don't want to be crass here, but as a new believer, with hormones harrowing through my body, I only saw Genesis 1:28 as a "**get married, get it on and have kids.**"

Then God blessed them and said, be fruitful and multiply Genesis 1:28 NLT.

That's why I wrote the book, "**The Pharisee Factory,**" because I asked the question: **is the Church making more pharisees or disciples. Had we, as the Church, lost the art of making disciples?**

I felt a huge shift happening in the Church that we needed to get back to **being disciples**, but there still was not an emphasis on **making disciples**.

Our mission, vision & motto here at Candlewood Church



Back to Genesis!

God's first command was 'be fruitful and multiply.'

Blessed to be a blessing!

Jesus affirmed it through his words and ways to the disciples.

The Green Thread



Old Testament

The Genesis 1:28 language gets deliberately repeated, often word for word:

- **Adam and Eve:** "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28)
- **Noah:** the same command, twice, after the flood; a creation restart (Gen 9:1, 7)
- **Abraham:** "I will make you exceedingly fruitful" and multiply you like stars and sand (Gen 17:2, 6; 22:17)
- **Isaac and Jacob:** the promise passed down; Jacob gets the command itself (Gen 26:4; 35:11)
- **Israel in Egypt:** "fruitful... multiplied greatly... the land was filled" (Exodus 1:7)
 - **But their descendants, the Israelites, had many children and grandchildren. In fact, they multiplied so greatly that they became extremely powerful and filled the land Exodus 1:7 NLT.**

- A generous fulfillment of Genesis 1:28, but this is **what caught the attention of the new Pharaoh**. That Pharaoh came up with a plan to stop their growth – it's called **generational slavery** or what they now call "**Descent-based slavery**." We think of slavery as a fairly modern atrocity, but it is **very old and very human**.
- **The prophets:** restoration is promised in the same terms (Jer 23:3; Ezek 36:11)

New Testament

Acts describes the church's growth with the same two verbs used in the Greek Old Testament's Gen 1:28: the word of God "increased and multiplied" (Acts 6:7; 12:24). Luke is echoing Genesis on purpose.

- Colossians 1:6 says the gospel is "bearing fruit and increasing" in the whole world.
- John 15:8 ties fruit directly to discipleship: bear much fruit "and so prove to be my disciples."
- John 12:24: a grain of wheat dies and bears much fruit.
- Revelation 7:9: a multitude no one can count; Abraham's stars and sand, finally delivered.

We pick up the last part of our series on Practicing the Way:

We've looked at BE with Jesus, and become LIKE him. This week it is:

Do as he did.

Part One: BE FRUITFUL.

We have touch on this a few times in this series, but I'd like to highlight some things that help us remember that God, the creator of all things, made us in His image. Then God blessed us and commanded us to be fruitful and multiply. We are going to see Jesus' methods in reproducing himself by what he instructed his followers to do.

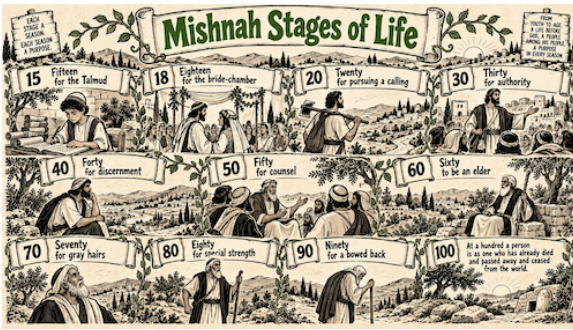
Scene One. Sent before they were ready

Jesus doesn't wait for finished disciples; he sends them out at the beginning of their 2nd year of apprenticeship. The Twelve go out in Luke 9, then seventy-two more in Luke 10.

- They 12 are told up front, they're going "[like lambs among wolves](#)."
- We know this about the twelve. **Most were under 30 years old**. Maybe Peter was their "senior" in the group. The significance in that is that a "standard rabbi stages of life," isn't **deemed to have any authority until they reached 30 years old**! Jesus sent them out with **HIS** authority before they technically had any of their own. This is why we say **they weren't ready**!



DIG DEEPER: Mishnah Stages of Life



Mishnah Stages of Life

- Fifteen for the Talmud,
- Eighteen for the bride-chamber,
- Twenty for pursuing a calling,
- Thirty for authority,
- Forty for discernment,
- Fifty for counsel,
- Sixty to be an elder,
- Seventy for gray hairs,
- Eighty for special strength,
- Ninety for a bowed back,
- and at a hundred a person is as one who has already died and passed away and ceased from the world.

Just a point to be made: As we move forward in age, we don't lose the stages or calling, authority, discernment, counsel, elder – but we do lose hair, strength and back 😊

As we mature, we are supposed to keep those stages of growth sharp so that we can give back to others as they make their way through life's stages. If we just turn into grumpy old men and women, folks won't listen to our wisdom if we are just rude, opinionated and divisive!

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- Luke 9:1–6; Luke 10:1–3
 - There is also significance in the **two different sendings!**
 - **It's multiplication inside Jesus's own ministry**
12 becomes 72. Before the resurrection, before Pentecost, the sending circle is already expanding. **Then the 72 are nameless, not apostles, not the inner circle, just followers.** These are not the Apostles, these are just normal followers that were committed to their own apprenticeship path **being with, being like and doing what he did!**
 - **The numbers likely point from Israel to the nations**
 - 12 echoes the twelve tribes; and in **Matthew's version of that first sending, Jesus explicitly limits them to "the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt 10:5–6).**
 - 70/72 likely echoes the **Table of Nations in Genesis 10**, which lists 70 nations in the Hebrew text and 72 in the Greek translation.

- Luke makes it clear in these “sendings,” that the Great Commission: first Israel, then all nations. **Genesis 10 is the result of Genesis 9:1**, God telling Noah, “be fruitful and multiply.” The nations the 72 symbolize are themselves the fruit of that command. And **The Green Thread runs right through Luke 10.**
- **The conditions got harder as the numbers grow. The Twelve go out during the beginning of the popular season; the 72 go as Jesus heads toward Jerusalem and opposition**, the mission widens precisely as the danger rises; the sending isn't reserved for favorable conditions.

The “doing” wasn't some kind of graduation reward; it was part of Jesus apprenticeship and it wasn't a finality. It was supposed to continue on.

Scene Two. Debriefed and admonished.

The debrief was full of excitement.

- The debrief of the mission takes place in private because the final exam is still coming.

When the apostles returned, they told Jesus everything they had done. Then he slipped quietly away with them toward the town of Bethsaida (Luke 9:10 NLT).

- **Yet things quickly went back** to our very own **human Achille's heel** –
 - **Failed** demon casting attempt ([Luke 9:37-43 NLT](#)).
 - **Where am I** in the power pecking order - "who's greatest" argument ([Luke 9:46-48 NLT](#)).
 - **Feeling empowered to distribute justice** from our **newly enlightened perspective**. Advising Jesus to torch a Samaritan village ([Luke 9:51-56 NLT](#)).

The debrief with the seventy-two was different than with the twelve.

When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, “Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!” “Yes,” he told them, “I saw **Satan fall** from heaven like lightning! Look, **I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy**, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you. But don't rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven.” Luke doesn't try to hide the inevitable setbacks **Luke 10:17-20 NLT**.

They came back buzzing with reports. Jesus, even then **redirects their enthusiasm**:

Part Two: AND MULTIPLY

Scene One. Same men, permanent commission

The unfinished men from Luke 9 are the **ones on the mountain in Matthew 28**. Even then, there were “some that doubted.”

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have

given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." **Matthew 28:18–20 NLT**

The command isn't "make converts"; it's "make disciples."

The word Jesus used is mathéteuó

It's a unique word meaning both to BE A DISCIPLE and to MAKE A DISCIPLE.

In Jesus's vocabulary, the word disciple is a verb before it's a title.



DIG DEEPER: Mathéteuó

It appears **four times in the New Testament**: Matthew 13:52, Matthew 27:57, Matthew 28:19, and Acts 14:21. Strong's dictionary of Greek words defines it two ways: intransitively, to become a pupil; transitively, to disciple someone, i.e. enroll them as a learner. The **New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance** sums it up simply as **"to be a disciple, to make a disciple."** Same word; both directions. [BIBLE HUB REFERENCE](#).

Matthew uses it three ways

- **Being disciplined** (Matt 13:52): Jesus describes "every scribe who has been disciplined for the kingdom of heaven" as a householder bringing out new treasures and old. [biblehub](#)
- **Becoming a disciple** (Matt 27:57): Joseph of Arimathea "had also become a disciple of Jesus"; a respected Sanhedrin member now standing publicly with the crucified Messiah. [biblehub](#)
- **Making disciples** (Matt 28:19): the lone imperative in the Great Commission is this verb. [biblehub](#)

... teaching them to obey," which is be **with/be like/Do** As He Did.

By Acts 4, the religious leaders notice something different about the same men they had seen before –

What did they see?

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were **ordinary men with no special training** in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as **men who had been with Jesus**. **Acts 4:13 NLT**

These ordinary men "had been with Jesus."

What do people see in me?
What do people see in you?

I may not know everything I need to know and I certainly don't behave in every way I should – even though I want to.

But what I do know is this...

I want people to see that I have been with Jesus!

That is not just in the words I say or don't say – it's in the way I behave, the way I treat them or don't treat them.

In our cultural moments today –

When words are cheap.

Our behaviors stand out strong.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **Acts 1:8 NLT**

Scene Two. MAKE ONE

2 Timothy 2:2 holds four generations in one verse: Paul, Timothy, faithful people, and others after them. Acts 2:42–47 shows the whole cycle reproducing in a new community. This is **not outsourcing the** "gift of evangelism."

- 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 2:42–47
- **A follower of Jesus who never participates with God to make a follower, isn't being fruitful and multiplying. Many still don't understand they have been blessed by God to bless others.**
- **An apprentice who never makes an apprentice hasn't finished becoming one.**

Do you believe you are you **blessed by God**?

Do you believe that you are **being fruitful by being a blessing to others**?

Then you and I should also understand that the creator of all things has given us everything we need to be the most creative people on the planet to multiply what God has done in us and through us so that people around us – where we work, live and play – can clearly see Jesus in our very ordinary lives!

We are not done becoming like Jesus until someone is becoming like Jesus because of you."

"Every apprentice was made to make one."

REFLECTION

- **Be fruitful and multiply**

Have you ever thought about this phrase **beyond** marriage, kids and being the chief groundskeeper for Earth?

- **Jesus often talked about us being fruitful, but he was just as passionate about us multiplying.**

Have you thought about multiplying as much as being fruitful?

- **The 12 and the 72 were sent out without really understanding the full scope of why they were sent.**

Have you felt inadequate or too ordinary to think that God wants to send you out as well?

- **God doesn't want you to be something you're not – just to have more forward faith in the way He has created you and gifted you to be.**

Do you believe that God wants to you be fruitful but also multiply? What would that look like in the places where you work, live and play?

APPLICATION

- **Feelings of inadequacy often define our limited view of God and our ability to exercise our faith.**

How does God see you? What is your identity in Christ? Who do you choose to believe – yourself, the liar and deceiver or Jesus?

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:28 NLT

Then God blessed them and said, be fruitful and multiply.

Exodus 1:7 NLT

But their descendants, the Israelites, had many children and grandchildren. In fact, they multiplied so greatly that they became extremely powerful and filled the land.

Luke 9:10 NLT ON SCREEN

When the apostles returned, they told Jesus everything they had done. Then he slipped quietly away with them toward the town of Bethsaida.

Luke 10:17-20 NLT ON SCREEN

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and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

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Acts 1:8 NLT ON SCREEN

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.



DIG DEEPER NOTES



Fruitful and Multiply

The Green Thread

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- **Israel in Egypt:** "fruitful... multiplied greatly... the land was filled" (Exod 1:7); nearly a checklist of Gen 1:28, fulfilled in slavery, and Pharaoh's first move is to stop it
- **The prophets:** restoration is promised in the same terms (Jer 23:3; Ezek 36:11)

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What does it have to do with Discipleship/Apprenticeship

1. **Bookends:** God's first words to humanity were "multiply"; Jesus's last words to his disciples were "make disciples." The Bible opens and closes its commissioning scenes the same way.
2. **Blessing before command:** Gen 1:28 begins "God *blessed* them and said..." Multiplication is God's blessing before it's our assignment. That fits "Make one. Let God do the math" better than any hustle framing; and Abraham counting stars at God's invitation (Gen 15:5) is literally God doing the math.

What else does scripture does say?

- **Isaiah 9:7:** "Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end." Increase with no end.
- **Ephesians 2:7:** "in the coming ages" God will keep showing the immeasurable riches of his grace; ages, plural, implies ongoing discovery.
- **Revelation 22:2–5:** the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations, and God's people reign; that's activity and blessing, not a frozen tableau.
- **Genesis 12:2–3:** Abraham is blessed *to be a blessing*. That's the purpose behind the multiplication all along; it was never just about numbers.

What the tradition has said

Gregory of Nyssa called it *epektasis*: perpetual progress into the infinite God, never exhausting him. Jonathan Edwards argued the saints' knowledge and joy would increase forever. That's a respectable, mainstream line of thought, not a fringe one.

Paul talks like a parent

Paul uses family language and applies it to discipleship:

- **1 Corinthians 4:15:** "In Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel."
- **Philemon 10:** Onesimus, "my child, whom I fathered in my imprisonment."
- **1 Timothy 1:2:** Timothy, "my true child in the faith."
- **Galatians 4:19:** "My little children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you."

2 Timothy 2:2 reads like a genealogy

Genesis tracks multiplication through "so-and-so fathered so-and-so." Paul, Timothy, faithful people, others also: that's a spiritual genealogy, four generations deep.

The growth language echoes Genesis

- Acts 6:7 and 12:24: the word "increased and multiplied"
- Colossians 1:6: "bearing fruit and increasing"
- Matthew 13:23: seed yielding thirty, sixty, a hundredfold



Mishnah Stages of Life

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- **Fifty for counsel, Sixty to be an elder,**
- **Seventy for gray hairs, Eighty for special strength,**
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- **and at a hundred a person is as one who has already died and passed away and ceased from the world.**



mathēteuō

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Yes, it's dual purpose

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God Math in disciple-making

One preacher reaching **1,000 people a year for 30 years** vs. **one person making one disciple a year, with each of those doing the same.**

Year Preacher (addition) One-a-year (multiplication)

1	1,000	2
5	5,000	32
10	10,000	1,024
13	13,000	8,192
14	14,000	16,384
20	20,000	1,048,576

Year Preacher (addition) One-a-year (multiplication)

30	30,000	1,073,741,824
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A preacher leading wins for 13 straight years; multiplication overtakes in year 14. By year 30 it's 30,000 vs. over a billion. (And **at year 33, it passes 8.5 billion**, more than the world's population. Maybe too cute to use; but it's there.)

The sermon point hiding in the table: multiplication looks like losing for a long time. At year 5, it's 5,000 vs. 32. That's exactly why people think they should give up on it and outsource to the "professionals."

Roadblock to flag: the one-per-year doubling is idealized, and a sharp listener may know it. Jesus spent about three years with his guys. If you use a more realistic "one disciple every three years," the numbers change:

Years Preacher One every 3 years

30	30,000	1,024
45	45,000	32,768
60	60,000	1,048,576