

September 5, 2017



Discipleship Like Jesus Did It

**Christianity without
discipleship is
always Christianity
without Christ. --
Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

Note: Please read the following on discipleship.
www.covenant-harvest.org/blog/2017/08/30/when-did-we-separate-being-a-christian-from-being-a-disciple/

Do it like Jesus did it! This is somewhat of a cliché, but I think we need to recapture the essence of it in a very important area, making disciples. Everyone, especially leaders are called to make disciples. The heart of the Great Commission is "make disciples....teaching them to obey (put into practice) everything I commanded you" (Mt 28:28-29).

Making disciples is not a formula or program, it is relational. It is intentionally entering into life with people and helping them follow and put into practice everything Jesus said. Making disciples is intentionally investing in another's life so they grow to follow, look like, and obey Jesus in every area. Every person in the body of Christ is called to both become and help make disciples.

People and programs

Making disciples is a relational process that will not happen in a corporate meeting. Leaders need to realize that you cannot make disciples from behind the pulpit or simply implementing a program. Programs are helpful as long as they connect people to discipling relationships.

We must be careful not to define a program as discipleship. It is in relationships that discipleship occurs. Discipleship isn't an individual endeavor. Jesus links people in family relationships to help accomplish this (like He did it one earth John 1-4). It is what Paul told the Corinthians, "follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

Programs can help organize our discipleship efforts but they are Spiritually and relationally applied. People in discipleship relationships are a little messier than pre-formed programs. There is often disappointment, hurt, and even pain. It is part of walking with people and investing in them on the pathway of life. This is just like Jesus did it with the 12. Discipleship starts and ends with people not just a system or program.

3 important ingredients of discipleship in the context of relationships

- **A person who invests their life in others.**

Discipleship requires that someone decides to invest their life into another. Jesus chose twelve people and poured into them for three years. He walked with them, journeyed with them and really knew them. It was a long process of investment into relationship. It was up close, not from a distance.

When we over-identify discipleship with “programs,” it actually becomes a barrier to real discipleship, because we think that “running the program” will do the job. Great disciple-makers don’t simply lead a program or facilitate a curriculum, they participate in people's lives. They remind and teach them how to live as Jesus lived in the context of what’s actually happening in their lives right now.

- **Someone who responds and receives the investment by following.**

A disciple is someone who decides to follow, to learn, and to grow. This discipling relationship should never become coercive or controlling, because Jesus taught us that we are “not to be like that” (Matt 20:26). Instead, it becomes a relationship of trust and vulnerability. We see

Check it out and sign up



others at their best and worst and in that reality we walk together in discipleship and learn to apply everything Jesus said.

- **There is an objective of growth and development that is Spiritually discerned.**

Many discipleship programs are pre designed over the course of the material or meetings. Making it through indicates success in discipleship Biblical discipleship is more of a Spirit-lead relational art form. It is discerning by the Spirit where God is working in people's lives so we can line up with Him and develop in those areas through revelation, repentance, and cooperation with the Spirit to make progress.

Leaders need to remember discipleship is relational. Jesus did it in the midst of everyday life. *Mark 3:14 And He ordained twelve, **that they should be with Him.*** His strategy wasn't classroom or curriculum based, it was relational based. People aren't projects they are people and friends. Discipleship is about helping our friends learn to follow and obey what Jesus said. It takes living life among people. It is about being who we are and showing His Kingdom design and perspective in every area.

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