



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON: THE BASICS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Sunday, June 4, 2023

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

Discipleship is a commitment to a journey of spiritual growth – a process of learning to love and follow Jesus and becoming more like Him in our attitudes and actions. This growth happens the more we die out of our flesh and align our purpose, character, and values with God’s Word.

For this journey, there is not always a clear-cut map. But there is good news! God provides us with a local church with a pastor and other believers to give us knowledge, understanding and spiritual directions for our life.

Please note: The discipleship process is customized for the individual, but consistent in the basic principles. Everybody will not get the exact same training because your training is based on the assignment God has for you. **And, on another note,** understand; it takes time to get from here to there, but both the disciple and the disciple-maker must be committed to the process.

Assignment:

1. Fill in the blanks: Discipleship is a commitment to a journey of _____.
2. Spiritual growth happens the more we die out of our flesh and align our purpose, character, and values with God’s Word.
(Circle one) True or False

3. Fill in the blanks: God provides us with a _____
_____ with a _____ and other believers to give us
knowledge, understanding and spiritual direction for our life.
 4. You should expect to receive the exact same discipleship
training as someone else. (Circle one) True or False
 5. Fill in the blank: Both the disciple and the disciple-maker must
be _____ to the process.
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MAKING DISCIPLES

When Jesus returned to heaven after His resurrection, He left His followers explicit instructions. They were both for the people who were there with Him that day and for every follower of Jesus who would come after them.

This instruction is known as the “**Great Commission**” because these words represent a critical assignment for the church to reach souls and make disciples as His people await His return.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing 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.’”

When Jesus told His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, they wouldn’t have seen this as a casual assignment to squeeze between other interests. This would need to become their primary focus.

Let’s look at each part of what Jesus said.

“Go.”

Disciple-making is not a passive activity. It requires intentional, strategic behavior. Christ’s followers couldn’t wait around for people to come to them

and ask to become disciples. They would have to go out and make them, which speaks to strategic and intentional behavior.

“Make Disciples.”

“Go therefore and make disciples.” – Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)

Discipleship goes beyond helping someone pray the salvation prayer. You’ll notice this verse doesn’t say “Go therefore and make converts,” but rather disciples. Winning souls is important, but it’s only step one of what we’re called to do. Discipleship is a lifelong process. It never ends. Each of us is to continually grow and mature spiritually, and that includes new and seasoned Christians!

Throughout the Bible, we see many examples of discipleship – Moses and Joshua, Eli and Samuel, Naomi and Ruth, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and His disciples, Paul and Timothy, and so many more. That’s because discipleship is to be a way of life for the believer. Giving and receiving discipleship is the path to spiritual maturity, and in each of these instances, great personal breakthrough.

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Baptism is an inauguration into God’s community. A follower of Jesus should declare their allegiance to Him by identifying with His death and resurrection, which is what baptism illustrates. It’s clear from this instruction that Jesus’ commission includes people becoming His followers, but it’s not limited to that. It’s about identifying with and giving your life to the God who knows you, created you and loves you.

“And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

This is where discipleship goes beyond evangelism. The discipleship process is more than teaching people the right knowledge about God. A disciple models him or herself after someone. Making disciples of Jesus

goes beyond teaching facts about Jesus. It means teaching people how to know and be like Jesus — to obey God and seek His best for their lives.

Discipleship is to form our lives around Jesus as Lord. This means that discipleship is first and foremost about how we live. Are we truly following Jesus, being formed by Jesus, and faithful to the mission of Jesus? Too many people have made discipleship about knowledge of the Bible. And that is it; they equate discipleship with education. But the focus of discipleship is practical and life oriented, on how we live every day.

Let me leave off with this. God’s plan for every believer is to disciple others. But the first step is to be a faithful disciple yourself. In other words, discipleship isn’t a one-way street. Each of us is called to disciple, but also to be discipled. And, it is a lifelong pursuit.

Assignment:

- 1. Why are the instructions found in Matthew 28:18-20 known as the “Great Commission”?**

- 2. Fill in the blanks: Disciple-making is not a _____ activity. It requires _____, _____ behavior.**

- 3. Fill in the blanks: Whether a new or seasoned Christian, each of us is to continually grow and mature _____.**

- 4. List two great discipleship relationships found in the Bible:**

- _____ and _____
- _____ and _____

5. God's plan for every believer is to _____ . But the first step is to be a faithful _____ .

SCRIPTURES ON DISCIPLESHIP

- **Matthew 28:18-19** "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"
- **Matthew 6:33** "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
- **Romans 12:2** "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
- **1 Corinthians 15:58** "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
- **Matthew 5:14-16** "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."