

The Art of Discipleship

As disciple makers, we must be intentional in the process of helping people follow Jesus. Investing in others is hard work. It is often messy, and requires a lot of time. Discipling others in many ways is an art form- it's something you get better in the more you practice. There are innumerable methods for discipleship, and many are proven. There is no perfect way to do it, but there are some key principles that generally all effective disciplers are committed to. We want to discover them, and get better at practicing them.

Read Colossians 1:28-29, Discuss the goal of discipleship.

Commitments of discipleship:

Investing in a few- When Jesus invested time discipling the men who would carry on his ministry he was very selective. He didn't disciple any and every one. His method was to choose a manageable number of guys and give them most of His time. We call this being intentional. **To be effective in discipling others it requires carving out significant amounts of time that you reserve for just a few people.** We suggest a group with 2-4 others, or 1-on-1. With a small group, there is greater opportunity for personal attention and training. Read (Mark 1:14-20, Mark 2:14, Mark 3:13-14) *Discuss this principle observed.*

- Jesus did not neglect preaching to mass amounts of people that were far from God, but He could be more useful with His time by training leaders who could disciple those masses by helping them follow His teachings.

Focusing on Jesus- Jesus taught His followers that remaining in Him and loving Him was the key to living a fruitful life. When we disciple others we want to keep Jesus at the center of everything.

- **A discipler's main material is the scriptures**, from through them we know Jesus. The more we know Jesus the more we love Jesus and the more we love Jesus the more we obey or follow Him. Read (Col. 1:28-29, Eph. 4:11-15) *Discuss this principle observed*

Life on life- Jesus shared His life with the disciples. He cultivated relationships with them by truly getting to know them and spending time with them. They ate together, traveled together, served together and many others ways of hanging out. Effective disciplers find ways to develop relationships with those they invest in. They allow others to see Christ in their life, live action. The disciple even gets to see the raw mistakes and struggles of the one investing in them. Read (John 1:39, Luke 6:13, Mark 8:27, Matthew 20:17) *Discuss this principle observed*

- Jesus' disciples could see Him physically demonstrate a kingdom life. He modeled how to pray, quote scripture, evangelize, and give his life to serve others. Effective disciplers demonstrate how to follow Jesus. Read (John 15:12-15, Luke 11:1-4, Phil 4:9) *Discuss this principle observed*

- Jesus' disciples were accountable to Him. They were expected to live lives of obedience and mission. *Effective disciplers have accountable relationships with those they invest in.* Read (John 15:10, Mark 6:30, Luke 9:10)

Journey- Jesus invested in His disciples for 3 years before leaving earth. Effective disciplers understand that discipleship is a long-term time investment. We suggest a 12 month investment. There are no quick solutions to teach people to follow Jesus. While discipleship will take time, it is also important to remember the end goal of those you are discipling completing their time with you, and beginning their own group to disciple. Read (John 14:9, Gal. 4:19)
Discuss this principle observed

Elements of Discipleship

Teaching them to be with Jesus: Imparting spiritual disciplines helps people develop a personal relationship with Jesus. Key spiritual disciplines are bible reading, prayer & fasting, scripture memory, evangelism, and generosity. It is most helpful to teach and demonstrate how you practice these disciplines.

Teaching them to be grounded in Jesus: Imparting core bible doctrine helps people develop a theology of God that gives them a firm foundation. What people believe about God is important because it shapes how they live for God. It is good to have a base theology of the scriptures, God, Man, Salvation, The church, the End Times, and more.

Teaching them to be conformed by Jesus: Imparting life transformation is the end goal of discipleship. It helps people be more like Jesus as they walk with Him. Life transformation is challenging people to change in their unique battles with sin, through the power of the gospel.

Teaching them to be sent by Jesus: Imparting the skills and lifestyle of making other disciples helps people to obey the Great Commission. A major part of obeying all that Jesus commanded is replicating the process of discipleship with others, who will replicate with others.

Group Discussion:

- What are some commitments of discipleship that come more natural to you?
- What are some commitments of discipleship that will be more challenging for you?
- What adjustments will you need to make to replicate discipleship with others?