

From Pastor's Desk...

Be a Disciple Before You Make Others Disciple

Matthew 28:18-20 is well known as the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ which is almost parallel to Mark 16:15 and Luke 24:46-49 with some variation .

The heart of the commission is the one Greek word 'mathatosate'. This imperative means to make disciples. The only command in the Greek text of the entire Great Commission is "make disciples".

The word ALL plays a dominant role in all three verses of this text:

Authority - ALL authority is given to Christ

Go - go to ALL nations

Teach - ALL things that Jesus has commanded them

Promise - I will be with you Always

The term "disciple" is the most popular name for the early Christians. The Greek word 'mathetes' means a learner. A true disciple is attached himself/herself to the teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. The followers of Jesus were known 'disciples' until and even after they were called Christians at the city of Antioch.

The significances of the Great Commission are:

1. It is a commission comprised with four imperatives a promise.
2. The imperatives are go, make, baptize, and teach. The promise is mentioned above.
3. The commission is exclusively given to the disciples.
4. Therefore, first be disciple and then go and make others disciples.

Teaching is imparting truth by demonstration. The fundamental law of teaching states: 'You cannot impart what you do not possess.'

The discipleship is expensive. It costs everything including you. Juan tells the story of a great price (a dialogue between a Man and a Merchant after the man sees a beautiful pearl with the merchant):

Man: I want the pearl. How much is it? Merchant: Yes, you can have it. Man: But, I thought you said it was very expensive. Merchant: I did. Man: Well! How much? Merchant: Everything you have. Man: Alright I'll buy it. Merchant: Okay, what do you have? Man: Well I have \$10,000 in the bank. Merchant: Good, \$10,000. What else? Man: That is all I have. Merchant: Nothing more? Man: Well, I have a few dollars more in my pocket. Merchant: How much? Man: Let's see, \$100. Merchant: That's mine too. What else do you have? Where do you live?" Man: In my house. I own a home. The merchant then writes down, "a house" and says, "it's mine." Man: Where do you expect me to sleep - in my camper? Merchant: Oh, you have a camper, do you? That too is mine. What else? Man: Am I supposed to sleep in my car? Merchant: You have a car? Man: Yes, I own two of them. Merchant: They are mine now. Man: You have taken my money, my camper, my cars. Where is my family going to live? Merchant: So, you have a family? Man: Yes, I have a wife and three kids. Merchant: They are mine now. Suddenly the merchant exclaims, "Oh, I almost forgot! You yourself too are mine! Everything becomes mine: your wife, kids, house, money, cars, and you too." Now, the merchant goes on, "I will allow you to use all these for the time being. But don't forget that they're all mine, just as you are. And whenever I need any of them, you must give them up, because I am the owner now." (Adapted)

This is what Jesus means when He says that we must give up all our possessions in order to be His disciples. He is not just Lord of the tenth; He is the Lord of ALL!

God Bless You

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Go Make Disciples

Ben Cherian, Evangelism Director & Asset Controller

Matthew 28:19-20 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁹Go therefore^[a] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always,*even* to the end of the age." Amen.^[b]

The Great Commission to ALL who follow Christ, i.e., Christians; is to

Go → Make → Disciples.

This action statement from Christ comes with complete AUTHORITY from heaven. In the key verse (Mat 28:19), Christ is promising the Holy Spirit to guide and lead as well as heavenly authority for us on this great commission journey.

As a Christian and a church body, our main goal ought to be mission. We need to produce fruits not for our existence or to pass on the torch to the next generation but to be a part of this great commission of spreading the good news which will save the dying world from sin.

In order to respond to the calling of the great commission, one must be a first be a disciple him/herself before reaching out to make others disciple. For example, a teacher must know the subject before teaching others. A driver must know to drive before teaching others.

Being a Disciple → Automatically Makes → You Go → Make → Other Disciples

Rick Warren in his famous book, "The purpose Driven Life" defines a disciple as a person who

- a. Is pleasing God every day. This is true WORSHIP. They realize that they are planned for God's pleasure
- b. Is an active member of a local body of believers. This is FELLOWSHIP. They understand that they are formed for a family
- c. Is learning to be more Christ-like in their behavior every day. This is DISCIPLESHIP. They realize they are created to become like Christ
- d. Is serving sacrificially within the local body of believers. This is MINISTRY. They know how they have been shaped for service and live it out continually
- e. Is sharing God's love, forgiveness and hope with people who do not know Christ. This is MISSION. They declare openly and confidently, "I was made for a mission".

The above characteristics when invested in a person, naturally makes him a disciple and automatically make that individual GO and MAKE DISCIPLES. There can be never enough of His Disciples as the word says, harvest is plenty but the laborers are few.

Let us team up in taking on this fabulous challenge of commissioning HIS disciples all around.

Let us get READY (Be a DISCIPLE), SET (Focus), and GO (Make disciples/make a difference)