



DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES

Lesson 5: A Disciple-Making Church

OBJECTIVE

The goal is for you to recognize the stages of spiritual growth, so that you may help the person you are discipling to grow in the faith.

Scripture Reference: The Great Commission - Matthew 28:18-20

*18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 19 Go, therefore, and **make** disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

- Disciple-making is an **intentional process** where you connect with someone with the purpose of building a relationship with them to help them grow in the faith of Jesus Christ.
- Who should be a disciple? _____
- Who should make disciples? _____
- The first key to disciple-making is to enter into a _____ with someone.
- Therefore, the disciple is making a _____ choice to be obedient to the Great Commandment.
- What two things are involved in the disciple-making process, (two words):

- Jesus intentionally chose 12 men – Matthew 4:18-22
By reaching and discipling 12 Jewish men, Jesus was able to reach the whole world. He was able to reach the world of Greeks, Romans, Asians, Germans, Indians, Arabs, Latinos, Russians, and Americans

Let's Discuss What Is Involved in Leading Someone to Be Obedient to Christ

FIVE STAGES OF A DISCIPLE'S GROWTH

Stage 1: Spiritually Dead

Ephesians 2:15, which phrases refer to the dead?

People will reveal their spiritual condition, Mt. 7:17, 12:34. Two words that best characterize those who are spiritually dead are unbelief and rebellion. Revelation 20:14 lets us know what happens to those who do not receive Jesus.

The spiritually dead:

1. An explanation of the gospel
2. To see the gospel lived out

3. Answers to their questions about the Bible, God and Christianity
4. An invitation to receive Christ

Stage 2: Spiritual Infant

As a Spiritual Infant, becoming a Christian is a new experience and beginning (John 3:3). When one receives Jesus as Lord and Savior they move from death to life, becoming born again.

Spiritual infants are eager and excited, though they do not know much about the Bible. However, they know something has changed in their lives.

They are characterized by:

1. Ignorance - Just don't know much about biblical truths
2. Confusion - Do not know how to replace old familiar habits and attitudes of a disciple
3. Dependence - Cannot accomplish growth on their own

Spiritual Infants need someone to care for and feed them in order to grow (I Peter 2:2-3). Paul gave us a model in I Thessalonians 2:6-8 for meeting spiritual needs of infants.

1. Personal attention of a disciple-maker/spiritual parent
2. Care and protection during this vulnerable stage of discipleship
3. Teaching and modeling the new truths of the Christian faith
4. Developing new habits that become the rhythms they will live by as disciples

Stage 3: Spiritual Child

The Spiritual Child understands the basic language of faith. They are excited about faith, still act childish, rebellious, and are self-centered. They consider doing the right thing, if it is something they may want, or to avoid punishment.

Characteristics of Spiritual Childhood

A Spiritual Child sees Christianity as just them and God. They have made a commitment to the church family or church. Their immaturity is:

1. Self-Centeredness - they are centered on their own world and interpret everything from their own perspective of themselves. Concerned about their needs more than others' needs.
2. Idealism - They apply their ideas to other people, and think everything is black and white, which at times disappoints and discourages them.
3. Over/underconfidence - Overconfidence comes across as pride and underconfidence comes across as self-defeating. They have a tendency to swing back and forth.

Spiritual Children Need:

1. Connection to a church family
2. Help on how to start feeding themselves spiritually
3. Teaching on how to have a relationship with Christ
4. Teaching about how to have relationships with other believers
5. Teaching on how to have appropriate expectations concerning other believers

Stage 4: Spiritual Young Adult

Spiritual Young Adults have grown tremendously, are eager to serve, and share their faith. However, they are both God-centered and others-centered. They will serve their church. Some of their characteristics are:

1. Romans 12:10-13, Serving others with joy
2. Philippians 2:3-4, Others-centered with humility

3. I John 3:16-18, Sacrificing for others

Spiritual Young Adults need:

1. A place to learn how to serve
2. A spiritual parent who will debrief them about ministry experiences
3. Ongoing encouragement
4. Help for establishing boundaries
5. Help identifying their gifts
6. Skills training

Stage 5: Spiritual Parent

Reproduce themselves, they are intentional about discipleship process.

Characteristics of Spiritual Parents

1. Reproducible Disciples – They intentionally build relationships that open doors to follow Jesus.
2. Feed Themselves – Understand the Bible well enough that they can get personal nourishment out of it. They are ready for the meat.

Spiritual Parents Need:

1. Ongoing relationships with other disciple-makers
2. A church family – discipling people as a part of the team
3. Peer accountability and encouragement

Importance of Accurate Assessment

Christians oftentimes develop inaccurate assessments of their own level of spiritual maturity as well as the levels of those around them. Many believers are not as mature as they think they are. Some do not relate to others well. What causes churches to break up is relationships versus theology. Spiritually mature Christians are relational; they love God and others. They tend to reflect the character of Christ. Scripture Reference: I Kings 18, 19 & 2 Kings 2