




Disciple of
Jesus



“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching 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.”

Matthew 28:19-20.

As Christians, our mandate is to disciple the nations. Jesus paid a high price to remove our sinful nature, make us compatible with Him, and fill us with His Holy Spirit, making us brand new creations, and ministers of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:20). It is our commission and great privilege to be able to share this good news with the world. Evangelism and discipleship is at the core of the gospel. However, the commission is not simply: “go therefore and evangelise to all the nations”; we are called to *make disciples*.

It is important as we begin to love and live like Jesus, that His word is our roadmap. In the book of Acts we see the planting of the early church. Throughout this time all believers were involved in the sharing of the gospel, which went on to turn the known world upside down (Acts 19:26). The giving and outworking of the great commission was not for an elite few, but for every believer. All are equipped, and all are called to make disciples of all nations.

Acts 2:36-47 describes the way the early church operated, which gives us an amazing template for what discipleship looks like; the believers were together regularly, worshipping and praying in the Holy Spirit, they were generous and shared all they had with one another, they multiplied and baptised, devoted themselves to the Word of God, ate meals and took communion, and they had great love for one another. Discipleship is not simply a program or manual, it is a relational commitment to seeing people transformed by the love of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit. To see the world disciplined, and not just preached at, every believer must be involved and engaged with relational, costly, and the potentially messy process of discipleship, as this is the only way to truly produce fruit that lasts.

This process also requires humility and trust in people and in the Holy Spirit. If we are to make disciples who make disciples, we need to be prepared for those we lead to become leaders themselves. The discipling of nations simply cannot be done by one person.

Try this activation to see just how this works; select one member of your group who must then high-5 everyone in the group as quickly as possible, time them and see just how long it takes. Now try the activation again, but this time, as soon as a person has received a high-5, they can start high-5ing those around them. How long did it take until every person was high-5ed? Was your time faster? Significantly so.

This activation is designed to show that when every believer plays their part in reaching and discipling the world, we can get the job done so much faster; it really is designed to be a team effort. Pastors and leaders are not graced to personally disciple every single person in their church and/or community, that is actually the responsibility of every single Christian.

At NNC we have an understanding that whilst relationships are long-term, Jesus Hubs and discipleship groups are made to grow and multiply. We need to be prepared to listen to the Holy Spirit, and release those we are discipling to disciple and lead new believers themselves. Just like Jesus, we aim to give people space to try, to grow, to get things wrong, and to go further than we ourselves have been. The world says that we should control and limit those we lead, but Jesus always released people. Those that are Spirit led are Sons of God, and can and should be trusted to hear and follow all He says.

Of course, we know that it is impossible to disciple others unless we are ourselves disciples of Jesus. Our effectiveness as evangelists and disciple-makers, is both secondary to and dependent on intimacy with God. No Christian ever outgrows their need for daily intimacy with the Holy Spirit; as we submit to Him we learn how to live like Jesus. This intimacy is what equips us to equip others; Paul even wrote to the Corinthians that they were to imitate him as he imitated Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Whilst we take responsibility for our choice to engage with the great commission of Jesus, we never take responsibility for the fruit produced; Jesus teaches that He is the vine and we are the branches, and that apart from Him we can do nothing, but that if we simply abide in Him, we will produce good and lasting fruit (John 15:1-17).

Discussion Questions:

1. What is it that equips a Christian to disciple someone?
2. What is your current view of discipleship? Does it align with our biblical mandate?
3. Read Acts 2; how does this description of the early church help you to disciple others?

