

THE MISSION OF DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus (the Master) sacrificed Himself so that those who would be His disciples could be redeemed (bought back) from a life of sin and become a people for His own possession who are eager/zealous to do good works (Titus 2:11-14)! Consequently, you must not just think of your discipleship as a personal journey; but as a process that equips you to join Jesus's mission of making disciples of others (Matthew 4:19). Therefore, you should evaluate the way Jesus teaches that He wants to use you in His mission.

MATTHEW 13:31-33

Although the gospel of the kingdom can seem like a small thing, its influence (if fostered) will grow in great ways. First, it will grow and spread throughout every aspect of your life. When you let the gospel of God's kingdom into your life, it will work to bring every area of it into submission to King Jesus (e.g. your speech, relationships, character, decisions, etc.). Second, it will grow beyond your own life and impact others around you. When you let the gospel of God's kingdom work in your life, it cannot be contained to only impact your life, as you will become a vessel used to spread it to others by both your example and your words (Matthew 5:13-16).

MATTHEW 9:35-38

Jesus viewed others with compassion, like sheep who were wandering without a shepherd (unprotected and without guidance). Jesus responded to that reality by urging His disciples to pray that God would send out workers into the harvest because the harvest was abundant but the laborers were few (Luke 10:2). Similarly, disciples must recognize the urgent need for more workers to be equipped and go out into the abundant harvest of souls throughout this world who need to become disciples of Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Whether other people follow Jesus or not should deeply matter to and impact you (Galatians 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)! Then, when you care about helping others be true disciples of Christ, you will develop a consciousness of opportunities to see the spiritual needs of people and the doors God opens (Colossians 4:2-6; John 4:1-26). Having the care and consciousness of people who need to be disciples will then help motivate you to develop the courage and craft to do what you can to help!

MATTHEW 28:18-20

Jesus worked closely with His disciples during His earthly ministry for about 3 years, teaching them, answering their questions, correcting them, challenging them, etc. Now, it was time for them to be sent out to continue Jesus's mission. Similarly, all disciples must recognize they are being trained so they can be released and sent out to continue the mission of making disciples for Jesus (Matthew 4:19; Isaiah 6:8). Jesus outlines four steps in this disciple-making work (including Mark 16:15-16). First, you must go to those who need to be disciples of Jesus whether through intentional going or watching for opportunities as you are going about your life. Second, you must preach the gospel to help people learn why they should be Jesus's disciples and how to follow Him. Third, you must teach people to be baptized so they can begin their new lives with Christ and be forgiven of their sins. Fourth, you must continue teaching them all the things Jesus has taught so they can grow in their discipleship and be equipped in His service. Therefore, as a disciple of Jesus, you must be trained and equipped for works of service so you can be sent into His mission field to utilize your abilities and opportunities in the work of making disciples (Romans 12:3-8)!

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-2, 24-26

Jesus is not just concerned about you being strong in your own faith (though this is critical). Instead, He also wants you to allow others to invest in you so that you can invest in others, who can then invest in others – all to help Christ be formed in others (Galatians 4:19; Colossians 1:24-29; 2:6-7). Since

Jesus's servants follow Jesus wherever He leads (John 12:23-26), His servants deeply care about those who have been caught in Satan's traps and want to do what they can to help them escape. For, you simply cannot be a disciple of Jesus and *not* care about whether others follow Jesus. Therefore, you must devote the time, energy, and resources that are necessary physically, emotionally, and spiritually to being equipped as an effective disciple who makes disciples. Then, you must pour yourself into training others to do the same, to multiply as His followers!

TITUS 2:1-8

Those who have grown and matured as disciples of Christ should be looking to invest in those who are younger in the faith in mentoring relationships. Consider how Jesus did this with His disciples (e.g. Peter, James, John; Luke 7:11-17; 9:28-36) and Paul did this with Timothy and Titus (1 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4). As you grow and mature in the faith, you should identify those who may be younger and/or less spiritually mature in their faiths and pour time, energy, and resources into them with the goal of helping them grow in the faith and become able to invest in others. Doing this often involves giving Biblical instruction. However, it also involves helping to make practical applications, providing accountability, correcting sin, challenging to grow, working through difficulties, problems, and questions, etc. In this, you are training your eventual replacements so God's work continues and multiplies beyond yourself!

CONCLUSION

Joining Jesus's mission of working to make disciples is not just for a select few in the church (e.g. evangelists, elders). Instead, it is central to what Jesus wants from all His disciples. Therefore, you must commit to the process of discipleship so that you can grow and mature in your faith to be equipped and use your gifts in His service. Now, you must carefully evaluate yourself as it relates to your discipleship, including: Whether you are truly following Jesus as His disciple, whether you are growing as His disciple, and whether you are joining Jesus in His mission.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

What kind of impact should God's kingdom have on your life?

How should God's kingdom impact beyond your life?

How did Jesus view those who were not His disciples?

How should you respond to the need for others to be Jesus's disciples?

What steps are involved in making disciples?

How does Jesus expect His disciples to work at multiplying?

How should Jesus's disciples view and conduct themselves toward the lost?

How are mentoring relationships important in helping others be disciples?

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