

Purpose 11

Purpose of the Elders Discipleship Group: To Train and Equip Discipleship Group leaders to lead more effectively.

Key Theme: Purpose.

Key Truth: Make disciples.

Matthew 28:19-20 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, baptising 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."

Last week we looked at the first aspect of the Great Commission which was to GO, and we discussed how there is a very specific way in which we must go if we are to walk in alignment to the Father. Jesus did nothing from His own initiative and neither must we. All authority has been given to Jesus so it is essential we come under this authority and do everything His Way and not our own when it comes to Going and in the making of disciples.

The second aspect of this Commission is to make disciples of all nations. Once again this is an instruction and not an invitation, so it is a non negotiable for all followers of Jesus Christ to be discipled and making disciples.

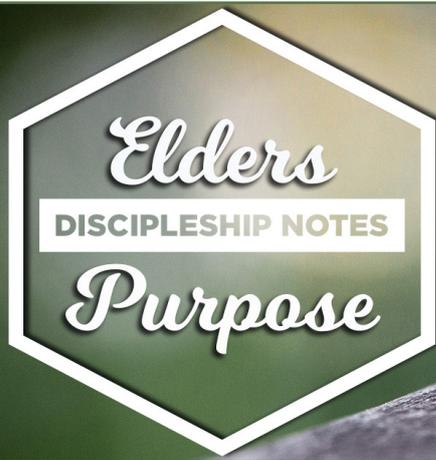
This is about the making of disciples and not converts. Disciples are followers who want to be exactly like their master and are wholeheartedly surrendered and committed to become like their master. A convert is one who makes a one off decision, receiving the free gift of salvation (justification), who then proceeds to live for one's self and if they do serve in any capacity it is still from a place of self and self gratification.

The first thing to take note of is the wording of the instruction. Notice it doesn't say go into all nations and make disciples but make disciples of all nations. Discipleship starts in our own back yard before it starts in some other nation. We live in a world today where there are so many nationalities right in our own back yard, including our own. Just like Acts 1:8 where Jesus instructed His disciples to be witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea first, we to are to be making disciples in our neighbourhoods, community and city.

I am going to suggest to you that the instruction we are given to make disciples is one that is not as straight forward as it sounds or as easy as one might think, in fact I want to submit to us all that we actually can't really make a disciple of Jesus at all, in our ability. We can certainly teach people how to do certain activities like prayer, serving, sharing their faith, being involved in a ministry, giving etc, but as far as changing the heart and mind of man in the knowledge of God, which produces His life within us and through us, we find ourselves completely helpless and completely dependant on the Holy Spirit doing this deep inner work.

Disciples are ultimately made through the receiving of the Word of God which is Spirit. This is why it is essential those who are going to be disciples of Jesus Christ are not only baptised in water for the repentance of sin but baptised in the fire or power of the Holy Spirit. Without being baptised in the power of the Spirit one will constantly struggle to become a fully fledged obedient disciple of Jesus who leaves everyone and everything to become like the one they love and follow.

If we haven't been baptised in the power of the Spirit, then we are living and operating from our own strength or power and this will never suffice and our walk will always be a struggle, tiresome and just downright hard. The making of disciples is split into two parts. The first part is being made as a disciple of Jesus Christ personally through receiving the Word of God through the revelation of the Spirit and the second is walking along side others, while this very same process occurs to them as well.



Next week we will look at the saying “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you”

Questions

1. What are the major differences between a disciple of Jesus and a convert of Jesus?
2. What order have you heard the great commission in, (go into all the nations and make disciples or make disciples of all nations?) and how has this impacted your outworking of it?
3. Why do we need the empowerment of the Spirit in the discipleship making process and not man’s techniques or abilities?
4. How would you explain the difference between copying what a person does through our own strength in the discipleship making process and imitating God through the receiving of His power?

Action: What is one thing you may need to put in place from going through this resource?