

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Jesus' last instructions to His disciples before leaving earth was that they were to make disciples of all nations. We know this command as the great commission. The command to make disciples of all nations is God's plan and method for redeeming the world. As a follower of Jesus and a member of the local church, we are invited to join Jesus in this breathtaking mission. Disciple-making is a rhythm that includes both evangelizing to the lost and helping believers follow Jesus. Making disciples is not optional, it is not easy, and it is not a program with quick results. However, with the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Jesus, we can make disciples who multiply themselves to reach the world for Jesus. There is nothing more important to the purpose of the church than this.

Read Matt. 28:18-20

Discuss: These 2 statements from Jesus:
"All authority has been given to me", and
"Lo I am with you always even to the end of the earth."

Making disciples: 1 command, 3 participles

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and (make disciples of all the nations), baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

The command

The command is to, *make disciples of all nations* - this is a rhythm of both evangelism and discipleship. We can say this is helping people know and follow Jesus.

The participles

The participles show us how to do evangelism and discipleship.

Go therefore

Evangelism is engaging people who are far from God with the good news of the gospel, so that they can know Jesus. Disciple makers are intentional about finding ways to have gospel conversations with people where they live, work, and do recreation. (2 Cor. 5:20, 1 Pet.2:9, Rom. 10:14-17)

Baptizing them

Baptizing people is the idea of establishing them in the faith. It is a call to surrender to Jesus, through repentance and faith. The act of baptism is to announce their profession of faith in Jesus to the world and enter membership in the local church.

Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you

Discipleship is helping believers learn to follow Jesus and obey his teachings. Discipleship is an intentional process of sharing truth and your life in the context of an accountable relationship. When we disciple others, we pass on and demonstrate the habits of a fruitful Christian life including making other disciples. (2 Tim. 2:2, 1 Cor. 11:1, 1 Thess. 2:7-8)

Typically, a discipleship relationship last for 12-18 months. It is more than a bible study or program, it is investing your life in another person until they can follow Jesus on their own and begin making other disciples.

Personal Application

Why is it important to see that making disciples is both evangelism and discipleship?

Why does discipleship require more than bible study?

Begin reflecting on how you have been helped to know and follow Jesus.

Write down the names of some people whom you could see yourself discipling in the future.