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DEVELOPING A DISCIPLE MAKING PROGRAM AT  
WHITE HOUSE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN WHITE HOUSE, TENNESSEE

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A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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by  
William Edward Ashpern Mofield  
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**APPROVAL SHEET**

DEVELOPING A DISCIPLE MAKING PROGRAM AT  
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IN WHITE HOUSE, TENNESSEE

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I dedicate this dissertation to all the wonderful people who have taught me the incredible realities of the Great Commission throughout the years.

To Jerry Williams for being my first “Paul,” and to all the other mentors and disciple makers who have nurtured me along the way.

To my family of faith at White House First Baptist Church. You are a blessing and a true gift from God.

To my sweet Ellie for reminding me of the small, yet most important stuff along the way, and for loving Daddy and keeping me smiling all along the way.

Most of all I dedicate this project to Emily. Your love, support, and encouragement are testimonies to God’s grace in my life. I could not have done this without your support, and I love you with all my heart.

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## PREFACE

This project was a challenging endeavor, but through the strength given by Christ and in God's will, it was completed. Indeed His grace is sufficient, and His strength is made perfect in our weaknesses. When I felt called to ministry as a young college student I contemplated whether or not seminary was even necessary. I am thankful that God made clear to me the knowledge to be gained, and thankful for the fruit He has grown in me as I grow in Him. I could never have envisioned doing what I am doing, and learning what I am learning. Praise be to God! As I continue on in kingdom building I am beyond blessed, and I pray that this project is a tool that will assist in making more disciples of Christ until His return.

After being called into ministry, I was mentored by an incredible servant and pastor. Little did I realize that Jerry Williams had actually been discipling me all along, since the eighth grade. My vision of ministry was to make a difference in one person's life as he did in mine. As I have grown in my understanding of the Great Commission the last twenty-five years, I have been enlightened unto God's vision of how to reach the world, and how God wants to make the vision of my initial calling a reality. I am thankful that Jesus left us with direction, and that He empowers and equips us for the mission as we seek to make disciples. His commission is surrounded in His grace!

Thank you to my family. Mama, you have always been my biggest cheerleader and believed in me. Thank you, Daddy, for your love and encouragement. April, I am proud of you! Thank you, Bill and Janice, for you sure raised an amazing girl, and I am daily the recipient of your love and parenting. You two have always supported and encouraged me, and it is truly appreciated.

As I complete this project, I must thank my wife, Emily, for her patience and support all along the way. This undertaking was not just a challenge for me, but for her and Ellie as well. I know that sacrifice was made as I would leave from time to time for class and to write, all while working through the challenge of being a full-time pastor, daddy, and husband. Thank you, Emily, for your continual encouragement and support. You are amazing, and I love you. And Ellie, Daddy sure does love you!

Thank you to all the incredible staff and professors at SBTS for their direction and encouragement throughout this process. I also acknowledge the grace and wisdom of my faculty advisor, Dr. Joe Harrod, as well as his ability to lead me to a place of perseverance. What a blessing he has been in my life. To gain not only an advisor, but a friend, has been a part of this endeavor I did not foresee. I am thankful that this process reached beyond academic, and has been one of fulfilling brotherhood and encouragement. Thank you to my church at WHFBC for allowing me to take on this challenge as well. I pray God grows fruit in our body because of this project.

Above all, I want to thank Jesus. Your grace is truly the most amazing thing going, and I am blessed to be in You. Because I have Christ, I have everything. What a blessing and privilege it is to serve. In His Grip!

Ashley Mofield

Nashville, Tennessee

May 2018

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The biblical command to make disciples given by Jesus in the Great Commission is God’s mandate in Scripture for building his kingdom. Often the commission of “making disciples” has been replaced with mass evangelism and discipleship classes. Due to the lack of disciples being made, as well as the lack of biblical knowledge of God’s vision to reach the world for the gospel, I was compelled to address the issue of disciple-making at the church where I currently serve as pastor. A ministry project with this purpose was for the benefit the family of faith that I shepherd, as well as the kingdom of God worldwide.

#### **Context**

The ministry project took place in the context of White House First Baptist Church (WHFBC) in White House, Tennessee. This project is relevant because first, most church members at WHFBC need to be cultivated in a proper biblical understanding of what true discipleship entails. To put it succinctly, this need is evidenced in the small amount of people that are engaged in making disciples. Personal involvement in one-on-one discipling relationships is one indicator of a healthy church, yet at WHFBC few such Paul-to-Timothy relationships exist. The church’s group-based discipling activities (Sunday school, small groups, etc.) are well attended, and while these ministries are important in the life of the church, they are only one outworking of Jesus’ command to make disciples (Matt 28:19). The type of discipleship that Jesus modeled and expects cannot flourish apart from regular, interpersonal training.

Another marker of healthy, biblical discipleship is the multiplication of believers as disciple-making should be ongoing and expanding (2 Tim 2:2). Multiplication is another key challenge at WHFBC: of the members involved in one-on-one disciple-making, few have discovered how to affectively replicate and multiply themselves within those relationships.

In the ministry context of WHFBC there is also a strong need for more personal evangelism. WHFBC does engage effectively in evangelistic events throughout the year and has a vibrant community-driven small-group ministry. WHFBC small groups are built on people's individual passions, and are assimilated to be community outreach. However, the church members are afraid to evangelize in their daily lives. Many might contend that evangelism and disciple-making are two separate entities. On the contrary, a proper biblical understanding of disciple-making employs evangelism when the disciple-maker teaches his disciple how to evangelize and reach converts. One cannot have discipleship without evangelism, and growth in personal evangelism takes place in disciple-making. The two go hand in hand, but in our current ministry context, most church members would consider them separate.

When considering a typical church member of WHFBC, the following truth becomes obvious. People are extremely busy within the community, whether in sports and extracurricular activities with their children, or in their jobs and responsibilities outside the church. WHFBC does not engage in a corporate weekly evangelistic program. Nonetheless, the truest and most pure form of evangelism takes place while living life in accordance with the Great Commission. To qualify this idea, it is not "lifestyle evangelism," but intentionality in one's daily life to share their faith. Ultimately it does not appear that many people are taking responsibility for the command given by our Lord.

In regard to the busy lives of people, it also appears that many are too busy to attend regularly offered classes, let alone make and multiply disciples. People are involved in each other's lives within the community outside of the church. Many do make the

sacrifice of time for relationships, but are failing to make disciples. From a practical standpoint, off-campus disciple-making could be very cohesive with what is already taking place in people's lives.

Furthermore, multiplying disciples who possess a biblical understanding of the Great Commission would strengthen the lay leadership within the church. Although disciple-making is driven by gospel multiplication, it ultimately promotes spiritual maturity. A lack of strong biblical leaders for various ministries is a current struggle in the context of ministry at WHFBC. It is challenging to secure dedicated workers for children and student ministries, as well as find people to serve on various committees and teach classes. When training is offered, the challenge becomes getting people to commit. However, the church has seen tremendous fruit in the growth of involvement and leadership any time disciple-making relationships are present. As disciple-making has had spurts of growth in the past, we have seen the tremendous impact it can have throughout the various ministries in the church: new leaders step up, the quality of the deacon ministry expands, evangelism through multiplication and missions takes place, and all of the ministries of the church consequently grow in depth. Regrettably, disciple-making of this nature is not widespread since most of the deep teaching is taking place through preaching and various Bible study classes that are not consistently attended.

Lastly, there seems to be a missing link in the personal growth of new believers when they come to faith in Christ. New converts are often committed to Sunday morning services and possibly Sunday school classes, but struggle to grasp the basics of biblical spirituality as they grow in faith. If ever something could fill the void in helping new believers grow in their faith, it would be an army of mature disciples fulfilling their call of the Great Commission and multiplying themselves among new converts. As a result, the new converts would learn in the beginning what a disciple of Christ is called to do, and would not spend a lifetime misunderstanding the principle of biblical discipleship.

In summary, a lack of Great Commission disciple-making is evident at WHFBC. There is a strong need for education and spiritual application in this area. Many other opportunities exist in the church that would be nurtured by the process of disciple-making. The individual church members struggle to live the life of an evangelist because they have never been personally taught how to engage in the process, nor have they ever witnessed it. Multiplying disciples who are taking a Timothy under their wing and passing on Jesus' strategy of reaching the world would revolutionize the ministry taking place at WHFBC as the Great Commission would be foundational.

### **Rationale**

The above-mentioned factors indicate that WHFBC has an incredible opportunity to grow in disciple-making. First, because a solid biblical context of ministry is already taking place in the church, it seems that members are ready for growth and biblical education in the Great Commission and the New Testament patterns of discipleship found especially in the Pauline Epistles. Many congregants have been taught what it means to multiply themselves through disciple-making, and are already involved in each other's lives in the body and throughout the community. However, they struggle with follow-through and consistency. To be sure, taking disciple-making to the next level in the congregation will be a blessing to all involved because there is nothing more gratifying than unity in building God's kingdom in the manner in which Jesus initiated.

Second, because disciple-making is also a key element in evangelism, church members would be more willing to share their faith when they have personal training from someone who is actively practicing evangelism in their daily life. Programmatic evangelism is still a tool that the church will utilize, but one-to-one faith sharing throughout life is a mandate Jesus has given all Christians.

Third, because there is a need for devoted mature leaders in the ongoing ministry of the church, biblical disciple-making will foster leadership development and spiritual maturity. The impact that fulfilling the Great Commission had on leadership

positions in the past was phenomenal. I expect nothing less than what we have seen take place in previous years as people grow in their faith to become fully developing followers of Jesus Christ motivated to pour into others.

Lastly, an effective way to grow new believers in their faith is through personal disciple-making relationships. Not only do these relationships encourage the growth of life-long believers, but fill the void for the spiritual growth of new believers as they enter the process of sanctification. Ministry focus on the Great Commission affects so many areas of ministry in a positive way that the congregation will undoubtedly be encouraged to see the process of Jesus' vision at work. This is a project that church members were personally engaged in as they grew in Christ's command; therefore, it was paramount that this project be pursued.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to develop a disciple-making program among the members of White House First Baptist Church.

### **Goals**

Several necessary goals guided this ministry project. These goals reflect a progression of the steps to be taken in order to grow the members of WHFBC in their understanding of biblical disciple-making.

1. The first goal of this project was to assess the knowledge and practice of disciple-making among a key group of pastor-selected members of WHFBC.<sup>1</sup>
2. The second goal of this project was to develop a curriculum to assist in training the select group in the area of disciple-making.

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<sup>1</sup>The key group was comprised of 15 to 25 men and women. For the purpose of this project, the pastoral selection of this group was based on the following criterion: (1) an adult (18+) member or regular attender of WHFBC, (2) actively involved in a church small group or Bible study or desire to begin doing so, and (3) a willingness to meet weekly for the six-week duration of the project.

3. The third goal of this project was to increase knowledge and practice of discipleship through educating the group on disciple-making.
4. The final goal of this project was for project participants to commit to initiate a discipling relationship.

Also entailed within each of these goals is the research methodology necessary to indicate the means of measurement, the benchmark of success, and the instrumentation used. This methodology provides a clear picture of the biblical disciple-making knowledge and practice among congregates. Moreover, it gave church leadership tools and long-term goals to further engage and encourage church members in practicing biblical discipleship.

### **Research Methodology**

The first goal of this project was to assess the knowledge and practice of disciple-making among a key group of pastor-selected members of WHFBC.<sup>2</sup> This assessment provided a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of current discipleship knowledge and practice among congregants. The goal was measured by administering the Discipleship Knowledge and Practice Survey (DKPS) to a select group of 15 to 25 adult members.<sup>3</sup> The goal was considered successfully met when this group completed the DKPS, showing a clear picture of their understanding and implementation of biblical discipleship. To determine the effects of the curriculum intervention on Disciple-Making Knowledge and Practice, pre and post-tests were given to both the intervention group and a control group<sup>4</sup> to serve as a comparison.

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<sup>2</sup>All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

<sup>3</sup>See appendix 1.

<sup>4</sup>The control group was comprised of 15 to 25 men and women. For the purpose of this project, the pastoral selection of this group was based on the following criterion: (1) an adult (18+) member or regular attender of WHFBC, and (2) actively involved in a church small group or Bible study.



The second goal of this project was to develop a six-week curriculum to assist in training the select group in the area of disciple-making.<sup>5</sup> This curriculum was developed around key disciple-making biblical texts, relevant books, discipleship principles, and disciple-making tools. The goal was measured by an expert panel<sup>6</sup> who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.<sup>7</sup> The goal was successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the minimum requirement was not met, the curriculum was revised to address the weaknesses identified by the evaluation.

The third goal of this project was to increase knowledge and practice of discipleship through educating the group on disciple-making. This goal was measured by administering the DKPS to the same members who completed it before, comparing the results using a t-test. This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-DKPS. In addition, post-tests were given to the control group to serve as a comparison.

The final goal of this project was for project participants to commit to initiating a discipling relationship. This goal was measured by a commitment card<sup>8</sup> that asked project participants to commit to take another believer through the same curriculum in which they had just participated. The card asked participants to identify the believer (church member, family member, fellow Christian) they felt led to disciple as well as a general starting date to begin the disciple-making process. Participants received this

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<sup>5</sup>See appendix 3.

<sup>6</sup>One pastor on staff on WHFBC, one associational pastor, one seminary professor, one local pastor from an evangelical non-denominational church, and one layman in the church.

<sup>7</sup>See appendix 3.

<sup>8</sup>See appendix 4.

commitment card during the final week of classroom training and returned it to the church office within one week. Success for this goal was that at least 75 percent of those who had participated in the training would return a completed commitment card.

### **Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations**

The following definitions of key terms are used in the ministry project:

*Discipleship.* Discipleship is the overarching process of sanctification that all believers are called to when they are regenerated and trust in Jesus, live life co-crucified (Gal 2:20) with him, and walk with him daily (Luke 9:23). The process of discipleship begins when one enters into a family of faith under the lordship of Christ. According to Peter Nelson, “The life of Christian discipleship as presented in the New Testament calls for supreme devotion to Jesus through the acceptance of his lofty demands. Commitment to him must come before all other attachments.”<sup>9</sup>

*Disciple-making.* For this project, disciple-making is a more intentional aspect under the umbrella of discipleship. J. Andrew Overman asserts, “A disciple is one who understands, teaches, and does what Jesus taught and did.”<sup>10</sup> The process of making a disciple occurs when a believer goes about the process of intentionally helping another believer or believers grow in their faith with the end result of multiplication in mind.

Three limitations were applicable to this project. First, the accuracy of the DKPS was dependent upon the willingness of the respondents to be honest about their biblical knowledge and understanding of disciple-making principles and practices. To mitigate this limitation, the respondent’s surveys were completed anonymously. Second, the effectiveness of the training was limited by the constancy of attendance. If the participants did not attend all of the training sessions, then it would be difficult to

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<sup>9</sup>David Noel Freedman, ed., *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), s.v. “disciple.”

<sup>10</sup>J. Andrew Overman, in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 169.

measure the benefit of the training. To mitigate this limitation, make-up discipleship sessions were scheduled. Participation in five of the six training sessions was considered adequate for the success of the training. Finally, this project was limited to short-term results and would not see the full scale effect of disciple-making, as the fruit of making a disciple is often a long-term endeavor.

One delimitation was placed on the project. The project was confined to a twenty-four-week timeframe. This timeframe provided adequate time to write the curriculum and get feedback from expert panel, prepare and teach the six-week training session, and conduct the DKPS after sessions are completed.

### **Conclusion**

The mandate by Jesus to make disciples is clear. As the saints of God await His second coming there is much work to be done, and the church should labor to fulfill Jesus' final words before he ascended into heaven. The congregation of WHFBC is at a wonderful place of ministry, but growth in understanding and practicing this mandate will pay incredible dividends within the church, and throughout eternity. Chapter 2 of this project outlines the biblical and theological foundations for disciple-making as the redeemed of God seek to "make disciples of all nations" until the second coming of Christ.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR DISCIPLE MAKING

Three passages from the New Testament teach that Christians are to make disciples through intentional evangelism and teaching, by equipping saints for ministry, and replicating themselves among other believers. These passages are foundational to the disciple-making project at White House First Baptist Church. Those being disciplined must grasp the key components of the Great Commission while understanding their individual call to multiply, as well as use their gifts in the church.

#### **Jesus' Disciple-Making Message in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)**

The Great Commission contains Jesus' marching orders concerning the building of His church. The commission calls for Christ followers to make disciples, not mere converts. Jesus' mandate in Matthew 28:18-20 involves intentionality, empowerment, evangelism, teaching, and multiplication. An exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 shows these components.

#### **A Command from the Master**

Jesus' words abound with encouragements and commands for his followers. Matthew 28 is among some of the last recorded words of Christ before his ascension, making them an important imperative. Discipleship strategist Herb Hodges notes the importance of these words at this specific time in the life of Christ, stating that Jesus made an appointment with his disciples where he shared with them, or "posted," some of his

final instructions for believers as written in Matthew's gospel.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Donald Hagner adds that the commission brings the resurrection narrative to its climax in this "final majestic pericope."<sup>2</sup>

In the commission, Jesus certainly provides divine directives for the building of his kingdom, which were a culmination of what he had done by example throughout his ministry. An enlistment of those who experienced Christ's life and walked alongside him was taking place, and the enlistees were to carry on His work.<sup>3</sup>

Interestingly, Matthew 28:18-20 was not a primary text used in calling all believers to action until possibly the sixteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The title "Great Commission" did not appear until a couple of centuries thereafter. Ulrich Luz makes an historical observation, stating, "Only since the beginning of the nineteenth century has the verse, especially in Protestantism, begun its victory march as 'The Great Commission.'"<sup>5</sup> For centuries, according to Luz, most believed that the mandate of the passage was only for the disciples.<sup>6</sup> David Wright specifies, "It is perhaps not surprising that some patristic writers express the conviction that the mandate first delivered to the apostles had indeed been fulfilled in the apostolic generation."<sup>7</sup> Yet Wright contends there is a strong case

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<sup>1</sup>Herb Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox: The Foundation for Building World-Visionary, World Impacting, Reproducing Disciples* (Memphis, TN: Spiritual Life, 2001), 28.

<sup>2</sup>Donald Alfred Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, The Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33B (Dallas: Word, 1995), 881.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revel, 1993), 21.

<sup>4</sup>Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 626.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>David F. Wright, "The Great Commission and the Ministry of the Word: Reflections Historical and Contemporary on Relations and Priorities," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 25, no. 2 (September 2007): 139.

for the Matthean passage to be authoritative to all followers of Christ, not only the original disciples.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the Great Commission must include an extension to the Gentile nations, as the goal of Jesus is to make disciples throughout the world.<sup>9</sup>

Hyper, or “pseudo” Calvinists of the eighteenth century also believed the commission was only for the first disciples, and even went as far as standing alongside Arminian theologians in this assertion. Arminians often held to universal grace, and the pseudo-Calvinists believed sovereignty essentially negates what God calls man to do in Jesus’ commission.<sup>10</sup> Observing the stance of theologian Andrew Fuller, Tom Nettles affirms two truths: “The universal duty of all men to repent and believe; and the absolutely unmerited and sovereign character of grace.”<sup>11</sup> Fuller stood with Baptist missionary William Carey in the midst of this commission controversy.<sup>12</sup>

Peter O’Brien explains that Carey (1761-1834) was influential at the end of the eighteenth century in pursuit of the Great Commission call and its binding message toward all believers.<sup>13</sup> Carey’s message was strange to many as O’Brien explains, “The Reformers and the majority of seventeenth century theologians believed the Great Commission was binding only on the apostles.”<sup>14</sup> O’Brien, however, affirms Carey’s exegesis of the passage. The importance of the Commission goes beyond the apostolic

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<sup>8</sup>Wright, “The Great Commission,” 133.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 136.

<sup>10</sup>Thomas J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 118.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Samuel Pearce Carey, *William Carey, D.D., Fellow of Linnaean Society* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), 70-71.

<sup>13</sup>Peter O’Brien, “The Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20: A Missionary Mandate or Not?” *The Reformed Theological Review* 35 (September-December 1976): 66.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

age, as the nature of discipleship presented in Scripture aligns with Jesus' words in the Great Commission, and leads to fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant.<sup>15</sup> After significant scrutiny, Wright concludes,

This admittedly limited range of evidence counts in favour of the last quarter or third of the nineteenth century as the period when 'the Great Commission' really caught on and could be used as though its normal reference to Matthew 28:18-20 called for no explanation or justification.<sup>16</sup>

Although a universal call, the intentionality of the Great Commission emphasizes how important Jesus' words are at this particular time in his ministry. In verse 18, Hagner contends that Jesus now "comes to them (προσελθών), a comforting approach that takes the initiative to re-establish an intimate relationship with them."<sup>17</sup> Verse 17 states that some of the disciples were in a state of doubt while in Christ's presence. The experience of the crucifixion was challenging for the disciples, but the reality of a risen Messiah was now in full view. Jesus provided his band of followers needed reassurance and comfort as they heard his ultimate initiative.

In verse 20, Jesus assures His disciples of His presence to the very end of the age, and they are to teach everything he had commanded them. Davies and Allison state,

V. 20 interprets Jesus as the authoritative bringer of the revelation. Ἐνετείλᾳμην is a constative aorist and refers to not one command or to the Sermon on the Mount but to all of Jesus' teaching—not just imperatives but also proverbs, blessings, parables, and prophecies. But more than verbal revelation is involved, for such revelation cannot be separated from Jesus' life and deed, and so recalls the entire book: everything is in view. The earthly ministry as a whole is imperative.<sup>18</sup>

Ultimately, the weight of the gospel and the life and teachings of Christ are a part of his divine commission. Citing verse 18, D. A. Carson states that the use of "all" also gives

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<sup>15</sup>O'Brien, "The Great Commission," 77-78.

<sup>16</sup>Wright, "The Great Commission," 157.

<sup>17</sup>Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 886.

<sup>18</sup>W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 686.

insight into the words of Christ and ties the three verses together. He draws the conclusion that it is precisely “*all authority, all nations, all things, all the days.*”<sup>19</sup> Davies and Allison introduce the verse, stating, “Jesus is not waiting passively in heaven for his glorious arrival as judge and king but is already exercising his Lordship as God’s plenipotentiary son.”<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, the importance of Jesus’ words in completing his earthly ministry and fulfillment of Messianic prophecy are embodied in knowing the kingship that was introduced by the Davidic royal genealogy has now been revealed. R. T. France writes, “It stands far above local politics and extends far beyond the people of Israel. It is the universal kingship of the Son of Man.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The Imperative to Make Disciples**

When dealing with the intentionality of the Great Commission one must be quick to affirm that the imperative within these verses is to “make disciples.” The commission contains one main, powerful imperative verb, μαθητεύσατε.<sup>22</sup> Without question, it is the specific command of Christ given. From a historical standpoint in dealing with the translation of the word, Ulrich Luz states,

“Make Disciples” corresponds to the basic ecclesiological word “disciple” (μαθητής) that is transparent for the present. “Disciples” are not only the twelve disciples of the earthly Jesus; Jesus’ discipleship occurs at every place where his power becomes operative among his people and his commandments are kept.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>D. A. Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 594.

<sup>20</sup>Davies and Allison, *Matthew 19-28*, 682

<sup>21</sup>R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1113.

<sup>22</sup>Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 686.

<sup>23</sup>Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 625-26.



Far too often people are mistakenly convinced that the command is Christ's encouragement to "go." However, the going is the logical following of the imperative, and part of the fulfillment of the command. Craig Blomberg makes the interesting argument that too much and too little have been made of this observation:

Too much is made of it when the disciples' "going" is overly subordinated, so that Jesus' charge is to proselytize merely where one is. Matthew frequently uses "go" as an introductory circumstantial participle that is rightly translated as coordinate to the main verb – here "Go and make" (cf. 2:8; 9:13; 11:4; 17:27; 28:7). Too little is made of it when all attention is centered on the command to "go," as in countless appeals for missionary candidates, so that foreign missions are elevated to a higher status of Christian service than other forms of spiritual activity. To make disciples *of all nations* does require many people to leave their homelands, but Jesus' main focus remains on the task of all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be.<sup>24</sup>

O'Brien writes,

However, when the attention has been focused on the "going" rather upon the "making of disciples" it has been misplaced. The important point about the Great Commission is that it has to do with bringing men and women to submit to Jesus as Lord, to become His disciples, wherever they may be.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the commission is also "framed," or "sandwiched," in the grace, power, and authority of God. Jesus begins, "All authority has been given me," and ends, "Surely I will be with you until the very end of the age."

Hagner confirms this grace-empowered idea:

The statements that frame the commission on either side concerning the authority and the presence of Jesus alone allow the church to continue in the world. Only the ongoing reality of these facts can continue to equip the church for its mission—a mission that will continue until the consummation of the age.<sup>26</sup>

Direction and encouragement come from Christ who has all authority, and will continue until he returns. A. T. Robertson maintains,

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<sup>24</sup>Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 431.

<sup>25</sup>O'Brien, "The Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20," 78.

<sup>26</sup>Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 889.

His authority or power in his earthly life had been great (Matt. 7:29; 11:27; 21:23). Now it is boundless and includes earth and heaven. It is the sublimest of all spectacles to see the risen Christ without money or army or state charging this band of five hundred men and women with winning all the nations.<sup>27</sup>

Christians should be humbled as they grasp this grace-filled, Christocentric idea.

Blomberg writes, “Matthew wants to end his Gospel centering more on Christ’s attributes than on the disciples’ task. Verses 18-20 link back with 1:23 to frame the entire Gospel with references to Immanuel—*God with us*.”<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the gospel message and Christ’s commission center on the empowering grace of Jesus. Thus, according to Davies and Allison, “The result is that the believing audience and the ever-living Son of God become more intimate. The Jesus who commands difficult obedience is at the same time the ever-graceful divine presence.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Evangelism and Teaching**

When it comes to the topic of the Great Commission, there can be considerable debate on a supposed tension of “evangelism” and “discipleship.” Yet one cannot become a disciple until he has been converted (evangelism). Believers learn how to evangelize and “go” through being disciplined (taught).

Theoretically, the command of making a disciple cannot take place until one “goes and baptizes.” Carson recognizes the vitality of “going,” stating, “It is difficult to believe that ‘go’ has lost all imperative force.”<sup>30</sup> The going must mean, to a degree, leaving where one is and going to another place to share the gospel message. It involves evangelism and the goal of reaching new converts. The participle *πορευθέντες* links to the mission of a believer’s life—to make disciples. The second person plural verb

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<sup>27</sup>A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, concise ed. (Nashville: Holman Bible, 2000), 64.

<sup>28</sup>Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433-34.

<sup>29</sup>Davies and Allison, *Matthew 19-28*, 688-89.

<sup>30</sup>Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 595.

translates, “as you all are going.” France contends that it is too common and general a verb to be thought of as one “moving to a new area or field of mission.”<sup>31</sup> “Going” is not based on a territorial idea, but a life idea.

Contextually, one sees that the commission was given to those who were already considered disciples of Christ. Nevertheless, France notes,

In the first instance that means the eleven men there in the Galilean hills, but as their numbers increased (and already we have been given hints of a larger number of committed disciples; see on 27:55, 57) the mission will be extended more widely until ‘all the nations’ are included in its scope.<sup>32</sup>

France continues to lay out what this process looks like as given by Christ: “The sentence structure is of a main verb in the imperative, μαθητεύσατε—‘make disciples,’ followed by two uncoordinated participles, βαπτίζοντες—‘baptizing,’ and διδάσκοντε—‘teaching,’ which spell out the process of making disciples.”<sup>33</sup> Baptizing becomes the actual evangelism coming to fruition as a sinner receives salvation through faith by professing Christ as Lord. France writes, “Baptism is the point of enrollment into a process of learning which is never complete.”<sup>34</sup>

The learning to which France alluded is the product of the teaching, as Jesus encourages them to “observe everything he had commanded” (v. 20). It can be a rather daunting task when seeking to define “everything.” Blomberg is helpful in arguing that “this is a perennially, incomplete, life-long task.”<sup>35</sup> As believers grow in the faith and the truths of God’s Word, they share and teach their newfound knowledge to others. Believers

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<sup>31</sup>France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1114.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 1115.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 1116.

<sup>35</sup>Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

must utilize the teachings of Christ in the Gospels and the whole counsel of God's revelation in Scripture.<sup>36</sup> Thus, curriculum for disciple-making is infinitely exhaustive.

Hagner gives further insight into what the word διδάσκοντε entails:

The word "disciple" means above all "learner" or "pupil." The emphasis in the commission thus falls not on the initial proclamation of the gospel, but more on the arduous task of nurturing into the experience of discipleship, an emphasis that is strengthened and explained by the instruction "teaching them to keep all that I have commanded" in v20a. To be made a disciple in Matthew means above all to follow after righteousness as articulated in the teaching of Jesus.<sup>37</sup>

The goal of the disciple is to become a fully developing follower of Jesus. Indeed, God's Word is the all-sufficient, authoritative guide in this Spirit-filled endeavor as one seeks Christ in the daily discipline of biblical Christ-likeness.

France simplifies the idea, asserting, "To be a disciple is to obey Jesus' teaching."<sup>38</sup> Through the process, one sees the infallible knowledge and genius of the divine Messiah in putting his kingdom building strategy into place. Davies and Allison explain, "By teaching what Jesus taught, the church becomes an extension of his ministry."<sup>39</sup> Robertson adds that "'make disciples' literally means to 'make learners.' This means evangelism in the fullest sense and not merely revival meetings."<sup>40</sup> The endeavor becomes multiplying ourselves to make additional "gospel changed" people.

### **Commission Multiplication**

Fulfilling the Great Commission takes place as the gospel multiplies in the world as the kingdom of Christ followers exponentially grows. Carson is helpful getting to the core of this idea:

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<sup>36</sup>Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433.

<sup>37</sup>Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 887.

<sup>38</sup>France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1119.

<sup>39</sup>Davies and Allison, *Matthew 19-28*, 686.

<sup>40</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 65.

The disciples are to carefully pass on everything that Jesus taught, the first disciples—themselves eyewitnesses—call into being new generations of “earwitnesses.” These in turn pass on the truth they received. So a means is provided for successive generations to remain in contact with Jesus teaching (2 Timothy 2:2).<sup>41</sup>

Mere addition of new converts is not the call of Christ, rather disciples who would multiply themselves through the process of evangelizing and teaching others.

Multiplying is to bring disciple-making to its ultimate fruition. Carson writes, “It is binding on *all* Jesus’ disciples to make others what they themselves are—disciples of Christ.”<sup>42</sup> Hagner also observes the idea of multiplication within the commission in discussing Jesus words, that he will be “with them until the very end of the age”:

Jesus promises his disciples that he will be with them until the end of time presently known. The promise thus applies not only to the future disciples themselves but to their successors and their successors’ successors in the church. The evangelist here not only writes history but provides a promise having relevance to his own contemporaries and indeed to the disciples composing the church down to the end of the eon.<sup>43</sup>

Therefore, a possibility of succession of the message until the end of the eon is achievable through multiplication. Concerning multiplying disciples, France acknowledges, “It is not enough that the nations hear the message; they must respond with the same whole-hearted commitment that was required of those who became disciples of Jesus during his ministry.”<sup>44</sup> To be certain, the church has not reached the very end of the age, so a movement of multiplication must persist! Christ’s commission will indeed keep his followers engaged until the end of the age.<sup>45</sup>

As stated, it is comforting to realize that the Gospel of Matthew ends with a promise that Christ will be with His disciples. To be sure, the disciples did not live until

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<sup>41</sup>Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 599.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 596.

<sup>43</sup>Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 889.

<sup>44</sup>France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1115.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 1119.

the end of the age.<sup>46</sup> The length of time between the Commission and Christ's second return is not known, but the given task is certain, and Christ followers will be enjoying the presence of Jesus each step of the way.<sup>47</sup> Robertson encourages believers along these lines: "Matthew's gospel closes in a blaze of glory. He is the Risen, all powerful Redeemer, who is with his people all the time. Jesus employs the prophetic present here. He is with us all the days until he comes in glory."<sup>48</sup>

### **The Apostle Paul Fulfilling the Great Commission (2 Tim 2:1-2)**

The fulfillment of the Great Commission by Jesus' disciples reveals the reality of two thousand years of generational gospel discipleship. Because of believers' obedience to Jesus' directive, people today know His teachings. One tangible example of Jesus' marching orders of multiplication and replication is the apostle Paul's discipleship relationship with Timothy. Second Timothy 2:1-2 echoes many Great Commission principles as Paul continues to teach what had been entrusted to him.

### **Great Commission Replication and Multiplication**

While Matthew 28 records Jesus' commissioning, 2 Timothy 2:1-2 shows a specific instance of obedience to this commission in its portrayal of Paul's disciple-making endeavor with Timothy. The reality of replication, multiplication, relation, and commission are observable in the verses.

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<sup>46</sup>Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 635. The disciples did not live "until the end of the age" unless someone interprets the end of the age to mean the coming of the Holy Spirit to permanently in believers in Acts, the Eucharist, or the time of Jesus' physical body being with them. A few of these interpretations have been shared over the centuries, yet they do not lend themselves to the interpretation of most conservative modern-day scholars.

<sup>47</sup>Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 599.

<sup>48</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 65.

## **A Divine Checkpoint**

Paul was in prison while writing, and he was very aware of the importance of building new, trustworthy disciples, who would continue the gospel work. Philip Towner believes,

The church leadership ranks were being depleted, and the itinerant Pauline mission was in danger of grinding to a halt. The command [to entrust these things] is therefore primarily to ensure the continuation of the churches' and the mission's ministry in Asia Minor.<sup>49</sup>

The relevancy of the message in the present is that succession took place, and current believers are the beneficiaries of Paul's practice and example. Replication is on display. So what is the basis of this replication? What specifically is being entrusted?

## **A Special Relationship**

Paul's tone is that of a father to a child in speaking with Timothy. Towner explains,

While this perhaps contributes a note of intimacy, it also reminds Timothy, and any other readers/hearers, that his special relationship to Paul lends him a certain authority that positions him to continue Paul's ministry just as it obligates him to serve faithfully.<sup>50</sup>

Paul addresses Timothy as his child (he had previously done so in 1:2), which gives understanding to the type of true intimate relationship that may take place in discipleship. Kent discusses the importance of this parent-to-child metaphor: "A child possesses the nature of his parents. The word 'child' (τέκνον, not K.J.V. 'son') is derived from a verb meaning to give birth, bear a child, and denotes a relationship of nature."<sup>51</sup> Granted the term is also clearly used here as a term of endearment. This metaphor displays a certain intimacy that is involved in biblical discipleship.

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<sup>49</sup>Phillip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), 491.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 488.

<sup>51</sup>Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in I and II Timothy and Titus* (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 266.

As a child receives instruction from his father, so does one being disciplined from his discipler. Kent adds, “So Timothy, as Paul’s spiritual offspring, is given that helpful instruction which will enable him to carry out successfully the responsibilities of the Christian life.”<sup>52</sup> In regard to offspring, this replication should lead to a multiplication of the process, as 2 Timothy 2 is clear that something vitally important is being passed down.

### **The Passing of Power**

What is being passed down finds its roots in divine power—the power of God in the gospel of grace. Immediately in verse 1, Paul is returning to a theme of power that he discussed in 1:7-8. Towner explains,

Here in the command “be strong” the verbal form (ἐνδυναμόω) continues the wordplay as it connects this power to “grace” and “Christ Jesus. The verb is probably to be taken as a passive, which implies that strengthening for ministry comes through divine agency. It is also in the present tense, which, in view of the aorist tense of the two verbs that follow, marks the action it alludes to and suggests that responding to this command concerning empowerment will somehow be the ongoing key to carrying out the rest.<sup>53</sup>

William Mounce explains,

Paul is speaking here of daily empowerment (Romans 4:20; Ephesians 6:10; Philippians 4:13), an ongoing strengthening required to carry out the commands in chapter one. ἐν τῇ χάριτι, “by the grace” could be locative (‘in the grace’), indicating the sphere in which all of Christian life is lived.<sup>54</sup>

Robertson specifies that the Greek translation for “be strengthened” is “keep on being empowered,” “keep in touch with the power (cf. 1 Tim 1:12; Rom 4:20; Phil 4:13; Eph 6:10).<sup>55</sup> Robertson also explains that the source of the power is clearly located “in the

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<sup>52</sup>Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 266.

<sup>53</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 488.

<sup>54</sup>William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 503.

<sup>55</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 539.



grace that is in Christ Jesus.<sup>56</sup> As disciples of Christ are going (in accordance with the Great Commission), they are rooted in this power of grace while making disciples, and the only way the commission message can multiply is through continuing reliance in the work and power of the gospel.

Christ followers must make generations of disciples who multiply themselves in others with an understanding of the power of Grace. Paul uses ἐνδυναμῶ elsewhere in his writing, often with the awareness that Christ is the one who strengthens. Grace (χάρις) strengthens the Christian to live a Holy life, or endure hardship.<sup>57</sup> Knight simply states, “χάρις is God’s gracious enabling power (2 Corinthians 9:8; Titus 2:11-14).”<sup>58</sup>

### **Teaching “These Things”**

Towner states, “‘The things you have heard me say,’ identifies the commodity Timothy is to pass on to others. That commodity, ‘the things,’ refers to the Pauline expression of the gospel.”<sup>59</sup> Knight elaborates, “Paul refers to this message with the indefinite plural pronoun ἃ, which is appropriately rendered by the broad and indefinite terms ‘what’ (*RSV*) or ‘the things [which]’ (*NIV, NASB*) and which includes all of his teaching (cf. 1:13-14).”<sup>60</sup>

Disciple-making involves one life pouring into another life, who will then reach others with the exhaustive message of grace and the teachings of Christ. Second Timothy 2:2 is about making disciples through “passing on the torch of the light of the

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<sup>56</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 539.

<sup>57</sup>George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1992), 389.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 489.

<sup>60</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 390.

knowledge of God in Christ.”<sup>61</sup> Knight adds that the “words are the truth of God that should be passed on.”<sup>62</sup>

“In the presence of many witnesses” (διὰ πολλῶν μαρτύρων) is a phrase in the passage that also has some interesting possibilities. Mounce presents the idea that the phrase could refer to encouragements Paul might have said at Timothy’s conversion or baptism, or possibly, his commissioning into ministry.<sup>63</sup> While this is an interesting proposition, Knight disagrees: “It is doubtful that Paul has this exclusively in view because not all of what Timothy heard from Paul was communicated to Timothy on that occasion.”<sup>64</sup> Towner explains that some see the phrase, “the presence of many witnesses,” as a statement of authenticity, or the “presence of others who can authenticate the message.”<sup>65</sup> Towner explains, “The emphasis is on the apostolic origin and shape of the teaching and its authenticity, to which many can attest, whether or not Paul harks back to a decisive moment in Timothy’s life.”<sup>66</sup> All believers saw the authenticity and reliability of the message of grace and the gospel in which Paul proclaimed.

Paul surely proclaimed pastoral encouragements at a baptism or commissioning of Timothy, but it seems that the “things you have heard me say in front of many witnesses” is much more exhaustive. Paul passed down to Timothy a much more general understanding of the message of the gospel.<sup>67</sup> Kent adds, “There is no need to restrict the reference to the time of Timothy’s ordination or baptism. The aorist form ‘heard’

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<sup>61</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 539.

<sup>62</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 390.

<sup>63</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 505.

<sup>64</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 390.

<sup>65</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 266-67.

(ἤκουσας) may be understood as constative, gathering into one all that Timothy had heard from Paul during many years of association.”<sup>68</sup>

### **A Downline of Multiplication**

Paul is the initiator in this process of disciple-making (by the work of the Holy Spirit). While being discipled by Paul, Timothy now must pass on to “faithful men” the teachings of grace and the gospel entrusted to him. The word “faithful” (πιστοῖς), would assume that people are believers.<sup>69</sup> To be sure, the process may begin with an evangelistic gospel presentation responded to in faith. What indicates, “faithful,” in this Great Commission succession of disciple-making?

A proper understanding of what constitutes a faithful person is necessary. πιστοῖς is often translated “reliable,” which is insightful. Reliability deals with a person’s character, a necessary characteristic for downline succession to take place. Towner agrees with this understanding, stating, “This quality has much more to do with dependability in relation to apostolic teaching (in contrast to the heretics), loyalty to Christ and Paul (in contrast to those who abandoned him), and commitment to fulfill what one has promised to do (df. 2:13; 1 Timothy 1:2).”<sup>70</sup> The second qualification is that those who are selected by Timothy must be “qualified to teach others.” Each party in the process of multiplication must possess a certain reliability as part of Paul’s criterion.<sup>71</sup>

One might ask before discipling someone if the one to be discipled is “sufficient for the task?”<sup>72</sup> Simply sharing with a person the process and expectations is important.

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<sup>68</sup>Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 266-67.

<sup>69</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

<sup>70</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 491.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

Knight acknowledges, “It is imperative that those to whom the teachings of the apostle are entrusted (to pass them on to others) be ‘faithful.’”<sup>73</sup> Entrusting the gospel “was not simply a tap on the shoulder; it would require Timothy to teach and to model the faith (1:11-12; 3:10-17).”<sup>74</sup> Kingdom growth and missional focus will take place when the disciples are not just present, but are faithful and reliable.

The verse commanding Timothy to teach reliable men who will then teach others is about a pattern for the continuation of the ministry and its expansion.<sup>75</sup> Towner elaborates, “The ‘others’ (1 Timothy 1:10) are distinguished from the ‘reliable’ ones who teach them the apostolic gospel, which anticipates the outward growth and movement of the ministry.”<sup>76</sup> Four generations of Great Commission disciples exist within this verse.

Christ followers need fathers in the faith to help them grow, and to know specifically how to grow others. When Paul says “from me,” he was signifying that he was Timothy’s chief teacher of Christ.<sup>77</sup> As he taught Timothy, Timothy was to find reliable men to whom he would pass down and entrust the message. Robertson reiterates the message: “Paul taught Timothy who will teach others who will teach still others.”<sup>78</sup> William Mounce confers that this principle of multiplication is instruction to the church as a whole.<sup>79</sup>

Paul’s instructions within 2 Timothy 2:1-2 to his “child,” Timothy, are fruit of adhering to the Great Commission and making biblical disciples who will multiply

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<sup>73</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 391.

<sup>74</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 491.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 539.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 507.

themselves, entrusting to others what they have acquired. Believers must instill into a Timothy what they have been entrusted and seek to multiply themselves on to reliable men and others.

Just as disciple-making will create generational disciples who multiply and replicate, it will also yield fruit in the body of Christ. For example, as disciples grow, they will serve, take on leadership positions, and will be equipped to evangelize and share their faith as they live empowered by the grace of the gospel. These truths of discipleship concerning equipping the saints leads to the final portion of this chapter.

### **The Great Commission in the Church: Equipping the Saints (Eph 4:11-12)**

As the Paul-to-Timothy relationship and example in 2 Timothy 2 give evidence for Great Commission multiplication and replication, Ephesians 4:11-12 gives evidence for the process of disciple-making in church ministry. Pastors and church leaders are to build up believers who are “in Christ” within the “body of Christ” for service ministry in Christ’s church for the purpose of evangelism and leadership.

#### **Equipping and Empowering**

How do Jesus’ marching orders for believers in the Great Commission play out in the local body of the church? The book of Acts, as well as all of the New Testament Epistles, gives numerous significant examples of this taking place. This exegesis centers on two specific verses where Paul encourages leaders to equip the believers in the church for the purpose of ministry.

Ephesians 4 rightly connects pastoral leadership with the laity of the church in pursuit of ministry. Ray Stedman confers with the importance of this passage of equipping and empowerment, and rightly points out that the work of ministry is not solely for pastors, ministry leaders, or a select few. Indeed, laymen are vital for the task, and are to be equipped for the work of ministry and building God’s kingdom. This idea is innovative to some, and often debated. Stedman adds, “We must never lose the impact of the

Apostle Paul’s statement that apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers exist “for the equipment of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (4:12).”<sup>80</sup> Paul’s words point to the fact that equipping the saints is an important aspect of the ministry of the local church. Colin Marshall and Tony Payne state, “Most churches need to make a conscious shift—away from erecting and maintaining structures, and towards growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ.”<sup>81</sup>

Ephesians encourages leaders in what to do and gives laity direction in what they are to do as well. Under the Lordship of Christ, everyone has a role. Moreover, each role is important. In discussing the passage, Andrew Lincoln states, “Now, the one who has been given to the Church as cosmic Lord, himself gives to the Church to help equip it fully for its cosmic task.”<sup>82</sup>

### **Gifts That Are Given**

Ephesians 4:11-12 points the church to the purpose of accomplishing the goal of the Great Commission as leaders equip saints for ministry. It is the task of the entire body of believers, every single Christian, to serve in some capacity for the praise of God and for the benefit of broken people.<sup>83</sup> Concerning the monumental cosmic task, O’Brien writes,

Having achieved dominion over all the powers through his victorious ascent, he sovereignly distributes gifts to the members of his body. The building of the body is inextricably linked with his intention of filling the universe with his rule since the church is his instrument in carrying out his purposes for the cosmos.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ray C. Stedman, *Body Life* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1972), 119.

<sup>81</sup>Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias, 2009), 17.

<sup>82</sup>Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 248.

<sup>83</sup>Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries, vol. 34a (London: Yale University Press, 1974), 481.

<sup>84</sup>Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament

Verse 4:11 begins with a simple phrase, yet one that should not be overlooked: “And he gave” (καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν). Before any equipping takes place, a believer must understand who is doing the giving, whom the ruler is, and what the ultimate goal is.

According to Lincoln, “The αὐτὸς (He) picks up the αὐτὸς of v. 10 making plain that he of whom the psalm said ‘he gave gifts to men’ is the exalted Christ who fills the universe.”<sup>85</sup> The ultimate goal of Jesus in making disciples of all nations is progressed as he gifts men to be about the task. Ultimately, the inheritance is Christ himself, and part of this gracious inheritance is the fact that “he” gives gifts to men for the glory of building up his body.

One should never underestimate the power and message of “he who gave!” Grace becomes tangible by believers being “in Christ,” as well as the gifting in which he graciously provides to accomplish the task he left for His church. Ephesians 4: 8-10 specifically mention Jesus’ ascension, as well as his giving of gifts to men (Paul quotes Ps 68:18 in the passage). Within this context, Paul writes verse 11. In discussing this giving, F. F. Bruce expounds, “It is emphasized that the one who gave the gifts is the one who ascended: it is because he ascended that he has given them.”<sup>86</sup>

The prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers, recipients of the gifts, are an important focus of the text. Cessationists such as John MacArthur hold to the belief that many of these specific giftings were for the particular apostolic age of the biblical writing.<sup>87</sup> Others, such as O’Brien, see the cessationist argument as unnecessary and see

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Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 297. In 2016, Eerdmans pulled this commentary over plagiarism concerns. While I am aware of these issues, this commentary was still helpful throughout the writing of this project.

<sup>85</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 248.

<sup>86</sup>F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), 345.

<sup>87</sup>John MacArthur, *Strange Fire: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship* (Nashville: Nelson, 2013), 92-103. It is worthy of note that John

relevance of the offices to the Ephesian readers and the modern church. The four offices are specifically, and generally, “ministers of the word.” Lincoln, though recognizing their differences, concurs, “Ephesians 4 is narrowed to particular ministers of the word,”<sup>88</sup> thus all of their tasks include proclaiming, preaching, discipling, evangelizing, and empowering others in the message of the gospel. Dealing with the four groups, Robertson sees the specific titles of shepherds and teachers relevant in modern churches:

There are four groups here, we will deal with the meaning of the last. A pastor is a shepherd with an essential function of protection. Only here are preachers termed shepherds (cf. John 2:16). Here Paul groups ‘shepherds and teachers’ together. All these gifts can be found in one man, though not always. Some have only one.<sup>89</sup>

Writer and disciple-maker Tim Miller goes as far as to say that it becomes the pastor (or shepherd’s) job to locate the people in their local body (or locally) who specifically possess those four gifts (even if laity), and empower them to use their gifts within the body to disciple others in replication and growth.<sup>90</sup>

No matter the stance one holds on the passage, pastors and churches must recognize that the heart and purpose of each of those titles and offices still exist, though perhaps not in the same understanding to those in the apostolic age.<sup>91</sup> To be dogmatic on the functions or “offices” that Paul mentions may be missing the point of the passage. Whether or not Ephesians 4:11 deals with functions or offices is a fair inquiry, but the text deals with groups of people without even detailing activities or positions in the local church. Have the ones named been given titles because of what they are doing in their

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MacArthur believes only the first two offices have ceased, apostles and prophets.

<sup>88</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 249.

<sup>89</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 475.

<sup>90</sup>Tim Miller, *Tethered: Breaking the Chains of the Shackled Church* (Westminster, CO: IMD, 2010), 78-86.

<sup>91</sup>People still may be gifted in prophetic offerings, though not a “prophet,” and though the office of “apostle” has ceased, some denominational and associational leaders lead in various and sometimes similar ways.



communities? On the other hand, are the titles based on functions they perform? Lincoln provides balanced insight: “The answers given are highly disputed, and it may simply be the case that a question is being asked for which there is neither enough data in the text nor sufficient knowledge of church organization at this time and in this area to provide a convincing answer.”<sup>92</sup>

The heart of the passage and its relevancy in the local church is still valid. Marshall and Payne explain, “In the verses following 11-12 Paul goes on to say that the goal of all this ministry (whoever is doing it) is the building of the body of Christ to unified, doctrinally sound maturity.”<sup>93</sup> Bruce compares the list given in verse 11 with another notable spiritual gift passage: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. His insight is helpful:

Here the “gifts” are the persons who exercise those ministries and who are said to be “given” by the ascended Christ to his people to enable them to function and develop as they should. It is not suggested that such “gifts” are restricted to those that are specifically named; those that are named exercise their ministries in such a way as to help other members of the church to exercise their own respective ministries (no member is left without some kind of service to perform).

In summing up the purpose of the “lists” or “offices,” and the call to equip the body, Barth gets to the root of Ephesians 4: “The whole church, the community of all the saints together, is the clergy appointed by God for a ministry to and for the world.”<sup>94</sup> This encouragement from Paul is an all-important message, forbidding members of the body to see the task of ministry, making disciples, and sharing the gospel as the “preacher’s task.” Barth continues, “The dignity and usefulness of the special ministries given to the church are as great or as small as their effectiveness in making every church member, including the smallest and most despised, an evangelist in his own home and environment.”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 252.

<sup>93</sup>Marshall and Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 45.

<sup>94</sup>Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 479.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, 479-80.

## Sheep Feeding and Ministry

Paul tells the leaders in the church to “equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (4:12). Paul uses the term “shepherd” (ποιμένας) in verse 11, and this common phrase for the office of pastor (overseer) in a local body gives insight into the role as well as insight into Ephesians 4. Bruce shares the importance of the title within the context: “It is fitting that this injunction (shepherd) should be ascribed to the apostle whose final commission from the Lord, according to John 21:15-17, was ‘Feed my sheep.’”<sup>96</sup>

The phrase πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων gives understanding to the task. Robertson translates the phrase “for the mending (repair) of the saints.”<sup>97</sup> καταρτισμὸν range of meanings include “to complete,” “to restore,” and “to prepare.” Lincoln explains, “It is the notion of making complete, which can include making complete by restoring or training that best fits the context, where, in the next verse, different images for the Church’s completion will be used.”<sup>98</sup>

Growing in absolute dependence on Christ in all things gets to the heart of the gospel and is vital in this building up, or equipping (καταρτισμὸν). Barth states,

The term “to equip” (lit. for equipment) corresponds to the essence and meaning of “grace.” . . . The “grace” given to saints according to 4:7 is certainly the same grace of the same God as the ministerial grace given to Paul in which he speaks in 3:2, 7; cf. Romans 1:5.<sup>99</sup>

Grace does not end when one becomes a believer, but continues to work in them throughout their journey of service. Paul states that God’s grace has not come in vain but has made him work (1 Cor 15:10).<sup>100</sup> The specific giftings mentioned in verse 11 are for

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<sup>96</sup>Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 348.

<sup>97</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 475.

<sup>98</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 252.

<sup>99</sup>Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 480.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*

helping the body of Christ see the grace of God in their lives. The passage gives three possible conclusions, or directives. The three inferences are “for the equipment of the saints,” “for the work of ministry,” and “for the building of the body of Christ.” These conclusions give insight into a unified gospel purpose in Christ’s church. O’Brien explains, “Regard those enumerated in v. 11 as helping and directing other members of the church so that all may carry out their several ministries for the good of the whole.”<sup>101</sup> People in local churches must be equipped to assume and develop the various ministries in the church. In order for people to be fully equipped, they must know the ultimate purpose of the equipping.

The saints (ἁγίων) are holy people whom God has set apart for himself by his own gracious initiative,<sup>102</sup> whom he has given rebirth and a change of identity (Gal 2:20, 2 Cor 5:17, John 3:1-21), and are to be about his divine purposes. O’Brien concurs: “The notion of equipping or preparing, in the sense of making someone adequate for something, best suits the context.”<sup>103</sup> People are to be equipped for a specific task, and that task clearly is “the work of ministry.”

During the time of this Pauline letter, churches were increasing. Bruce writes, “As the number of new churches increased, there would have been a call for more teachers to give young converts basic instruction as needed.”<sup>104</sup> As long as people are being converted and the church is experiencing growth and new birth, the need for giving new converts instruction will always be present. Ministers are to equip the members of their churches so that continual building up and multiplication take place.

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<sup>101</sup>O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesian*, 301.

<sup>102</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 6-7.

<sup>103</sup>O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesian*, 303.

<sup>104</sup>Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 348.

“Building up” (οικοδομῆν) is the task of those who are being disciplined within the body. Those being equipped are specifically building up the body of Christ (τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ). The phrase οἰκοδομῆν denotes the activity of building, and the cognate verb appears outside the New Testament for the literal building of houses, temples, and other structures.<sup>105</sup> Figuratively the term is often used in the establishment of individuals or nations.<sup>106</sup> Here the term is referring to people, individually and collectively. In Christ’s church, disciples are to be made (built up), which in turn builds up the church as a whole. Recognizing the principle of discipleship, O’Brien adds,

All that has been spoken of in v. 11 and in the first two phrases of v. 12 is directed towards the goal of building the body of Christ, so that together the ministers of v. 11 and ‘the saints’ serve this divinely appointed goal. To the metaphor of building Paul has joined the idea of growth.<sup>107</sup>

When verse 13 is approached, the ultimate goal is again realized. The body is built up so that unity in the faith will take place and for the purpose of growing in the knowledge of Jesus. Bruce sums up the verse: “As the personal knowledge of Christ was the attainment which he most earnestly sought for himself, so he seeks it for all his fellow believers.”<sup>108</sup> The puzzle of the passage completes an ecclesiological picture of discipleship, and the church can see Paul’s purpose of equipping for ministry and reaching the lost. Bruce concludes, “The full spiritual maturity that is to be attained is more specifically defined as ‘the measure of the stature of Christ’s fullness.’”<sup>109</sup> The directive of Ephesians 4 must begin with pastors and leaders in the church and filter down to the body. Ministers are

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<sup>105</sup>O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 304.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 350.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., 350-51.

given to the church specifically for the task of building it up.<sup>110</sup> Consequently, the shepherd of the church is not only building through preaching and evangelism, but also through personal disciple-making and by example.

Robertson states that the “building up” is the ultimate goal of all the gifting mentioned in this prudent passage.<sup>111</sup> In summarizing the various ideas within the passage, Barth concludes, “In all cases one ministry rendered by the church to God and in the world (Ephesians 4:12), and the manifold services which the church members render to one another and to men near and far from them.”<sup>112</sup> A “gospel-centric” message is for certain, and all believers are not only called, but also equipped for ministry, as Christ builds his church.

### **Conclusion**

The possibilities of biblical texts regarding disciple-making are vast, and due to the nature and limitations of this chapter, it would not be feasible to include them all. The key passages discussed—Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:1-2, and Ephesians 4:11-12—provide believers with a downline pictorial of multiplication. Indeed, it is important to remember that making disciples involves biblical evangelism birthing new converts, yet it must include building up those converts so that they will replicate and multiply themselves, and saints will be equipped for ministry in the body.

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<sup>110</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255.

<sup>111</sup>Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 475.

<sup>112</sup>Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 483.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO DISCIPLE MAKING

The biblical mandate to make disciples is best observed in the examples of Jesus and Paul, and informed by the historical practices of the church, as well as through contemporary reflection and practices of modern-day Christians. This chapter contends that church history and Christian writings give testimony to the key components of Jesus' Commission.

#### **The “What” and “Why” of Disciple-Making**

Scripture makes clear the mandate of all believers to be involved in the process of making disciples. Church history, contemporary reflection, and modern-day observation of disciple-making provide fruitful examples of Great Commission principles and practice. Collectively these resources give credence to the previously presented biblical exegesis and provide guidance for disciple-makers.

#### **The Meaning of Disciple-Making (The “What?”)**

Definitions of *discipleship* vary among Christians. Simply practicing a religion or being a member of a church does not constitute “Christian” discipleship. Discipleship implies growth, change, and health; it gives evidence of a living, flourishing relationship with Christ. Absence of growth indicates that one's faith is likely a mere intellectual assent, or, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer warns, “It remains an abstract idea, a myth that has a

place for the Fatherhood of God, but omits Christ as the living Son. A Christianity of that kind is nothing more or less than the end of discipleship.”<sup>1</sup>

In its simplest form, a disciple is “a follower,” as explained by Mark Dever.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, all people are disciples in some form or another. What is unique of Christian disciples? Christians follow Jesus, and spend a lifetime growing in their understanding of the gospel. Christopher Adsit is helpful in laying the framework for defining the uniqueness of “Christian Discipleship.” Adsit states that a μαθητής, literally defined as a “learner,” is a “person-in-process” who is growing in biblical Christ-likeness.<sup>3</sup> In light of this progression, Jesus set an example for believers to assist others throughout the process. Thus, a disciple is growing in understanding of how to follow Jesus and share Him. Discipleship becomes the life of a follower who is helping others grow in “followship.”

Discipleship begins with Christ’s work.<sup>4</sup> If one does not recognize Christ within, then he will seek to understand discipleship as solely a task. Task-driven discipleship can easily neglect transformation that comes from a follower who grows in understanding of faith in Christ. Authentic transformation does not take place by a legalistic process. Eric Geiger, Michael Kelly, and Philip Nation concur, emphasizing that Jesus is the supreme disciple-maker who “makes transformation possible.”<sup>5</sup> Yet, a tangible process takes place as a Christ follower seeks to multiply himself among others.

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<sup>1</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1937), 59.

<sup>2</sup>Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 13.

<sup>3</sup>Christopher B. Adsit, *Personal Disciple-Making: A Step-by-Step Guide for Leading a Christian from New Birth to Maturity* (Orlando: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1996), 35.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>5</sup>Eric Geiger, Michael Kelly, and Philip Nation, *Transformational Discipleship* (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 9.

An important question in this endeavor of definition is, “What are Christians making when they replicate?” Essentially, believers make a disciple based on the life they have in Christ and desire to see other Christians grow in the abundance of Christ’s life (John 10:10). A disciple, as a follower of Christ, assists others in their spiritual development and shares from his or her own growth in the gospel. To progress a convert to disciple, a convert, transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, is disciplined throughout the process of sanctification and experiences continual change as he or she grows in biblical Christlikeness.<sup>6</sup> This change involves the core of one’s identity, as a sinner by birth becomes a new creation in Christ, and Jesus becomes their life (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20). Consequently, not only will the new identity and new life be what defines a disciple of Christ, but also what motivates the believer toward discipleship. Geiger, Kelly, and Nation, and Robby Gallaty,<sup>7</sup> concur that Christian discipleship builds a foundation on transformation and multiplication.

Evangelism is a part of this equation. What is the relationship between discipleship and evangelism? Christians often misunderstand that discipleship must and will involve evangelism. When one follows Jesus and is involved in making disciples, he or she will begin to understand the vitality of encouraging others to share their faith.<sup>8</sup> A disciple must evangelize to reach new disciples, and a new disciple is disciplined to evangelize.

Previously mentioned truths concerning intentionality and multiplication are also clear to Greg Ogden: “Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love

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<sup>6</sup>Geiger, Kelly, and Nation, *Transformational Discipleship*, 29.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 95. See also Robby Gallaty, *Rediscovering Discipleship: Making Jesus’ Final Words Our First Work* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 78-85.

<sup>8</sup>Bill Hull, *Jesus Christ: Disciplemaker* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 126.



to grow toward maturity in Christ.”<sup>9</sup> A disciple is a follower, teacher, and evangelist. Ogden goes as far as to say that “any credible definition of discipling should contain within it the concept of reproduction.”<sup>10</sup>

Accordingly, the birth of the church gives testimony to the kingdom of God multiplying, as Christians understand being a disciple means being a Christ follower who reproduces. Walter Henrichsen contends that the idea of a disciple and disciple-making stands or falls with the two words used by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2: “Faithful men.” To be sure, the story of gospel multiplication is on display throughout the book of Acts. In *Master Plan of Discipleship*, Robert Coleman contends that the “evangelistic explosion” among the earliest Christians was a product of their intentional efforts of reproducing themselves.<sup>11</sup>

Preconceived ideas about the meaning of discipleship and/or disciple-making may already be ingrained in many believers. Improperly understood, the terms can be confusing. Disciple-making is leading toward discipleship, as a disciple is learning to walk in discipleship. Bill Hull teaches that discipleship is the more widely used and accepted term describing the “ongoing life of a disciple” and “the broader Christian experience.”<sup>12</sup> This experience of being a discipleship entails the ongoing journey of being a Christ follower, while disciple-making is specific to the task of pouring oneself into another and multiplying.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 129.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>11</sup>Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 77.

<sup>12</sup>Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006), 35.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

Helping disciples grow in understanding their role throughout the process is important so that they do not see being disciplined as a mere class. A disciple partakes in a spiritual discipline that bears eternal fruit. One must take ownership and understand the commitment involved in making disciples. The learner is to do something with what they have learned. Hull writes, “The classic discipleship that has been practiced in the past fifty years has done much good. But it falls short in that it has been too programed and too superficial.”<sup>14</sup> Disciples of Christ are to make new disciples. Followers and learners teach others how to follow, grow, teach, and share.

### **The Importance of Disciple-Making: The “Why?”**

Disciples making disciples is God’s plan to build his kingdom and reach the world for his glory. This progression does not discount God’s sovereignty and the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification; yet, God chose to use his followers as part of this divine process. Making disciples is important because it is God’s idea.

Confusion about the Great Commission leads to misunderstanding about why one is to make disciples. Believers do not know why they are to disciple, yet traditionally they tend to hold the Commission in high regard. John Piper states, “The Great Commission has been worshipped, but not obeyed. The church has tried to get world evangelization without disciple making.”<sup>15</sup> If one understands the gravity of what a follower of Christ is, then they will hold in high regard the importance of why he or she must make disciples. Believers transformed by the power of the gospel message realize the importance of why God has told them to share (Rom 1:16). Herb Hodges goes as far

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<sup>14</sup>Bill Hull, *Choose the Life: Exploring a Faith That Embraces Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 45.

<sup>15</sup>John Piper, “The Glory of God as the Goal of History,” *Desiring God*, October 12, 1976, accessed November 16, 2016, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-glory-of-god-as-the-goal-of-history>.

as stating the Great Commission is Christ's "marching orders" for His church.<sup>16</sup> By extension, if Jesus asks His followers to be about something, they must take it seriously. Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey attest that fulfilling the Great Commission is "God's will for the life of a Christian."<sup>17</sup> Understanding disciple-making is to understand that Christians are partners with God in His Commission.

The importance of the Great Commission vision not only entails God's will, but also has global ramifications. Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15, and John 3:16 all express a worldwide vision. Quoting Dawson Trotman, Hodges states, "Spiritual vision is getting on your heart what is on God's heart—the world!"<sup>18</sup> Jonathan Dodson makes the strong case that God's vision is indeed a gospel vision: "It is this understanding of the gospel that makes disciples, which is why it would be better to refer to the commission as the 'Gospel Commission.' The Gospel Commission sends us to teach and observe the gospel."<sup>19</sup>

Conversely, God desires to fill the world with followers who are living and exemplifying His love. The great commandment of loving one's neighbor (Mark 12:31-32) takes place within disciple-making. Christ followers love God as they follow His commission. Disciple-makers love others through teaching them gospel truth, and by helping them grow in their understanding of biblical love. Chan correctly contends that Christians glorify God when they make disciples who multiply, and love.<sup>20</sup> Believers

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<sup>16</sup>Herb Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox!* (Germantown, TN: Spiritual Life Ministries, 2001), 33.

<sup>17</sup>Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is . . . How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 2-3.

<sup>18</sup>Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox!*, 25.

<sup>19</sup>Jonathan K. Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 35.

<sup>20</sup>Francis Chan, *Multiply* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2012), 44.

recognize that they “love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). Jesus’ love for His children and in His children will motivate love for others. Dever goes as far as saying that the labor of discipleship is a “labor of love.”<sup>21</sup>

Christian identity is at the core of this issue, and Christians should be defined by love. Cassandra Williams brings to light that early believers saw the divine grace of the gospel molding them into who they were, as opposed to what they did. Making disciples and being disciples was about “becoming.”<sup>22</sup> Herein lies importance, for believers understanding who they are in Christ is integral in the discipleship process. Bonhoeffer discusses the amazing grace of “being” as one takes on the yoke of Christ: “Bewilderment is the true comprehension.”<sup>23</sup> When Christians realize who they are in Christ they will do what has been called of them, and will not even understand how it is possible!

Last, the effect of disciple-making on the local church, when properly followed, cannot be overemphasized. Though the process is more interpersonal and often done in small group relationships, it influences the whole of the body. When believers are discipled, they will begin to see, as Dodson states, “mission.”<sup>24</sup> Making disciples is not only an evangelism program and church growth program, it is God’s designed method for what the church is to be. Disciple-making will reach far beyond any program. The church will be Christ-centric, and not program-centric, when she practices biblical discipleship. For this reason, learning the importance of disciple-making may cause ministry shifts in many churches.

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<sup>21</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 27.

<sup>22</sup>Cassandra D. Carkuff Williams, *Learning the Way: Reclaiming Wisdom from the Earliest Christian Communities* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2009), 60.

<sup>23</sup>Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 93.

<sup>24</sup>Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship*, 108.

Williams boldly calls for church repentance in recovering authentic discipleship that had taken place for ages.<sup>25</sup> Sadly, the church often inundates itself with *spiritual fast food* while neglecting God’s vision of discipleship within the church. To be sure, poor Christian discipleship will not lead to healthy churches.<sup>26</sup> Healthy discipleship will play out in the church body and assist the church in all her glorious functions. Discipleship within the body will see saints equipped for ministry and unleash what Ray Stedman describes as quite possibly “the most powerful force on Earth, the Church.”<sup>27</sup>

Local congregations must be about the business of equipping every person in the congregation to be, as Putman explains, “an army released on its community.”<sup>28</sup> This community is in one’s back yard and extends to the utmost. The church must reclaim a global Great Commission vision. Comfort and complacency are not attributes of Christ’s commission. Challenges for the local church in the culture abound, yet the answer is not to merely seek relevance and change accordingly. Granted, the church will evolve and strive to reach the culture in various ways; however, the solution in a challenging culture, as Robinson states, “is not to seek relevance by offering different services, gimmicks, charismatic speakers, and endless programming. The solution is to return to our core mission of making disciples.”<sup>29</sup> The work of discipleship is challenging, but its importance is without question. Making disciples is a proven principle that will yield phenomenal results as the church adheres to the call of Christ.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Williams, *Learning the Way*, 2-3.

<sup>26</sup>Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006), 297.

<sup>27</sup>Ray Stedman, *Body Life* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1995), 10.

<sup>28</sup>Jim Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2010), 20.

<sup>29</sup>Natasha Sistrunk Robinson, *Mentor for Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 61.

<sup>30</sup>Herb Hodges, *Fox Fever: Exploring Both the Will and the Skill to Obey Christ’s Great Commission to “Turn People into Disciples”* (Chelsea, MI: Sheridan,

## The “How” and “When” of Disciple-Making

There can be considerable debate on how exactly one makes a disciple. The “how” of disciple-making might be the most contentious aspect of the topic as opinions on the process abound. The “when” is less controversial, yet important to address. The following sections discuss the practices that various writers and pastors have seen as beneficial.

### The Practice of Disciple-Making: The “How?”

Precision and disciple-making are not synonymous. A discipler verges on legalism when he maps out a non-negotiable, precise disciple-making framework. Making a disciple can actually be a messy undertaking; still, one can learn from successful models despite the differing opinions that exist. When discussing models, Jesus’ example should be the first place to look. In the classic *The Training of the Twelve*, A. B. Bruce discusses the relationship between Jesus and his disciples in detail, providing a framework for what Jesus called His church to be about in the Great Commission.<sup>31</sup> Jesus poured into a small group of people with intentionality and a goal in mind. Seeking to be intentional is a core principle exemplified by the Master. Moreover, at the end of his time on earth Christ told the disciples to do with others what he had been doing with them.

Looking at historical discipleship practices, Williams concurs, “Christian discipleship began with the ministry of Jesus.”<sup>32</sup> For this reason, many successful discipleship models closely resemble Jesus’ example. Various disciple-makers agree on core principles that are foundational for success. Methods vary, but the research unveils

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2006), 197-220.

<sup>31</sup>A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (Lexington, KY: ReadaClassic.com, 2010), 15.

<sup>32</sup>Williams, *Learning the Way*, 13.

common principles. The vital principles discovered provide insight into what produces success. Disciple-makers are to be deliberate in the process. The focus should be relational, not programmatic. There is an emphasis on replication. Discipleship may take place within programs, and people may multiply even if not directed to do so. The principles keep one grounded in vision and purpose.

Putman's discipleship model also emphasizes these core ideas.<sup>33</sup> No matter the model one chooses to use, these specific principles are vital. Earley and Dempsey lay out principles that easily flow from Putman's emphasis on being intentional, relational, and replicate driven. These foundational ideas plug into any model. Three specific stages involved in disciple-making are declaration, development, and deployment.<sup>34</sup> Walter Henrichsen also agrees that the emphasis in disciple-making should be on principles rather than methods.<sup>35</sup> Intentional standards become the foundation for methods.

When Jesus asked His disciples to make disciples, he was calling them to share life with others and seek to help people grow in their connection with Himself. They were to carry out this process in divine multiplication.<sup>36</sup>

In looking at methods, it is also comforting to see to whom specifically Jesus gave the task. Christ called out ordinary men. Hull goes as far as to call them a "ragtag band of misfits."<sup>37</sup> The disciples Jesus chose is reassuring for the believer because many Christians feel unworthy, uneducated, untheological, or incapable of making a disciple.

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<sup>33</sup>Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship*, 35.

<sup>34</sup>Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 59-60.

<sup>35</sup>Walter Henrichsen, *Disciples Are Made Not Born* (Colorado Springs: Victor, 1974), 116.

<sup>36</sup>Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship*, 62-64.

<sup>37</sup>Hull, *Jesus Christ: Disciplemaker*, 147.

These factors should not hold one back. As the church seeks to know “how” to disciple, they can learn from the original “who.” To put it another way, many look to make sure that they have the available and necessary resources to institute a discipleship “program” in their church. In actuality, the resources are the people who God calls to be a part of the process. Christians are often unaware of their capability. It is comforting to realize that every church already contains the resources needed for the task. No budget or building is needed for this divine endeavor.<sup>38</sup> Discipleship is for ordinary believers, not some “super-class” of Christians.<sup>39</sup>

In observing early disciple-making models, Michael Green notes, “Neither the strategy nor the tactics of the first Christians were particularly remarkable. What was remarkable was their conviction, their passion and their determination to act as Christ’s embassy to a rebel world, whatever the consequences.”<sup>40</sup> Success and passion flows from a Christian’s reliance on the Holy Spirit. He is available for all with no prejudice of status or qualification.

As the practice of disciple-making begins to take shape, multiplication will not be automatic. Disciple-making is often messy and can take on different forms, but the Commission must be before the people. Dever explains, “Discipling necessarily involves initiating. It’s not passive. And that can feel awkward. You cannot disciple everybody, so you have to pick this person and not that one.”<sup>41</sup> This selection process leads to the first step in the practice of biblical disciple-making: one must find someone to disciple. Again, this may or may not happen in programs at church.

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<sup>38</sup>Williams, *Learning the Way*, 108.

<sup>39</sup>Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 48.

<sup>40</sup>Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970), 23.

<sup>41</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 36.



Although principles are much more important than models, it remains important to have an intentional plan. Leroy Eims states, “You must have a step-by-step building program in mind; you must have certain objectives you want a young Christian to attain before he undertakes others.”<sup>42</sup> Have a plan, then encourage the one being disciplined to share what he has learned. Disciple-making will also involve life transference and being “with” a disciple.

In the books reviewed, principles continued to be more significant than precise methods. The principles should always point back to Jesus’ model with Scripture providing foundation. Success in a variety of models exists if core principles remain present. Gallaty would argue for foundational “MARCS” in light of healthy discipleship within churches. The MARCS principles are Missional, Accountable, Reproducible, Communal, and Scriptural.<sup>43</sup> These foundations lend themselves to growing Christians and reproducing disciples. Robert Coleman’s watershed work *The Master Plan of Evangelism* does a superb job of combining principles with possible methods. Coleman’s work focusses on core discipleship principles, yet they constitute a potential model. Whether one is in a group, with one other person, in a home study, or in a discipleship class at church, focusing on principles such as association, delegation, and reproduction is helpful.<sup>44</sup>

Often disciple-makers do not agree on the number of people one should disciple. Some find success in one-on-one discipleship. Paul and Timothy provide this biblical framework. Imagine as well the effort that Luke made in writing two letters to Theophilus to disciple him, and those two letters became nearly one fourth of the New

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<sup>42</sup>Leroy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 73.

<sup>43</sup>Gallaty, *Rediscovering Discipleship*, 18.

<sup>44</sup>Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993), 21-108.

Testament!<sup>45</sup> Others focus on a small group. Jesus disciplined a small group, so there is warrant for this model as well. Gallaty prefers a group of three. He contends that one-on-one is difficult to reproduce, and groups of two become a counseling session.<sup>46</sup> Others, including myself, have had success with all of these models.

Jesus focused on a few in disciple-making, and sometimes within his small group, there was greater focus of one-on-one.<sup>47</sup> All would agree that Jesus achieved fantastic results. The twelve were also aware of what he was calling them to do. They were engaged in hearing and seeing.<sup>48</sup> No matter what model of discipleship a church may choose, it is clear that there must be ministry mind-shifts from programs to gospel driven relationships.<sup>49</sup> One tool does not fit all situations. Core biblical beliefs and practices will create the needed structure and environment for disciple-making. Foundationally, discipleship is an investment in the spiritual life of another. When a believer intentionally engages another believer or group of believers in discipleship, the “how” is defined.

### **The Location of Disciple-Making: The “When?” and “Where?”**

Having explored the importance of disciple-making as it relates to the church in response to the Great Commission, it is important to briefly discuss when and where disciple-making takes place. There can be debate on these particulars. Yet, if the church properly understands the Great Commission and lives the gospel, the debate should cease. Disciples are to be made everywhere, and all the time. When one says that discipleship

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<sup>45</sup>Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox!*, 88-92.

<sup>46</sup>Gallaty, *Rediscovering Discipleship*, 147.

<sup>47</sup>Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 59-74.

<sup>48</sup>Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, 36-43.

<sup>49</sup>Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 121-34.

should take place outside of the church building, or focus on the building as the key location of disciple-making, he is missing the point. Hull agrees as he discusses the Master Discippler's approach to discipleship: "Jesus used every situation as an opportunity to teach his disciples. Class was always in session in the laboratory of life."<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, the church is the place where people often learn about discipleship and are launched out into life as a disciple-maker. For this reason and for the purpose of this project, it should be recognized that disciples often learn to be disciples through the ministry of the local church. The environment of the church must give congregates foundational truths so they can live a life of discipling others. Sometimes discipling will take place inside the four walls of the church, and sometimes it will not.

In actuality, no ministry in the church should ever be considered a non-disciple-making ministry if proper fundamentals and expectations have been laid. The church is to be about growing people and unleashing them toward the grace of spiritual disciplines if they wish to make disciples. Dever goes as far as to say that "the church itself" is a discipler if a church has the proper biblical foundations.<sup>51</sup> In fact, as Dever states, "If it's unwise to discipling without a church, it's worse to do church without discipling."<sup>52</sup>

In order for disciple-making within the church to happen effectively, it is also important that pastors lead by example. The overseer is to do everything in his power to create a discipleship friendly environment where the foundational teachings within the Great Commission are continually before the people. Almost every resource looked at for the purpose of this project mentioned the role of the pastor in order for a church to make disciples effectively. Dever states, "The fundamental role of pastor is to disciple

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<sup>50</sup>Hull, *Jesus Christ: Disciplemaker*, 47.

<sup>51</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 52.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

those within his church by teaching God’s Word.”<sup>53</sup> From a biblical standpoint, the pastor’s primary goal is to equip the saints for the work of ministry.<sup>54</sup> Equipping takes place in discipleship. Yet, between services and ministries, how could a pastor ever find the time to create this environment, let alone disciple someone? Jim Putman identifies the problem: “When a church spends most of its time and energy putting on a weekly show, the pastor is too busy to create a system by which people are being disciplined.”<sup>55</sup>

Countless pastors feel stuck on an endless ministry treadmill seeing no hope of ever getting off, let alone making biblical disciples. Thus, a pastor must maintain a tight focus on the Great Commission. They must be about developing and implementing discipleship principles and environments.<sup>56</sup> When and where will not be as significant when the principles saturate the environment. Disciple-making takes place at a variety of places and at various times. Intentionality encourages believers to follow the Great Commission passionately and fruitfully, no matter the proximity where disciple-making takes place.

### **The “What If” and “Where to” of Disciple-Making**

This final section includes the challenges that one might entail throughout the discipleship process, as well as presents possible curriculum options and direction.

#### **The Challenges of Disciple-Making: The “What If?”**

This section could have included in its title “objections” and “pitfalls” of disciple-making. Many struggle with being consistent in their disciple-making efforts, so “what if” questions arise. Various struggles have been mentioned throughout this

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<sup>53</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 59.

<sup>54</sup>Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 41.

<sup>55</sup>Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship*, 23.

<sup>56</sup>Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 223-24.

chapter, providing foundational ideas on which will be expounded. Consequently, the “what ifs” already uncovered affect the brevity of this section.

As previously stated, people feel unqualified to make disciples. Thus, all Christ followers need to appreciate that Jesus’ first disciples were ordinary men. Educating the church on principles of disciple-making is important in guarding against the pitfalls of program-centric ministry. Proper foundations remedy much confusion. Leaders can be so consumed in seeking to find the right “model” that they never make disciples. A proper understanding of disciple-making must be taught and caught. Education is always imperative, as is leading by example. Many people will say that discipleship is “not their thing,” yet that is not what the Great Commission prescribes.

For many, the task of making disciples in all nations seems an impossible task. They are not even faced with “what if?” and have already adopted the view of “no way.” Francis Chan reminds the church, “If the Great Commission sounds impossible to you, that’s because it is. As daunting as the task to make disciples of the nations on the face of the earth would be by itself, we also face serious opposition.”<sup>57</sup> A believer’s flesh fights against the new identity in Christ. Church programs can often cause church members to be distracted from Great Commission purpose. Christians who seek to fulfill Christ’s commission face opposition from the world as well as Satan himself. Yet Scripture states, “Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

Christians frequently struggle with challenges to take seriously God’s mandate for all believers. Hull humorously states, “A lot of Christians feel like the turtle being poked with the stick. Even when we feel motivated to grow, if we get poked, we retreat to the safety of our shells.”<sup>58</sup> Discipleship is radically hard, yet giving one’s life to Christ Jesus calls the believer to be radical. Christ followers should be reminded that fear is not

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<sup>57</sup>Chan, *Multiply*, 274.

<sup>58</sup>Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, 155.

of God, and any fear they experience in fulfilling His commission is not from Him and can be overcome by the love, power, and self-discipline that resides within (2 Tim 1:7).

In *The Training of the Twelve*, Bruce explains that the power of the Holy Spirit promised to the disciples in Acts 1:8 is “indispensable to success.”<sup>59</sup> Believers are too often so scared that they will fail that it becomes easier to do nothing. Paul stated in Colossians 1:28-29, “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works in me.” Paul is toiling in making disciples as he seeks to present everyone mature in Christ, yet the energy and power needed for the task is powerfully working within him. Dever adds, “Paul toils. Paul struggles. If we would do good for others, so must we.”<sup>60</sup>

Another challenge in disciple-making is the time it takes. To be sure, making a disciple is not an overnight process. Eims correctly affirms the notion that many people are already overwhelmed partaking in local church ministry. How would they ever find the time to make a disciple?<sup>61</sup> Much of the solution to this is a simplification of programming and creating a disciple-making environment. Encouragement comes from knowing the vision is God’s, and the perseverance for the journey comes from Him as well. Henrichsen adds, “It is easy to see that the training process needed to ensure multiplication is slow and costly. That is why the ministry of multiplying disciples has never been popular.”<sup>62</sup>

Discipleship can be challenging in churches and in people’s lives because they are incredibly busy. Dever explains, “It’s not just the poets and writers who love their

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<sup>59</sup>Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, 383-84.

<sup>60</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 30.

<sup>61</sup>Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 84.

<sup>62</sup>Henrichsen, *Disciples Are Made Not Born*, 142.

independence. The population at large is disengaging from their clubs, civic associations, and local churches, says Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone*.<sup>63</sup> People are becoming selfish with their privacy, careers, and hobbies. A remedy for this tug of war in church is to keep the vision before the people, create the environment, and start with a few just as Jesus did. It will take time and will be challenging. Yet church leaders know that God's plan is always the best plan.

The popularity of discipleship writings and current church culture can also morph discipleship into the next church fad. The Great Commission is not a fad, yet the danger of this pitfall exists. Gallaty concurs with the risk that discipleship can easily become a fad, much like the fanny packs of the 1990s or the 40-Day studies of the 2000s.<sup>64</sup> This fear can come to fruition if the church does not go about the process biblically and intentionally.

Perhaps a pitfall is that authentic discipleship seems rather untidy and uncertain for Christians. Dodson affirms as much when struggling with his own preconceived ideas, stating, "Real discipleship is messy, imperfect, and honest. I wanted clean, 'perfect,' and limited honesty."<sup>65</sup> Snares and challenges will abound, whether they be time, difficulty, church schedule, education, or all out fear. For many pastors, the challenge is not discipling someone; it is discipling someone who will disciple someone. Ogden agrees, writing, "Perhaps an even greater challenge than growing fully devoted followers of Christ is growing fully devoted followers who reproduce."<sup>66</sup> However, if pastors and leaders are faithful to God's plan and His Word, then results will follow. In *The Training of the Twelve*, Bruce provides reassurance of victory in the task: "The grand

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<sup>63</sup>Dever, *Discipling*, 11.

<sup>64</sup>Gallaty, *Rediscovering Discipleship*, 159.

<sup>65</sup>Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, 15.

<sup>66</sup>Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 136.

fact is that Christ's victory is the victory of His followers, and insures that they too shall conquer."<sup>67</sup>

### **The Curriculum of Disciple-Making (The "Whereto?")**

Presumably, if disciples understand the ins and outs of disciple-making, they will soon be searching out biblically based curriculum. The idea of "whereto" should be understood as, "toward what end" will I make disciples? To put it another way, what tools will one use to accomplish the clear goal and mandate of discipleship that Jesus has given to each of His followers?

God's Word is the benchmark for any curriculum chosen. Everything one needs to help others grow in faith is in the Word of God. As one grows in the gospel through the leading of the Holy Spirit, the Bible continually remains the benchmark. Marshall and Payne emphasize this important truth:

It's interesting how little the New Testament talks about church growth, and how often it talks about "gospel growth" or the increase of the "word." The focus is on the progress of the Spirit-backed word of God as it makes its way into the world, according to God's plan.<sup>68</sup>

The Holy Spirit brings to life the curriculum of God's Word as growth in the gospel takes place under the power of the Spirit.<sup>69</sup>

Pastors and church leaders too often seek to find that next "perfect" book or curriculum for discipleship, just as they endlessly seek a certain program that will be the answer to all of their ministry woes. There is no sin in using viable programs, as long as one understands that finding the right program is not the issue. Ministry is pragmatic, but pragmatism must never engulf Spirit-filled, authentic, Great Commission disciple-making.

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<sup>67</sup>Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, 322.

<sup>68</sup>Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias, 2009), 37.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.



Similarly, books and various curriculums can be tremendous tools. Nevertheless, any curriculum at the very least must be biblically sound and founded on the truth of God's Word, while involving the core principles discussed. Too often, the question to disciple-makers seems to be, "What curriculum are you using?" The purest and true answer to this question should be, "The Bible." Eims writes, "Our first and foremost responsibility as Christians is to maintain a strong, day-by-day abiding fellowship with the Lord Jesus by feeding on His Word. And we need to help others do the same."<sup>70</sup>

Disciples need to be self-feeders as they grow. A person being disciplined cannot be forever dependent on the one discipling them, nor on particular books. Paul encouraged Timothy on the issue of Bible intake, stating, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17). These words are a reminder that God's Word will always be the key curriculum. In fact, disciples develop their own curriculum as they study and grow in God's Word; the possibilities are endless.

Many of the books used in writing this chapter would be quite suitable for curriculum as long as a person does not become dependent on a book over Scripture. Walking someone through the chapters of Coleman's *The Master Plan of Evangelism* can be a great springboard for biblical disciple-making. Of the books reviewed in this project, there were various suggestions for curriculum. In *Jesus Christ Disciplemaker*, Hull is clear that whatever curriculum one uses, or whatever biblical ideas or passages one seeks to instill in others, important elements should be key to the curriculum. Hull states, "Christians must be established in these four fundamentals: the Word, prayer,

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<sup>70</sup>Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 54.

fellowship, and witnessing. Whatever Christians become later in life, regardless of the skills acquired, they will be only as strong as they are in the fundamentals.”<sup>71</sup>

Dawson Trotman’s para-church organization, Navigators, has a great deal of disciple-making curriculum built on these principles. One can find helpful and simple to use curriculum through NavPress, such as the *Topical Memory System*.<sup>72</sup> Campus Crusade for Christ also has curriculum, such as *10 Basic Steps toward Christian Maturity* by Bill Bright.<sup>73</sup> Pre-made curriculum such as these can be helpful and tweaked as needed to meet the need of the disciple-maker. Throughout *Transforming Discipleship*, Ogden makes clear that the following ideas must be present in any effective curriculum, no matter what one chooses to use: multiply, generational, relational, transformational, invest, intentional, and reproduce.<sup>74</sup> Avery Willis’ series *Masterlife* is also a helpful curriculum along these lines.<sup>75</sup>

Putman suggests using “Bible Storying” as one disciples another, or particularly a group. The storying asks key questions about a particular portion of Scripture and will assist the disciple to help others grow and discover key truths of God’s Word in a way that they will grow as a self-feeder and discovery learner.<sup>76</sup> The goal of any kind of education, whether it be formal/secular, seminary, or discipleship, is not to necessarily always provide all the answers to every possible question. Rather, it is training people in such a way so that they can find the answers themselves. Herb Hodges

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<sup>71</sup>Hull, *Jesus Christ: Disciplemaker*, 90.

<sup>72</sup>The Navigators, *Topical Memory System* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1969).

<sup>73</sup>Bill Bright, *10 Steps toward Christian Maturity* (Orlando: New Life, 1994).

<sup>74</sup>Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 9-202.

<sup>75</sup>Avery Willis, Jr., *Master Life: Developing a Rich Personal Relationship with the Master* (Nashville: Sunday School Board of SBC, 1982).

<sup>76</sup>Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship*, 155-62.

notes that anything and everything can be curriculum (a sermon, Bible Study, book), as long as it is biblically based and the discipler is intentional about the disciple-making vision.<sup>77</sup>

When it comes to curriculum, one must also realize that all of life is discipleship curriculum when that person is trusting in Jesus. While it is helpful to have a formal curriculum, walking along side disciples in life as they grow in their walk with Christ is an important part of the process. This kind of curriculum does not find itself on paper, but in one mature believer encouraging another along the path of followship. Conversely, the one doing the discipling will allow his or her life to be an open book curriculum. Just as Jesus poured into His disciples while walking through life with them, class is always in session. Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” This biblical encouragement brings discipleship back full circle to the reality that one must first be a disciple of Christ in order to disciple another.

A disciple-maker must be living and practicing what he is teaching, which goes back to the original definition of a “follower.” The disciple-maker follows Christ, and disciples others to do the same. Those being disciplined learn from the disciple-maker, and ultimately follow and learn from Christ through the disciple-maker as the process takes place. Chan argues, “One of the worst things you can do is teach truths that you are not applying.”<sup>78</sup> In discussing 1 Corinthians 11:1, Hull explains, “In just a few words, Paul set up two primary goals of discipleship. The first: Imitate Christ. The second: Although other disciples make for earthly and imperfect examples, imitate them.”<sup>79</sup>

Many challenges face a follower of Christ when taking seriously Jesus’ call to make disciples. One can find comfort in the leading of the Holy Spirit when dealing with

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<sup>77</sup>Hodges, *Fox Fever*, 145-61.

<sup>78</sup>Chan, *Multiply*, 46.

<sup>79</sup>Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, 115.

possible challenges or decisions on curriculum.<sup>80</sup> As previously stated, the key components are more vital than the actual curriculum itself. One must be intentional and seek to multiply while sharing Christ with others and teaching the gracious truth of the indwelling Jesus, “Christ in me, the hope of glory” (Col 1:27).

### Conclusion

The approaches of discipleship have varied throughout the centuries; however, the theoretical goals and principles remain unchanged. Understanding biblical principles while looking at Jesus and Paul, as well as various writings and renowned experts, brings to the surface non-negotiable foundations. The true meaning of disciple-making, along with its importance and how it is practiced, is worthy of attention. Its merit is contained in a universality to all Christians—at all times, in all places. Churches, pastors, and Christians will be inclined to go beyond the routine of programs and church culture mindsets when they are discipled to embrace the incredible mandate of Christ to reach the world for the gospel.

The church is to be a gospel-centric body where a healthy atmosphere for biblical discipleship is evident. Earley and Dempsey assert, “To make disciples, you

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<sup>80</sup>For the curriculum developed in this project, several resources were consulted to assist in achieving the desired educational results. For curriculum methodological support, see Bruce Wilkinson, *The Seven Laws of the Learner* (New York: Multnomah, 1992); Roxanne Cullen, Michal Harris, and Reinhold R. Hill, *The Learner-Centered Curriculum: Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012); Robert F. Mager, *Preparing Instructional Objectives*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Atlanta: CEP Press, 1997); Leroy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1991); and Marlene D. LeFever (Colorado Springs: Cook Ministry, 1985). The implemented principles focus on character and serving students as well as a balance of learning maximizers and various learning styles with support of strong application and equipping. Learner-centered rigor of continual review, as well as community, assessment, and accountability were also considered. Objectives were intentional and concise while the teaching was for the purpose of transformation through the Holy Spirit, God’s Word, and personal application. The desired outcome for the curriculum was very specific, notably the idea of multiplication in disciple-making. Creative variety was implemented, including discussion, visual learning, and the use of technology and social media for the purpose of discipleship.

must maintain a tight focus on the Great Commission. You must develop and implement effective discipleship systems and environments.”<sup>81</sup> The focus starts with the pastor leading his congregation and the Christian congregants seeking to replicate themselves. A church that grasps the vision of the Great Commission sees the work of disciple-making as much more than a class. Inevitably, the life of Christ is what permeates the church and beyond, as gospel multiplication progresses.

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<sup>81</sup>Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 224.

## CHAPTER 4

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTRY PROJECT

This chapter describes the project preparation actions and follows with a detailed discussion of the completion of the four project goals and the associated results. The purpose of this project was to develop a disciple-making program among the members of White House First Baptist Church (WHFBC) with the training necessary to assist church members in their understanding and practice of key discipleship principles. Four key goals of the project included assessing the knowledge and practice of disciple-making among a key group of members of WHFBC, developing a curriculum to assist in training a disciple-making class (experimental group), teaching the curriculum to the disciple-making class over a six-week period while administering DKPS pre-and post-course surveys for experimental and control groups, and encouraging commitment to disciple-making through post-course commitment cards. The implementation of the project began on May 8, 2017, and continued through October 22, 2017.

#### **Project Promotion**

Promotion and recruitment for the project began on July 30, 2017. From this date until August 20, several promotional tools were implemented. I promoted the project through the weekly church bulletin, mass emails, pulpit announcements, and personal invitations. In addition to promoting the project, I secured a control group through Sunday morning Bible study classes and asking individual members of classes to participate. The promotion of the disciple-making class ceased when the implementation of the curriculum began. The goal of securing ten to fifteen church members for the study on August 23, 2017, the night of the first session, provided the experimental/intervention group that

would receive training. The control group, who did not attend the six-week training, was secured the following Sunday.

### **Disciple-Making Implementation**

The first goal of the project was to assess the knowledge and practice of disciple-making among a key group of members of WHFBC. The goal succeeded when members of the disciple-making group and members of the control group completed the Discipleship Knowledge and Practice Survey (DKPS). The DKPS assessment provided a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of current discipleship knowledge and practice among congregants. Members of the disciple-making class as well as a control group took the DKPS.<sup>1</sup> The results of the surveys gave a picture of how well active church members understood discipleship principles and if they were currently involved in a disciple-making relationship.

I administered the survey the first night of the course, on August 23, 2017. Twenty-three participants attended the first night, and all completed the DKPS. This group was larger than anticipated, which was encouraging. However, nine participants did not see the class to completion. The control group completed surveys during Sunday morning Bible studies on August 27, the same week the disciple-making class began. Twenty-seven church members completed the survey and agreed to take part in the project, serving as the control group. However, only fourteen committed to pre- and post- tests. Pre- and post- tests of those committed made a necessary control group for comparison purposes.

Gaining insight into church member's level of understanding regarding discipleship principles and practices was vital. WHFBC already has a strong discipleship environment, so I was interested in how people currently attending Bible studies understand and practice key biblical concepts of discipleship. Disciple-making appeared

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix 1.

to be weak at WHFBC and the tables in this section provide interesting windows into this process. For the purpose of goal 1, a pre-test for the experimental and control groups was helpful, as both groups represented similar populations and contexts in the church. Test groups logged responses using a six-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6).

Three sections divided the pre-test: demographics, biblical knowledge, and current practices. The pre-test scores for the biblical foundations section were consistently higher than the disciple-making practice section. These results confirmed my suspicions—people know a lot about the Bible, yet struggle putting their knowledge into practice, particularly in the area of disciple-making. Table 1 represents the highest scores gathered in regard to biblical knowledge among participants.

Table 1. Pre-test results regarding biblical knowledge

Survey Question	Experimental Group (N=14)	Control Group (N=14)	Total (N=28)
15. I can explain grace.	5.21	5.21	5.21
19. I understand biblical forgiveness.	5.21	5.28	5.25
20. I know how the Old Testament and the New Testament are related.	5.28	5.21	5.25
22. I have a hunger for God's Word.	5.64	4.78	5.21

WHFBC teaches a great deal about grace, so high responses for question 15 was not surprising, but encouraging nonetheless. The church's mission and purpose statements include substantial emphasis on Galatians 2:20, a passage that highlights living by grace. This concept was one of the key principles taught in session 1, so adjustments might have been made to the teaching and emphasis if the results for this survey were available weeks before the teaching.

The high responses for question 19 were also encouraging, but surprising. There has not been a great deal of church-wide teaching on forgiveness over the last several years, so I did not foresee this response being so high. One reason for the high



responses may be the church members’ grasp of biblical grace, as the doctrines of forgiveness and grace are closely related. Responses to question 20 indicate that participants have grasped comprehensive biblical and theological teaching that has taken place the last several years. As I have taught and preached from the Old Testament, I have been intentional in emphasizing the metanarrative and unity of Scripture with Jesus as the centerpiece. High responses for question 22 should encourage any pastor, as teachers of the Bible should desire for the congregants to have a hunger for God’s Word. WHFBC prioritizes the Bible and the congregational survey reflects this priority. All scores for experimental and control groups displayed similar results for these questions. Some questions received considerably lower scores, as displayed in table 2.

Table 2. Pre-test results regarding biblical foundations of discipleship

Survey Question	Experimental Group (N=14)	Control Group (N=14)	Total (N=28)
9. I can explain the difference between discipleship and disciple making.	3.21	4.71	3.96

The lowest score for all pre-test results in the area of biblical knowledge was in the area of discipleship. While this score was not significantly low, it seemed to confirm what I suspected, that disciple-making practice is lacking in the congregation. Part of the low score could be the confusion of the terms, as *discipleship* and *disciple-making* are often used synonymously. For the purpose of disciple-making, these distinctions should be taught more frequently in the future. The variance of means score between control and experimental groups is compelling. One possibility of higher control group scores might be that many control group members attend a Sunday school class in which the teacher is a dedicated disciple-maker and discusses the process in class. The section of the survey regarding disciple-making practices gave further insight into these lower scores.

The results in table 3 confirmed my thoughts on church members’ comfort levels in discipling others. These scores were the lowest based on means of the entire

survey. Though it was not surprising, these results are concerning because they may indicate low awareness of how practically Christians should make disciples, even though the subject of disciple-making is a frequent topic of WHFBC teaching and preaching. The hope is that the curriculum addressed these deficiencies, though it is just a small step on a long journey. Question 24 may be the most telling result. If someone has not been discipled, they may struggle to know how to disciple another.

Table 3. Pre-test results regarding disciple-making practice

Survey Question	Experimental Group (N=14)	Control Group (N=14)	Total (N=28)
23. I am an effective disciple maker.	2.92	3.35	3.14
24. I have person in my life who disciples me.	2.71	3.07	2.89
25. I am currently discipling another believer.	3.00	2.35	2.67
41. I have the skill set to disciple another believer.	3.85	3.71	3.78

Question 41 is also insightful, as it seems to indicate the groups do have some of necessary the skills to disciple another believer. Other areas in the survey verify that as well. However, the participants' confidence has not matched their knowledge, or they have not been encouraged or taught about the process, or have yet to see it modeled. Twenty-four of the twenty-eight surveyed have been Christians for twenty years or more. Personally, this revelation is alarming. It shows that this local church and perhaps the church universally, has often missed the mark on The Great Commission. If people can be a Christian for over twenty years, most of them over twenty-six years, there has been a gap in their development in regard to discipling another believer over the years.

Table 4. Demographics on years a believer

Question 4. How long have you been a believer?	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26+
Experimental Group	1	0	0	0	2	11
Control Group	0	1	1	1	1	10

Equally as disconcerting is the lack of young believers who chose to be a part of the class. For there to be such a gap in seasoned Christians and new believers, the church must do a significantly better job in evangelism, or discipling new believers. The age demographics are equally insightful.

Table 5. Age demographics

Question 5. What is your age in years?	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Experimental Group	0	2	3	1	4	4
Control Group	1	0	2	5	4	2

Of the twenty-eight participants, twenty were over the age of forty-five. Of those under age forty-five, 87.5 percent stated that they have been discipled. While the sample group is small, it does give insight into the life of the church. The majority of the older church members have never been discipled, so it seems they would struggle in discipling another believer. Although the number of young Christians involved in the study is low, a push for seasoned believers to disciple younger believers would likely increase the younger believers' involvement in the life of the church, as they were discipled by older members.

Several of the pre-test scores in some aspects of the area biblical disciple-making practices were consistently high. These results are encouraging in regard to the teaching and discipleship that does take place at WHFBC.

Table 6. Pre-test results regarding high disciple-making practice scores

Survey Question	Experimental Group (N=14)	Control Group (N=14)	Total (N=28)
29. I can reach the world from where I live through making a disciple.	4.78	5.07	4.92
32. I know how to study the Bible.	4.64	4.92	4.78
34. I enjoy studying the Bible.	5.28	4.85	5.07
35. I understand the importance of discipleship.	4.57	5.14	4.85
39. I feel empowered by Jesus to do what He has called me to do.	5.00	4.78	4.89
43. I am aware of God's presence in my life.	5.64	5.21	5.42

The positive results shown in table 6 demonstrate a few things. First, foundations are in place on which the church can build. Collectively, the group understands the power of the Great Commission and the importance of discipleship. They also are comfortable studying the Bible and enjoy doing so. This again could be because of the emphasis on expository preaching and deep Bible study in the life of WHFBC. The encouragement must be for the church members to pass on this love and knowledge they have of the Bible. Due to the emphasis on grace and the presence of Jesus in one's everyday life, it is also encouraging to see that the group feels empowered by the Lord in their daily walk while being aware of God's presence in their lives.

The means involving evangelism questions were average (3.89-4.46), displaying the need for the group to be disciplined in sharing their faith. Higher scores, involving knowing how to share one's testimony and praying for specific people to come to know Jesus, were unbalanced with questions regarding the aspect of looking for daily opportunities in life to share one's faith. Session 4 of the curriculum did address witnessing, and an ongoing emphasis of evangelism must take place at WHFBC for this area to grow. Once believers grow in their awareness of the compatibility of discipleship and evangelism, the practice of sharing one's faith should increase. Believers need to be disciplined in how to be evangelists.

The second goal of this project was to develop a six-session curriculum to assist in training the select disciple-making group.<sup>2</sup> This goal met expectations when the curriculum was complete and had been successfully evaluated by an expert panel and edited by the author. Curriculum conceptual development began on January 15, 2017, while completing chapter 3 edits of this project and awaiting formal approval to begin the project. In regard to this goal, the development of the curriculum took place prior to the completion of surveys in goal 1. I wrote the initial draft of the curriculum during the

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<sup>2</sup>See appendix 3.

week of May 8 to May 12, 2017. After initial drafts were completed, I made edits over the course of the next six weeks.

An expert panel composed of five individuals reviewed the curriculum. The panel included a fellow Southern Baptist pastor in a local area church; a local pastor of a non-denominational church plant; a respected deacon, teacher, disciple-maker, and member of WHFBC; an associate pastor at WHFBC; and a long-time SBTS seminary professor who is an expert in Christian education and curriculum design. Due to the coordination with the church calendar, it was necessary to begin teaching the curriculum promptly as the normal Wednesday night training program began and the two needed to coincide. The six-week class needed completion before fall break, constituting a break in the church's weekly programming. This schedule provided a limitation in that it would have been helpful to take the curriculum through another editorial pass after receiving the pre-surveys. Having survey results earlier would have provided insights into specific deficiencies in the curriculum, as well as collective strengths in disciple-making principles and practice that did not institute as much intervention. However, I designed the curriculum lessons to be general and repeatable in numerous contexts. In fact, one class member immediately used the curriculum after the sessions were complete with another group of men in his home on Thursday nights. This reproducibility was one of the purposes of the curriculum and it is encouraging to see its early use.

The reviewers used an evaluation rubric (see appendix 2) to assess the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum. The assessment goal was to have minimum of 90 percent of the all evaluation criteria meet or exceed the sufficient level. All feedback indicated scores in the exemplary or sufficient level as displayed in table 7, achieving the set goal. The areas of the rubric that showed

less than exemplary were helpful in fine-tuning the curriculum. Reviewers comments were as helpful as were their rubric scores.<sup>3</sup>

Table 7. Expert panel curriculum review results

Rubric Criteria	1	2	3	4
The material is clearly relevant to the issue of disciple making.	0	0	0	5
The material is biblical and theologically consistent.	0	0	0	5
The material includes vital information for Christian faith and personal development of a believer.	0	0	2	3
The material clearly lays out the principle for one to multiply themselves in another believer.	0	0	2	3
The points of material clearly support the purpose laid out in the thesis and are easy to grasp.	0	0	2	3
The lesson contains points of practical application.	0	0	2	3
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.	0	0	2	3
Overall, the lesson is clear and could be re-taught by another person.	0	0	1	4

The most common critique, accompanied with constructive comments, was in the area of practical application. The feedback proved helpful in uncovering a major deficiency in my curriculum. After seeing the pre-curriculum survey scores, the issues became clearer. Class members lacked confidence in living their faith, and the curriculum needed to address the struggle. As discussed, survey results showed a strong grasp of doctrine, but a weakness in practice. By showing where the training material was weaker on application, the panel helped me address this imbalance.

One particular critique that I did not foresee, which was not a part of the rubric, was the teaching methods I was integrating. What particular educational techniques and practices was I implementing to achieve the desired results within my curriculum? The seminary professor panelist suggested some resources to research detailing various teaching methods. I was familiar with some of these from my M. Div. in Christian Education, and some I was not. After this suggestion, I gathered all of these resources and spent time reviewing my curriculum as an affirmation. I also made small changes

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<sup>3</sup>The scoring options on the rubric were 1= insufficient; 2=requires attention; 3= sufficient; and 4=exemplary.

and thought through various lessons. The resources utilized were discussed in a footnote in chapter 3 of this project regarding curriculum development and “toward what end will I teach disciples?”

The third goal was to increase knowledge and practice of discipleship through teaching the disciple-making curriculum. The third goal succeeded when instruction was complete, and a t-test for dependent variables assessment demonstrated a positive correlation between the disciple-making course and changes in participant’s biblical knowledge and practice. In addition, I administered post-tests to the control group to serve as a comparison. Class sessions took place on Wednesday evenings from 6:00-7:30 p.m. I designed lessons to last about an hour, but used extra time for the purpose of late arrivals, fellowship, prayer time, and prospective lengthy discussions. The first class met on August 23, 2017, and the class sessions concluded on September 27, 2017. Twenty-three participants attended the first session. Some attendees did not return after session 1, and a few others missed multiple weeks and did not finish. Fourteen class members attended at least five of the six sessions, and only three people missed one particular session throughout the entirety of the course.

I designed the curriculum to include six sessions. The goal of increasing the biblical knowledge and practice of discipleship within the church drove the lessons. Lesson 1 was entitled “Christ the Center,” and had the primary objective of helping disciples understand the doctrine of Jesus being one’s very life as they grow in knowledge of being crucified with Christ and new identity in Christ. Lesson 2, “The Abiding Christian,” assisted disciples in their understanding living a life of trust and worship as they abide in Christ. “Make Disciples,” lesson 3, centered on the Great Commission and 2 Timothy 2:2, and educated the class in the importance of the process of disciple-making, and that Jesus had called believers to replicate themselves. Lesson 4, “Sharing the Gospel,” trained disciples in sharing the gospel. Lesson 5 was entitled “The Power of the Word,” and sought to help disciples understand the magnitude of God Word, and how

spending time in His Word will be life changing. The final session, “Communing with God,” focused on the importance and blessing of prayer in one’s life. In the final session, class members were encouraged to pass on what they had learned in a disciple-making relationship as they continue to grow in their own spiritual journey. Based on table A1 in appendix 5, there was significant growth in several areas that the curriculum addressed.

**Disciple-making class (experimental group) results.** At the end of the disciple-making class, a post-course survey, which was identical to the pre-course survey, was administered. The results of both surveys were assessed through the use of a t-test for dependent variables, which provided a statistical assessment of course effectiveness. The results of the pre- and post-course surveys and the t-test for dependent variables are in table 8.

Table 8. DKPS Experimental group pre- and post-survey total results

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	<i>Pre-total</i>	<i>Post-total</i>
Mean	199.2857143	228.0714
Variance	553.1428571	634.0714
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.664080037	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-5.380991749	
P(T<=t) one-tail	6.25765E-05	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000125153	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

The t-test demonstrated a positive difference in the comparison between the two surveys ( $t(13) = -5.380991749$ ).<sup>4</sup> Table 8 displays that there was a significant difference in

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<sup>4</sup>This number is the t stat or absolute value. Since it is larger than the t critical one-tail value of 1.770933396 and the critical two-tail value of 2.16036858, then the



the pre- and post-survey scores among the disciple-making experimental group. Thus, I achieved the goal of increasing the disciple-making group's knowledge in biblical principles and practices, and the teaching made a difference.

In gathering statistical data to achieve this goal, it is also interesting to see the results involving two specific sub-categories, Bible Knowledge and Disciple-Making Practice. Tables A2 and A3 in appendix 6 displays these results. The tables display that the disciple-making group increased in knowledge in both categories, and the growth was significant. However, the growth in the area of Disciple-Making practice was more significant than the section regarding Biblical Knowledge. This result was encouraging as it gave quantitative data to the purpose of the project. The goal of church members growing in their practice of disciple-making increased as a result of the curriculum intervention. The principles in the curriculum are intentional toward the practices not only being utilized, but also taught to another believer. There is no way of knowing the long-term multiplication that will take place, but the hope is that growth and replication will increase far beyond what the confines of a class. As believers take ownership in disciple-making, the process will make dividends in the future.

**Control group results.** The use of a control group to provide a comparison of the difference the class made further demonstrates the success of this goal. I made comparisons by inputting the results of pre- and post- scores for both surveys, and a t-test for dependent variables assessment exhibited that the control group did not display significant growth during the duration of the course. The results of the control group are in table 9.<sup>5</sup>

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teaching intervention made a positive difference in the knowledge and conviction of the participants.

<sup>5</sup>The t-stat absolute value of 0.92333918636 is significantly less than the t critical one-tail value of 1.770933396 and the t Critical two-tail value of 2.160368656 displaying that there was no significant growth in the control group.

Table 9. DKPS control group pre- and post-survey total results

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	199.7142857	204.5714
Variance	638.8351648	1111.187
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.80866632	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-0.923391836	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.186312369	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.372624738	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

When tables 8 and 9 are compared, a few interesting observations may be noted. First, the pre-test total means scores for each group are almost identical. The experimental group had a mean score of 199.2857143, while the control group had a means score of 199.7142857. The scores being very close in value was important, as the goal was to provide comparison scores from a similar population and context within the church. It was also a positive result in that it gave a solid benchmark for comparison in post-surveys. At the completion of the disciple-making class, the experimental group had a significant increased means score of 228.0714, while the control group showed no significant growth, 204.5714. These results further verified the positive result the disciple-making class had on church members.

The lack of significant growth in the control group within the two specific sub-categories showed a small increase in each area. The group's increase was greater in the area of Disciple-Making Practice, but the growth was insignificant. Tables A4 and A5 in appendix 7 demonstrate this lack of growth in the sub-categories. The Biblical Foundation post-test scores for the control group rose from 80.57 to 81.35. Control group Disciple-Making Practice scores slightly increased from a means of 119.14 to 123.21.

## Experimental versus Control Post-Survey Results

In order to further determine and solidify the results of the curriculum intervention, I utilized a third statistical comparison. For this comparison, I analyzed the differences between post-survey scores of each the groups. Experimental post-scores compared to control group post-scores display significant differences. As noted, independent t-tests indicated no pre-existing statistically significant differences between the disciple-making group and the control group in their pre- course scores, and the groups represented similar contexts within the church. Tables 10 and 11 displays the post-test results of experimental vs. control group.

Table 10. Control vs. experimental post-test results

	Mean Diff.	DF	t-Value	P-Value
Control, Exp	-23.50	26	-.2.10	.0451

Table 11. Statistical comparison—control vs. experimental—post-survey summary

	Count	Mean	Variance	SD	St. Err
Control	14	204.571	1111.18	33.33	8.90
Experimental	14	228.071	634.07	25.18	6.73

The comparison of the disciple-making (experimental) and control group post-tests display a significant difference in their means scores.<sup>6</sup> The analyzed post-tests further demonstrate the class’s impact, as the disciple-making curriculum resulted in a positive increase for the experimental group compared to the control group. However, differences vary in the growth of each group when broken down into sub-categories Biblical Foundations and Disciple-Making Practice. Appendix 8 displays these results.

The results in tables A6, A7, A8, and A9 in appendix 8 provide one more element of difference to display the validity of the class, as the experimental group saw

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<sup>6</sup>P-value of .041 < P=.05

higher post-test increases in Biblical Foundations and Disciple-Making Practice. The mean score for the control group post-tests was 81.35, while the experimental disciple-making class had a post-test mean score of 90.28. In the Disciple-Making Practice category, the control group displayed a mean score of 123.21, and the experimental groups was 137.78. In the comparison between control and experimental groups there is a significant difference in post-scores in the Biblical Foundation section ( $P=.048$ ). However, there was no significant difference in the post-scores of the Disciple-Making Practice section ( $P=.066$ ). First, it is encouraging that disciple-making grew in both areas, and their growth was statistically significant. The lack of a significant difference in the group's post scores in disciple-making practice is a challenge. This insignificance could be due to a variety of factors. Upon looking at individual questions, the control group had growth in various areas: being intentional with other believers, considering personal accountability with another believer important, and changing the world through pouring into another person. The control group also had higher pre-test scores in several of the questions.

Some of the control group growth may be due to what they have been taught in Sunday School, or possibly through sermons. The control group did have higher post-test scores in some of the areas specifically regarding disciple-making. There is no way of knowing why the scores increased, though it does seem that more participants are involved in disciple-making relationships than they were before the class began. Some of those in the class may have initiated disciple-making with those in the control group, or those in the control group may have randomly began being disciplined, or discipling another within the six weeks. It would be interesting to do the project again without time restraints and oversee class members discipling another person. The hope is that actively discipling another would increase their disciple-making practice scores, and the tangibility of the process would see growth throughout the entire body of the church.

The third project goal of increasing knowledge and practice of discipleship through educating a group on disciple-making principles and practices succeeded as the results display significant growth for the experimental group. It is encouraging to see that intentional training makes a difference in the lives of believers, and these positive results will fuel future disciple-making goals within the church.

The final goal of this project was for project participants to commit to initiating a discipling relationship. This goal came to fruition when class participants completed a commitment card indicating their desire to make disciples.<sup>7</sup> The card asked participants to identify a believer (church member, family member, fellow Christian) they felt led to disciple, as well as a general starting date to begin the disciple-making process. Participants received this commitment card during the final week of classroom training, and class members returned the commitment cards within a week of the class.

The success of this particular goal depended on 75 percent of class members returning commitment cards, and it was very encouraging to have a 100 percent return rate. Thirteen of fourteen participants committed to begin a disciple-making relationship in the near future. Being that one of the main purposes of this project was for people to multiply themselves, I was encouraged by these results. Based on the response of several participants, they are enthusiastic to be active in what God has called them to do. Follow-up with the class members will be necessary to encourage their commitments.

Six of the fourteen participants committed to identifying someone, or possibilities of people, who they might be able to disciple in the months ahead. Of those six, five wrote down specific names. This was also encouraging to see as I personally noticed the names of young Christians in the church, new church members, spouses of deacons, co-workers, family members, neighbors, and children of participants. Five of

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<sup>7</sup>See appendix 4.

the fourteen participants who returned commitment cards identified potential dates in which they would initiate a discipleship relationship.

Overall, the post-course commitment cards affirmed the value of the course and achieved the desired goal for believers to be intentionally involved in discipleship relationships. Of the fourteen present, only a few had ever been consistently disciplined by another believer, and only a couple of class members had ever disciplined someone before. Goal 4 successfully accomplished its purpose, and the feedback will be helpful in constructing the next presentation of this disciple-making class.

### **Conclusion**

My assessment is that all project goals met or exceeded expectations, and the overall project was a success. The t-test for dependent variables and the post-course commitment cards indicate that the participants grew in their knowledge of discipleship principles and practices, and were enthusiastic to begin discipling another. Although the title and purpose of the project is specific in developing a disciple-making program at WHFBC, it is clear this an ongoing process. To be sure, disciple-making reaches far beyond a program, so the hope is that believers see the Great Commission as an integral part of their lives, even outside the four walls of the church. I will teach the class in the future, and new disciples will develop. If those who made commitments follow through with their disciple-making relationships, biblical multiplication and replication is forthcoming. Long-term results exist when consistent teaching and modeling of disciple-making is a reality. I look forward to seeing how God will work in the future to build His kingdom as the members of WHFBC follow His commission to make disciples.

## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This chapter summarizes my evaluation of the ministry project. In this conclusion I evaluate the project's purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. I then reflect on various actions I would take if I were to implement the project again. Finally, this chapter includes both theological and personal reflections learned throughout the process of researching disciple-making and growing the process at WHFBC. A brief conclusion completes this evaluation.

#### **Evaluation of the Project Purpose**

The stated purpose of this project was to develop a disciple-making program among the members of White House First Baptist Church. God's Word teaches that Christians are to make disciples through intentional evangelism and teaching, by equipping and empowering saints for ministry, and replicating and multiplying themselves among other believers. The purpose was birthed out of a realization that a great deal of solid discipleship is taking place at WHFBC, yet few disciples multiply themselves in such a way as described in 2 Timothy 2:2.<sup>1</sup> An exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 makes the command of the Lord clear: Jesus calls believers to "make disciples."

God's vision of disciple-making has implications that surpass making new converts. Disciples of Christ who are growing in faith and being disciplined by another believer will positively affect the church in essentially all functions. Disciples will grow in sharing their faith, thus evangelism will advance. Leaders develop when they are in a Paul/Timothy relationship. Ministry growth takes place as believers grow in understanding

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<sup>1</sup>See table 3 in chap. 4 for statistics supporting this statement.

of their place in the body and seek how they can use their gifts for the kingdom. Converts who grasp Great Commission principles will begin to practice what Jesus entailed, as they are discipled. Since there seems to be lack of multiplying disciples among many churches, this project's purpose should reach far beyond the local congregation at WHFBC.

### **Evaluation of the Project Goals**

In cohesion with the purpose of the project, the project goals were fitting for disciple-making at WHFBC, and were effective. The project included four goals: (1) assess the knowledge and practice of disciple-making among a key group of members of WHFBC; (2) develop a six-week curriculum to assist in training the group in disciple-making; (3) increase knowledge and practice of discipleship through educating the group on disciple-making; and (4) have participants commit to initiate to disciple-making relationships.

#### **Goal 1: Disciple-Making Knowledge and Practice Assessment**

The DKPS sought to measure the status of church members' biblical knowledge regarding various discipleship principles, as well as their tangible actions regarding those principles. I achieved this goal, but did not foresee how interesting the insight would be. The purpose of the goal was rooted in disciple-making, but the results reached beyond that purpose.

I am currently in my seventeenth year as a pastor at WHFBC. While I initially came as student pastor, I have served in the role as senior pastor for the last ten years. The assessment of the church is fascinating because it provides insight into my ministry the last several years at the church. It would be equally interesting if I had not been on staff for so long, but in a different way. Those results would display past trends and teaching within the church. Being on staff for so long, the information gathered in the surveys is a reflection of my preaching, teaching, and leadership.



The survey results reflecting my teaching and leadership was obvious in areas where I teach a lot about grace, metanarrative, and the preeminence of God's Word. I was thankful to see these high scores. However, the scores were lower in the area of disciple-making, which was my presumption. When I initially became pastor, discipleship was emphasized more, and there were more staff members discipling others. The disciple-making atmosphere of the church, as well as my teaching and preaching on the topic, was more evident during that time. It would be interesting to go back and see the differences a similar test would have had then, in regard to all areas tested. Nevertheless, the assessment was a great tool to see where the church have been in regard to biblical knowledge and disciple-making practice, and where the leadership at WHFBC can work to improve in the future.

One additional result of goal 1 is that many who took the survey expressed guilt and conviction from the mere taking of a survey. They expressed frustration in themselves, and noted that the survey made them aware of opportunities for growth in their own lives. Many found motivation simply from taking the survey, and I did not anticipate this taking place. To be sure, I welcomed this unintended stimulus.

## **Goal 2: Curriculum Development and Evaluation**

I designed the curriculum to implement some key areas of the faith in which to teach as one begins a disciple-making relationship. Additional areas are important, such as biblical fellowship, which were not a part of the curriculum. However, the key components gained from chapter 2 of this project were implemented in the curriculum, namely principles learned from Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Timothy 2:2. The curriculum did not contain much focus on the learnings of the Ephesians 4 exegesis, and that would have been productive. However, the principle of saints being empowered for ministry should manifest itself as discipling takes place.

The knowledge gained in the literature reviews and research for chapter 3 were incredibly beneficial in the curriculum development. While experts vary on the specifics of disciple-making, the conclusion is that key principles exist in each method. Being intentional and seeking to multiply are vital attributes, and the curriculum emphasized these ideas.

The help of the panel was equally insightful. Each reviewer was given chapter 1 of this project, as well as the curriculum proposal, and a rubric to evaluate the course. The feedback was encouraging and helpful, as discussed in chapter 4. A potential weakness of this review is that ideas about discipleship and disciple-making can be ambiguous, even among an expert panel. The personal experiences, background, practices, and inclinations of each panel member likely influenced their feedback. However, the reviewers gave a great deal of similar feedback, so I was enlightened on tendencies that I have in my own teaching and curriculum development. I tend to go too deep too quickly, and I need to improve on personal application ideas and discussion starters. Certain theological ideas and phrases evolved too quickly in the first pass of the curriculum. I also need to consider the order in which I teach, as well as the applicability to a new Christian, as opposed to someone who has been a believer for years.

Issues of depth is something I continue to struggle with in my own teaching and preaching. Our congregation has a reputation of being a “deeper” church in our area. While I am encouraged by this depth, I never want new believers to feel bewildered as they are discipled and grow amongst us. More than one panelist had critique in regard to new believers taking the class. Due to these comments, some phrasing was changed, and the class itself began with discussion in how long each member had been a Christian, and what their religious/church background was. This question was helpful in that it gave me insight into the individual faith of the class members.

These critiques led to some new discussion questions as well as added points of emphasis. Some of the points of discussion that were added to the curriculum were

more personal, and caused the class to be introspective while wrestling with what God is calling them to do. Not everyone has the same experiences, education, and comfort level with all the teaching, so the introspection and discussion allowed me to make personal and practical applications in several areas within the curriculum. I prefer lecture-driven teaching, but need to understand that not all learner's respond as well to lecture, and discussion is often necessary.

The seminary professor's critique was incredibly helpful as mentioned in chapter 4. It caused me to process exactly how I hoped to achieve my desired results. One of the biggest encouragements is the current use of the curriculum by one of the disciples who attended the class. The six-week class is working well for a men's Thursday night Bible study taught by a layman, and feedback from class participants has been positive. The curriculum is achieving its purpose, and I hope this pattern repeats itself.

### **Goal 3: Disciple-Making Knowledge and Practice Increase**

The third goal of increasing the knowledge and practice of disciple-making through the use of the curriculum within the disciple-making class proved fruitful. As noted in chapter 4, the turnout for the class was encouraging. Most participants displayed enthusiasm throughout the course, and it was an exciting process.

Other items of note, beyond the pre- and post-surveys which display the achievement of this goal, warrant discussion. Initially, some class members were reluctant to attend, especially when they discovered it involved personal disciple-making. Thankfully, most of those who expressed trepidation were fervent by the end of the course. One particular participant who struggled with whether or not to attend stated after session 5, "I'm fired up! This is exciting. I am learning so much and can't wait to share what I'm learning." This particular person is already pursuing people he may disciple in his home (daughter or grandson), and is now more equipped to share his faith in the workplace. A newer believer in the class shared similar sentiments. In the beginning, he was nervous

about the class, but by the course’s conclusion, he was sharing how he had been involved in deep discussions about the Bible in His workplace, and was encouraged by his ability to participate in such a conversation. Various others shared encouraging comments about how God was using their newfound knowledge, and they were motivated to share and disciple others. Another class member enthusiastically told me, “I want to be a Paul!”

Particular areas of growth gained from the class provide further insight to the validity and effectiveness of the curriculum. The statistical results of the pre- and post-test scores for the disciple-making group (experimental) in relation to each survey question is in appendix 5. Pre- and post- test results for the control group, is in appendix 9.

Several questions saw a growth of at least a full point on the Lickert scale, and others were even more significant. In regard to the disciple-making group, forty-three of the forty-five questions received increased post-test mean scores,<sup>2</sup> and as noted, the overall score showed significant statistical change. Table 12 provides a snapshot of appendix 5, displaying of the results regarding specific questions.

Table 12. Experimental group significant increases

Survey Question	Pre-test (N=14)	Post-test (N=14)
6. I can effectively outline principles of disciple making found in the Great Commission.	4.00	5.07
8. I can explain Jesus’ method of building the kingdom of God.	4.21	5.21
9. I can explain the difference between discipleship and disciple making.	3.21	5.21
11. I can explain the key biblical principle of Jesus being my life, taught in Galatians 2:20	4.14	5.28
24. I have a person in my life who discipled me.	2.71	3.85
35. I understand the importance of discipleship.	4.57	5.57
36. I can adequately explain how discipleship can take place outside the church.	3.92	5.35
37. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a Paul to another believer.	3.92	5.21
41. I have the skill set to disciple another believer.	3.85	4.92

<sup>2</sup>The two questions that did not increase did not show a statistically significant decrease.

All of these questions that show significant increase display that many class members did grasp a great deal of the teaching regarding Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Timothy 2:2. Outside of the growth in question 11 post-test results, all of the questions where the disciple-making class' scores increased the most specifically discussed discipleship or disciple-making. As to the purpose of the project, that is incredibly encouraging. Many of the scores in these areas received a mean score between 5 and 6. Questions 9 and 37 saw increases of two total points. A great need for class members to mature in the areas of disciple-making understanding and practice existed, and these increases clearly demonstrate that the experimental group grew in understanding their Great Commission calling.

Various other questions received slightly less significant increases in post-test scores, yet still improved at least .5 on the Lickert scale. Twenty-one questions fall into this category. These moderate increases display that all six sessions made an impact on attendees in several areas of disciple-making knowledge and practice. Many of the questions that did not increase at least .5 had high pre-test scores, thus the reason for insignificant increase. Some of the questions worthy of note that did not see very much growth are shown in table 13.

Table 13. Experimental group insignificant increases

Survey Question	Pre-test (N=14)	Post-test (N=14)
26. I am comfortable sharing my faith with others.	4.57	4.78
27. I know how to share my testimony.	5.00	5.28
33. I have consistent daily quiet time/devotion.	3.85	4.00
38. I regularly pray for specific people to come to know the Lord.	4.85	4.85
40. I have a consistent prayer life.	4.42	4.64
48. I use normal/everyday activities as opportunities to help others grow in the faith.	4.42	4.71

Evaluating the lack of increase in these areas displays some possible deficiencies in the curriculum. It provides some things to work on in regard to the curriculum, as well

as the future of disciple-making at WHFBC. Addressing evangelism more efficiently will strengthen necessary foundations. An entire session on evangelism is a part of the curriculum, but growth in that area was lacking. One of the reasons could be that particular sessions seemed to have more discussion than other sessions, and it was challenging to keep the class on task. That session may have also included too much information, and it was hard to go into detail on any of the evangelism techniques, or spend any time demonstrating them. The session was supposed to end with each class member sharing his or her testimony with another person, but we ran out of time. In the future, I will mitigate some of the time issues by splitting sessions. Class members writing down and sharing their testimonies warrants an entire session. Then, I would have them share with the group or another person in the class. It would be helpful to do the same with some of the evangelism methods taught. Another topic that requires attention is daily quiet times. A better focus on prayer in the future assists this deficiency. All of these results display needed areas of continuing discipleship.

Appendix 9 presents pre- and post-test scores for the control group. A quick review of this table shows that none of the questions saw any significant increase in mean scores. Only seven questions saw an increase of at least .5, with .65 being the highest increase for any question. Twenty of the questions had a post-test mean score that either stayed the same, or decreased. The results of both experimental and control groups makes a very clear point. Consistent discipleship and education that is purposeful makes a difference in the spiritual life of believers.

The pre- and post-course surveys were a helpful tool to assess the effectiveness of the disciple-making class. Chapter 4 noted that the t-test for dependent samples showed there was a significant difference in the post-test surveys for the experimental groups. Various factors influence these statistics, so it is not a perfect formula or obvious window of success. A weakness of surveys such as this is the likelihood of participants responding to survey questions in such a way that it inflates reality. Some class members unknowingly

may wish to provide the instructor with a sense of success. Most of the noted success for this project confers with quantitative data, and qualitative would prove helpful to further cement results. Survey questions depend on class member's perception of their knowledge and practice and do not always present the reality of the disciple's biblical knowledge, or their ability to disciple another.

#### **Goal 4: Commitment to Disciple-Making**

The final goal of this project was encouraging the disciple-making class to put into practice what they learned. This goal went through various alterations throughout project development. Initially, my desire was to oversee the members of the disciple-making class each go through the process of discipling another church member. Since discipleship multiplication rarely exists in our church, I saw this as being a great tool in learning how to accomplish disciple-making goals. After considering all the logistics to make this a reality in the project, I deemed it unfeasible. My second thought was to initiate a long-range strategic plan for the church. This will still take place outside of the constraints of the project; however, the realization was that creating a strategic plan within the project would not fit time constraints, nor would it give me any immediate indicators for the success of disciple-making multiplication.

For these reasons, I modified the goal to encourage class members to initiate a disciple-making relationship with another believer. At the end of the final session each class member was given the post-survey, as well as a commitment card in which they were to return within a week. The commitment card asked for three potential levels of commitment: to commit to discipling another, to write down names of potential people to disciple, and to write down a specific date when they will begin the process. As stated in chapter 4, the response was tremendous. Every class member returned the card, with only one person not committing to any degree of disciple-making.

I am already aware of multiple disciples that are discipling another, and following through with their commitment. This is promising, and I could not envision

being more excited about how this will positively affect our congregation. A couple of class members are using the curriculum, and some are using other disciple-making tools. The key is that disciples seek intentionality, and that seems to be taking place. It would be naïve to think that all of those who wrote a name and a date on a card follow through with their commitments. Reinforcement must take place. The fact that class members are aware of what God has called them to do, and are praying for guidance to disciple another, encourages me.

The fruits of disciple-making do not appear overnight. In fact, true biblical discipleship is extremely challenging to quantify over the short course of a ministry project. Because it takes time, many pastors and churches abandon the process. Great Commission disciple-making gets traded for programs and number driven ministries that base success around areas that make a pastor look good, but do not build the kingdom of God long-term. My prayer is that WHFBC will continue to count the cost and partake in a kingdom building process initiated by Christ Himself. The success of goal 4 in light of this disciple-making process verifies a hopeful step in this endeavor.

### **Strengths of the Project**

The project has several positive attributes. To be sure, the success of the disciple-making project met a serious need to recapture Jesus' vision for the church given in the Great Commission. When I became pastor almost ten years ago, the disciple-making principles I taught in the six-week course for this project were at the forefront of the vision of the church. I was more intentional in discussing disciple-making, and was doing a more efficient job of discipling others. Unfortunately, through the course of years in the pastorate, I have gotten overwhelmed with ministry. I wear too many hats, and true gospel multiplication often becomes tabled for another day. Disciple-making would help remedy some problems as church members find their place in the body and learn to utilize their gifts as they grow in discipleship. Indeed, it is easy to get overwhelmed with "trellis" work. The project was a wake-up call for myself, as well as



those disciplined. A spark of excitement and understanding of disciple-making among many new “Paul’s” now exists. God’s vision is before the church members who participated in the six-week discipleship class, and the participants grew in their understanding of how God can build His Kingdom through them. God can change the world from White House, Tennessee. The understanding of disciple-making and evangelism being interrelated has new birth at WHFBC. At the end of one particular session, a class member noted to the class, “If just the people in this room takes this seriously, it would turn our church upside down, and change our town.”

A second strength is that many class members grew in how they live out their faith in relation to Scripture. Many memorized passages throughout the class and can breakdown specific passages in a way in which they could not before the class started. Furthermore, the disciple-making class members began to grow in their understanding of hermeneutics and Bible study. If the project motivates disciples of Christ to become self-feeders, then their lives will forever be changed as they grow in biblical Christ-likeness while feeding on His Word.

A third strength, which was a supplemental goal of the project, was the development of leaders within the church. Throughout the teaching, I witnessed several examples of leadership development coming to fruition. One particular young man, who was a part of the class, attended a recent associational disaster relief training. He now displays enthusiasm about growing and serving in the church. He is a fairly young Christian with a young family, and has never served in any particular capacity. He is actively seeking to be disciplined by another believer in the church. This young man even got several nominations to be a deacon in the coming year, and I see him growing as a father and husband. The class had a major impact on this young believer. Other members of the class have stepped into various servant and leadership roles since the class took place. Leaders and servants develop when people are disciplined.

A fourth strength is that a foundation for the discipleship of new believers now exists. While the class did not have as many young Christians as I had hoped, a solid integration and development structure now welcomes the challenge as new people come to faith. A team of disciples exists, many of which are anxious to take a new believer under their wing. The class brought new people together in the church who had not previously been in a class or group together. Any time this takes place, I consider it a positive outcome.

Last, the project provided insight into the fruit of my long tenure at WHFBC. Many areas the church has grown in the last several years are evidence of biblical principles and practices taught and modeled. I am thankful to be at the same church for so long, and implementing a project such as this is a good gauge for my ministry. Insight into areas that need improvement are also a reflection of my leadership, and I am thankful to gain that knowledge.

One of my fears in doing a project such as this was that the church members might not embrace their pastor pursuing this challenging degree. Other pastors have burned the church in the past who had pursued doctorates. At one point, I even tried to notify only those who needed to know about me returning to school. The more the process grew, the more I understood that this process was not just about me. It needed the support and involvement of the church body. I am thankful that the gracious members of WHFBC embraced the project and encouraged me, and I believe we all grew together. I am incredibly blessed. The greatest blessings do not find significance through doctoral degrees or personal acknowledgements, but rather growth and love.

### **Weaknesses of the Project**

The project did exhibit some weaknesses. The first weakness involves the structure and reliability of the survey. While I sought to gauge disciple-making principles and practices from several angles, I was new to creating surveys and conducting research. Using statistics was enjoyable, but something I had not previously

utilized. The learning curve was large, and I undoubtedly grew. Gauging someone's knowledge proves challenging, because surveys often rely on a person's perceptions. A weakness exists when it is difficult to verify absolute change. The sample of members who participated was also small in comparison to the active church membership. A larger sample group for spiritual assessment would be helpful.

Time constraints for a disciple-making project constitute another weakness and limitation. The process of disciple-making is a long-term endeavor. In addition, the class could never implement all the possible disciple-making texts, nor cover all applicable material and Scripture. The hope is that class members gained valuable tools in which to build. The class also did not start as early as I had hoped, as the process of writing chapters 2 and 3 took longer than anticipated. I would have liked to start the class in January 2017, and several people were excited. It felt anti-climactic when I deferred the anticipated start date for six months. This, of course, was my failure alone. Delaying the class because of school logistics, as well as taking surveys before and after the class, made disciple-making seem sterile. The perceived awkwardness transformed when enthusiasm for topics grew and people engaged.

The class size and structure was also a weakness. It would be more feasible to take a small group, even one or two people, through the curriculum. That scenario would model a more realistic structure. Disciple-making is very effective with one person pouring into one or two others, and often it is done outside the four walls of the church. To a degree, I contradicted that philosophy as I taught a large group, and the disciple-making class took place during regular church programming time. The Great Commission entails walking through life with another person. Jesus was "with" his disciples throughout His earthly ministry. There is no way I could spend personal time throughout the week with fourteen class members, some of them female, all with various schedules and responsibilities. People need to see various principles such as evangelism modeled by their "Paul," and they need to walk through victories and struggles with a mentor when

they are disciplined. Most of the class did not experience that degree of discipleship, as they all were disciplined by myself over the course of six weeks. I do have a more intimate relationship conducive to discipleship with some class members, and it makes a tremendous difference.

Last, the success of a class can depend on the teacher's drive and experience. I know I discussed some class topics passionately, and I would not expect a disciple to teach something exactly the same way. The hope is that whoever would teach the curriculum next would not simply read the curriculum, but allow the presence of their own personality. More real life stories and examples should exist in the process, and there was a lack of those examples in the curriculum. Being intentional and strategic while faithful to Jesus' Great Commission will overcome many of these apparent weaknesses.

### **What I Would Do Differently**

Several possible modifications for the ministry project are prescribed in various places throughout chapters 4 and 5. In addition to those revisions, I would be intentional on getting younger Christians involved in the class. Most class members had been believers for a long period. While those in attendance needed to grow in their understanding of the Great Commission, a void of young believers existed. New Christians should have received personal invitations to the class. In addition, the promotion of the project could take place in a way that is not intimidating. A disciple-making class with the pastor, as part of his doctorate studies, might intimidate some people. The project deserved better clarification when advertised. If I were to teach the class again I would also try to offer it at an optional time. A possibility would be on Sunday mornings or Sunday evenings. The Wednesday night time traditionally constitute challenges for young families in our community.

Overseeing the disciples pour into another person for another six-week session interests me as well. That supervision and analysis would provide tangible information in the struggle of replication. I would also love to experience seeing others teach the disciple-

making curriculum and assess its usefulness in various settings. This will take place in the future.

I intend to add more appropriate discussion questions. An effort to provide personal stories, as well as better avenues to put Bible study techniques and evangelism tools into practice are necessary. A simple, to the point, key idea, needs to be clear in each lesson. In addition, as previously mentioned, it would be helpful to receive the pre-surveys back a few weeks before the initiation of the class. Appropriate curriculum editing would take place as feedback warrants adjustments

A seventh lesson of the curriculum is also necessary. This lesson would entail practicing one's testimony and a more detailed demonstration and practice of evangelism tools. As the class also sought to raise leaders, I would give class members some sort of spiritual gift inventory. Providing the class with possible serving opportunities within the church would be worthwhile at the end of a disciple-making class.

These possible additions and edits to the project do not negate the positive outcome. The process was beneficial to me, and to the disciples of Christ at WHFBC. The project met a need in the congregation, and I am enthused to take the next steps of disciple-making as more Paul's pour into Timothy's, and reliable men and others grow in God's kingdom (2 Tim 2:2). This project never sought to be a "program," though that is what the title states. It is about being obedient to Jesus and following His example.

### **Theological Reflections**

I went into this opportunity with many preconceived ideas about discipleship and disciple-making. My intentions detailed proving what I already knew to be true, and laboring to make it a stronger reality at WHFBC. The biblical exposition in chapter 2 was incredibly enlightening. The exegesis stretched me, and I did not foresee that taking place to the level it did.

The commentaries and resources required for Doctor of Ministry course work and dissertation writing contained a new level of scriptural exposition. I now add those

resources to my hermeneutical arsenal as I continue to pastor and preach expositionally. The process of looking beyond perceived ideas and digging deeper is vital. Just because I have been discipled in something, even by sound teachers and preachers, does not necessarily entail its validity. The practice of diligent scriptural evaluation is something I teach the members of WHFBC, but I need to do a better job of putting it into practice in personal study.

Through the encouragement of my advisor and the gleanings of sound expositors, I had to look at each passage as a skeptic (in a positive sense), and seek to only determine the true meaning for the original audience. I grew in asking tough questions such as, “Was the Great Commission for everyone?,” “Was it only for the disciples present?,” and “Does 2 Timothy 2:2 really demonstrate discipleship multiplication, or have I read that into the text and seeking to make it fit my narrative and doctrinal goals?” I could be misinterpreting a simple statement in regard to 2 Timothy 2:2. Context rules the day, and I must practice what I preach as I use various passages to disciple others. These thoughts are all important and vital to my growth as a pastor and theologian. To be sure, in most cases I confirmed what I already believed to be true. However, the process of digging and asking the tough questions is a step of growth.

Another theological revelation was the presence of grace in the passages I studied. I sought to give credence and foundation to disciple-making based on God’s Word, but had never realized the major emphasis on the Holy Spirit’s empowerment and grace within what I saw as disciple-making passages. Christians are commanded to make disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, but it is an endeavor made possible by Christ having all authority, and Him being with His followers until the very end of the age. Pastors are called to equip saints for ministry, but it is God alone who gives gifts and empowers the use of those gifts (Eph 4:11-12).

Seeking to understand disciple-making in chapter 3 was the greatest challenge of this entire project. I read so many books about discipleship that they all began to run

together. Thankfully, I took good notes and efficiently organized my thoughts in a productive way. What I discovered is that most discipleship gurus have a particular method or process that they see as the “way to do it.” Sadly, I believed I was one of those supposed experts. Someone taught me the *right* way to disciple another, or so I thought. My conclusions were that disciple-making is a messy undertaking, and there is no right or wrong way to implement it. Just be obedient, and pour into another. Key elements existed in all the resources, such as intentionality and multiplication. If the church focuses on fulfilling the Great Commission intentionally, and seeks to grow the kingdom through multiplication, then they cannot derail God’s building process. Taking ownership of one’s faith as a disciple of Christ is vital. The empowerment of Holy Spirit and fulfillment of God’s Word will insure success. Answer the call, and make a disciple.

### **Personal Reflections**

The foundation of this project is a disciple-making relationship that changed my life. As a young teen, a youth pastor took me under his wing and became my Paul. As I answered a call to ministry, I grew in my understanding of the Great Commission. Another believer poured into me during the time of my ministry calling, and his obedience to the Great Commission was vital in my development as a Christian, and a pastor. Consequently, I now understand that the call to disciple another is not exclusive to ministers, or a dedicated few. The Great Commission’s call to make disciples is for all Christ followers. Seasons exist in my ministry where I spoke and taught more often regarding the key principles of this project. I am thankful for a re-igniting of an old disciple-making fire in myself.

One of the blessings of this project was to see how my leadership influences WHFBC, either positively or negatively. I am thankful for God’s leading throughout, and know I have grown through this process. Being at a church long-term is a great blessing. I do not take it for granted. The goal is always to seek God’s leadership, build on good foundations, and construct new structures where needed. In some instances,

tearing down dilapidated ministry structures proves necessary. Whatever the case, I look forward to using the insight that God gave me about myself, and the congregation of WHFBC, in the future.

Self-doubt did enter into the project on several occasions. Am I smart enough to do this? Maybe this is a big mistake, and I am in over my head. Fear of failure is something I do not often encounter, but did with this project. Pride is a detriment throughout the process, and one learns humility quickly. God gave me the perseverance needed to accomplish His work. Multiple times, I quoted 2 Corinthians 12:9: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” My flesh had many pre-conceived ideas about what I could and could not do, as well as how people in the congregation might react to my next step of education. Thankfully, this was my flesh, and the Spirit of God prevailed and blessed me with encouraging truths. In addition, I never considered myself a writer. I grew in my understanding of how important written communication is in the church. The people of God constitute a people of written words, and I embrace growth in that area. Since the project initiated, I began writing devotions in the local newspaper, and wrote hundreds of hand written letters to members of the congregation. This is a love that I did not previously possess, and now am enthused by its power.

At times, the overwhelming struggle of life and ministry throughout the project were a brutal reality. At one two-month stretch, our church experienced thirteen deaths. During another period, I dealt with a challenging support staff change. I also sought to be continually present with my wife and daughter. Again, as He always is, God was faithful. To Him be the glory for the endurance to see the project to completion. I will need that fortitude that comes from Christ alone as I seek to practice what I preached throughout this project.

The gracious saints at WHFBC love me, and I love them as true brothers and sisters in Christ. A recognition of God’s blessings are a testimony to His faithfulness,



and one of the greatest blessings gleaned from this entire project. I love not only the local church at WHFBC, but love God's universal church more than I ever have. What a blessing it is to serve.

The project, as well as the entire focus of my degree, provided much needed balance and growth in my spiritual life. As I have stated many times, I am firm believer in the grace of God in salvation. God's grace empowers our daily lives as well while we walk in Him. I have grown in my understanding that grace does not lead to passivity, and that the spiritual disciplines given to us are disciplines "of His grace." I *get* to serve God and grow in biblical Christlikeness. What a joy! I am thankful that I find rest in Jesus, and I *get* to participate in God's kingdom. The privilege to live life in Christ is humbling nonetheless. Yes, the "life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal 2:20). "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" (2 Pet 3:18).

### **Conclusion**

My final thoughts and assessment is that this disciple-making project succeeded in building fully developing followers of Jesus Christ at WHFBC. My hope involves these Christ followers taking the baton for the next stage of disciple-making needed to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission. I am thankful for personal growth, and the growth I see in our body. Some fruits of discipleship are tangible in the present, and others evidenced in eternity. To be sure, God's church makes disciples through grace and perseverance that comes from Him alone. Praise Jesus, for, "He will be with us, to the very end of the age" (Matt 28:20).

## APPENDIX 1

### DISCIPLESHIP KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE SURVEY (DKPS)

The following survey was used to provide a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of current discipleship knowledge and practice among congregants.

## DISCIPLESHIP KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE SURVEY

### **Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding of biblical discipleship and the practices of disciple making of the participant. William A. Mofield is conducting this research for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

- I agree to participate  
 I do not agree to participate

### **Part I**

The first section of this questionnaire will obtain some demographic information.

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

1. Have you ever been disciplined by another believer?  
 A. Yes  
 B. No
2. Are you a deacon in the church?  
 A. Yes  
 B. No
3. Are you leader in the church (Sunday School Teacher, Small Group Leader, Nursery Volunteer, Staff Member, Worship Ministries Member, etc)?  
 A. Yes  
 B. No
4. How long have you been a believer?  
 A. 0-5  
 B. 6-10  
 C. 11-15  
 D. 16-20  
 E. 21-25  
 F. 26 and over

5. What is your age in years?  
 \_\_\_ A. 18-24  
 \_\_\_ B. 25-34  
 \_\_\_ C. 35-44  
 \_\_\_ D. 45-54  
 \_\_\_ E. 55-64  
 \_\_\_ F. 65 and over

**Part 2: Biblical Foundations**

Directions: Based on the following scale, circle the option that best represents your agreement with the statement:

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree Somewhat,  
 AS = Agree Somewhat, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

- |  |    |   |    |    |   |    |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 6. I can effectively outline principles of disciple making found in the Great Commission.  | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 7. I understand what the Bible teaches about generational discipleship.                    | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 8. I can explain Jesus' method of building the kingdom of God.                             | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 9. I can explain the difference between discipleship and disciple making.                  | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 10. I know several key biblical texts to use in sharing my faith.                          | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 11. I can explain the biblical principle of Jesus being my life, taught in Galatians 2:20. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 12. I can explain the importance of biblical fellowship.                                   | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 13. If asked, I could articulate the gospel.   | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 14. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.                     | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 15. I can explain grace.   | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 16. I can confidently explain biblical principles of prayer.                               | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

17.	I can explain God's purpose for my life from a biblical standpoint.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
18.	My spiritual health is directly affected by my prayer life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
19.	I understand biblical forgiveness.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
20.	I know how the Old Testament and New Testament are related.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
21.	Using Scripture, I can lead another person to faith in Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
22.	I have a hunger for God's Word.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

**Part 3: Disciple Making Practice**

23.	I am an effective disciple maker.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
24.	I have a person in my life who disciples me.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
25.	I am currently discipling another believer.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
26.	I am comfortable sharing my faith with unbelievers.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
27.	I know how to share my testimony.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
28.	I desire to make disciples.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
29.	I can reach the world from where I live through making a disciple.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
30.	I know my place in the body of Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
31.	I have had adequate training to comfortably serve as a leader in the church.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
32.	I know how to study the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
33.	I have a consistent daily quiet time/devotion.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
34.	I enjoy studying the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
35.	I understand the importance of of discipleship.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

36.	I can adequately explain how discipleship can take place outside of the church.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
37.	I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a Paul to another believer.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
38.	I regularly pray for specific people to come to know the Lord.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
39.	I feel empowered by Jesus to do what he has called me to do.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
40.	I have a consistent prayer life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
41.	I have the skill set to disciple another believer.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
42.	I look for opportunities in my daily life to share my faith.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
43.	I am aware of God's presence in my life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
44.	I am intentional in my relationships with fellow believers.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
45.	I am capable of training others to be stronger believers.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
46.	I am intentional in my relationships with unbelievers.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
47.	I consider personal accountability with another believer important for my spiritual growth.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
48.	I use normal/everyday activities as opportunities to help others grow in their faith.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
49.	I can change the world through pouring myself into just one other person.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
50.	I am currently growing spiritually.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Personal Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

### CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

The following rubric was used to evaluate the disciple making curriculum developed by the author and distributed to the select expert panel described in the goal section of chapter 1.

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

<b>Disciple Making Curriculum Evaluation Tool</b>					
<b>Lesson to be Evaluated:</b>					
<b>1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary</b>					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The material is clearly relevant to the issue of disciple-making.					
The material is biblical and theologically consistent.					
The material includes vital information for Christian faith and personal development of a believer.					
The material clearly lays out the principal for one to multiply themselves in another believer.					
The points of the material clearly support the purpose laid out in the thesis and are easy to grasp.					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clear and could be re-taught by another person.					



APPENDIX 3  
DISCIPLE-MAKING CURRICULUM

**Introduction**

The following curriculum is for making disciples at WHFBC. I derived the curriculum from Dawson Trotman’s “Wheel Illustration,” and made various modifications. Trotman, founder of the Navigators, originally drew the illustration, and it remains popular. Christopher Adsit believes it to be one of the best tools for discipleship in pursuit of Christian maturity.<sup>1</sup> “The Wheel” gives a tangible illustration that is easily remembered and helpful in discipleship reproduction. In *Personal Disciple-Making*, Adsit uses the illustration, and has developed limited curriculum to teach various portions of it.<sup>2</sup> However, the curriculum is incomplete for the purpose of this project. Adsit’s does not cover some of the important aspects of intentional discipleship that drove this ministry project. A very rudimentary curriculum is also included in The Navigator’s *Topical Memory System*.<sup>3</sup> This particular curriculum does not suffice for this project due to its brevity and primary objective of Scripture memory.

For these reasons, I modified and expounded upon The Wheel to fulfill the purposes of this discipleship project. Both Adsit’s and Navigator curriculums were utilized in the edit, while the rework of Trotman’s Wheel has been renamed, restructured, and a more detailed curriculum has been developed that will lend itself to replication by a

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<sup>1</sup>Christopher B. Adsit, *Personal Disciple-Making: A Step-by-Step Guide for Leading a Christian from New Birth to Maturity* (Orlando: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1996), 200.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, 200-289.

<sup>3</sup>The Navigators, *Topical Memory System* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1969).

disciple-maker. Each discipleship session should last approximately an hour if the teacher and disciple(s) adequately look up and read passages, and thoughtfully discuss the given questions.

### **Lesson 1—“Christ the Center”**

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the doctrine of Jesus being one’s very life. The teacher will emphasize being crucified with Christ, as well as the doctrine of New Identity for the believer. (Note to teacher: Make every effort to share the ideas and questions in your own words as you prepare. Understand ideas and phrases, add examples as necessary, and do not simply read the lessons.)

#### **Introduction**

Christians often use terminology such as “give Christ my life,” or “Jesus came into my life.” While these are biblical ideas, they are incomplete in that they do not convey the principle of a new identity “in Christ.” When we receive Christ in our lives and give Him our life, we then possess a new life—the life of Christ within us. Jesus gives us His very life!

The life of a Christian abiding in Christ can be illustrated by a wheel (see Appendix). A wheel gets its ability and force to move from the hub. The Christian’s source of power and motivation to live comes from Jesus. The ability to live the Christian life come from Jesus. We get a new identity in Him! He resides within, and His grace and life guide us as we live surrendered and trusting.

The rim of this wheel represents “The Abiding Christian.” As one abides in “Christ the Center,” they will obediently live Christ in their daily life. The spokes of the wheel represent various aspects of biblical spirituality in the Christian life as one abides.

(Note to teacher: Emphasize grace, replication, multiplication, and being a disciple as much as possible. BE VERY INTENTIONAL! Also realize that people who

are being disciplined are at different levels. Do not be afraid to let a discussion play out and not follow curriculum exactly as long as objective of each lesson is met.)

**If in a group, go around and ask how long each participant has been a believer. If one on one, discuss this in more details. Note to disciple maker/teacher: Be sensitive and pay close attention during this time of sharing. Some particular areas of theology may be more challenging for a new believer to grasp. For this reason lay out Scripture, and seek to learn from discovery and teaching the truths presented. Do not allow disciples to be overwhelmed by theological terms and try to make as easy to understand as possible.**

**Activity:** Use “The Wheel” at the conclusion of this curriculum, and draw an outline of the wheel, only filling in the title and scripture for the hub (Christ the Center), as well as the title and scripture for the Wheel itself (The Abiding Christian). Instruct students to do the same.

### **Learning Procedures:**

**Read Galatians 2:20. We commonly say that we are to give Jesus our life, and are often taught that we invite Jesus into our lives. According to Galatians 2:20, how does a Christian identify with Christ in His life and death? (How do we relate to Jesus in His life and death?)**

*When Jesus died on the cross, by faith we were there as well. The term used is that we were “co-crucified.” Paul is stating that what happened to Jesus happened to him as well. This is the denial of self, and Christ becoming one’s very life. At the cross, a believer gets forgiveness and rest. Through our co-death with Christ, we now live life “by faith in the one who loves us, and gave himself for us.” (Discuss further if needed – including ideas on Jesus living life we could not have lived).*

**Discuss additional implications of living by faith in Jesus, and being “co-crucified” with Christ.**

*The phrase “have been crucified” also means that Paul’s crucifixion had a permanent effect. His crucifixion has finished results. It also affects how we now live in dependence on His life. (What might finished results imply? Is there still a battle with sin? Is living a sin free life possible? How might one overcome as they continue to struggle with sin in their life? How do we live by grace?)*

**What does the passage mean when it states, “I no longer live?”**

*My life is no longer my own. My life is Christ’s, and I am now joined with him. To quote Paul from Philippians, “for me to live is Christ.” The only way I can live the Christian life is through Jesus. Jesus is now my life. (How might this differ from simply being “religious?”) Why is the term “born again” such an important idea to understand? (Remember Jesus used the term.)*

*In layman’s terms – this is all about relationship with Jesus. Truly resting in Him. Living, through trusting Him.*

**Read Galatians 2:20 in context, and discuss the implications of vv. 17-21.**

Encourage Disciple to begin memorizing this verse, understanding that the purpose of the verse is that Christ is now the center of his life. Galatians 2:20 is foundational to living the Christian life, and the principle of “Jesus is life” will be the “hub” of the wheel as one abides in Christ. (Discuss again how the hub “drives” the wheel. What are the dangers of what happens when something else, even a good thing, becomes the hub? i.e. witnessing, theology, family).

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and discuss the following questions:**

What is the key to living a new life?

*Realizing that we are now new creations in Christ Jesus. He has given us a new identity. We now find our identity in Christ, and not in our former sin nature. The*

*identity of a Christian will be depending on Christ within who has now given new life through a new birth.*

What has happened to your old life?

*Our sin identity at the core of who we are in relation to how we relate to God is now gone. Because of the cross, we can be in right standing with God. This does not mean that the Christian will not struggle with sin, but now has the power to overcome sin. This also entails that the believer now has new Holy hungers, which will be the motivation for living the Christian life. Christians must remember who they are! Understanding the new identity in Christ will lead to Christian living, pursuing biblical disciplines, and overcoming sin. A new identity will not lead to passivity.*

**What does it mean to be “in Christ?”**

*Look at Colossians 1 and Ephesians 1. How often is that phrase or one similar in these passages Bible?*

**What things might change in one’s life once they become a Christian?**

*We now have the freedom “not to sin.” Sin no longer has control over us. We have new holy hungers (various spiritual disciplines of grace). Christ compels us. Some sin struggles may continue, but now the Christian has a valid battle plan for victory.*

**Discuss the following: We “have been saved by grace.” What does it mean that we “live by grace,” and how does an understanding of grace affect the life of a Christian?**

**Further Questions: Do you struggle with the concept of living by grace? Why, or why not? How might one’s religious background, or home environment and the way they were raised affect this?**

*Allow disciples to share their experiences, and give encouragement in how to live by grace.*

End by discussing the Wheel once again, filling in the scripture and title “Christ the Center.” Encourage the disciple to memorize these verses, as well take time the next week to read the passages in other versions, as well as look at study notes in various study Bibles.<sup>4</sup>

\*This is probably the deepest Bible study of the curriculum. The concepts are often challenging, yet necessary to begin with for the purpose of the illustration. If there was confusion or if it was challenging to teach, or the learners to grasp, end by focusing on the key concept: JESUS IS THE HUB!

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<sup>4</sup>If the disciple does not have a reputable study Bible, encourage them to purchase one and use it in their personal Bible study and reading. If time permits, use some study Bibles demonstrating the coinciding notes and cross references. Recommended Study Bibles – MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible.

## Lesson 2—“The Abiding Christian”

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the doctrine of living a life of worship and abiding in Christ. Christian living is possible through one yielding themselves to Jesus each day. The goal of being a disciple is to abide in Christ. When this takes place, one becomes a fully developing follower of Christ.

### Introduction

**Ask: Is living the Christian life easy? (Discuss)**

Living the Christian life is not always easy, but it is possible. To be sure, the ability to live the Christian life is through abiding in Jesus. (What does it mean to abide?) Abiding leads to obedience as one continually remembers who they are in Christ. Worship becomes a lifestyle. As Christ followers, we learn through the grace of spiritual disciplines that the only way they can discern God’s will, overcome sin, and pursue service and ministry, is to be grafted in the vine of Christ. When this takes place, spiritual fruit will grow.

In regards to the Wheel Illustration, this particular part of the teaching involves the wheel itself. The outward portion that spins and touches the ground causing a vehicle to move is entitled “The Abiding Christian.” This is the Christian, or specifically a person who is living Christ. We learned in lesson one that the hub, “Christ the Center,” powers the wheel. This session very well could have been taught first, in that it is the title for a disciple of Christ in the illustration. Yet it was important to start with Christ being the center. Now one must envision the outward wheel driven by the hub, and the spokes will be the graces of spiritual disciplines.

This wheel can illustrate the life of a Christian who abides in Christ. A wheel gets its ability and force to move from the hub. As Christians, we get our source of power and motivation from Jesus. We have a new identity in Christ who gives us the

ability to live the Christian life. He resides within, and His grace and life guide us through life as we live surrendered, trusting, and abiding.

**Activity:** Use “The Wheel” illustration at end of curriculum, and draw the wheel again. Review the verses taught in lesson one and encourage the disciple on scripture memory. Have the disciple briefly discuss the key ideas of Christ the Center. Then have them fill out the outer wheel portion, titled “The Abiding Christian,” and provide relevant Scripture passages. (Review last week’s verses and main ideas. See if anyone has memorized passages.)

### **Learning Procedures**

**What do most people associate with the word “worship?” (Discuss) Read Romans 12:1. Often Christians think of worship solely as singing, or the music portion of a religious service. What does this particular passage say in regards to that line of thinking?**

*Upon reading Romans 12:1 it is clear that all of life is worship unto God. As we live, we worship, trusting and resting in Jesus each day. Obviously, singing and music can be worship, but it is much more. This is about living a life of worship as we abide in Jesus.*

**What is sacrifice? How can living a life of worship entail sacrifice?**

*Sacrifice is giving something up. We now have given Jesus our very lives, and He has become our life. Living life in daily communion and trust in Jesus is worship! We can do that because He has given us His life. In a sense, we now live through an exchanged life.*

**Notice the phrase “in view of God’s mercy.” It would be easy to focus on our sacrifice and self-denial in this process, yet living a life of worship is only possible**



**because of God’s mercy. Discuss the implications of mercy and grace in this endeavor. (Because of what God has done for me?) How might God showing us mercy and giving us His grace motivate us in Christian living?**

*When we realize that God has showed them mercy, we are thankful. Christian’s realize that the only way that we can live a life of worship and grow in biblical Christ-likeness is through mercy and grace. Salvation, and Christian living, is not possible if not for the mercy and grace of God. There is a great freedom in realizing how much Christ loves me. It motivates me to live trusting in Him!*

**Discuss other possible key phrases and their meaning within the text.**

*“Therefore” – Reminds the reader to remember context. (The word is “there for” a reason! Read what was before it.) The disciple should look at previous verses and read in order to understand the meaning of 12:1. “I urge you” – God is serious about this! It is important. “Offer your bodies” – We give our whole person to God. Our souls belong to God through salvation. He also wants our outer man, our mind, our emotions, and our will. God wants every part of us, and we must be reminded that we were co-crucified with Him. “Holy and pleasing to God” – God is pleased when we live lives of worship. He is pleased when we trust in Him to live the Christian life. This magnifies Him, and he gets the ultimate glory not only for our salvation, but also for our ability to live the Christian life.*

**Read Romans 12:1 in context, and discuss the implications of vv. 11:32-12:2.**

Encourage disciple(s) to begin memorizing this verse, understanding that the purpose of the verse is that the Christian is now to live a life of worship, daily trusting and walking in Christ. (Discuss possible real world applications of putting this into practice.) Constantly reflecting on Christ, in communion with him, walking with him. Even the normal stuff of life!

**Read John 15:5. The key to this passage is “abiding in Him.” What does it mean to abide?**

*Abide means to trust. It means to get the nutrients and resources to grow fruit. Abiding is daily trusting, resting, growing, and communing with Jesus. Each day a believer must remember who they are in their new identity, Christ is the center, and abide in Him. (Think of other analogies of abiding, and specifically discuss a vine and branches.)*

**Further Questions: Do you abide in, and fully trust and rest in Christ in all areas of your life? Where do you struggle to trust Jesus? Why is it hard to live a life of worship when times are hard? Why can those times also be blessings?**

*Allow time for personal reflections, prayer, and accountability. Discuss things that we can do to trust God in those areas, including following up on one another, spending time in God’s Word, removing sin and distractions in life, and remembering the truths discussed.*

*How do we abide when there are uncertainties? Is it tough to give up control of our lives? Why? If we don’t, what does that lead to?*

**Read the entirety of John 15. Discuss implications of the chapter. Notice how the context centers on the key idea in verse 5.**

Encourage disciple to begin memorizing 15:5. Also remind them that John 15 is often referred to as the “Vine and the Branches” chapter, and is a key chapter of the New Testament in regards to Christian living. If the disciple has a Study Bible, continue to teach them how to use it as a resource.

### **Lesson 3—“Make Disciples”**

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the importance of the process of disciple making, and that Jesus has called them to multiply as a Christ follower. The disciples will learn key components of The Great Commission, as well as understand generational discipleship in relationship to Paul’s relationship to Timothy, and the downline of disciples displayed in 2 Timothy 2:2.

#### **Introduction**

**When you hear the term discipleship, what do you think of?** (Discuss)

Discipleship is a term used a great deal in Christian circles, but often misunderstood. Discipleship for many is a class, Discipleship Training opportunity, or a simple phrase used for growing in the faith. However, God calls Christians to more than attending a class. He calls them even to go beyond growing in their faith. According to the Great Commission, God calls every Christian to be a disciple maker. This is much more individual than many realize. The purpose of being disciplined then becomes to disciple another. The Great Commission gives us God’s vision statement for the Church.

Does the Great Commission focus more on discipleship or evangelism? (Discuss how it is both.) Can you do one without the other? (Because evangelism is essential, the two must go hand-in-hand. A person must be converted to be a disciple of Christ, so evangelism is necessary. Also, a disciple-maker should train his disciple in how to evangelize and share his faith.)

God’s vision for reaching the world is for disciples of Christ to replicate, and multiply themselves. This must be intentional, and is one of the primary purposes of this class.

In regards to the Wheel Illustration, this particular part of the teaching involves the first spoke of the wheel to be filled in. As the abiding Christian is empowered by

Christ the hub, they will understand their calling to disciple others.<sup>5</sup>

**Discuss and define: What is a “disciple?” (A learner and a follower.) Is there a difference between a convert and a disciple? Can someone be a “disciple” of other things outside of Christianity? What makes Christian discipleship unique?**

*Discuss becoming a fully developing follower of Christ. A learner and follower. A Christian disciple follows Christ. Christian’s are to also disciple other believers. And we learn from others as we are taught about faith and the realities of the Christian life. One must first be a disciple of Christ, as he becomes their life. Then, they are disciplined by others, and they disciple others.*

**Activity:** Draw the wheel again. Review the verses taught the last two sessions and encourage the disciple on scripture memory. Have them briefly discuss the key ideas of Christ the Center, and The Abiding Christian. Have them fill out the earlier learned portions, now adding a spoke entitled “Discipleship.”

**Learning Procedures:**

**Read Matthew 28:18-20. This passage is commonly known as The Great Commission, and is considered some of Jesus’ final words before he left the Earth. Does the fact that these words contain as some of Christ’s last words to His disciples make them significant? If so, why?**

*Being that they were among Christ’s last words make them extremely important. If you are leaving someone for a long time, the last words you say are quite significant.*

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<sup>5</sup>This particular aspect of the wheel was not originally in Trotman’s Wheel. For the purpose of this curriculum, I added discipleship. In order for a disciple to understand The Great Commission and multiplication, it is a key component. For authentic discipleship to take place, disciples must understand Jesus calls them to replicate themselves.

*(Discuss). The Great Commission could be considered God's vision statement for all believers. (Discuss). This does not entail that any of Jesus' other words that He spoke were "less" significant. It merely illustrates the importance of some of his final instructions he left for his disciples that would be important in the specific context of Christ's ascension, and the disciples mandate to carry on the work.*

**Notice that the Commission is bookended, or sandwiched, in the power of God and His grace ("All authority" and "Surely I am with you to the end of the age"). Why is this significant? (Discuss context.)**

*God's grace and the empowerment of Christ are vital because making disciples can have its challenges. It is not easy. Some do not feel adequate. Others wonder if they could actually disciple someone. Jesus wraps His commission in grace, so that we would be comforted and strengthened knowing that He is actively with us throughout the task. We are led by One who has all authority, and He will continually be with us until the end.*

**To whom is Jesus originally giving this Commission? Is there anything comforting to realizing the original audience of the Commission?**

*Jesus is speaking to His disciples. We must remember that they were regular, ordinary, uneducated men for the most part. Many were fishermen. The fact of their "blue collar" status should be a comfort realizing that God uses all, and there are no specific qualifications to disciple making. The only qualification is being a disciple of Christ. Christianity is not a preacher's movement, but a people's movement. Jesus called common, ordinary people (Acts 4:13). (Discuss as needed.)*

**Answer the key questions of Who?, What?, Where?, When?, How?, and Why? in regards to Matthew 28:18-20. (Explain to disciple that this practice is useful for discerning deeper meaning for any biblical text. We cannot always answer every**

**question, but will gain significant understanding of the text as they seek the answers of each.)**

**Who** is Jesus talking to? The who is “all of you.” It is second person plural, understood you. As the King James states, “Go ye therefore.” In the south, we say “ya’ll.” It entails everyone.

**What** is Jesus stating to do? Make Disciples of all nations. This is the only direct command in the Commission. (It is in imperative form).

**Where** is Jesus stating to make disciples? All nations and ethnic groups (Acts 1:8)  
Everywhere!

**When** do we make disciples? The “go” should be understood as “all the time.” As you are going, and living life, be about disciple making.

**How** do we make disciples? Going, baptizing, and teaching. We must first be obedient to the call. That is the “going.” The baptism entails evangelism, as people must be reached for the gospel. Teaching involves passing on what God is teaching you in the faith to others, and encouraging them to be a multiplying disciple.

**Why** do we disciple? Because Jesus told us to do so. He is Lord! It is His method for reaching the world. He has no plan b.

**Do discipleship and evangelism work together?**

*Yes! Unfortunately, these two ideas get pitted against each other. However, they are both integrally connected. One must evangelize and have converts in order to*

*disciple. And in disciple-making one learns how to share their faith. Some discipleship relationships may start with a believer, and in those cases, the first step will not be evangelism. Yet part of making that disciple will be to teach them how to share their faith as they live the Christian life.*

**Read 2 Timothy 2:2. Who are the generations within this simple verse?**

*Paul (who is writing), Timothy, Reliable or faithful men, others.*

**This is a picture of generational discipleship. Through following the Great Commission, each person can be a Paul to someone else. As a disciple maker, you must teach the people you disciple (Timothy's) to disciple someone as well. What is the challenge in this? Does finding someone "faithful" help the process?**

*The challenge is that people feel unqualified, and they have never seen themselves as a disciple-maker and multiplier. For that reason one must be intentional as they disciple another. The one being disciplined must be willing to count the cost, and be committed to the process. They must realize what is being done to them, and that they are called to then go and disciple another.*

**Discuss multiplication vs. addition. If we understand the concept of compound interest, how might 2 Timothy 2:2 infer that the world could be reached for the Gospel? Also, help the disciples recognize someone they can disciple. (Child, friend, spouse, new Christian, etc.)**

**A few final thoughts:**

- Someone only has to be one step ahead of another to disciple them. Use anything biblical in the process. A sermon, John 3:16, a lesson in this curriculum, or any curriculum or Bible study. Whatever someone taught you, teach another.

- In this day and age, God has brought the world to us. Think about different cultures and backgrounds present in our “backyard” help achieve the Commission. Also, think about how modern travel might assist us in multiplying ourselves. How might this concept change the way one does short-term mission trips? (*Teach concept when on mission trips*).



## Lesson 4—“Sharing the Gospel”

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the importance of sharing their faith and how God uses believers to reach the world with the Gospel. Practical evangelism strategies of sharing one’s testimony and faith sharing outlines will be discussed as well.

### Introduction

**Discuss:** Why is witnessing and sharing our faith such a tough thing for so many believers? Why are they often scared? (Rejection, trained, failure, equipped, etc.)

When it comes to reaching the world for the Gospel, we must understand God grows the kingdom when believers share their faith. Yes, God is the one who does the saving. This should bring comfort and take away many of the fears we may have. Success in evangelism is not necessarily in whether someone prays to receive Christ. That is always the hope. However, success in God’s eyes is for us to simply share. Through our lives, relationships, hobbies, and families, we share. God does the saving.

God’s method to reach the world for the gospel is for believers to share, as people need to hear the life-changing message. It is also important to understand again that you must teach a person how to share their faith. Also, do not neglect that reaching someone for the Gospel could be the first step in a disciple-making relationship.

In regards to the Wheel Illustration, this particular part of the teaching involves another spoke. This particular spoke is “Witnessing.”

**Activity:** Draw the wheel again. (Have disciples draw it first). Review the verses taught in the last three lessons and encourage Scripture memory. Have them briefly discuss the key ideas learned as they fill in their wheel.

### Learning Procedures:

**Begin discussing the following questions: What is witnessing? Why should I**

**witness? Who should I witness to? How do I witness?** (The first few questions are somewhat elementary and should be freely and quickly discussed. Answer to the last question will be at the conclusion of this session.)

**Read Matthew 4:19. What part of this verse is a command, and what part is a promise?**

*The command is to “follow Him.” The promise is that He is the one who makes us fishers of men.*

**Who were the words spoken to, and how did they respond? (Read surrounding verses to determine answer.)**

*Jesus spoke the words to the original disciples. They immediately dropped their nets and followed him.*

**In “dropping their nets,” what were they leaving behind?**

*These disciples were leaving behind what they were comfortable with, and what they knew. Now they would be directed by Christ and follow Him, as opposed to living by their own comforts and routines. Their purpose was now to reach others for the Kingdom as they walked alongside and followed Jesus. Their nets became secondary to their life! They probably continued to fish to provide for their families, but now had new goals and new purposes.*

**Read and discuss Romans 1:16. How might this verse comfort us in sharing their faith? How does this verse say that the gospel is for all people?**

*The Gospel is the “power of God unto salvation.” It is clearly for all Jews and non-Jews. We are often taught that the Jews are God’s chosen people. In the New Covenant, God’s chosen people include anyone who accepts Christ (Galatians 3:28-29).*

## How would you describe in your own words the power of the gospel?

**There are various witnessing tools that people use in evangelism. Many of these can be very effective, but do not have to use them. Here are a few helpful ones:**

- The Romans Road – Go through key passages in Romans to share one’s faith.  
Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-10
- ABC’s – Admit you are a sinner, Believe Jesus died on the cross and rose again, Confess Jesus as Lord
- John 3:16 – Share this simple verse and the implications of it.
- FAITH outline (Lifeway)
- EE (Evangelism Explosion)
- Share Jesus without Fear (William Fay)
- FIRE outline. This is more of an approach to help someone move along in their evangelistic relationships, being attentional and aware. The acrostic is **F**riends and **F**amily, **I**nterests, **R**eligious background, **E**xploratory questions. (What, in your opinion, do you understand it takes for a person to get to Heaven?)
- Testimony – Sharing one’s testimony is always an effective tool in evangelism. In fact, no one can discount what God has done in your life. “I once was blind, but now I see,” is as powerful as it gets! When God opens the door, share your story. Elements of a testimony include: 1) What your life was like before Christ. 2) How you came to be a Christian. 3) What difference does trusting in Jesus in your life make? **YOUR STORY!**
- Remember that when you lead someone to the Lord, it is not about talking someone into “praying a magic prayer.” There is nothing wrong with using a tool such as the sinner’s prayer, just be aware of what God is doing in someone’s heart, and lead them to a commitment of walking with Jesus. Also, do not shy away from asking someone if they would accept Christ. Possibly ask, “Is there

any reason why you wouldn't want to ask Jesus into your life today?" As one grows in discipleship and evangelism, they will hear a multitude of answers for this question. Follow the leading of the Holy Spirit throughout the process. Be loving, humble, honest, and bold.

Encourage disciple to never shy away from sharing their faith, and always be looking for opportunities in all of their relationships. Be aware how God can use things like hobbies, school, or jobs, for the purpose of evangelism. If time permits, have them share their testimony. Explain that one can share an evangelistic testimony in a matter of two or three minutes. If time permits, allow disciples to "witness" to another person, or yourself, using one of the evangelism tools provided. Discuss places they can share their testimony, or people to whom they can share. (Lead by example and share your testimony first). End with prayer.

## Lesson 5—“The Power of the Word”

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the magnitude of God’s Word, and how spending time in it will be life changing. God has given us His written Word, and it is important to see the benefits of having the Bible and biblical input in one’s life.

### Introduction

**Discuss: How many Bible’s do you have in your house?** (Discuss the video where the Christians in China are receiving boxes of Bibles.)

The Bible is truly an amazing book. There is, in fact, no way that we could do justice to understanding its complexities and power in one short session. This session should be a springboard for one to dig further into the amazing realities of God’s written Word. Mind-blowing facts of fulfilled prophecies could be a great place to start. Interestingly enough, the Bible was written over the course of hundreds of years, by several authors, yet the common thread that ties it all together is Jesus. This in itself is incredible.

In the beginning, God spoke things into existence. God opened His mouth, and created (Genesis 1). When Jesus came, the Word became flesh (John 1). It is amazing to think of Jesus as God’s living Word, showing us completely who God is in human form. It is also comforting to know that God would give us a guide in written form. If we believe God is sovereign and powerful, then **why would He not want us to have a reliable and accurate account of the most important issues of life, faith, the world, and Himself? He would, and He did!**

Most Christians in America own multiple Bibles. This is not the case in other parts of the world. Sadly, many neglect what they have sitting on their shelves, or on their coffee table, God’s Word. It is important for a disciple to grow in understanding the power of God’s Word. Using God’s Word for devotion, guidance, and study is a great blessing and privilege.

In regards to the Wheel Illustration, this particular part of the teaching involves another spoke of the wheel. This particular spoke is “The Word.”

**Activity:** Have disciples draw the wheel. Review the verses taught in the last four lessons and encourage the disciple on Scripture memory. Have them briefly discuss the key ideas learned thus far, as they fill in their wheel.

**Learning Procedures:**

**Begin by discussing the following questions: Who is the author of Scripture? Why is God’s Word important?** If the disciple is a new Christian, briefly explain the differences between the OT and NT. Discuss the prophecies, pictures, and sacrifices of the OT, all pointing to Jesus in the New Testament. Explain the Four Gospels, as well as important aspects of Paul’s letters and how his and other NT writings help one interpret the Bible and understand theology.

**Read 2 Timothy 3:16. This verse clearly answers the above question of authorship. God is the author of scripture (Look at various versions – “inspired by God,” “God breathed.”) Granted, this particular passage is discussing the OT, but we know that God revealed His Word and preserved it as well in the NT writings. Notice the four benefits of Scripture listed in this verse. Briefly go over them and define their meaning.**

**Teaching** – God’s Word gives us everything we need in order to receive instruction from God about life. God’s word “teaches.” If one is looking for a theological answer, or wanting to teach Divine truths, one should never reach past or go beyond God’s Word. (Discuss as needed.)

**Reproof** – This reminds of our wrong behavior. Reproof is for the purpose of realizing sin. The Scripture exposes sin and causes man to understand they are lost, or are in need for spiritual life and guidance.

**Correction** – This seems very similar to reproof, and they can easily be confused. If reproof reminds of our sin, correction tells us the remedy for it. Correction is how to get back on track. It could be for initial salvation, when rebirth takes place. Or it could be in Christian living, when repentance is often still necessary throughout life. (Have disciples share practical examples of difference between reproof and correction.)

**Training in Righteousness** – God’s Word gives us all the direction we need in order to live a godly life. Not only does Scripture reprove our sin, and correct us, it also trains us in how to continue to abide in Christ. In the New Testament era (current), the writings of Paul (as well as letters like Hebrews), can be very helpful in putting together the puzzle of some of the mysteries of the Bible as one learns how to live as a Christ follower.

**Is there any significance in the order of these four items? Discuss.**

**Read Psalm 119:105. Discuss how God’s Word can be a guide in one’s life.**

(Discuss tools like flashlights, maps, GPS, etc.) How could memorizing Scripture be helpful in Christian living?

Encourage disciple to begin reading through Scripture daily if they do not already do so.

Discuss reading through various Psalms, the book of John, and Paul’s letters. There are many daily reading plans if they desire to read through the Bible. Also, encourage them not see daily Bible reading as a legalistic task, but a privilege. They should not beat themselves up if they miss a day, but be excited for an opportunity the next day.

Encourage journaling as well. Discuss the principle of reading for devotion vs. reading for study. Also explain hermeneutical concepts of context, and reading to determine original meaning, then how does that apply to their lives. Never read the Bible with the question in mind, “What does this mean to me?” The question in sound Bible study should be, “What was the original meaning and intentions of the author in this text?” Then, “What is the application of this in my life?” Review and support concept by sharing memorized passages, demonstrating their use in one’s life. End with prayer thanking God for the power of His Word.



## Lesson 6—“Communing With God”

**Disciple-Maker’s Objective:** To help disciple(s) understand the importance and blessing of prayer in one’s life. This being the last session, other possible spiritual disciplines that could have been in the wheel should be discussed, as well as the importance of passing on what they have learned, and continuing to grow in other disciple-making capacities.

### Introduction

#### Why do people struggle with prayer?

*Never been taught. Don’t feel worthy. Pray the same old things about the same old things. Too busy. Do not feel they know enough “spiritual” words. (Talk through each of these issues.)*

It is not challenging to define prayer. Simply put, it is talking to God. Yet often people do not spend a lot of time in prayer, or are scared to pray. One reason is that maybe no one ever taught a disciple the importance of prayer. If they have, they might see prayer as a specific time and place, and have never grasped living life in communication with God. Sometimes people’s prayer lives get stagnant. There is also great mystery in understanding how prayer works.

Why is prayer such a great blessing? (Discuss). Communing with God is a great blessing, and it is amazing to think that we can be talking to Him anytime, anywhere, and know He is listening. We are reassured by God’s Word and the Holy Spirit that He is active and loving us all along the way. Some of the mysteries of prayer confound us until we get to Heaven. We know that we must pray, and it makes a difference. We also know that prayer changes us. When one is talking daily to Almighty God, how could they not be changed?

In regards to the Wheel Illustration, this particular part of the teaching involves another spoke of the wheel. This spoke is “Prayer.”

**Read John 15:7. What is the first thing that pops out?**

*The disciple should realize this is the “Vine and the branches” chapter.*

**What do you think is the most important part of this verse? Why?**

*Abiding in Him. This goes back to the original illustration and first two lessons, so we have come full circle. We abide in Him, and allow His Words to abide in us. This reveals an important idea of prayer—abiding.*

**Discuss the idea of prayer being communication and abiding throughout the day of one’s life, not just before a meal or before bedtime.**

*It is important to remember that Jesus is right there, always living in us. He is our life. When we live with this understanding, we will talk to him all throughout our day. We will be continually talking, trusting, thinking, and asking. This does not negate prayers before bed or meals, nor corporate prayer or intercessory prayer. Yet one should live life communing with God.*

**So, according to this verse, we can ask whatever we want?**

*The key once again is the abiding and having His Words in us. If we are doing that, God will conform our will to His. Prayers may be answered according to our requests, or in a way we never envisioned. If we are in Him, be assured God answers our prayers correctly. If we are in Christ, we will ask things He wishes us to ask. The Lord’s Prayer states, “Thy will be done.” Prayer changes people. (Discuss as needed.)*

**Read Philippians 4:6-7. In what situations are we to pray?**

*In every situation.*

**Do you deal with anxiety or worry? How might this verse be a comfort?**

*It comforts us that God is control and that we can take all things to Him. It reminds us to count our blessings and see God at work. (Teacher—be transparent if you deal with anxiety or struggles. Share personal thoughts. Also, share how you might have utilized this verse in your prayer life.)*

**What is “supplication?”**

*It is simply to humbly ask. When one prays, they remember God. They remember to be thankful. They also ask God for things in light of His will.*

**Explain a “peace that passes all understanding.”**

*A divine peace can come only from God. When one is trusting and in communion with God, He will provide this peace, no matter the circumstance.*

**Discuss prayer tools like ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication), and the Lord’s Prayer. Mention that these are good, as long as one does not see prayer as a legalistic checklist. Often someone will spend the entire time just “Adoring” God.**

**Discuss how to pray through the Bible, particularly using the Psalms.<sup>6</sup>**

Encourage disciple to being spending more time each day just talking to God. Many times people use prayer like a water faucet. They turn it on just when they need it. The blessing of communing and talking to God will revolutionize one’s life as they

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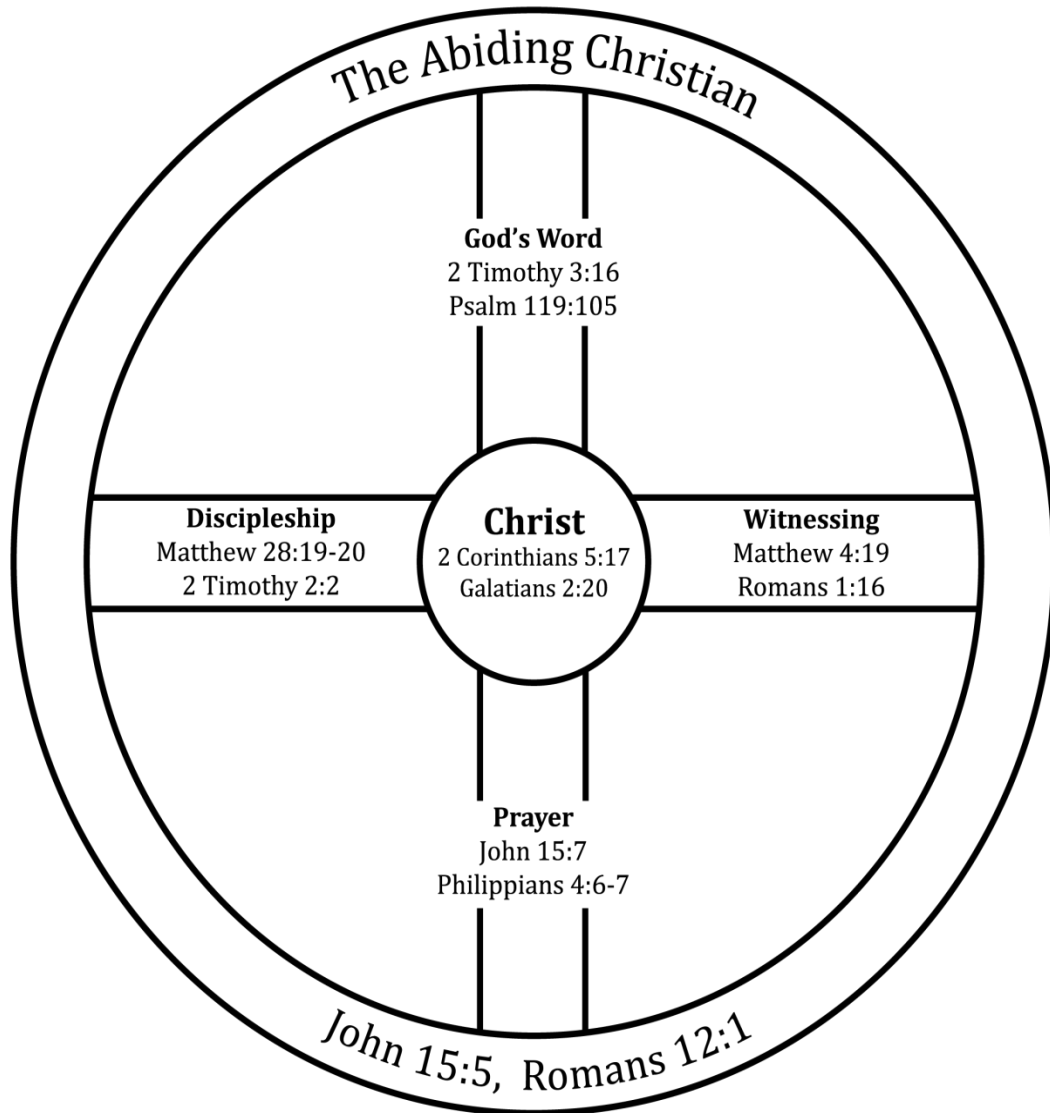
<sup>6</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Praying the Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015). This is a fantastic tool for learning how to pray the Bible, or discipling someone in the discipline of praying the Bible.

realize God is always there, always listening, and always loving. Through the Holy Spirit and His Word He is also always speaking.

**This is the last session. Is there anything else that we could have added to this wheel?**

*Fellowship, Worship, Ordinances. Fellowship, Worship, Ordinances. (Explain that fellowship was in the original wheel. Discuss Acts 2:42 and Hebrews 10:24-25, and maybe draw the wheel with fellowship as a “5<sup>th</sup>” spoke, to see how the illustration might look. Discuss the implications of biblical fellowship, and that salvation involves being born into a “group” or “family.” Too much can be made of Jesus being one’s “personal Lord and Savior.”*

Encourage disciple(s) in the importance of now multiplying themselves! Ask them to commit to discipling someone else, and even identifying who that might be. Talk about follow-up, and that you will check to see how they are doing. This could involve someone they will disciple, an aspect of prayer, witnessing, or a theological question. If it is possible and appropriate, seek to spend time with disciples outside of study. Disciple them through “life,” and lead by example in all the areas discussed as you grow in a relationship with the disciple. Remember, Jesus was “with” his disciples.



## APPENDIX 4

### POST-COURSE COMMITMENT CARD

#### **Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding of biblical discipleship and the practices of disciple making of the participant. William A. Mofield is conducting this research for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this commitment card, you will identify your intentions in disciple-making based off of the knowledge you have gained in class. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

By completion of this commitment card, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

I agree to participate

I do not agree to participate

\_\_\_ I commit to begin disciple-making relationship in the near future. I understand that this will involve prayer and seeking the Holy Spirit to guide me in the process. I will be trusting in the Holy Spirit also to guide me as I seek out whom I will disciple. My desire is to put into practice the things I have learned in this class.

\_\_\_ I want to identify someone, or possibilities of people who I might be able to disciple in the months ahead. (In the following space write down potential names of individuals you will pray about approaching to disciple.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I want to initiate this discipleship relationship or one similar with another believer no later than: (fill in potential date to begin discipling another) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX 5

PRE- AND POST-TEST RESULTS—EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Table A1. Pre- and post-test results, individual questions—experimental group

	Pre-test <i>M(SD)</i>	Post-test <i>M(SD)</i>
<b>Bible Knowledge</b>		
6. I can effectively outline principles of disciple making found in the Great Commission.	4.00(1.46)	5.07(.82)
7. I understand what the Bible teaches about generational discipleship.	4.00(1.51)	4.78(.89)
8. I can explain Jesus' method of building the Kingdom of God.	4.21(1.47)	5.21(.89)
9. I can explain the difference between discipleship and disciple making.	3.21(.80)	5.21(.80)
10. I know several key biblical texts to use in sharing my faith.	4.78(1.02)	5.28(.82)
11. I can explain the key biblical principle of Jesus being my life, taught in Galatians 2:20.	4.14(.825)	5.28(.72)
12. I can explain the importance of biblical fellowship.	4.71(.82)	5.14(.94)
13. If asked, I could articulate the gospel.	4.71(1.13)	5.50(.85)
14. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.	4.71(.72)	5.57(.64)
15. I can explain grace.	5.21(.80)	5.50(.76)
16. I can confidently explain biblical principles of prayer.	4.35(.74)	5.07(.73)
17. I can explain God's purpose for my life from a biblical standpoint.	4.64(.92)	5.35(.74)
18. My spiritual health is directly affected by my prayer life.	4.92(1.38)	5.50(.76)
19. I understand biblical forgiveness.	5.21(.69)	5.28(.72)
20. I know how the Old Testament and the New Testament are related	5.28(.82)	5.50(.65)
21. Using Scripture, I can lead another person to faith in Christ.	4.92(.99)	5.42(.64)
22. I have a hunger for God's Word.	5.64(.49)	5.57(.64)
<b>Disciple-Making Practice</b>		
23. I am an effective disciple maker	2.92(.99)	3.85(.86)
24. I have a person in my life who disciples me.	2.71(1.06)	3.85(.86)
25. I am currently discipling another believer.	3.00(1.61)	3.42(2.02)
26. I am comfortable sharing my faith with unbelievers.	4.57(1.08)	4.78(.89)
27. I know how to share my testimony.	5.00(.78)	5.28(.72)
28. I desire to make disciples.	4.28(1.06)	4.85(.94)
29. I can reach the world from where I live through making a disciple.	4.78(.97)	5.28(.82)

*Table A1 continued*

30. I know my place in the body of Christ.	4.64(1.00)	5.14(.77)
31. I have had adequate training to comfortably serve as a leader in the church.	3.92(1.26)	4.85(.86)
32. I know how to study the Bible.	4.64(.92)	5.14(.86)
33. I have a consistent daily quiet time/devotion.	3.85(1.46)	4.00(1.17)
34. I enjoy studying the Bible.	5.28(.91)	5.42(.75)
35. I understand the importance of discipleship.	4.57(.93)	5.57(.75)
36. I can adequately explain how discipleship can take place outside the church.	3.92(.99)	5.35(.92)
37. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a Paul to another believer.	3.92(1.32)	5.21(.89)
38. I regularly pray for specific people to come to know the Lord.	4.85(1.02)	4.85(1.67)
39. I feel empowered by Jesus to do what he has called me to do.	5.00(.87)	5.42(.75)
40. I have a consistent prayer life.	4.42(1.28)	4.64(1.08)
41. I have the skill set to disciple another believer.	3.85(1.35)	4.92(.73)
42. I look for opportunities in my daily life to share my faith.	3.85(.77)	4.71(.82)
43. I am aware of God's presence in my life.	5.64(.63)	5.85(.36)
44. I am intentional in my relationships with fellow believers.	4.71(.91)	5.21(1.05)
45. I am capable of training others to be stronger believers.	4.14(1.09)	5.00(1.24)
46. I am intentional in my relationships with unbelievers.	3.78(.57)	4.64(.74)
47. I consider personal accountability with another believer important for my spiritual growth.	4.42(.93)	5.28(.99)
48. I use normal/everyday activities as opportunities to help others grow in their faith.	4.42(.75)	4.71(.61)
49. I can change the world through pouring myself into just one other person.	4.57(1.39)	5.28(.82)
50. I am currently growing spiritually.	4.78(.80)	5.14(1.09)

*Note.* Likert scale scores range from 1(strongly disagree) to 6(strongly agree)



APPENDIX 6

DKPS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP PRE- AND  
POST-SURVEY STATISTICAL RESULTS

Table A2. Experimental group pre- and post-test statistical results—  
biblical foundations (questions 6-22)

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means	<i>PreBibFnSum</i>	<i>PostBibFnSum</i>
Mean	78.71428571	90.28571429
Variance	127.2967033	94.21978022
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.715131231	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-5.375248151	
P(T<=t) one-tail	6.31961E-05	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000126392	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

Table A3. Experimental group pre- and post-test statistical results—  
disciple-making practice (questions 23-50)

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means	<i>PreDMP</i>	<i>PostDMP</i>
Mean	120.5714286	137.7857
Variance	211.3406593	279.2582
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.645849692	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-4.844131716	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000160247	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000320494	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

APPENDIX 7

DKPS CONTROL GROUP PRE- AND POST-SURVEY  
STATISTICAL RESULTS

Table A4. Control group pre- and post-test statistical results—  
biblical foundation (questions 6-22)

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	80.57142857	81.35714
Variance	53.64835165	165.3242
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.778517305	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-0.345663824	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.367562461	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.735124921	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

Table A5. Experimental group pre- and post- test statistical results—  
disciple-making practice (questions 23-50)

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	119.1428571	123.2143
Variance	373.978022	529.8736
Observations	14	14
Pearson Correlation	0.804489629	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	13	
t Stat	-1.112200211	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.143098537	
t Critical one-tail	1.770933396	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.286197075	
t Critical two-tail	2.160368656	

APPENDIX 8

CONTROL VERSUS EXPERIMENTAL  
POST-SURVEY RESULTS

Table A6. Control versus experimental post-test statistical results—  
biblical foundations sub-category (questions 6-22)

	Mean Diff.	DF	t-Value	P-Value
Control, Exp	-8.92	26	-.207	.0482

Table A7. Statistical comparison—control versus experimental—  
biblical foundations sub-category (questions 6-22)

	Count	Mean	Variance	SD	St. Err
Control	14	81.35	165.32	12.85	3.43
Experimental	14	90.28	94.22	9.707	2.59

Table A8. Control versus experimental post-test statistical results, disciple-making  
practice sub-category (questions 23-50)

	Mean Diff.	DF	t-Value	P-Value
Control, Exp	-14.57	26	-1.91	.0663

Table A9. Statistical comparison—control versus experimental—disciple-making  
practice sub-category (questions 23-50)

	Count	Mean	Variance	SD	St. Err
Control	14	123.21	529.87	23.01	6.51
Experimental	14	137.78	279.28	16.71	4.46

APPENDIX 9

PRE- AND POST-TEST RESULTS—CONTROL GROUP

Table A10. Pre- and post-test results, individual questions—control group

	Pre-test <i>M(SD)</i>	Post-test <i>M(SD)</i>
<b>Bible Knowledge</b>		
6. I can effectively outline principles of disciple making found in the Great Commission.	4.35(.633)	4.42(.64)
7. I understand what the Bible teaches about generational discipleship.	4.78(.80)	4.71(.91)
8. I can explain Jesus' method of building the Kingdom of God.	4.71(.72)	4.78(.89)
9. I can explain the difference between discipleship and disciple making.	4.71(.91)	4.50(.94)
10. I know several key biblical texts to use in sharing my faith.	4.50(1.22)	4.50(1.28)
11. I can explain the key biblical principle of Jesus being my life, taught in Galatians 2:20.	4.64(1.08)	4.50(1.28)
12. I can explain the importance of biblical fellowship.	4.78(.97)	5.14(.89)
13. If asked, I could articulate the gospel.	4.64(1.00)	4.71(1.26)
14. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.	5.07(.73)	4.78(1.18)
15. I can explain grace.	5.21(.80)	5.00(1.10)
16. I can confidently explain biblical principles of prayer.	4.71(.72)	4.57(1.01)
17. I can explain God's purpose for my life from a biblical standpoint.	4.28(1.13)	4.78(.89)
18. My spiritual health is directly affected by my prayer life.	4.78(.80)	4.85(1.02)
19. I understand biblical forgiveness.	5.28(.72)	5.35(.74)
20. I know how the Old Testament and the New Testament are related	5.21(.57)	5.50(.76)
21. Using Scripture, I can lead another person to faith in Christ.	4.07(.99)	4.50(1.22)
22. I have a hunger for God's Word.	4.78(1.18)	4.71(1.20)
<b>Disciple-Making Practice</b>		
23. I am an effective disciple maker	3.35(1.08)	3.28(.99)
24. I have a person in my life who disciples me.	3.07(1.26)	3.64(1.49)
25. I am currently discipling another believer.	2.35(.92)	3.00(1.35)
26. I am comfortable sharing my faith with unbelievers.	3.21(1.31)	3.71(1.38)
27. I know how to share my testimony.	4.35(1.33)	4.35(1.27)
28. I desire to make disciples.	4.28(1.13)	4.78(.89)
29. I can reach the world from where I live through making a disciple.	5.07(.61)	5.00(.78)

Table A10 continued

30. I know my place in the body of Christ.	4.71(.91)	5.00(1.24)
31. I have had adequate training to comfortably serve as a leader in the church.	3.85(1.16)	4.14(1.06)
32. I know how to study the Bible.	4.92(.82)	4.92(.82)
33. I have a consistent daily quiet time/devotion.	3.92(1.49)	3.64(1.59)
34. I enjoy studying the Bible.	4.85(1.40)	4.64(1.39)
35. I understand the importance of discipleship.	5.14(.66)	5.14(.66)
36. I can adequately explain how discipleship can take place outside the church.	4.85(.86)	4.71(.82)
37. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be a Paul to another believer.	4.35(1.15)	4.57(1.01)
38. I regularly pray for specific people to come to know the Lord.	4.07(1.49)	4.57(1.39)
39. I feel empowered by Jesus to do what he has called me to do.	4.78(1.22)	4.42(1.01)
40. I have a consistent prayer life.	4.35(1.33)	4.21(1.42)
41. I have the skill set to disciple another believer.	3.71(.82)	4.00(1.77)
42. I look for opportunities in my daily life to share my faith.	4.07(1.26)	4.00(1.24)
43. I am aware of God's presence in my life.	5.21(.89)	5.21(.69)
44. I am intentional in my relationships with fellow believers.	5.00(.67)	5.21(.80)
45. I am capable of training others to be stronger believers.	3.85(1.02)	3.92(1.07)
46. I am intentional in my relationships with unbelievers.	3.92(1.07)	4.42(1.06)
47. I consider personal accountability with another believer important for my spiritual growth.	4.17(1.06)	5.00(.96)
48. I use normal/everyday activities as opportunities to help others grow in their faith.	4.14(1.09)	4.14(1.23)
49. I can change the world through pouring myself into just one other person.	4.35(1.15)	4.78(.97)
50. I am currently growing spiritually.	4.57(1.22)	4.71(.99)

Note. Likert scale scores range from 1(strongly disagree) to 6(strongly agree)

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## ABSTRACT

### DEVELOPING A DISCIPLE MAKING PROGRAM AT WHITE HOUSE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN WHITE HOUSE, TENNESSEE

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018  
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The purpose of this project was to develop a disciple-making program among the members of White House First Baptist Church.

Chapter 1 explores the context of ministry at White House First Baptist Church while determining the need for the stated project, as well as the goals and methodology to achieve success.

Chapter 2 provides biblical and theological foundations of disciple-making as exegesis of Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Timothy 2:1-2, and Ephesians 4:11-12 are applied to the thesis.

Chapter 3 examines theoretical and practical issues within disciple-making as modeled throughout the history of the church, as well as current models prescribed by church leaders, discipleship experts, and pastors.

Chapter 4 describes the implementation of the ministry project and includes statistical results as well as interpretation of various results within the project.

Chapter 5 presents an assessment of the project purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses of the project, and concludes with theological and personal reflections.

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