

Making Disciples of All Nations

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Matt 28:16-20

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Synopsis:

In order to reach all the nations, every person who ever lived from creation until the end of time, Jesus chooses a relational, slow, and limiting strategy called discipling. Just what is Jesus asking us to do, and how are we to do it?

I.

Who are the Disciples?

28:16, 17 “Eleven disciples . . . they worshipped and doubted”

We start from where we are, not where we wish we were:

Judas (elite) Peter and Andrew (fishermen) James and John (terrorists), Matthew (tax collector)
Only 11, a defective number

We start from Geneva:

Old, young, PCUSA
Refocus! Missional! Out of here! Change! = joy and fear

Jesus starts with 11 (defective) worshipping and doubting people.

II.

What’s Their Authority?

28: 18 “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me”

Big Bible Statements:

- Quantity and Quality statements
- “heavens and earth” “all the world” “Cain and Abel”
- Notice *all*
- *Larger the quantity the larger the importance.

If you had *all* the authority (executive power) how would you bring the gospel to all nations?

Examples:

Indian and Asian religion: solitary seeking
-each person individually (monad) seeks God
-light from above through the skylight

God is impersonal/non-relational and remote
*humans are essentially separate individuals

Islam: forcing, jihad
-quote from *Islamic Imperialism*, Efraim Karsh, p. 63

God is personal but remote (no incarnation, no cross)
*humans are to be forced if necessary

Jesus: discipling
Just what is this and what does it imply about God and us?

III.

What's the Command?

28:19 "Make disciples of all nations!"

One command (finite) and three participles (infinite)

Command:

Disciple = Greek word, OT doesn't use, Jesus uses, Paul doesn't use

Defined = Attach yourself to someone for learning, an apprentice, to learn a skill

Jesus = attach yourself to *me* to learn *me*

Participles:

Going = missional action
E.g. Troy at my gym

Baptizing = initiating action

E.g. having the new baby, bringing into family of God:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Teaching = instructing action

E.g. My education, slow and expensive; new skill

*All these are relational, slow, and limiting experiences

Why did Jesus choose discipling in bringing the gospel to the nations?

Purpose:

Relational God = If God is relational, gospel is relational,
humans are relational

Slow God = If God is relational, then slow process of relationships
is what God is after, not quick conversion

Limiting God = if God is relational, relationships happen one at a
time. God chooses, elects specific people to reach specific people,
not masses at one rally

What does this mean for you and me?

Relational = getting to know someone slowly

E.g. Paul Bankston – one person in Knoxville, Tenn

Slow = relationships are slow

E.g. Paul Bankston - met with me week after week

Limiting = one on one, two on two, three on three

E.g. Paul Bankston – had to choose me and not others

Here's what discipling implies:

You get to know a few people, develop relationships with them, and over time introduce them through your life and through Scripture to Jesus Christ. It is this simple.

IV.

What's the Promise?

28:20 "I am with you always to the end of the age"

Objection: I can't do it!

Jesus is present with us when we disciple

E.g. Mom walking me home under the street lights at night
Jesus in protection and power

What to do? Form discipleship groups with *Discipleship Essentials*