

Family Baptist Church – April 28, 2024

The Master Plan of Disciple Making – Various passages

Opening Illustration:

The modern ministry emphasis on making disciple. *The philosophical approaches to disciple-making. (Philosophy of ministry...)*

- A. The “**build it and they will come**” model
 - Question – Is it about Christ or man?
- B. “**Preach and they will change.**” The “**preaching** – only” model
 - Question – Is it about information or transformation
- C. “**Downsize and they will connect.**” (The “**small** group” or “community” model)
 - Question – Is it about bonding or building
- D. “**Create and they will respond.**” The “**event**” (atmosphere) model (church growth seminars, special events, etc.)
 - Question – Are we looking for a “magic bullet” or are we preparing to make lifelong commitment to the person and plan of God?
- E. “**Personalize and they will listen.**” The “**one-on-one**” model
 - Question – Where does the local church fit into the discipleship process?
 - The difference between playing ping pong and playing volleyball...

II. The Master’s Plan of Disciple-Making

- Pray with Purpose (Matthew 9:37-38)
- Preach (and teach) with passion (Matthew 7:28-29)
 - Jesus preached to the heart, not the head (Matthew 5:3-7; 27)
 - Jesus called men to a cause beyond themselves (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - Jesus called men to “holiness of the heart” rather than “service to a religious system” [i.e., legalism] (Matthew 23:2-39)
 - Jesus preached a life of total surrender rather than self-actualization (John 12:24)
 - He taught systematically: a large block of teaching with a single theme
 - He taught at “teachable moments” – as the situation arose

- Disciple with **intentionality**.

Establish a Deliberate “Two-Stage” Ministry Model

The Crowd (multitudes) – both the casual and the committed followers

1 He didn't **neglect** them (Mark 6:35-37) but shepherd them and laid down His life for them (John 10:7-11).

2 He sincerely **loved** the crowds (John 15:9).

3 He didn't allow them to control his ministry **schedule**. (Luke 4:42-43)

4 He clearly communicated **the cost of following him**. He taught them the truth about what it meant to be a disciple and let them **choose** their level of **commitment** (Luke 14:25-27). He never pandered to the multitudes.

Application/Illustration: where is your fishing hole?

A Plea for Fishing¹

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year, these who called themselves fishermen met in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing. Year after year they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually, they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. Further they said, 'the fishing industry exists by fishing as fire exists by burning.?' They loved slogans such as "Fishing is the task of every fisherman.?' They sponsored special meetings called "Fishermen's Campaigns?' and 'the Month for Fishermen to Fish.?' They sponsored costly nationwide and world-wide congresses to discuss fishing and to promote fishing and hear about all the ways of fishing such as the new fishing equipment, fish calls, and whether any new bait had been discovered.

¹ <https://bible.org/illustration/plea-fishing>

These fishermen built large, beautiful buildings called "Fishing Headquarters." The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn't do, however: They didn't fish.

In addition to meeting regularly, they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. The board hired staffs and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing, and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members did not fish.

Large, elaborate, and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. Over the years courses were offered on the needs of fish, the nature of fish, where to find fish, the psychological reactions of fish, and how to approach and feed fish. Those who taught had doctorates in fishology, but the teachers did not fish. They only taught fishing. Year after year, after tedious training, many were graduated and were given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing, some to distant waters which were filled with fish.

Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But like the fishermen back home, they never fished. Like the fishermen back home, they engaged in all kinds of other occupations. They built power plants to pump water for fish and tractors to plow new waterways. They made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries. Some also said that they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they felt called to furnish fishing equipment. Others felt their job was to relate to the fish in a good way so the fish would know the difference between good and bad fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, land-loving neighbors and how loving and kind they were was enough.

After one stirring meeting on 'the Necessity for Fishing,' one young fellow left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported that he had caught two outstanding fish. He was honored for his excellent catch and scheduled to visit all the big meetings possible to tell how he did it. So he quit his fishing in order to have time to tell about the experience to the other fishermen. He was also placed on the Fishermen's General Board as a person having considerable experience.

Now it's true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished. They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend the weekly meetings to talk about fishing. After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don't catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. Yet it did sound correct. Is a person a fisherman if, year after year, he never catches a fish? Is one following if he isn't fishing'

Darrell W. Robinson, *People Sharing Jesus*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), pp. 21-23

The Core (True Disciples) – The “convicted” want to give their all to Jesus

- **He invited them to follow him. (Mark 1:16-17)**
- **He reminded them of the cost. (John 6:53-70)**
- **He told them where they were going. (Mark 16:15)**
- **He showed them how to get there.**
 - Phase One: He **taught**. They **listened**. (Mark 1:36-39)
 - Phase Two: He **led**. They **followed**. (Mark 2:23)
 - Phase Three: They **led**. He **observed**. (Mark 2:14; Luke 9:1-10)
 - Phase Four: They **led**. He **left**. (Mark 16:15).

Application:

- **Evaluate the modern-day models of disciple making. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each model.**
 - The “**build it and they will come**” model
 - Question – Is it about Christ or man?
 - “**Preach and they will change.**” The “**preaching** – only” model
 - Question – Is it about information or transformation
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 - “**Personalize and they will listen.**” The “**one-on-one**” model
 - Question – Where does the local church fit into the discipleship process?

- **Before you criticize the different approaches, make sure you are engaged in the disciple making process, not simply engaged in the conversation about the process.**
 - Find a fishing hole and get busy fishing.
 - Develop a core group and start reproducing.

- **Model the Master Plan for disciple making:**
 - Pray with purpose.
 - Preach/teach with passion.
 - Disciple with intentionality.