



CONNECT

FIRST STEPS - LESSON 19: MAKING DISCIPLES



Objectives

- New believers to understand the heart of discipleship.
- New believers to be inspired to make disciples.

Introduction

Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of a hundred and ten. And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. They forsook the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They aroused the Lord's anger because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

Judges 2:8-13

The legacy of God through Moses stopped at Joshua, who passed away without a successor. This left the next generation of Israel growing up without knowing God and walked away from the ways of God. On the other hand, Jesus ascended to Heaven, leaving a team of 11 disciples whom He personally groomed during his 3.5 years of ministry on earth, with a mandate to reproduce themselves.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

Paul poured out his life for the Gentile churches, yet not forgetting to impart his life and experiences to Timothy, whom he instructed in his final epistle.

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

2 Timothy 2:2

As such, making disciples, the reproducing of ourselves, is vital for the advancement of His church on earth. A successful leader is not only based on the results he/she produces, but on the successors he/she raises.

A Disciple

Before we proceed to making disciples, we must understand what it means firstly, to be a disciple. The simple definition of a disciple is someone who adheres to the teaching of another. In the Bible, the word disciple is from the

Greek word: μαθητής, *mathētēs*, which derives from the verb “to learn” (μανθάνειν, *manthanein*). It was used of a “learner” in a general sense, such as an “adherent” of a great teacher or teaching.

In the New Testament it is used for Jesus’ followers. Often referred to as “the Twelve” but also indicates a wider group of followers. When we place our faith in Jesus, we are believers, but not necessarily His disciples. Only disciples apply His teachings.

Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”
Luke 9:23

1. A disciple follows Jesus.

As disciples, we are called to follow Christ.

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
Matthew 4:19

The call to follow Jesus is a call to follow the example of Jesus. As disciples, we are called to imitate Jesus in:

a. Love

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
John 13:34

b. Mission

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
Matthew 4:19

c. Humility

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage
Philippians 2:5-6

d. Service

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

John 13:14

e. Suffering

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

1 Peter 2:21

f. Obedience to God the Father

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

1 John 2:3-6

2. A disciple follows the example of their church leaders/mentor who walk in Christ's footsteps.

In the church context, discipleship also means coming under authority of a church leader/mentor. There is tremendous power in learning from another Christ-follower's godly heart and lifestyle. More is learnt and absorbed from one life to another. Far more than in classrooms. A disciple learns from his mentor and other godly Christ-followers, both in knowledge and lifestyle, as they too follow Christ. Discipleship is a relationship in which a mentor helps a protégé (pupil) reaches his/her God-given potential. We are also called to imitate others who are following Christ with diligence and devotion.

Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

1 Corinthians 4:16

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

A Disciple Maker

Having a personal relationship with God is amazing but it is incomplete if it ends with us. Being a disciple of Christ also requires us to be intentional in helping others to follow Jesus.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

From **Matthew 28:19-20**, there are 2 main duties of a disciple maker:

1. A disciple maker is called to evangelise.

Evangelism means to make Jesus known to people who do not know Him by proclaiming and sharing of the Gospel. God has placed us at different places, at different stages of life to share of His love to the people around us.

2. A disciple maker is called to help other believers grow in Christ-likeness.

...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...

Matthew 28: 20a

As a disciple maker, we are called to teach others about Christ.

I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Romans 15:14

Looking at the life of Jesus, we observe that He formally taught His disciples.

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them.

Mark 10:1

Jesus also modelled a life of obedience to the Father to His disciples. Disciple makers are called to intentionally pour into the life of others, so they too, will learn how to pour into other people's lives.

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

1 Timothy 2:1-2

A disciple maker intentionally builds relationships. Making disciples does not happen organically. Disciple makers need to be intentional in cultivating deep, meaningful and honest relationships with fellow disciples in the context of a local church.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25

In conclusion, disciple-making includes the element of teaching others to follow Christ and helping others grow in Christ. Our church has a wide range of resources, such as Next Steps. There is also a need to do life together.

Why is Disciple-making Important?

1. It is Jesus' commandment

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

2. It is the will of God for every believer to grow up

He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

Colossians 1:28-29

Paul was not contented only to see people professing their faith in Jesus Christ. Instead, he wants to present every believer to be mature before Christ when He returns. This is what drives Paul to help the believers in Colossae grow and mature in Christ.

3. It protects fellow brothers and sisters from false doctrines

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

Acts 20:28-30

4. It equips fellow believers to do the work of ministry

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Works of service means works of ministry. Paul saw the church as a community of believers where every person is actively engaged and involved in doing the work of ministry, which is to make disciples and build up God's church together.

Mentor Chat

1. What excuses tend to keep you from following Jesus' command to make disciples?

As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

He said to another man, "Follow me."

But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family."

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:57-62

Many Christians tend to give various reasons as to why they should not disciple other people. Some would say “I don’t feel called to minister to others”, “I have too much to do at this stage of my life right now”, “I don’t know enough about Christianity”, “I don’t think I am equipped with the necessary skills”, “I’ll start when my life is all in place”.

These excuses might seem convincing to different ones but Jesus’ command does not come with exclusion clauses. He does not tell us to follow after Him when we have everything sorted out. The Great Commission has a promise that Jesus will be with us as we are on this journey of making disciples and He will never leave us alone. God will provide everything we need to disciple others. We just have to be obedient and intentionally teaching others, even as we have much to learn for ourselves.

2. What if I have a mentee who is more mature than I am? (e.g., been a Christian longer than I have, knows the Bible more than me?)

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.
1 Corinthians 3:7

Important Character Traits of a Disciple Maker

These are the four main character traits (F-A-S-T) we would like to see it developed in a person’s character as he/she grow to be a disciple maker for Christ. It does not mean that each person has to have all these traits before

becoming a disciple maker, rather the outworking of their character should be evident as they grow and mature in Christ.

1. Faithful

A disciple maker, to their best of the ability, show faithfulness in roles and responsibilities in different aspects of their life (e.g., family, work, ministry, studies).

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:62

You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

Hebrews 10:36

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Matthew 25:23

A true disciple of Christ wants to follow after Jesus from their heart and this overflows to every area of their lives. They seek to serve and obey him faithfully in all the circumstances of life.

2. Available

A disciple maker counts the cost and pay the price to serve Christ's purposes. Sometimes, being available to God involves giving up personal agendas (e.g., businesses, hobbies, family, lifestyles) and to be obedient to the call of God.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

In order to leave something behind, there has to be something greater or more attractive that draws you toward it. In this case, it is to understand the plans and purposes of God that a disciple will count everything else as loss to follow after Christ.

3. Submissive

A disciple maker recognises and obeys the principle of delegated authority. They are willing to flow along with their leaders although they may have different preferences of doing things. They may question reasons for certain decisions made by the church but eventually seek to understand and support their leaders joyfully.

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

Hebrews 13:17

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

1 Peter 2:13-14

4. Teachable

A disciple maker is willing to be corrected and makes efforts to improve when areas of weaknesses are pointed out.

Whoever disregards discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honoured.

Proverbs 13:18

When there are areas of a disciple's life that need correction, he/she is willing to talk about it and has a desire to make a change for the better.

Reflection Station

1. Which is your weakest and strongest area among the 4 character traits listed above?

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Conclusion

A disciple maker helps others to follow Jesus. Making disciples is not an option, but it is a call of God upon our lives as believers. What would your response be unto God in this area of your Christian walk?

A disciple is a disciple maker- Francis Chan

Memory Verse

THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTISING 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. AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE VERY END OF THE AGE.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20



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