

Introduction

Have you ever asked the question Why? Or What is the Purpose? in my life. I believe, these are two questions that every individual asks themselves, but for many, there has never come a true answer.

Today, and for the next several months I want to help you find answers to these two questions, because I believe that the answers to these two questions will turn your own world upside down.

With that being said, allow me to propose my method of helping you answer these two questions. Over the course of the next several months I would ask that you check out my short teachings, which I believe in the end that you will find the answer to the Why and What questions.

Let's begin then by me asking you a pretty simple question, "When a baby is born, why don't we leave it alone?" The question, although absurd, is a question that everyone knows the answer to. The baby would die and never grow to reach its potential without someone caring for it.

Why then do we do this very thing in our own Spiritual lives and in the Spiritual lives of those we are given oversight of?

I think we all can agree that we are all made up of three unique components, Mind, Soul, and Spirit. When it comes to our minds we can all in one way, shape, or another wrap our minds around the concept of the child rearing process, which in the natural is universally known and administered the same way by every society since the beginning.

Through this process I will be detailing the spiritual process of child rearing, which is discipleship. Both growth processes are based on training an individual to become mature within a specified amount of time. Both processes are systematic in that they build upon principles already learned. For example, a child does not compete in the 100-yard dash until he has learned to walk.

Training is the essential part of both the child rearing process, as well as the Spiritual development process, which is called discipleship. Both training processes are made up of two parts, hearing and doing.

Let's then begin by briefly defining Disciple and Discipleship:

A Disciple is a learner; one who puts into practice what he or she has been taught. Discipleship is the process of transformation from "learner" to "teacher". It involves changing the way the learner thinks and acts, so that he becomes conformed to the image of the teacher.

With that being defined, let's now reflect on these two words from God, and have you consider there implications: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments," John 14:15, and "Go therefore and make disciples. . . teaching them to observe all that I commanded you . . .," Matthew 28:18-20. These were the final words that Jesus spoke to His followers before ascending into heaven. Jesus chose His words carefully, they were important words, memorable and intended for lasting impact.

Two questions come to mind immediately. *What did Jesus command His disciples to do? . . . and . . . Why is it so important to teach others to do as He commanded?* The answers to these questions are the heart of the disciple making process used by Jesus.

During the three-year period of His ministry on earth, Jesus took ordinary men and women who followed Him and transformed them into powerful disciples. Within twenty years of His ascension into heaven they had become known throughout the Roman Empire as "those who have turned the world upside down." They had truly become expressions of God's love on earth.

What happened to them to cause such a great impact on the world? It's simple. Jesus gave His disciples only one task make more disciples. He told them exactly how to do it. They did what Jesus told them to do and He

sent the Holy Spirit to help them do it! The rest is history.

To date, the history of discipleship in the Church has dramatically developed from . . .
. . . the immediate years following the resurrection of Jesus, and on up through the 3rd century, discipleship was the primary focus of the church. The gospel was preached, people repented and were baptized, and those who had been taught the Lord's commands instructed others in the way of righteousness. Small groups of people were trained in homes and were then sent out to make more disciples.

It was just in the beginning of the 4th century that the Church began to bind itself to secular world power, thinking that this was the way the kingdom of God would be established in the earth. The focus of the Church began to shift from making disciples to developing an orthodox belief system. What a person believed overshadowed the One in whom he believed.

Today, there is hope, but Christians must act. We need to be involved in small groups, loving one another and working together to effect transformation in the lives of people. Christians must learn the things that Jesus commanded them to do, and then do them.

With that, allow me to layout for you How the disciple making process is accomplished?

1. In the disciple making process we have divided it into fifty-eight teaching lessons.
2. In each lesson, one or more of the action commands that Jesus gave His disciples, will be featured. (There are a total of 226 individual commands.)
3. A short teaching will provide insight into understanding the command. . . and finally . . .
4. An activity is suggested to implement what has been learned in the lesson.

For Jesus, the reason that making disciples is so important is that it is born out of a love relationship with Him.

With that, let us begin the discipleship making process together, where I will start with Jesus' first Command. Until then, I would ask that you consider the following question:

What picture comes to mind when you hear the words "Follow Me"?