



HIS DISCIPLES

I am helping someone and someone is helping me to be a reproducing follower of Jesus.

The caption for this saying is, His Disciplers. There is an ‘R’ in the word. This is premised on the teaching of Jesus, who said, that we are to go and make disciples and that this should extend to the entire world and to the end of the age! The only way that the Great Commandment can be fulfilled is by embracing the intent of Jesus, Our Beloved Lord. We are called to be disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples. In other words, we are called to be and make disciplers. So, the saying we want to be able to state is: ‘I am helping (discipling) someone and someone is helping (discipling) me to be a reproducing follower of Jesus.’

Matt. 28¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

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Most often someone who comes to trust in Jesus has had opportunity to observe someone they trust who practices a living faith (trust) in Jesus. This is not in any way to suggest that the work of the Holy Spirit is not needed but to point out that the Holy Spirit typically uses his witnesses in gospel proclamation and disciplermaking. This witness is not simply communicating correct information but modelling a life that is marked by the fact that we have been with Jesus.

If we are going to lead people into the life that Jesus intends for them we will need to have a relationship with them. So, we don't think of evangelism as a program of the church but an early stage of a discipleship relationship. By 'early stage' a time reference is not intended since this can take a long time. Rather, this is a reference to the order in disciplermaking dynamics.

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Matthew 4:18-22

Let's Get Personal:

Do you have any disciplermaking relationships? Many people excuse themselves by saying, "No one discipled me." However, it might be that we discounted the people who have built into our life because God used many instead of few. Take stock of all the people that God used in your life as an exercise throughout this week. Don't be afraid to name names. Think about how they helped you to become more like Jesus.

My Reflections

LISTEN – What did God say to me?

TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?

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Raising children and making disciples use the same process. Both are about ‘people making’ and are both based on relationship. Disciplemaking, wherever it is being done, requires the modelling of attitudes, actions, and behaviours and the correction of wrong attitudes, actions, and behaviours.

It was God’s intent that our children should be discipled and that is why discipline must be part of our child rearing. Where we have often gone wrong is in thinking of ‘discipline’ as punishment. A discipleship mentality in our home can radically change our family life. Discipleship is definitely something we should try at home.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Luke 18:15-17

Luke 6:39-40

Let's Get Personal:

When you have children of your own you realize the affect your early training had on you as you find yourself sounding a lot like your own parents in the instruction you give your children. Is that a good thing or a bad thing for you? Who were people who are helping you be a follower of Jesus today? What good things do they teach you? What are some things that you see in them that you think you should not emulate?

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Who are you intentionally discipling who is not a follower of Jesus yet?

1. Don't have someone? Ask the Spirit of Jesus to put someone on your heart and mind. – Listen to God as He prompts you.
2. Pray for them.
3. Bless them.
4. Model Saying #3.
5. Love them.
6. Be ready and be patient.
7. Ask for the Lord's help.
8. Invite and include them in your family/your life/your journey. This also means include them in settings where there are others who love Jesus and who will include them too.
9. Be a friend.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

John 13:34, 35

Rom. 12:10

Eph. 4:2

Heb. 10:24

Let's Get Personal:

Time pressure and the demand of our schedule can be a great obstacle to overcome to engage in disciplemaking. However, disciplemaking might not mean adding any more people to your circle of influence than those that are already there. Think of how you could influence those around to be followers of Jesus.

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In the Gospels we can find that there were different levels of discipleship used to describe different people. In thinking of Jesus' disciples our first thoughts might go to the twelve. Yet, within that group we are told that there are three who were invited to join Jesus on the mount of transfiguration and also to go on further in the garden of Gethsemane. Another within that twelve (Judas) removed himself from that circle. In another situation we encounter seventy disciples who are sent out in twos. In another instance we are told there were more than five thousand who had followed him to hear him teach. We could ask ourselves which circle we would see ourselves in.

Tomorrow we will be celebrating the Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. There is a considerable contrast between the number of those who greeted him on that occasion and those who stood with him less than one week later. This is something to ponder as we give thought to what it means to be a disciple.

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Mark 11:1-11

Let's Get Personal:

As followers of Jesus we are not alone. We live out our discipleship in the presence of other followers of Jesus. Have you ever thought how your particular gifts and abilities can be used to encourage others as they follow Jesus? Helping people to be a follower of Jesus is not simply sharing information with them. What could you do this week to help others around you to experience a deeper walk with Jesus?

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Sermon Notes:

Anchor

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Tim 2:2)

Notes:

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Just as parents learn as they go, so do disciplers. As someone once said, the problem with parenting is that by the time we are experienced we are done. In the case of disciplemaking we should never consider ourselves 'done' so we have lots of time to be practicing disciplemakers.

We learn to be better parents because we love our children. We learn to disciple because we love others. Classes in parenting have their place but they are no substitute for actually parenting. Likewise, attending discipleship classes is no substitute for discipling. The journey for the discipler matches that of the disciple in being: iterative, incremental, cumulative, often uneven and unpredictable. The only way you will get better at disciplemaking is by practice.

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

John 21:15-17

Let's Get Personal:

Are you intentionally helping someone to be a follower of Jesus? Are you helping that person to help others to be a follower of Jesus? While there might be other indicators of maturity, reproduction is certainly one of the most important. Do you have someone else helping you to be a reproducing follower of Jesus? Intentionally spend more time with someone that you believe you could learn from.

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Every relationship is in effect a discipling relationship. The question is what values we are encouraging. As followers of Jesus we invest in others so that kingdom values will be carried forward. While not everyone that we invest in is ready to be an active disciplemaker as well, we should not lose sight of this important goal. The apostle Paul had this in view as he instructed Timothy, *"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 men who will also be qualified to teach others."* 2Tim. 2:1,2

Paul demonstrated a model of discipling to the fourth generation: Paul-Timothy-reliable men-others. If you are discipling someone, have you encouraged them to disciple someone too?

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

1Cor. 11:1

Phil. 3:17

Heb. 13:7

Let's Get Personal:

Have you been challenged with the idea of helping someone to be a follower of Jesus? Have you been frustrated by the lack of having someone to help you be a reproducing follower?

These relationships can be peer relationships. You might not find you have someone older to mentor you but what if you would get together with a couple of your peers and see what you can do to encourage one another?

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