

# MAKE DISCIPLES

Matthew 28:16-20

Our mission at Grace Community Church is to Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples. This morning we're thinking about making disciples.

Let's define terms. The word *disciple* translates a Greek word, which means *learner*. A disciple of Jesus is one who is learning from Jesus. In its simplest form, this is what a disciple of Jesus is:

**A disciple of Jesus is a lifelong learner of Jesus.**

The learning in view is not that of amassing information. It includes learning truth, but the goal is for the truth to transform the disciple to become like Jesus.

Jesus invited 12 men to be His disciples. He had many more disciples than the 12 (cf. Luke 6:12-16, 10:1), but into the 12 Jesus invested Himself more intensely for the three and a half years of His public ministry. He taught them and gave them assignments. He critiqued and corrected them. He praised them and prayed for them. He sent them out to preach and proclaim the Kingdom. After His resurrection and before His ascension Jesus commissioned His men to carry on the same work.

**Matthew 28:16–20 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

We call this the Great Commission. Unfortunately, historically the Great Commission has been reinterpreted from making disciples to Jesus to making converts to Jesus. Similarly, historically the Great Commission has also been understood to be the responsibility of pastors and missionaries to accomplish, not the brothers and sisters in the church family. Here at Grace, we're trying to turn that around.

Our conviction is that the Great Commission should be the Great Aspiration of every born again believer. Each of us has the incredible opportunity to help another person become a lifelong learner of Jesus and to be transformed into the very character of Jesus. There is nothing of greater value in the human experience than to make disciples.

What does it entail? If, by definition, a disciple is a lifelong learner of Jesus, then we recognize that the vast majority of people around us are not disciples. They have no relationship with Jesus. So making disciples begins with evangelism – proclaiming the good news of Jesus and the salvation He offers us. For those who respond in faith to Jesus, they should be water baptized and they should be taught the life and teachings of Jesus. Teaching / learning includes, but is not limited to, studying the Scriptures. Teaching is also accomplished through modeling what a Christ centered life looks like in real life with real issues. The ultimate goal is to help the one being discipled to eventually become a disciple maker himself / herself.

We are in the first generation of becoming a disciple making church. I've asked Al & Lyn Jaggi to join me this morning to discuss what it means to be disciple makers. Al & Lyn are two of our more veteran disciple makers.

## QUESTIONS FOR AL & LYN JAGGI

1. There seems to be some confusion about *what* disciple making *is*. Some have the idea that it's basically meeting and doing a Bible study. Others believe that if they mention God or Jesus in a conversation they've "discipled". Tell us, in our own words, *what* making disciples *is*. It may also help to tell us what it is not.
2. Who can be a disciple-maker? In other words, what qualifies a person to disciple another person? Is there a specific spiritual gift a person must possess in order to disciple others? Do you have to be a

Bible scholar with all the answers in order to disciple others? (It seems to me we want to emphasize at this point that those who disciple others must first be devoted disciples of Jesus themselves).

3. What is your game plan in discipling others? On the one hand it's not simply doing a Bible study once a week or going through a curriculum, but on the other hand it's not simply talking about things without reference to Jesus. So what do you do when you disciple others?
4. What holds Christians back from personally engaging in disciple-making? What would you say to those listening today who are almost persuaded?

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