

You're Always Making Disciples

I. The Definition of Discipleship

- In its broadest sense, discipleship refers simply to being a student. It's the process of acquiring information, systematizing it, and then using it. We could say it's gaining knowledge, understanding that knowledge, and then living wisely.
- And, of course, all students have teachers, so, to be a disciple of Christ — in particular — is to be someone who acquires information from God, systematizes it, and then uses it for His glory.

II. The Demand of Discipleship

- Disciples of Christ are *required* to make disciples of Christ.
- We can all agree that if you are a follower of Christ, you actually have to obey God. And we believe that because in John 8:31 Jesus specifically states that if you continue in His Word, *then* you are truly a disciple of His.
- So, we have to also agree that if Jesus commands that you make disciples — which He does — you can't consider yourself His disciple if you're not obeying Him by making more disciples.

III. The Inescapable Reality of Discipleship

- You are always making disciples. The only way a person can *stop* making disciples is if they were to become a hermit with *absolutely no interaction* with people . . . ever. But if that hermit were to stroll into town, the moment he comes within visual range of another human being — even if he never speaks a word — he's making disciples.
- **We're always making disciples because that's how God created it to work.**
 - God created, commands, and capacitates us to be disciples.
 - Therefore, it's impossible for the *average* human being to stop learning because God created it that way.
- **We're always making disciples because that's how people *want* it to work.**
 - There is absolutely nothing new under the sun. We are not the original, special snowflakes we like to think we are.
 - Humans can't create things that are 100% novel. Only God can do that. He can take nothing and create an infinite number of somethings never before conceived. But God's creation is only able to do variations on a theme. Yes, we are creative like God is, but infinitely less creative than He is, and one of the biggest differences is that we are never truly original.
 - But humanity wasn't just created to learn, it *desires* to learn.
 - In order to exercise the image of God in us, we must learn. We can't be creative without first observing and learning. We can't appreciate what is good or bad, cool or uncool without being taught.
 - You actually *want* to be discipled. You have your favored musicians and actors and speakers and personalities and teachers and subjects. Sometimes those subjects are academic and sometimes they're cultural. And the same is true for the other people in your life.
 - All of the is exemplified in the Bible from the beginning to the end. Everything from Cain's antithetical feelings about Able to the Corinthian's church's hero-worship to the disciple of Christ's passionate desire to be conformed to His image . . . we see that God created us to learn, and we all desire to do it to one degree or another.

- **We disciple the same way we worship.**
 - Matthew 25:13
 - **In order to disciple for Christ and not for Hell, you must open your eyes to the truth of God.**
 - Acts 26:17-18; Revelation 3
 - God does the spiritual work, He provides the faith, and He sends His people to preach the truth so that the unbelievers can have their eyes opened to the Gospel.
 - We must be born again disciples of Christ, or we will never be able to help another be a disciple of Christ. The second step is that we must *continue* with our eyes open.
 - **In order to disciple for Christ and not for Hell, you must understand God's truth as He would have you understand it.**
 - II Peter 3:15-16
 - Another major problem in the world today is bad advice, poor counsel, and even false-teaching.
 - It's true that the Bible can be hard to understand. That's why it's important to recognize that untaught and unstable people distort the Scriptures to their own destruction.
 - There are not many ways to understand the Bible. There is only one way . . . God's way. And it should not be your intention to discover what God's Word means to you, you need to discover what it means to Him.
 - **In order to disciple for Christ and not for Hell, you must make God's priorities your priorities.**
 - In Matthew 23:23 Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for tithing their spices but not emphasizing what Jesus says are the weightier parts of the Law.
 - They agonized over measuring out a 10th of their spice, but they didn't dedicated themselves to knowing, understanding, and living justice, mercy, and faithfulness.
 - **In order to disciple for Christ and not for Hell, you must make the internalization of truth your first goal.**
 - Pharisaism is what it is because it's hypocritical. It's not consistent from the inside to the outside. It appears to be something that it isn't.
 - When it comes to true, Christ-honoring discipleship that happens because of us — not in spite of us — our life choices need to be governed by who we are in Christ.
 - **In order to disciple for Christ and not for Hell, you must submit to those who speak God's truth.**
 - Instead of rejecting those who speak truth to us, we need to submit to the word they give us.
 - You need to love and interact with the discipline process. As you accept teaching, reproof, correction, and training, you will gain knowledge and understanding and live wisely.
 - It's impossible for you to not be discipling. That means that if you aren't intentionally discipling for Christ, you're discipling for yourself. You're encouraging people in their own self-worship.
 - And the only ways to avoid that is to have your eyes opened to the truth of God's Word, then you need to learn it, understand it, and live it. Then you will have the priorities of God and the mind of Christ and willing participate in sanctification.
 - Then and only then can you know that you are discipling people for God.