

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 9-14-14 AM NOTES
"MAKING DISCIPLES: WHERE DO WE BEGIN?"

Various Scriptures

#2 in Series, "The Making, Maturing, and Mobilizing of Disciples"

First Baptist Church exists to glorify God by making disciples who are connecting with God through worship, growing with others through small groups, serving others through ministry, and sharing the gospel here and around the world.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV) "19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 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.*"

Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV) "15 And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'"

Luke 24:46-47 (NKJV) "46 Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.'"

John 20:21 (NKJV) "So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'"

1 Timothy 1:15 (NKJV) "This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Luke 9:23 (NKJV) "Then He said to *them* all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'"

I. The Methodology of Making Disciples

"Disciple making is an intentional process of evangelizing non-believers, establishing believers in the faith, and equipping these believers to make disciples. The whole discipleship process takes place in the context of a local church."

—Adapted from Godwin Sathianathan, *Grow a Disciple-Making Culture in Your Church*, The Gospel Coalition

A. Evangelize Non-Believers

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) "For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Acts 20:21 (NKJV) "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

B. Establish Believers in the Faith

1. Assurance of Salvation

1 John 5:13 (NKJV) “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.”

1 John 1:6-10 (NKJV) “⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”

1 John 2:3-5 (NKJV) “³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.”

1 John 2:15 (NKJV) “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

1 John 2:19 (NKJV) “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”

1 John 3:14-15 (NKJV) “¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. ¹⁵ Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

2. Baptism

3. Identity

4. The Power of the Indwelling Holy Spirit

5. Spiritual Disciplines

C. Plug New Believers in to the Local Church

II. The Mind-Set

John 4:35 (NKJV) “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!”

Matthew 9:37-38 (NKJV) “³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’”

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#2 in Series, "The Making, Maturing, and Mobilizing of Disciples"

[Explanation: the normal messages at FBC are expository in nature, but there are times we need to re-focus on why we as a church exist and we are looking at that in a topical manner]

In part one of this series, we looked the mission of the church and the mission as it applies to **this** church. We saw that the mission of First Baptist Church is: **First Baptist Church exists to glorify God by making disciples who are connecting with God through worship, growing with others through small groups, serving others through ministry, and sharing the gospel here and around the world.** That is just our unique way of stating what the biblical mission is for every church. Let me give you the biblical statement of that mission as it is given in all four Gospels and in the book of Acts. **Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)** ¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ 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." Mark's typically concise and to the point statement of the mission goes like this: **Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV)** ¹⁵ "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." Luke's account puts it this way: **Luke 24:46-47 (NKJV)** ⁴⁶ "Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.'" John records Jesus saying these words in **John 20:21 (NKJV)** "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Paul gives us a little more detail as to why the Father sent His Son: **1 Timothy 1:15 (NKJV)** "This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." We see the resurrected Christ just before He ascended into heaven giving the commission once again to His disciples in **Acts 1:8 (NKJV)** "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." This is not just the Gospel writers giving different takes on the one time Jesus spoke about our mission; these are the exact words Jesus said on 5 different occasions. In other words, Jesus repeated our mission at least 5 times in different words so that we could see the importance and the emphasis of this mission to make disciples.

As we focus on the making of disciples, let me review what we covered last week. We began by refocusing on the mission – why we are here. The default mode in every church is to lapse into a self-centered approach to church. Very subtly we begin to focus on getting our own needs met, making friendships, and hanging out together. Certainly there is nothing wrong with these things since these are some of the manifestations of true fellowship. The problem comes when these things become the mission and the focus. In reality, when the Great Commission is the mission, there is more meeting of one another's needs and more friendships and enjoying one another than there ever could be when the fellowship and getting our needs met are the main focus. Any military combat veteran will tell you that the greatest closeness between soldiers is on the front lines of combat. The same is true in the Lord's army! When our mission becomes the Great Commission there will be deep lasting relationships and friendships that last not just a lifetime but all of eternity.

In the first message in this series, we also looked at the product of the mission – disciples of Jesus Christ. A disciple is best defined by the requirements Jesus gave to be His disciple. The best summary verse of the call to discipleship is **Luke 9:23 (NKJV)** Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." A disciple is one who desires Christ, one who desires to follow and obey Christ because they have been born again and given a new nature that longs to please Him. A disciple is one who denies self, vacates the throne of their life, takes up their cross by reckoning on the crucifixion of the old man and daily dying to their own desires and then follows

wherever Christ leads. That is not a super saint; that is a Christian. We saw that there is no such thing as a Christian who is not a disciple.

Today, I want to look at the methodology of making disciples and the mind-set of a disciple maker.

I. The Methodology of Making Disciples

I always get frustrated when someone tells me to do something but doesn't tell me how to do it. Let's get real basic about how to make disciples, because this command, this commission is given to every Christian. Let me begin with a good description. "Disciple making is an intentional process of evangelizing non-believers, establishing believers in the faith, and equipping these believers to make disciples. The whole discipleship process takes place in the context of a local church." [Adapted from Godwin Sathianathan, *Grow a Disciple-making Culture in Your Church*, Gospel Coalition]. Let's look more closely at each part of that definition.

A. Evangelize Non-Believers

The making of a disciple starts with evangelizing non-believers. The New Testament for the most part does not separate evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism is assumed in the making of a disciple. The word "evangelize" means to share the good news. The good news is the Gospel (the word "gospel" means "good news"). This quote was going around a few years back that said, "Share the Gospel everywhere you go; when necessary use words". This quote was credited to St. Francis of Assisi in the 12th century, but there is now evidence that he never said this. It is a horrible statement. Our good works are not the Gospel; the Gospel is a message that is communicated with words, words that have power (Romans 1:16). This Gospel is summarized by four words. First is the word "**God**". The Gospel begins with God. He created us for Himself to bring glory to Him through worship and obedience (Isa 43:7). The second word is "**man**". Because of sin all mankind is separated from God and does not give Him the glory that He deserves by thanking Him, worshipping Him, and obeying Him. Man is totally without ability to do anything about his separation from God. The third word is "**Christ**". Jesus Christ who is God become man (John 1:1, 14) has become our substitute. **2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)** "For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin **for us**, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." By having our sins imputed to Him, He took the wrath, the judgment of our holy God that we deserved. When He shed His precious blood, poured out His life, the sin of all who would believe in Him was atoned for. On the third day, the Father raised Him from the dead giving evidence that His payment was accepted and the redemption price had been paid in full. The fourth word is "**response**". Man is responsible to make the proper response to Christ's great sacrifice. **Acts 20:21 (NKJV)** "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." That is, we have the reasonable response of turning from sin and believing on, trusting in, putting our faith and dependence in the Lord Jesus Christ and His provision. Every Christian should be able to articulate the Gospel and do it clearly and without hesitation.

To evangelize non-believers, we must be intentional; it will never happen as a lifestyle until we have a plan. Let me share some of the opportunities we have here at FBC to be intentional. The goal is a lifestyle of evangelism, but it starts with training and a purposed heart to share the Gospel with non-believers that they might become a disciple. Let me share two ways we want to equip you to do just that. The first is through TELL. TELL stands for Teaching Exchanged Life Living. A 10 week cycle of TELL is taught twice each year. Our next cycle starts a week from Monday (September 22, 2014). In TELL there is 10 weeks of training and in 3 of those 10 weeks there is on the job training where you go out with an experienced TELL graduate and actually see and hopefully participate in the sharing of the Gospel. The approach to TELL is to share the Gospel with those who recognize that they are lost and to share the biblical tests for assurance with those who profess salvation. Tell also includes training in establishing believers in the faith. In addition to TELL (but not in place of TELL) we will be offering a three hour seminar periodically through the year on Servant Evangelism. Here is a weakness with TELL type of training. Alvin Reed, a professor of evangelism at SEBTS said: "The very approach we used in such training sowed the seeds of its own demise. We pulled out individuals, taught them a specific method,

gave them a certain time (usually weekly visitation) to implement what they learned, and awarded them when they finished the course. We expected the minimum of commitment and attempted to make witnessing as painless as possible. But except in those churches where the pastor's leadership led the church to adopt an evangelistic culture, for the most part those trained never spilled over into a movement of personal witness in the congregation. And many I have talked to still never actually think about intentionally speaking to their neighbors about the very things they learned to share one night a week to strangers."

Servant Evangelism is not a program; it is a way of life. The approach of servant evangelism is to do acts of service with no strings attached to people and if they are open to it we share the Gospel with them. I am not saying you cannot share the Gospel until you have earned the right through some act of loving service. We are commanded to share the Gospel and there is no biblical prerequisite for acts of service, acts of kindness before we can do it. However, the Spirit often uses acts of kindness to open a person's heart to the Gospel. The emphasis of this training is not so much the church coming together to do acts of love (such as "LOVE LOUD"), though we will continue to do that; the emphasis is individuals or families serving neighbors, hurting people, or just strangers to show the love of Christ and hopefully be able to share the Gospel. It may be as simple as mowing a neighbor's yard, cleaning out their gutters, or washing their car. It has no strings attached but it so often does open the door to share the Gospel with them. Watch the Encounters for training opportunities. You really don't have to wait for the training; it's not rocket science or brain surgery. Pick up some of the GRACE tracts and get to work!

B. Establish Believers in the Faith

When you lead someone to Christ or develop a relationship with a person who has received Christ but has never been taught the basics of the faith, you need to be willing to spend the time with them to see that they are grounded in the basics of the faith. What are those basics? We have developed a little book that enables you to have a plan and a guide in establishing believers in the faith.

1. Assurance of Salvation

No one will grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord until they are assured of their salvation. In the New Testament, assurance is not based on remembering how we felt when we think that we received Christ; it is not even based on knowing the exact time you became a Christian. The evidence of salvation in Scripture is the pattern of our life. The book of 1 John was written that we have assurance of our salvation. **1 John 5:13a (NKJV)** "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life..." Throughout this small book of just 5 chapters, we see evidence stacked on top of evidence that we are truly saved. Let me give you five evidences. First, in 1 John 1:6-10 we see that a true Christian cannot ignore sin. To put in the form of a question, "When you sin, does it deeply bother you or can you just ignore it?" Second, a true Christian treasures God's Word and as a pattern of life obeys God's word (1 John 2:3-5). Third, a true Christian does not love this world system that does not value God and the things of God (1 John 2:15). Fourth, a true Christian continues in faithful fellowship with other believers – that is he doesn't make a final turning from the church (1 John 2:19). Fifth, a true believer cannot harbor hatred in his heart (1 John 3:14-15). No one is saved by doing these things; these things are the evidence that a person is genuinely saved.

2. Baptism

In both Matthew and Mark's version of the church's mission, baptism is included. Baptism does not have saving power, but baptism is vitally important. Baptism is our public profession of Christ after we have savingly believed in Christ. A person who professes to be a Christian and understands what the Bible says about the importance of baptism and refuses, has good cause to question if what they have is genuine salvation. Spiritual growth is stopped for a genuine Christian when they refuse baptism. To refuse baptism after salvation as a public profession of your being His disciple is a manifestation of being ashamed of Christ and also living in disobedience to the one they proclaim as Lord of their life.

3. Identity

The most important thing for a believer to know to begin growing and following Christ is their new identity in Christ. The pattern in the Epistles of the New Testament is that before we are told what to do,

we are told who we are in Christ. In the booklet I referred to we look at the fact that when we are in Christ, we are loved, accepted forgiven, justified, and secure.

4. The Power of the Indwelling Holy Spirit

In order to be an obedient disciple we must know and appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in every believer. Disciples must be taught early that apart from the Holy Spirit filling our lives we do not have the power to obey Christ. The booklet tells us how to be filled (controlled by and empowered by) the Holy Spirit.

5. Spiritual Disciplines

After assurance of salvation, understanding our identity in Christ, and the power for living the Christian life that is available in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the disciple needs to understand the importance of disciplines like Bible reading and study, prayer, corporate worship in the church, and the importance of being a witness so that the disciple can begin making disciples.

C. Plug New Believers into the Local Church

I believe that God's plan for reaching the world with the Gospel is centered in the local church. There is no basis for "para-church" organizations in the Bible. What is meant by para-church organizations? I am speaking of organizations alongside the church such as Campus Crusade for Christ, the Navigators, Young Life, Yoke, etc. Wait before you get mad at me. I am not against these para-church organizations and I believe that those who truly proclaim the Word are used by God, but if the church was doing what God called the church to do, there would be no need for such organizations. Kathy and I have supported financially some of these organizations so I am not saying abandon them and have nothing to do with them. I am saying that if they do not have a strategy to connect believers won or disciplined through their ministry to the local church, they are (no matter how well intentioned they are) bypassing God's ordained way of growing disciples.

I believe that disciple-making truly takes place in the context of the church. It is in the local church that a convert is taught by and ministered to by the body of Christ with all their different giftings. I don't think one on one discipleship relations should just continue on indefinitely. The new disciple needs the ministry of the body. The person who led the disciple to Christ, after establishing them in the faith should move on to win and disciple others. It is in the local church that a believer hears expository messages, experiences worship, is impacted by true fellowship and discovers their gifting and ministers to the body using their spiritual gift.

That's the picture – individual disciples making disciples by evangelizing non-believers, establishing them in the basics of the faith, getting them involved in the church, getting involved in ministry and making disciples themselves. To summarize, we are to plug them into the church so that they can connect with God through corporate worship, grow with others through small groups, serve others through ministry, and share the gospel here and around the world (make other disciples). This is not rocket science. It is simple! This is God's plan for impacting the world with the Gospel. We have all the structure in place. We have God's chosen staff (pastors) to equip you for the work of the ministry. The missing ingredient is willing people to say, "I am ready to become a disciple-making disciple". Your next step is to ask someone to disciple you, find someone to disciple, resolve to take TELL, come to the servant evangelism seminar, plug in to a ministry, sign up for a mission trip, get involved in the worship ministry, teach preschoolers or children or youth or adults, follow the Lord in baptism, but you cannot just sit there and go on with life as usual and give God 2 hours on Sunday morning!

II. The Mind-Set

Most of us are not consistent disciple-makers because we are not intentional about it; we do not have a disciple-making mindset. We go through the week and never think about it. I struggle with this just like you do. I don't have the answer to this other than to seek the Lord until He gives us that hunger to make disciples. We must repent of treating as unimportant what God says is of ultimate importance. I commit myself as one of your Elders to keep it in front of you in messages. Sunday School leaders, youth ministry workers, children's workers, keep it in front of your people that you

minister to. Here is what I am praying. I am praying that God would give us “harvest eyes”. Here is what I mean by that. After Jesus had led the Samaritan woman at the well to faith, he said to his disciples who were more interested in eating than making disciples: **John 4:35 (NKJV)** “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” Jesus used that same analogy in **Matthew 9:37-38 (NKJV)** “³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’” Pray that we would sense the urgency that Christ exemplified for us. “Lord, give us harvest eyes that we might treat disciple-making with the same urgency that You do”.