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Make Disciples

by
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The Process of Making Disciples

Acts 14:21-23

I. Making disciples begins with preaching the Gospel

the four phases of evangelistic outreach are given in the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:3-7

Seeking	Finding	Bringing	Rejoicing
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A. Seeking

1. requires going to people where they are instead of expecting them to come to us - Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8
2. requires becoming a servant of all - 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
3. requires opportunities to get to know non-Christians - Luke 5:27-32
4. requires exposure to the Word of God - Acts 17:10-12

B. Finding

1. we must clearly understand the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit - John 16:8-11
2. we must be sure that we present the Gospel clearly - Galatians 1:8-9
3. we must present the death and resurrection of Christ - 1 Corinthians 15:1-6
4. we must present both repentance and faith - Acts 20:21

C. Bringing

1. every new Christian needs a spiritual parent - 1 Corinthians 4:15-17
2. every new Christian needs to get involved in a Bible study and fellowship - Acts 2:42
3. every new Christian needs a caring church which provides basic needs for stabilization and growth
 - a. be available with adequate time - Acts 20:31; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-10
 - b. be a team in ministry to new Christians - Acts 8:14, 11:22-26, 18:24-26

- c. provide proper food for spiritual growth - 1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:11-6:2
- d. provide protection from wrong associations - 2 Corinthians 6:13-7:1
- e. provide protection from false teaching - 1 John 4:1-4; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- f. provide encouragement to overcome discouragements - 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12
- g. provide opportunities for total development - Luke 2:52

D. Rejoicing

- 1. introduce them to other Christians who will rejoice with them - Luke 15:6, 9
- 2. provide new opportunities for fellowship, especially meals together, because their old friends may drop them - Luke 15:22-24; Acts 2:46
- 3. develop a church where the emphasis is gladness and praise to God - Acts 2:46-47

II. Making disciples takes a person from the point of contact to spiritual maturity and effective ministry

A. Making disciples is commanded - Matthew 28:19-20

- 1. this includes going to people where they are at and reaching them where they are comfortable
- 2. this includes baptizing them and helping them identify themselves publicly as Christians as well as helping them become part of a local church
- 3. this includes teaching them to obey all of the things that Christ has commanded

B. Making disciples is defined - Matthew 13:52

- 1. a disciple has become the head of a household, which means that he or she has developed a spiritual family - Acts 10:24
- 2. a disciple has a treasure, which means that he has become familiar with the Word of God
- 3. a disciple is able to bring out of his treasure things, which are new and means that he is continuing to grow himself
- 4. a disciple is able to bring things out of his treasure, which are the basics to help others in their spiritual growth

**C. Making disciples is illustrated in the ministry of Christ -
Matthew 27:57**

1. Christ invited people to get acquainted with Him - John 1:35-51
2. Christ invited people to follow Him - Mark 1:16-20
3. Christ invited a small group to be with Him - Mark 3:13-14
4. Christ had a larger group that traveled with Him part of the time - Luke 10:1-2
5. Christ spent time with individuals that were neither part of the twelve or part of the seventy - John 3:1-21, 4:1-42

**D. Making disciples is continuously practiced in the
New Testament**

1. from Acts 2 to Acts 6:1 the new believers are not called disciples but are called by some other title because they had not yet been taught to observe all that Christ commanded
2. only after additional disciples developed were deacons appointed - Acts 6:1-7
3. making disciples requires five basic things of us as leaders - Exodus 18:19-21
 - a. we must pray for those we are discipling
 - b. we must teach them the Word of God
 - c. we must show them the way to walk
 - d. we must show them the work to do
 - e. we must share the work with them

pray for them	teach them the Word of God	show them the way to walk	show them the work to do	share the work
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4. these five basics illustrated in the New Testament
 - a. disciples developed because of systematic prayer - Luke 6:12-16, 22:31-32; John 17:1-19; 2 Timothy 1:3
 - b. disciples developed because of systematic teaching of the Word of God - Acts 19:8-10
 - c. disciples developed because pupils became like their teachers when fully developed - Luke 6:40; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 2:2
 - d. disciples developed because they were shown how to do the work of the Lord - Mark 1:16-20; Acts 20:20
 - e. disciples developed because leadership was shared with them - Acts 6:1-7 compare Acts 6:8-7:60, 8:1-40

III. Making disciples includes strengthening the souls of the disciples

A. Principles for a strengthening ministry

1. strengthening is accomplished through preaching and teaching the Word of God - Acts 15:32; 2 Peter 1:12
2. strengthening is accomplished through prayer - Romans 16:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:17
3. strengthening is accomplished by sharing our spiritual gifts - Romans 1:11
4. strengthening is accomplished by suffering - 1 Peter 5:10

B. Recipients of a strengthening ministry

1. brethren - Acts 15:32; 2 Thessalonians 3:1
2. disciples - Acts 14:22, 18:23
3. churches - Acts 15:41

C. Goals of a strengthening ministry

1. spiritual protection - 2 Thessalonians 3:3
2. a strong faith - 1 Thessalonians 3:2
3. a strong hope - 2 Thessalonians 2:16
4. a strong love - Ephesians 3:19
5. a holy life - 1 Thessalonians 3:13
6. a commitment to obedience - Luke 9:51

1 Corinthians 13:13

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

IV. Making disciples includes encouraging disciples to continue in the faith (*to continue* or *to remain in* is a compound of the word “abide”)

A. The word “to continue” is used to show something that continues as long as life remains

1. for those who are not yet Christians, everyone is cursed who does not continue to practice all the things written in the law - Galatians 3:10
2. God could not continue to care for Israel under the conditions of the old covenant because they did not keep the old covenant perfectly - Hebrews 8:9

B. A person can only call himself a disciples if he is fruitful and that requires abiding in Christ - John 15:1-17

1. we will not be fruitful if we do not abide in Christ - John 15:4, 5, 6
2. we will be fruitful if we abide in Christ - John 15:5, 7, 8
3. we will have answered prayer if we abide in Christ - John 15:7

4. we will bring glory to the Father as we abide in Christ because we will bear much fruit - John 15:8
5. we will keep the commandments of the Father and abide in His love if we abide in Christ - John 15:10
6. we will be filled with joy as we abide in Christ - John 15:11
7. we will have fruit that remains if we abide in Christ - John 15:16

V. Making disciples includes preparing the disciples for persecution

A. The most common sources of persecution or opposition

1. opposition from family members - Luke 12:51-53
2. opposition from misguided Christians - Acts 15:1, 5
3. opposition from those who are rejecting Christ - John 15:18-21

B. The Biblical way to handle those who persecute and oppose - Luke 6:27-28

1. love them
2. do good to them
3. bless them
4. pray for them

VI. Making disciples includes recognizing their spiritual leadership

A. True spiritual leadership must be based on Biblical qualifications for leadership

1. spiritual qualifications for men in leadership - Titus 2:2, 6-8
2. spiritual qualifications for women in leadership - Titus 2:3-5
3. spiritual qualification for people in church leadership - Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9

B. Basic goals to develop spiritual leaders that meet Biblical qualifications for spiritual leadership

1. we need to reach people through effective evangelism - Acts 17:11-12
2. we need to stabilize people through effective follow-up - 1 Thessalonians 1:5-7
3. we need to develop Biblical qualifications for spiritual leadership by sharing our lives with them - 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12
4. we need to help them become a leader of ten - Exodus 18:21
5. we need to help them become a leader of ten leaders - Exodus 18:21
6. we need to help them learn how to train ten leaders to train ten other leaders - 2 Timothy 2:2

VII. Making disciples includes continuing in prayer for them

- A. True prayer for disciples includes thankfulness for what God is doing in their lives - 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3**
1. thankfulness for their work of faith
 2. thankfulness for their labor of love
 3. thankfulness for their patience of hope
- B. True prayer for disciples includes their maturity and ministry - Colossians 1:9-11**
1. we need to pray that they will be filled with the knowledge of His will
 2. we need to pray that they will be filled with all wisdom and spiritual understanding
 3. we need to pray that they will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord
 4. we need to pray that they will please the Lord in all respects
 5. we need to pray that they will bear fruit in every good work
 6. we need to pray that they will be increasing in the knowledge of God
 7. we need to pray that they will be strengthened with all power

VIII. Making disciples means commending them to the Lord

(to “commend” means *to entrust to Him*)

- A. This requires faith in the Lord to continue to work in their lives**
1. Paul expected the Lord to continue to build up the Christians in Galatia - Acts 14:23
 2. Paul expected the Lord to continue to build up the elders in Ephesus - Acts 20:32
 3. Paul expected Timothy to build up other faithful men - 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17
- B. This requires building an independent-dependent relationship**
1. we need to help people become independent of us but dependent upon Christ and the body - 1 Corinthians 12:14-27
 2. when Christ left, the disciples had each other - Acts 1:12-14
 3. Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would continue to guide the disciples into all truth - John 14:26, 16:13
- C. This requires an expectation that Christ will work through their lives**
1. we can have confidence that our disciples will walk in our ways and teach what we have taught - 1 Corinthians 4:17
 2. we can expect the Lord to multiply our ministry through the people who have become disciples - 2 Timothy 2:2

The Practice of Making Disciples

(Four Calls and a Commission)

As Christ was preparing to return to heaven, He gave the disciples the **Great Commission** recorded in Matthew 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

However, before that commission, Christ had given four calls to prepare the disciples for that commission. Those four calls plus the commission summarize how Christ made disciples. These four calls and the commission give us a pattern to follow as we are obedient to the commission to: **MAKE DISCIPLES**.

Call

Goal

Call One: Come and See - John 1:39	Evangelism and follow-up (birth)
Call Two: Come and Grow - Mark 1:16-20	Edification
Call Three: Come and Be With Me - Mark 3:13-15	Equipping for ministry
Call Four: Come and Shepherd - John 21:15-17	Expansion of leadership
Commission As you are going, MAKE DISCIPLES - Matthew 28:19-20	Extension (reproduction)

Call One: Come and See John 1:39

Goal: Evangelism and Follow-up (birth)

Meet Christ and learn who He is
Christ called the disciples to put their trust in Him

Vision shared with them:

lift up your eyes and look on the fields - John 4:35
see the needs of others around you:
relatives - John 1:40-42
friends - John 1:43-46
co-workers - Mark 2:13-17
others - John 4:32-35

In response to a question asking where He was staying, in John 1:39, “He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).” This began a period of about one year during which Christ wanted the disciples to learn who He was. Throughout this period, Christ was inviting the various disciples to put their trust in Him.

The goal of Christ during this period was spiritual birth and initial follow-up (evangelism and follow-up). One of the key things to notice about this period was that Christ met and talked to people where they lived, worked, met friends and spent their leisure time. He did not expect people to come to Him. Instead, He went to meet them in their normal activities. The disciples spent some time with Christ and even traveled with Him some during this period.

Christ also began to share His vision with the disciples. In John 4:35, He told them to lift up their eyes and look on the fields. He wanted them to begin to see the needs of other people. This included relatives (John 1:40-42), friends (John 1:43-46), co-workers (Mark 2:13-17), and others (John 4:32-35).

Today, we also want to help people become acquainted with who Christ is so that they can put their trust in Him. Once people put their trust in Christ, we want to begin follow-up to help them in their spiritual growth. We also want them to see the spiritual needs of their relatives, friends, co-workers and others.

Call Two: Come and Grow Mark 1:16-20

Goal: Edification

Go with Christ and grow in the knowledge of Him
Christ called the disciples to grow in their knowledge of Him

Vision shared with them:

let us go into the next towns - Mark 1:38-39
learned to make contacts in their Jerusalem and Judea

Approximately one year after Christ met the men mentioned in John 1, He gave them a second call. In Mark 1:17, Christ said, “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.” (KJV) This was an invitation to come and grow and begin to learn to serve Christ. The disciples went with Christ and continued to grow in their knowledge of Him. They also learned from the example of Christ as He showed them the way to live and how to serve.

Christ invited the disciples to go with Him so that they could learn from Him. However, he had a second reason, which was equally important, for taking the disciples with Him. Christ wanted them to see from His example that He loved them. The only way they could experience His love was to spend time with Him. He also wanted them to see that He had this same love and compassion for others.

During this period, Christ continued to expand the vision of the disciples. In Mark 1:38, Christ said, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.” Christ wanted to give the disciples a vision of the needs in other areas. He also wanted to show them by His example how to make contacts in their Jerusalem and Judea.

Today, we live in a world that has no understanding of real love. One of the great needs of Christians is to spend time in one-to-one and small group fellowship with younger Christians. This way they can grow both in knowledge and in their understanding of the love of Christ for them as they see that love in a more mature Christian. If we take younger Christians with us as we serve the Lord, they will also be learning from our example how to become fishers of men as they see us sharing the Gospel with others. Love and compassion for the lost are caught rather than taught.

Call Three: Come and Serve (Come and Be With Me) Mark 3:13-15

Goal: Equipping for Ministry

Go with Christ and learn to serve with Him
Christ called the disciples to follow His example

Vision shared with them:

sent them forth to minister- Matthew 9:36-10:8; Luke 10:1-3
share the good news in their Jerusalem and Judea
minister to the hurting in their Jerusalem and Judea

About twenty-one months after Christ first met those disciples, He gave them a third call. Mark 3:13-15 tells us that Christ called the twelve to be with Him that He might send them forth to preach and to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of people. First, Christ wanted the disciples to observe His example even more closely so that they could learn how much He loved them. Second, He wanted them to begin to serve Him by sharing the Gospel and ministering to the hurting in their Jerusalem and Judea.

During this period, Christ expanded the vision of the disciples in several ways. According to Matthew 9:36-10:10, Christ showed what it meant to have compassion for people. He also helped the disciples see that there was a great harvest but few laborers. Then Christ told the disciples how they could get involved and serve. First, they could pray for laborers. Second, they could be laborers. Third, He would provide their needs as they were serving Him.

Today, in order to help people learn to serve Christ, we need to give them the opportunity to observe us as we serve Him. This happens best as we take individuals with us as we minister. We also need to begin giving others the opportunity to share the Gospel and minister to the needs of people around them. Many people feel that they are unqualified for such service. Our ministry is to help them become qualified.

At the same time, we also need to help them develop a vision for ministry. This vision is best developed as they see our love and compassion for others. This will happen as we encourage people to pray for laborers, help them realize that Christ wants to use them as laborers, and help them realize that Christ is their source of strength as they minister.

Call Four: Come and Shepherd John 21:15-17

Goal: Expansion of leadership

Serve with Christ and love as He loved
Christ called the disciples to love Him

Vision shared with them:

take responsibility for a part of the flock - Luke 22:32;
John 21:15-17; Ezekiel 34:1-16

Approximately three and a half years after Christ first met the disciples, He gave Peter and the other disciples a fourth call in John 21:15-17. He called them to shepherd His sheep. However, before this call, He asked one question. In John 21:15-17, Christ asked Peter three times, ““Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?”” Christ knew that the only way that the disciples could shepherd others with love was if they loved Christ most of all. Christ called them to shepherd with Him and love as He loved.

Here, we see that Christ expanded the vision of the disciples to help them realize that He trusted them to shepherd and take responsibility for a part of the flock. Christ had taught them many things about the way that a shepherd leads a flock. Now, He was giving them the awesome privilege of leading a part of His flock.

According to Ezekiel 34:1-16, the shepherds of Israel had failed to shepherd Israel because they had tried to shepherd for their own benefit. As a result, Christ showed the disciples how to shepherd a flock by the way He had led them. Only when they had experienced His love and care for them, did Christ ask them to shepherd others in the same way. They knew what it meant to love others because they knew that they were greatly loved.

Today, there is a great need for many more spiritual leaders who will lead Christ's sheep and love them as Christ loves them. As spiritual leaders, one of our greatest ministries is to spend time with a small group so they can experience the love of Christ through us.

As we take others with us as we minister, they will experience the love of Christ if the love of Christ is controlling our lives. Then, as we see that love developing in their lives, we need to give them the privilege and responsibility of shepherding a small part of Christ's flock. Those who have responded to each of these four calls will be most effective in carrying out Christ's commission.

The Commission
As you are going, MAKE DISCIPLES
Matthew 28:19-20

Goal: Extension (reproduction)

Wait on Christ until you are endued with power from on high
Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5

Christ called the disciples to obedience
obedience to the Great Commission - Matthew 28:19-20
obedience to the New Commandment - John 13:34-35

Vision shared with them:

reproduce yourselves in the lives of others -
Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48;
John 20:21; Acts 1:8 - in your:

Jerusalem - cross the barrier of your own fear
of sharing the Gospel

Judea - cross the barrier of making contacts

Samaria - cross the barrier of another culture
and religion

Uttermost - cross the barrier of learning
another language

Shortly before Christ returned to heaven, Christ gave the commission in Matthew 28:19-20. This commission involves one command: **Make Disciples**. It includes three participles which tell how to carry out that command: going, baptizing, teaching. It says that it is to be obeyed in every ethnic group. Christ also promises that He is with us. Every Christian has been given this commission so that means every Christian should have another Christian show them how to obey the four calls and become obedient to this commission.

In addition to the commission to **Make Disciples**, Christ gave one other very important command just before His death. John 13:34-35 says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” In fact, the New Testament tells us a total of fourteen times that we are to love one another.

In order to carry out these two commands, Christ assured the disciples that they could not do it in their own power. In Luke 24:49, Christ said, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Christ knew that we could not carry out these commands in our own strength. As a result, He gives every Christian the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation and the Holy Spirit gives us the power to carry out these commands.

Christ also shared His vision with the disciples as He prepared to return to heaven. Each of the four Gospels include a part of that vision as well as Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The vision that Christ had for the twelve is the same vision that Christ has for each Christian today. We are to reproduce ourselves in the lives of others in our Jerusalem (cross the barrier of our own fear of sharing the Gospel), in our Judea, (cross the barrier of learning to make contacts), in our Samaria (cross the barrier of sharing the Gospel and making disciples with those of another culture and religion) and to the end of our earth (we may have to cross the barrier of learning to make disciples in another language).

In order to be obedient to our commission to Make Disciples, we begin by responding to each of the four calls in our own lives. Then we obey by taking other individuals through the same four stages of development that Christ took His disciples through. In order to be obedient to Christ, we must depend on the power that He supplies and not try to do it in our own strength.

It is the desire of Christ for every Christian to be equipped for an effective ministry of making disciples. In 2 Timothy 2:21 we read, “Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”

MAKE DISCIPLES
Are you obeying?

The Product of Making Disciples

Matthew 13:52

The definition of a disciple is given in Matthew 13:52:

“Then He said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things* new and old.’”

A disciple has a treasure

this means that a disciple knows and obeys the Word of God
Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 7:24-27; John 15:14-17

A disciple has become the head of a spiritual household

this means that a disciple has become a spiritual parent
1 John 2:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12; 1 Corinthians 4:15-17

A disciple brings out of that treasure new things

this means that a disciple is continuing to learn new things
2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:15

A disciple brings out of that treasure old things

this means that a disciple is sharing the basics with others
this sharing occurs through example
Acts 20:20; 1 Timothy 4:12
this sharing occurs through teaching
2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Timothy 4:16

Are you a disciple?

Are you making disciples?

Make Disciples

(Four Calls and a Commission)

Matthew 28:19-20

Call One

Come and See
John 1:39

Goal: Evangelism and follow-up (birth)
meet Christ and learn who He is
Christ called the disciples to put their trust in Him
Vision shared with them:
lift up your eyes and look on the fields - John 4:35
see the needs of others around you
relatives - John 1:40-42; friends - John 1:43-46;
co-workers - Mark 2:13-17; others - John 4:32-35

Call Two

Come and Grow
Mark 1:16-20

Goal: Edification
Go with Christ and grow in the knowledge of Him
Christ called the disciples to grow in their knowledge of Him
Vision shared with them:
let us go into the next towns - Mark 1:38-39
learned to make contacts in their Jerusalem and Judea

Call Three

Come and Serve
(Come be with Me)
Mark 3:13-15

Goal: Equipping for Ministry
Go with Christ and learn to serve with Him
Christ called the disciples to follow His example
Vision shared with them:
sent them forth to minister - Matthew 9:36-10:8; Luke 10:1-3
share the good news in their Jerusalem and Judea
minister to the hurting in their Jerusalem and Judea

Call Four

Come and Shepherd
John 21:15-17

Goal: Expansion of Leadership
Serve with Christ and love as He loved
Christ called the disciples to love Him
Vision shared with them:
take the responsibility for part of the flock - Luke 22:32;
John 21:15-17; Ezekiel 34:1-16

Commission

As you are going,
MAKE DISCIPLES
Matthew 28:19-20

Goal: Extension (reproduction)
obedience to the Great Commission - Matthew 28:19-20
obedience to the New Commandment - John 13:34-35
Vision shared with them:
reproduce yourselves in the lives of others -
Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48;
John 20:21; Acts 1:8