

MULTIPLYING DISCIPLE-MAKERS

1. Introduction.

- a. Hook. A landowner who raised funds to build a dairy farm. After a year of raising funds, he hires 12 employees, purchases cattle, tractors, and implements, builds a milking shed, and everyone starts working hard. At the end of the first year, the landowner comes to his manager and asks him how much milk the farm has produced. He answers, “Well, we really don’t know, but everyone is working hard and we are very busy.” “What?” the landowner exclaims. “Aren’t you keeping track of how much milk you’ve produced?” The manager shrugs his shoulders, “No, not really. But don’t worry, everyone is working very hard and keeping very busy.” What should the landowner do?¹
- b. Need.
 - a. Our primary mission as the Church is to make disciples. Do we know if we’re really accomplishing that mission? Many of us feel aimless, uncertain whether our churches are really pleasing to God, especially when we seldom see new converts and many Christians don’t seem to be particularly focused on the Great Commission.
- c. Subject.
 - a. Setting up a structure in our local churches whereby intentional, biblical disciple-making can occur.
- d. Text.
 - a. Various.
- e. Outline.
 - a. Discipleship.
 - b. Disciple-making.
 - c. Discipleship pathway.
- f. Prayer.

Discipleship

1. The Definition of Disciple.

- a. A disciple is:
 - (1) Ones who answer the call of Jesus to leave their nets, boats, and fathers and follow Jesus in order that he may make them fishers of men (Mt 5:19, 22; Lk 5:10).
 - (2) Ones who follow Jesus into the boat (Mt 8:23).
 - (3) A harvest labourer (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).
 - (4) Ones who deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow after Jesus (Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23-24; 14:27).
 - (5) Ones who lose their life for the sake of Jesus and the gospel (Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mk 8:35).

¹ D. Spader, “Disciple-Making Metrics,” 6.

- (6) One who take bread (teaching) from Jesus and give them to the crowds (Mt 14:19; 15:36; 16:11-12).
 - (7) One who leave everything—house, family, lands—and follow Jesus (Mk 10:28-30; Lk 5:11).
 - (8) One who leave the dead to bury their own dead to go and proclaim the kingdom of God (Lk 9:61).
 - (9) One who put their hand to the plow and don't look back (Lk 9:62).
 - (10) A faithful and wise manager whom the master sets over his household, to give them food at the proper time (Lk 12:42).
 - (11) One who “hates” his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and his own life to be Jesus' disciple (Lk 14:26).
 - (12) One who renounces all he has to be Jesus' disciple (Lk 14:33).
 - (13) One who leaves house, wife, brothers, parents, or children for the sake of the kingdom of God (Lk 18:29).
- b. Anonymous quote.
- (1) “I'm a part of the fellowship of the unashamed. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I'm a disciple of His and I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed. My present makes sense. My future is secure. I'm done and finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colourless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap living and dwarfed goals. I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits or popularity. I don't have to be right, or first, or tops, or recognised, or praised or rewarded. I live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by Holy Spirit power. My face is set. My gait is fast. My goal is heaven. My road may be narrow, my way rough, my companions few, but my guide is reliable and my mission is clear. I will not be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed. ...I won't give up, shut up, or let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and preached up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus. ...And when He does come for His own, He'll have no problems recognising me. My colours will be clear!”²

2. The Priority of Discipleship.

- a. **Mt 28:19** 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations....
- b. **Mt 16:18** 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- c. “Focus on making disciples. It is Jesus' job to build his church.”³

3. The Cost of Discipleship.

- a. **Lk 14:25-33** 25 ...Great crowds accompanied [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, 26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 28

² Anonymous.

³ Jason Knapp, Thinking Matters.

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him 30 saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

4. The Levels of Discipleship.

- a. In Jesus' ministry, there were:
 - (1) Believers.
 - (a) The 5000 (Mt 14:21).
 - (b) The 4000 (Mt 15:38).
 - (2) Disciples (Lk 19:37; 1 Co 15:6).
 - (3) The Seventy-two (Lk 10:1).
 - (4) The Twelve (Mt 10:1-2; 19:28; 26:20; Lk 6:13).
 - (5) The Three (Mt 17:1; Mt 26:37).
 - (6) Peter (Mt 16:17-19).

5. The Goal of Discipleship.

- a. **Lk 6:40** 40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

6. The Rewards of Discipleship.

- a. **Lk 18:28-30** 28 ...Peter said, See, we have left our homes and followed you [Jesus]. 29 And he said to them, Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house, wife, brothers, parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.
- b. "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."⁴

Disciple-Making

1. The Definition of Disciple-Making.

- a. Making fishers of men (Mt 4:19).
- b. Entrusting biblical truth to faithful people who are able to teach others (2 Ti 2:2).
- c. Historical examples of disciple-making.
 - (1) The Jesuits under Francis Xavier.
 - (2) The Methodists under John Wesley.
 - (3) The Navigators under Dawson Trotman.
 - (4) Matthew Paul's development as a dairy farmer.

2. The Qualifications of Disciple-Makers.

⁴ Jim Elliott, quoted in H. T. Blackaby and C. V. King, *Experiencing God*, 244.

- a. A disciple-maker must be:
 - (1) Fully trained (Lk 6:40).
 - (2) Worthy of imitation (2 Th 3:7, 9).
 - (1) Conviction.
 - (2) Character.
 - (3) Competence.
 - (3) A hard worker (2 Th 3:7-8).

3. The Selection of Disciples.

- a. Examples.
 - (1) Moses selected Joshua (Nu 11:28).
 - (2) Elijah selected Elisha (1 Ki 19:19).
 - (3) Jesus selected his disciples (Mt 4:19, 21; Mk 3:13-14; Lk 5:27; Lk 6:13; 10:1; Jn 6:70; 15:16).
 - (4) Paul selected his disciples (Ac 15:40; Ac 16:3; Ti 1:5).
- b. Principle: The disciple-maker has to take initiative in the relationship.

4. The Qualifications of Disciples.

- a. Choose believers who are faithful, available, and teachable (FAT).
 - a. Faithful.
 - a. Joshua was faithful to Moses (Nu 13:16; Jos 11:15).
 - b. Elisha was faithful to Elijah (1 Ki 19:21; 2 Ki 2:2, 4, 6).
 - c. The disciples were faithful to Jesus (Jn 6:67-68; 1 Ti 1:12).
 - d. John Mark was not faithful to Paul and Barnabas (Ac 15:38).
 - e. Timothy was faithful to Paul (Php 2:20-22).
 - f. Timothy was to look for faithful disciples (2 Ti 2:2).
 - (2) Available.
 - 1) Joshua was available to Moses (Nu 11:28).
 - 2) Elisha was available to Elijah (1 Ki 19:19-21).
 - 3) The disciples were available to Jesus (Mt 4:20, 22; 8:23; Lk 5:11, 28).
 - 4) Others weren't available to Jesus (Mt 8:18-22).
 - 5) Timothy was available to Paul (Ac 16:3-4).
 - (3) Teachable.
 - (a) **Is 50:4-5** 4 Lord Yahweh gave to me [Isaiah and Messiah] the tongue of [trained] disciples (לְמִדְּוֹתַי), that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens me morning by morning. He awakens my ear to listen as disciples (פְּלִמְדוֹתַי) do. 5 Lord Yahweh has opened my ear, and I was not disobedient, nor did I turn back.

5. The Secret of Disciple-Making: Quantity-Quality Time.

- a. Examples.
 - (1) Moses spent quantity-quality time with Joshua (Nu 11:28).
 - (2) Elijah spent quantity-quality time with Elisha (2 Ki 3:11).
 - (3) Jesus spent quantity-quality time with his disciples (Mk 3:14).
 - (4) Paul spent quantity-quality time with his disciples (Ac 20:4-6).
- b. Quotes:

- (1) “Having called his men, Jesus made a practice of being with them. This was the essence of his training program—just letting his disciples follow him.”⁵
- (2) “The natural informality of the teaching method of Jesus stood in striking contrast to the formal, almost scholastic procedures of the scribes.”⁶
- (3) “Contrary to what one might expect, as the ministry of Christ lengthened into the second and third years he gave increasingly more time to the chosen disciples, not less.”⁷
- (4) “[Jesus] actually spent more time with his disciples than with everybody else in the world put together.”⁸

6. The Content of Disciple-Making: the Three Cs.

a. The Three Cs.⁹

- (1) Conviction: the knowledge of God and understanding of the Bible.
- (2) Character: the godly character and life that accords with sound doctrine.
- (3) Competency: the ability to speak God’s word to others in various ways.

The Discipleship Pathway

1. The Definition of Discipleship Pathway.

a. A local church’s discipleship pathway is:

- (1) A clear, simple, memorable pathway or process for making disciples that everyone knows and understands.¹⁰
- (2) A process whereby a local church assists people in moving along a continuum from seeker to believer to disciple to disciple-maker.¹¹
- (3) It’s the “trellis” for the “vine” (Jn 15:1-11).
- (4) Mt 28.19

b. The pathway consists of a church’s primary ministries that members are expected to regularly engage in if they are to become disciple-makers.¹²

- (1) It’s the church’s ministries that set members up for success in their: (1) advance to spiritual maturity; and (2) fulfilment of their unique God-given purpose, mission, and ministry.

2. The Focus of the Discipleship Pathway: People.

⁵ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 37.

⁶ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 38.

⁷ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 40.

⁸ R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 42.

⁹ C. Marshall and T. Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 118-20.

¹⁰ A. Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting*, Kindle Locations 2083-84.

¹¹ A. Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting*, Kindle Locations 2552-2553.

¹² A. Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting* (Kindle Locations 2585-2586).

- a. “He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.”¹³
- b. Mt 28.19
- c. Don’t run programs, build people. Don’t run events, train people. Don’t use people, grow people. Don’t fill gaps, train new workers. Don’t solve problems, help people make progress. Don’t cling to ordained ministry, develop team leadership. Don’t rely on training institutions, establish local training. Don’t focus on immediate pressures, aim for long-term expansion. Don’t seek church growth, seek gospel growth.¹⁴

¹³ A Maori proverb, which means, “What is the most important thing in the world? It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.”

¹⁴ C. Marshall and T. Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 17-25.