

THE PATTERN

'MY PATTERN IS DISCIPLESHIP'

I. Introduction:

What in the World is Going On These Days?

Recent Headlines:

- ✓ September 26, 2014 Man cuts woman's head off at work in Oklahoma food Plant after attempts to convert his coworkers to Islam failed.
- ✓ December 3, 2015 2 attackers (husband & wife) kill 14 and injure 21 during a County Christmas Party in San Bernardino California.
- ✓ June 17, 2015 A lone gunman kills 9 in an attack at a Methodist church *during* a Bible study in Charleston South Carolina
- ✓ June 26, 2015 Supreme Court redefines marriage
- ✓ February 11, 2016 Attacker injures 4 in a machete attack at a restaurant (Ohio)
- ✓ May 13, 2016 Obama administration forces transgender bathrooms, locker rooms, on schools as condition of funding
- ✓ June 13, 2016 49 people gunned down in Florida nightclub
- ✓ July 7, 2016 Sniper kills 5 police officers in Dallas
- ✓ August 6, 2016 To date 653,290 children have been murdered by abortion in the US alone. The United States currently has the highest abortion rate in the entire world. It is estimated that a child's life is ended every 20 seconds in this country.
- ✓ August 6, 2016 To date there have already been 400 murders in Chicago

It does not take much for the average person to see that something is terribly, **terribly** wrong! Things were not like this even as recent as 20 years ago.

We Must Ask - Why is this happening?

I believe an equally important question is - **Where is the Church?**

Matthew 5:13-14 Jesus tells his disciples **we are**, “the salt of the earth... we are the light of the world.”

Salt prevents decay and light dispels darkness.

Where is the Church?

Why does the modern day church *seem* so ineffective in the face of this escalating evil?

Ineffective = not producing any significant or desired effect [results].

For instance how does 4% of a society impose its worldview on the remaining 96% when over 75% of that society is professing Christians?

Well -

It seems the church is having problems of its own these days

The Barna Group (a firm that is widely considered to be a leading research organization for the past 30 years focused on the intersection of faith and culture) sites the following statistics in recent studies:

- ✓ **Only 51%** of Protestant **pastors have a** Biblical worldview
- ✓ **Most** Christians today **do NOT believe** that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God
- ✓ Out of 1000 youths surveyed as to why they left the church 68% doubt the Bible
- ✓ **Less than half** of the born again adults (46%) believe in absolute moral truth
- ✓ **Only 40%** of born again adults believe that Satan is a real
- ✓ **Most American Christians** do not believe that the Holy Spirit exists
- ✓ Although most Americans consider themselves to be Christian and **say they know** the **content** of the Bible, **less than one out of ten Americans demonstrate** such knowledge through their actions

In **2 Timothy 3:1-5** the Bible describes the characteristics of how people will be in the last days **v5**.“... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:”

Many people who say they are Christians today have mental assent, but they are unable to apply Biblical truths to real life situations.

- ✓ More than one-fifth of **Christians** (22%) **strongly agreed** that Jesus Christ sinned when He lived on earth, with an additional 17% agreeing somewhat.
- ✓ **Only 45 percent** of those who regularly attend church read the Bible more than once a week. Over 40 percent of the people attending read their Bible occasionally, maybe once or twice a month. Almost 1 in 5 churchgoers say they *never* read the Bible.
- ✓ Because we don't read God's Word, it follows that we don't know it.
- ✓ Our **lack of biblical literacy** has led to a lack of biblical doctrine. LifeWay Research found that while 67 percent of Americans believe heaven is a real place, 45 percent believe there are many ways to get there—including 1 in 5 evangelical Christians.

These statistics are staggering – **We Must Ask - How is this Happening?**

Let's use the example of a person going to see the doctor. The Dr. will ask, "What's wrong?" The patient doesn't know what's wrong. They will begin to rehearse a series of symptoms. A good physician knows that the symptoms are not where the problem is. He knows that **something in the body is not functioning properly** and because something in the body is not functioning properly all sorts of negative and potentially dangerous symptoms begin appearing; If the underlying problem is left untreated these symptoms will increase in severity and with increasing regularity.

It's like that with the *body* of Christ, the church and the world. Because something in the body is not functioning properly symptoms are appearing; Dangerous and potentially fatal symptoms.

The things that **ARE** happening in the world right now and the things that are **NOT** happening in the church are not occurring independent of one another.

On the contrary, there is a direct and causal relationship between them.

It is my conviction that the church bears a great deal of responsibility for what we see happening in our country today. We are not doing what our Lord & Savior Jesus has **commanded us** to do, and may I lovingly say – It's **NOT** ok.

The Crisis in the Church

Missionary Ann Petry - While ministering in Africa in 2007, the Lord challenged Ann.

He said, “**My church has lost my pattern.**” “**My pattern is discipleship.**”

Let’s read: Matthew 28:19-20 New King James Version (NKJV)

*¹⁹ Go therefore **and make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them to observe [do] all things that I have commanded (or taught) you; ...**”*

When Jesus is speaking these words **to his disciples** he had already died, paid the price for all mankind’s sin, been resurrected and was now ascending back into heaven. He included this as a **command** to his followers in His last words before His ascension.

Reverend Edmund Chan (a widely influential Singaporean pastor and author who launched the Intentional Disciple – Making church Conference in 1995) says,

*“We live in an age where superficiality, immaturity and mediocrity have marred our contemporary discipleship. We are not longer producing **depth [maturity]** in our walk with God. The result is that (worldwide) we have the largest church in history but the shallowest.*

The crisis of disciple-making today is a crisis of depth [maturity].”

Lead Them and Leave Them Syndrome

Many Christians pride themselves on leading others in a little salvation prayer and then they simply abandon the person that they have lead to Christ leaving them “to find their own way along the Christian path, picking up a little bit here and a little there somehow trying to piece it all together... **This results in weak and ineffective Christians** with big gaps and incomplete understanding in many of the foundational areas of Christian living.”

In the natural realm it would be the same as delivering a baby and then abandoning it.

“If at the hub of all of our activities we are not seeing people **brought to Christ, nurtured, disciplined, and made into strong [mature] disciples and trained to be disciple-makers**, then we are not doing what Jesus has commanded us to do.” p.5

When Jesus’ disciples (that’s us) do not do what he has commanded us to do there are negative consequences both to us and to those around us.

John 14:23, Jesus said, "Anyone who loves me will **DO** what I have taught them to do ..."

When the church is not about the Father's business of **making disciples** the results are

- ✓ Weak, immature, and ineffective Christians
- ✓ The kingdom of God is not being advanced
- ✓ Decay begins to take over
- ✓ Darkness increases
- ✓ Believers' are frustrated and unfulfilled
- ✓ Souls are lost for eternity

So this is what we are going to take a closer look at over these next few sessions together.

- ✓ If the central task of the church is to make disciples (and it is) then what exactly is a disciple?
- ✓ What does a true disciple of Jesus know?
- ✓ What can a true disciple of Jesus do?
- ✓ How do we make one?
- ✓ What tools are available to us in this disciple making process?
- ✓ A correct understanding of the fivefold ministry (Ephesians 4; 11-15).
- ✓ Unity in the body of Christ. There is only ONE vision. Only ONE mission.
- ✓ We are going to see that Discipleship is intentional & systematic, line upon line precept upon precept. It is not random, a teaching on this then that...
- ✓ Making disciples is very time consuming patient work
- ✓ How do we know if the disciple that we are making will be able to stand up to all the pressure and perform correctly when they are out in the real world?
- ✓ Love must always be the motive. Be encouraged. This is a message of hope.

THE PRODUCT

WHAT EXACTLY IS A DISCIPLE?

Review: Last week we said that discipleship is **the pattern** the God has ordained

- ✓ As the means to Christ likeness and spiritual growth
- ✓ As the means of advancing His kingdom in the earth

Let's pick our story up again in **Matthew 28:v16** (NIV)

*¹⁶ Then the eleven **disciples** went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.*

Who is Jesus speaking to? _____.

*¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ **Therefore go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Remember, when Jesus is speaking these words [**to his disciples**] he had already died, paid the complete price for all mankind's sin, been resurrected and was now on his way back into heaven.

Jesus explained to his disciples that he had accomplished *his* mission, and now this is what he needed them to do until he returns.

- ✓ **Jesus broke Satan's power over mankind – His Mission**

"For this [singular] purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8 (KJV)

- ✓ **Then he commissioned his disciples v.19, he said, "You go now and make disciples..." – Our Mission.** This is the responsibility [Mission] that Jesus left us [his disciples] with.

So if *being* and making **disciples** is to be the end **product** of our church activities it is vitally important that we clearly understand what a disciple is! It would be like someone telling you to go into your back yard and build a deck. If you don't know what a deck is what chance do you have to successfully build one?

II. What exactly is A Disciple?

The Profile of a Disciple – the 6 essentials

1. A disciple is one who **has answered** Christ's call

Matthew 11:28-29 King James Version (KJV)

*“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart: and ye shall
find rest unto your souls.”*

- ✓ This is the call to salvation
- ✓ This is the call to accept Jesus as *Savior*

Much of the mainstream church today never gets a person past this first step. We present Jesus only as Savior

- ✓ Discipleship **starts** when a person responds to this call
- ✓ This is only the first step

A new believer **needs to know**;

- ✓ They are forgiven of all sin past, present, and future
- ✓ They have new spiritual life. They are a spirit they have a soul and live in a physical body. Their spirit man has been totally recreated. It is perfect.
- ✓ Jesus lives *in* them
- ✓ God is now their Father
- ✓ They are a part of a new family; **a member** in the body of Christ
- ✓ Satan has no longer has any power over them

2. A disciple is one that **surrenders**

Luke 14:33 (Weymouth)

*“If you do not **detach yourself from all that belongs to you, you can't be a disciple of mine.**”*

- ✓ Surrender to Jesus as Lord
- ✓ Christ comes first over my relationships, my rights, and my resources
- ✓ This surrender is necessary to experience God's highest and best purpose for my life
- ✓ This surrender enables my life to be used to advance the Kingdom of God

- ✓ Involves commitment
- ✓ **Takes a deeper level of maturity**

Remember the quote we read in our first session from Reverend Edmund Chan, “*The crisis of disciple-making today is a crisis of depth [maturity].*” If we are not moving a person from one level of maturity to another we are not making a disciple.

3. A disciple is teachable; **willing to learn**

Matthew 11:29 (New Living Translation)

*“Take my yoke upon you. **Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**”*

- ✓ Eager to learn from the lives of others
- ✓ Eager to learn from the Word of God
- ✓ Sensitive to the Holy Spirit
- ✓ **Becoming ‘self-feeding’**

Acts 17:11 (NIV)

*“¹¹ Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for **they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.**”*

- ✓ Deeper level of maturity
- ✓ Not just a hearer, but a doer
- ✓ Knows how to pray
- ✓ Knows how to read their Bible
- ✓ Spends time alone with God
- ✓ Able to apply Word to real life

4. A disciple is **becoming like** his Master

2 Corinthians 3:18 (Berean Study Bible)

*“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into His image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.**”*

- ✓ Ongoing transformation
- ✓ Change is apparent
- ✓ Develops Christ-like attitudes & behaviors
- ✓ Spirit man manifesting

- ✓ Person looks, acts more and more like Jesus
- ✓ Know how to resist the devil and win
- ✓ **Understands their identity in Christ**

5. A disciple loves God's family

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ **By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**”

- ✓ Motivated by love
- ✓ Understand that they are a member of one body
- ✓ Has found their place and is functioning in that to which *they* are called
- ✓ Understands that they are indwelt by same spirit
- ✓ Does not neglect the assembling together with other disciples
- ✓ Exhibits and protects unity within the body (again we are talking about maturity)

6. A disciple is one who is committed to Christ's mission in the world

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

¹⁹ Therefore **go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

- ✓ Highest level of maturity
- ✓ Has taken responsibility for their own spiritual life
- ✓ Knows how to share their faith
- ✓ Committed to the maturing others
- ✓ Involved in nurturing, discipling and mentoring others
- ✓ Has found and is fulfilling their part in the discipleship making process

Summary:

So this is what a disciple is:

1. Someone who has answered Jesus' call to salvation and has accepted Jesus as Savior
2. Someone who surrenders all to the Lordship of Christ
3. Someone who is teachable, eager and willing to learn and is maturing
4. Someone who is consistently becoming more like Jesus in thought, word and actions
5. Someone that understands and is functioning in their rightful place in the body of Christ
6. Someone that is fully committed to Christ's mission in the world

The making of a disciple is not magical. It doesn't just happen automatically. Even if a person is attending church services and Bible studies regularly it does not ensure that they are maturing and growing in their relationship to Christ.

Discipleship is **intentional**, it is **systematic**. It is leading a person along a very specific path to maturity; Line upon line, precept upon precept.

Much of the activity taking place in the church today is not discipleship. Discipleship is very specific and requires mentoring. It is hard work and takes an extended period of time to cover the topics necessary for a believer to grow in Christ likeness. It's far more than just, "doing life together."

Now that we have a clearer understanding of exactly what a disciple is, next time we will begin to look at **the process involved** in making one.

DISCIPLESHIP

- Part I The Pattern - God's Pattern is Discipleship
- Part II The Product - What Exactly is a Disciple?
- Part III The Process - A Disciple, How do we make one?
- Part IV The Tools - We Have Everything that we Need

THE PROCESS
A DISCIPLE- HOW DO WE MAKE ONE?

Review:

In lesson one; we established that **discipleship is the pattern** that God has ordained

- ✓ As the means to Christ likeness and spiritual growth
- ✓ As the means of advancing His kingdom in the earth

In lesson two; we presented [**the product**] the 6 essentials qualities **in the profile of a disciple**

We said:

1. A disciple is someone who has answered Jesus' call to salvation and has accepted him as ***Savior***
2. A disciple is someone who surrenders all to the ***Lordship*** of Christ
3. A disciple is someone who is teachable, eager and willing to learn and **is maturing**
4. A disciple is someone who is consistently **becoming more like Jesus** in thoughts, words and actions
5. A disciples is someone that **understands and is functioning** in their God ordained place in the body of Christ
6. A disciple is someone that is **fully committed to Christ's mission** in the world

III. A disciple, how do we make one? [**The process**].

Making a disciple, like making any product, **is a process**

Proc·ess¹: A **series of actions or steps** taken in order to achieve a particular end.

The **Disciple making process has three distinct steps or stages.**

1. **Turning** seekers into believers
2. **Growing** believers into disciples
3. **Training & Equipping** disciples to be disciple-makers

Where do we begin? What is the first step in the disciples-making process?

1. Go! *Turn seekers into believers.*

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore ...

Mark 16:15, And Jesus said to **his disciples**, “Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature...”

- ✓ Who is Jesus giving instructions to? His disciples.
- ✓ Where are they told **to go**? Into the entire world.
- ✓ To do what? To preach the gospel.
- ✓ **What is the gospel?** The good news that Jesus stepped into his own creation in the form of a man to pay the price for our wrongdoing so that we could come back into right relationship with God again.
- ✓ Who are we to preach the gospel to? Every one.
- ✓ Are just some of Jesus’ disciples to do this or all of us? All.
- ✓ Going into the entire world starts in your own back yard; your home, your work, your neighbor’s house.
- ✓ **It doesn’t say** sit in church and wait for people to come to you. **We must go to them**. We must take the time to involve ourselves in the lives of others right where they live.
- ✓ **In John 4:27-42** we see Jesus having a conversation with a woman at a well. This conversation so impacted her that she left her water pot and went back into the city and told the men everything that Jesus had said to her. The men from the city came to Jesus and urged him to stay with them; Jesus stayed there two days and we are told that many believed as a result of his words. (Relational Evangelism)
- ✓ Throughout the gospels Jesus can be found talking and **involving himself** with people that others criticized him for. He hung out with tax collectors [who were hated for their corruption] and harlots. **What was he doing?** He was turning seekers in to believers. (step one)

Mark 16:15, And Jesus said **to his disciples**, “Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature... **v.16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Step one)

There are many ways to present the gospel to unbelievers; street evangelism, knocking on doors, crusades, sports groups, giving out tracts or building relationships with people as Jesus did; sharing our faith as natural opportunities open up.

The five-fold ministry gift that helps the body of Christ as a whole in this area of seeking the lost and **turning seekers into believers** is the EVANGELIST.

“An evangelist is one who attracts people to the message of the gospel **AND** equips others to go out and share that message with others. He stirs up the Church and inspires us to win the lost.” Wendall Parr

* The five-fold ministry gifts were never to be an end in themselves. The evangelist should not only be attracting people to the gospel they should also be **equipping the saints** [other disciples] for that part of the work of the ministry [disciple making process] as well.

2. Step two in the disciple-making process; growing believers into disciples

- ✓ Growth [maturity] takes time!
- ✓ **Growing new believers into disciples requires that specific topics be addressed in a systematic order over a defined period of time.**

Let's use the example of a person building a house. The first thing they must do is **put in the foundation**. It is no different when we are building a disciple.

We must teach them.

Matthew 28:v.20, "... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded [or taught] you.

The first thing they must be taught are the foundational truths about what has happened to them.

- ✓ That they are forgiven of all sin past, present, and future (grace/salvation)
- ✓ That they have new spiritual life. They are a spirit they have a soul and live in a physical body. Their spirit man has been totally recreated. It is perfect. (new birth/creation)
- ✓ That Jesus now lives *in* them (indwelling of Holy Spirit)

- ✓ That God is now their Father
- ✓ That they are a part of a new family; **a member** in the body of Christ
- ✓ That Satan has no longer has any power over them

We stay with them step by step over an extended period of time **teaching, mentoring, involving ourselves in their lives, and intentionally** moving them along **a defined path** into deeper and deeper levels of maturity as evidenced by the fact that

- ✓ They are becoming self-feeders
- ✓ They are not just a hearer, but doers of the Word
- ✓ They know how to pray
- ✓ They know how to read their Bible
- ✓ They are spending time alone with God
- ✓ They are able to apply God's Word to real life
- ✓ They are beginning to understand their identity in Christ
- ✓ They are motivated by love
- ✓ They understand that they are a member of one body
- ✓ They have found their place and are functioning in their place in the body
- ✓ They understand that they are indwelt by same spirit
- ✓ They do not neglect the assembling together with other disciples
- ✓ They exhibit and protect unity within the body

The five-fold ministry gift(s) that help the body of Christ as a whole in this area of growing believers into disciples are the TEACHER, PASTOR and PROPHET.

“A **Teacher** takes the things that God has revealed to him and shares them with the body in such a way they can understand. Teachers teach the Body of Christ the truth about God's Word and train them to teach other also.

A **Pastor** is a shepherd of the sheep. He feeds God's people the Word and equips them to care for and minister to one another. A true pastor stirs up the Body's love for one another.

A true **Prophet** equips you to hear from God yourself.” Wendall Parr

3. **Step three in the disciple-making process;** Training and equipping disciples to be disciple-makers

So now the cycle comes full circle. As a person **matures** into being a true disciple of Jesus they are **then called to become part of the process of discipline others.**

We are to continue to teach them, to equip and train them to the point that they are able to take someone down the same path of maturity that just went down.

We see this **discipling principal** in **2 Timothy 2:2**, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Paul taught and disciplined Timothy. Now he calls Timothy to find other faithful believers to disciple and train in the same way, teaching them in turn to pass on what they have learned to others; **Disciples making disciples.**

The five-fold ministry gift that helps the body of Christ as a whole in this area of Equipping disciples to make disciples is the APOSTLE.

“The Apostle is one that is sent. They are usually involved in starting new ministry endeavors... A true Apostle equips others to go and start their own ministries.” Wendall Parr

Some important truths about discipleship are:

- ✓ The process of discipleship is **cyclical**, it is not linear
- ✓ The process of discipleship must be **systematic**; line upon line precept upon precept.
- ✓ The process of discipleship is about **multiplication**; it is about taking a person through the various stages of discipleship [maturing them] **to the point that they then** know how to go back to the beginning and take others on the same journey also.
- ✓ **Discipleship is for life; it is a lifestyle.** It is not about covering the basics then moving onto something else. We are to continue making disciples over, and over, and over again throughout our lives. The disciples that we have made are also to be making disciples over and over and over throughout their lives as well. This is how the kingdom of God advances and spreads. **Disciples making disciples.**

THE TOOLS
GOD HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING THAT WE NEED

Review:

In lesson one; we established that **discipleship is the pattern** that God has ordained

- ✓ As the means to Christ likeness and spiritual growth
- ✓ As the means of advancing His kingdom in the earth

In lesson two; we presented [**the product**] the 6 essentials qualities **in the profile of a disciple**

We said:

1. A disciple is someone who has answered Jesus' call to salvation and has Accepted him as ***Savior***
2. A disciple is someone who surrenders all to the ***Lordship*** of Christ
3. A disciple is someone who is teachable, eager and willing to learn and **is maturing.**
4. A disciple is someone who is consistently **becoming more like Jesus** in thoughts, words and actions
5. A disciples is someone that **understands and is functioning** in their God Ordained place in the body of Christ
6. A disciple is someone that is **fully committed to Christ's mission** in the World

In lesson three; we showed **the** 3 step **process** involved in disciple-making

We said the three steps are:

1. **Turning** seekers into believers
2. **Growing** believers into disciples
3. **Training & Equipping** disciples to be disciple-makers

In our final lesson we are going to take a look at **the tools** that have been made available to us both spiritually and in the natural that enable us to fulfill our God given mission – to Go and Make disciples of every nation.

Let's Read: Acts 1:8 - King James Version (KJV)

⁸ *but ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

1. **The first ‘tool’** that God has made available **to his disciples** is the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

There are many benefits to being baptized in the Holy Spirit, but the one that we need to understand in the context of this teaching on Discipleship is that **the baptism in the Holy Spirit empowers us to be *effective witnesses***.

Remember step one in our disciple-making process; *turning seekers into believers* by going into the entire world and preaching the gospel. Or in other words to **bear witness** to the truth that Jesus stepped down into his own creation to pay the price for our wrong doing so that we could come back into right relationship with God.

It is the infilling of the Holy Spirit that enables us to fulfill step one in the disciple-making process.

The Holy Spirit is the source of supernatural power in our lives. In **Acts 1:8** we see the disciples being filled with power to preach and to bear witness.

Jesus himself is our perfect role model. There are no recorded miracles preformed by Jesus prior to him being baptized in the Holy Spirit. We must remember that Jesus did not come into the earth as God, but rather in the form of a man. It was the infilling of the Holy Spirit that empowered him for ministry.

2. **The second ‘tool’** that God has made available to his disciples is the transfer of authority,

Let’s Read our key scripture **Matthew 28:18-20** Good News Translation (GNT) again; ¹⁸ *Jesus drew near and said to them, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Remember we said that when Jesus is speaking these words **to his disciples** he had already died, paid the price for mankind’s sin and was now on his way back into heaven.

He is meeting with **his disciples** to give them last minute instructions before ascending back into heaven. He starts by saying, “**I have been given All authority in heaven and on earth.**”

To understand the full impact of his statement we must go back to the book of Genesis.

Read Genesis 1:26 King James Version (KJV)

*“²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, **and over all the earth**, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”*

- ✓ When God created mankind he gave *them* dominion [sovereignty, control, **authority**] over all the earth.
- ✓ In an act of treason Adam choose to disobey God.
- ✓ In doing so Adam gave his **authority over all the earth** to the devil.

Read Luke 4:5-7 -King James Version (KJV)

⁵ And the devil, taking him [Jesus] up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

*⁶ And the devil said unto him, **All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.***

- ✓ It is clear from this verse that Satan [not Adam] now has the **authority** over **all the kingdoms of the world**.
- ✓ Adam’s disobedience was catastrophic!

Now let’s go back again to our key scripture in **Matthew 28:18** where Jesus is telling his disciples that **He now has all authority in heaven and on the earth**.

Remember we said in lesson two “*For this [singular] purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*” **1 John 3:8 (KJV)**

When we hear Jesus saying to his disciples in **Matthew 28:v18 that he now has ALL authority** in heaven and on the earth we know;

- ✓ That Jesus successfully accomplished his mission in coming into the earth and paying the price for mankind’s’ sin. In doing so he destroyed what the devil had done in when he got Adam to give his authority away.
- ✓ **Jesus took back ALL authority from the devil**

Now, I said all that to say this;

- ✓ Once Jesus had ALL authority **he did not give it back to mankind in general**, but he gave it back to **his DISCIPLES**. He said to them, “now you go.”

If Jesus now has ALL authority in heaven and on the earth how much authority does Satan still have? NONE!

- ✓ **The devil is now powerless over the affairs of men.** He is still able to operate however through unbelievers and unknowledgeable Christians. Satan is still influencing world events through people yielding to him.

BUT Jesus' disciples [that's us] can stop him in his tracks.

- ✓ **In Luke 10:19 Jesus tells us [his disciples]** ¹⁹ *Behold, I give unto you power [**& authority**] to tread on serpents and scorpions, **and over all the power of the enemy**: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*
- ✓ This is a spiritual truth that most of us have yet to truly wrap our heads around: We [**his disciples**] are "in Christ." We **act** in His Name on His behalf with **His power** and **authority**.

To summarize what we just said

- ✓ In the beginning God created man and gave him complete authority over the earthly realm
- ✓ Adam committed high treason and gave his authority over to Satan
- ✓ Satan became the god of this world
- ✓ Jesus came, fulfilled his mission and took back ALL authority
- ✓ Jesus gave that authority to his disciples ONLY not to all men in general

The second tool that God has given us to fulfill his Great Commission then is absolute authority in the earth and over the devil and his works! Only someone that has matured into a true disciple understands and knows how to function in this authority.

So it is this transfer of authority that enables us to fulfill the second step or stage in the disciple-making process; Growing or maturing a convert [new believer] into a disciple.

- ✓ A disciple exercises their God given authority with greater and greater skill

3. **The third spiritual 'tool'** that God has made available to his disciples is the five-fold ministry

Lets' read Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹ And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹² **to equip the saints, for the work of the ministry...**

Remember the third stage or step in the disciple-making process is **training** and **equipping** disciples to be disciple makers. **Making disciples is the work of the ministry.**

The five-fold ministry is another *spiritual* tool God has given to accomplish this.

So the three *spiritual* tools are;

1. The baptism in the Holy Spirit which empowers us to be effective witnesses throughout the whole earth fulfilling step one of turning seekers into believers.
2. The transfer of authority. The second step in the disciple-making process is fulfilled when a true disciple can bring God's will into real live situations by exercising God's authority.
3. The five-fold ministry is the spiritual tool that God has given to fulfill the third step in the disciple-making process by equipping and training disciples to go out and do the work of the ministry which is making more disciples. Disciples making disciples.

There are also some tools in the *natural* that are available to us as well.

1. Small groups
2. Discipleship curriculum

In the Bible we see Jesus ministering to the masses yet when it was time to develop and train those who would carry on the work of his ministry he choose a small group of twelve.

Small groups are very conducive to spiritual formation *if* they are established and run correctly.

Research has shown,

- ✓ that people who are involved in a spiritual community [small group] exhibit a much higher **commitment** to practicing spiritual disciplines
- ✓ they are 4 times more likely to study scriptures on their own
- ✓ they are more likely to pray, give and serve
- ✓ there is accountability as well as support
- ✓ since discipleship is inherently relational small groups provide a natural environment

The disciple making small group is different than other small groups in that the main focus is on helping others **strengthen their relationships to Jesus more than to each other.** Groups that focus on just the group member's relationships with other group members are fellowship group's not disciple-making groups. **Disciple making groups are interactive not passive** which facilitates a much higher degree of personal **growth** in each of its members.

Finally, there are many ministries today that are making **curriculum** available specific to the disciple making process. One example would be Andrew Wommack's Discipleship Evangelism Course.

Andrew's Discipleship Evangelism Course consists of 48 lessons broken down into three levels that are designed to establish a new believer in the foundational truths of the faith, bring that person to a higher level of maturity so they are able to walk out the truths of the Bible and apply them to their everyday lives, and finally to teach them how to disciple others.

1. Discipling Basics
2. Discipling to Maturity
3. Teaching to Disciple

As you can see these three levels parallel the three stages in the disciple-making process.

CONCLUSION:

It is my prayer that you end this series of lessons on discipleship feeling encouraged and full of hope. That you have a renewed sense of who you are in Christ; a renewed sense that, as Jesus' disciples, we are in fact the light of the world, the city on a hill.

God has given us everything that we need to successfully accomplish the mission that he has given us.

No politician, no government, no elected official is going to fix the problems that we now face. The hope for the world lies within us.

So now let's go and advance his kingdom and allow him to reveal his glory through us by making disciples of all nations. AMEN.