
The Goal I Make Disciples

What is God's mission or goal for your life? Did you know that it's about much more than being a good person and getting into heaven? It's all about BEING and MAKING disciples!

Listen to Jesus' last words in the Gospel of Matthew (often called the Great Commission)

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore **go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." - Matthew 28:18–20 (NIV)

In Matthew 28:19 Jesus said: "Go and make disciples..."

If Jesus' goal for our lives is to make disciples, wouldn't that mean we should first BE disciples?

In this lesson we will hear Jesus' invitation to more than just believe in Him, but to follow Him as true disciples. We will gain a clearer picture of what it means to be a disciple, and we will have the opportunity to commit to following Jesus more deeply than before, regardless of where we find ourselves in our faith journey today.

Reflect: *How would you define the word "disciple?"*

Simple Definition: A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Jesus.

In the first century (when the Gospels were written), the term disciple would create a clear and practical picture of what it means to follow Jesus. Every Rabbi (Jewish teacher) would have disciples following them, to learn from them. Today, the meaning of this word has become less clear.

What is a Modern Picture of Discipleship?

One of the best words in our day and language to convey a disciple relationship is "apprentice." Whether it conjures images of trade work (electrical, HVAC, carpentry, etc) or of Star Wars (Jedi Master and Apprentice/Padawan), it likely gives you a more vivid picture than the word disciple.

An apprentice sits under a teacher/master and learns from them. It is more than a casual commitment or a small part of your life, it would be the main emphasis of your life. You would be devoted or dedicated to learning the trade, and as a result you would organize your life around this relationship.

Naturally, an apprentice will do three things: **Be** with their teacher, try to **become** like their teacher, and then hopefully **do** what their teacher does.

Now let's apply this to following Jesus as His disciples... When Jesus invites us to Follow Him and be His Disciples, He invites us to do three things:

1. **Be** with Jesus
2. **Become** like Jesus
3. **Do** what Jesus did

Earlier in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives this challenging invitation:

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "**Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and **follow me**.** - Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

Do you want to be a disciple of Jesus? We will answer this question later on, but for now we will study each of these three goals.

Goal #1: BE with Jesus.

The first goal of a disciple is to be with their teacher. Jesus wants us to BE with Him every day. This is the basis of our discipleship and journey of faith. Every day, slowing down to BE with Jesus through prayer, Scripture, worship, and more...

Jesus wants more than your belief in Him, He wants you to BE with Him!

BELIEVE → BE

When Jesus called the twelve disciples, he called them to BE with Him:

13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve **that they might be with him** and that he might send them out to preach - Mark 3:13-14 (NIV)

- The first goal and calling of every follower of Jesus is to simply be with Him.
- To love and enjoy His presence. To know Jesus personally.

Think about this quote, if this is true, then why wouldn't we want to be with Jesus?

The reward for following Jesus... is Jesus. - John Mark Comer

You may not realize it, but Jesus WANTS you to BE with Him!

24 "Father, ***I want*** those you have given me to ***be with me where I am***, so that they will see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the world's foundation. - John 17:24 (CSB)

Here, Jesus was praying for you! And Jesus WANTS you to be with Him!

- This is not talking about heaven, but right here and now!
- It is Jesus' desire for you to know Him, and love Him, by being with Him.

This has always been God's desire, from the beginning of Creation when God walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden ([Genesis 3:8](#)), to the end of the story in the New Creation as God will be with His people once and for all ([Revelation 21:3](#))

Also, from John 17:24 we learn that when we slow down to BE with Jesus, we will SEE or BEHOLD His glory.

- It is in this place where we taste and see that the Lord is good! (Psalm 34:8)
- To behold Jesus' glory means we encounter His goodness and greatness and know/experience these things first-hand (going from abstract to concrete).

Reflect: *Have you ever met someone who, the more you get to know them, the worse they really were? The good news is that the closer you get to Jesus... the better He gets! He's even better than you think He is!*

BELIEVE → BE → BEHOLD

After we believe, Jesus calls us to BE with Him. As we spend time with Jesus, we will see more and more of His glory, we will learn to behold Him above all else.

Goal #2: BECOME Like Jesus

Next, a disciple or follower of Jesus is invited to BECOME like Him. It is possible to change, with God's grace empowering you every step of the way.

- A disciple actually wants to become like their teacher/master and follow their example.
- This means it is your goal to become like Jesus.

Jesus said this about disciples:

40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. - Luke 6:40 (ESV)

- A disciple should become more like their teacher.
- A disciple of Jesus should become more like Jesus...

Think about this: *If a person followed Jesus all of their life and ended up nasty, hypocritical, hateful, arrogant, bitter, and more... Did they really follow Jesus?*

What does it look like to become like Jesus?

In Galatians Chapter 5, we see a picture of what a life with God will look like over time. These are called the “fruit of the Spirit,” in other words, these are the characteristics of someone becoming like Christ through the work of the Spirit in our lives!

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. - Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

Reflect: *Looking at this list of Christ-like character (love, joy, etc), do you see that you have room to grow to become more like Jesus? In what ways?*

How do we become like Jesus?

Have you ever heard this quote?

“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” – Jim Rohn

- Important people impact our lives and change who we become.

Reflect: *Have you ever had someone in your life change you in a deep way just by spending time with them?*

- What if you spent so much time with Jesus, you begin to think like Him, talk like Him, and act like Him?

Now consider this statement:

Becoming like Jesus is something that God does to us! Not what we do to ourselves.

- *Becoming like Jesus is not shallow self-improvement.*
- *It is truly a miracle beyond our own abilities.*
- *You need God to change you from the inside out!*

Notice how this process works:

*18 And we all, with unveiled face, **beholding the glory of the Lord**, are being transformed into the **same image** from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. - 2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)*

Remember, it's not about self effort to be a better person, but through the Spirit of God as we behold Jesus' glory.

- In John 17:24, Jesus wants us to be with Him, so that we will see His Glory.
- As we behold His glory, we are transformed into His image!

BELIEVE → BE → BEHOLD → BECOME

- Be with Jesus
- Behold His Glory
- Become Like Him (we become like what we behold)

The Apostle Paul said it like this:

By the grace of God I am what I am... (1 Cor. 15:10)

While we still have a part to place in the process, we must realize that our part is small compared to what God will do in our lives... if we will just show up and BE with Jesus!

Goal #3: DO What Jesus Did

The end goal of a disciple is to do what their teacher does. If you are an apprentice of a piano mastermind, hopefully after much time spent together, you will be able to play piano!

- In the same way, a follower of Jesus should learn to do what Jesus did!

Jesus Himself says this fact:

*12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me **will do** the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. - John 14:12 (NIV)*

Over time, your actions, intentions, and way of life should more and more reflect Jesus of Nazareth. A peaceful, kind, and generous savior who gave his life for his enemies.

Specifically, what did Jesus do?

- Preached the Good News to the poor and the rich
- Healed the Sick
- Prophesied
- Cast out demons
- He also, cared for widows and orphans
- Stood up against injustice
- Loved his neighbor as himself
- Practiced hospitality
- Used Spiritual Gifts
- Made disciples

If that sounds overwhelming, that's ok because it is... in our own strength!

If you learn to BE with Jesus, you will BECOME like Him, and if you BECOME like Jesus then you will DO what He did. God is going to help you! The Holy Spirit is going to empower you!

Notice the complete progression:

BELIEVE → BE → BEHOLD → BECOME → BEHAVE

And remember, this is a lifelong journey that begins one day at a time. Your goal is to faithfully follow Jesus for the rest of your life. Over time you will learn to do what He did.

Conclusion: What or who are you really a disciple of?

Whether you are a disciple of Jesus or not, you are a disciple of something or someone. It's like gravity... you can't escape the pull of discipleship. The question is, what are you a disciple of... really?

Want to find out? Take the time test:

Each block represents 15 minutes of our day, assuming we have 16 hours to spend. The first graph represents the time you spend with Jesus each day. The second represents the time you spend with other things you follow (could be news, politics, social media, entertainment, etc).

- Take a few moments to reflect and fill in each graph by shading 15 minutes blocks of time (ex. If you spend 30 minutes a day with Jesus, fill in two blocks)
- On the second graph, consider what you listen to, watch, or read each day... how much time do you spend roughly in those areas (maybe check your screen time)

Time with Jesus

Reflect: What do these graphs tell you about yourself? Who are you following? How are you being disciplined already by other things?

Finally, remember the invitation from Jesus:

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, **“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.** - Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

Do you want to be a disciple of Jesus?

Pray: Decide today to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to change your heart and to help you follow Jesus.

Practice: How can you take more time to BE with Jesus this next month? Are there any changes you need to make to your free-time to make it happen?