

## Discipling Others

Jesus commanded us to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” in Matthew 28:19. A disciple is one who follows another’s teaching. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words) Making disciples involves both evangelism and equipping. A person must be saved and then grow as a believer. This process of growth from a new believer to a mature believer takes time and effort. It most often requires other believers to come along side the new believer and to teach and train that new believer.

Ephesians 4:11-16

<sup>11</sup> And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; <sup>15</sup> but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Hebrews 10:23-25

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup> and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

These 2 portions of scripture tell us that we need to be equipping the saints (all born-again individuals) for the work of ministry, stimulating one another to love and good works, and to be encouraging one another. The purpose of doing these things is made known in verse 13: **until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.**

This is what it means to disciple someone.

When we disciple someone, we are coming along side and spending time with them so that they can mature in Christ. This, according to these scriptures, involve the following things:

1. Using the gifts God has given us to minister to others. We are all ministers to the church, not just the chief minister—the pastor. God did not design the church for one person to do all the work of ministry.
2. Equipping the saints for the work of ministry. This involves teaching and working together with others so that they are equipped.
3. To build up the church (the body of Christ). The building up of the church involves both numerical and spiritual growth. This involves a firm understanding of the doctrines of the Bible and Theology.

4. To help attain unity of the faith. We do not attain unity of the faith by ignoring differences. Instead we are to study those differences and be Berean. Unity of the faith means that in the essentials we have agreement. In non-essentials we show love and in all things we seek to honor and glorify Jesus Christ. God is not glorified when we do not have unity in the church.
5. To help each one know about Christ and to know Him better.
6. To help each person become spiritually mature. To help others grow up in Jesus Christ.
7. To build up the church in love.
8. Stimulate others to love and good deeds. We seek to help others show love and do good deeds by encouragement.
9. Meeting together and spending time together. This must both be quality and quantity of time.
10. Encouraging one another.

A mature believer will have the fruit of the Spirit evidenced in their lives.

Galatians 5:16-26

<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. <sup>19</sup> Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

**This is very important.** The measure of a believer's maturity is not in how much they are doing, but in being the person God wants them to be. The fruit of the spirit is not works, but inward qualities, which manifest themselves in works. Sometimes well-meaning believers have misled people into thinking that works come first. Works should flow out of these inward qualities.

Sometimes people think that discipleship only applies to adults. Jesus did not command this, and you will not find this incorrect concept anywhere in scripture. No child who has trusted in Jesus to save them is too young to be discipled.

One other item: When we are discipling someone we are not to try to make people in our image or to be just like us, but to be like God.

Note: This class is not intended to be an exhaustive study of discipling. It is merely an introduction.