

BE ONE, MAKE ONE

DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES

Bridges Community Church

March 8, 2015

This Really Matters

Today we begin a new 4-part series focused on disciple-making. We will be looking at the final command Jesus gave His followers. With all of the things one could do with their life, this is the one thing we must do – be a disciple who makes disciples.

When it comes to making disciples...

- I think others are more qualified to do it
- I don't have time for it
- I wish I knew how
- I wish someone would disciple me
- I am disciplining someone
- I pray for it to happen through me and through others
- Other:

If all that you had to go on was Jesus' command found in Matt 28:19–20, what 3 factors do you see in this passage that are of paramount importance in making disciples?

***Matthew 28:18-20** - 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."*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

How important is disciple-making anyway?	1
Bridges launches B.R.I.D.G.E.S	1
The B reminds us to...	2
Dependent or Independent?	2
The R reminds us to...	3
Who in your life needs the Lord?	3
Either/or or both/and?	4

From Jerusalem Out

How the early church implemented Jesus' disciple-making mandate is played out in the book of Acts – from Jerusalem out. Acts 1:8 wasn't just a nice thought. It became a reality:

***Acts 1:8** – "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

What began in **Jerusalem** spread to **Judea** (the province where Jerusalem was located). Then it expanded to the northern province of **Samaria**. And then it went viral – to the whole **world**.

A number of things made it possible for the early church to be so successful in their disciple-making efforts. In our four-week study we will focus on seven strategic factors. They are all things that were very important then and are still important today. These seven essential disciple-making factors will be taught through a B.R.I.D.G.E.S. acronym. It's our prayer that they will help you successfully make disciples too.

Begin with Prayer

From the outset, Jesus reminded His followers that what He wanted done, could not be done in their own strength. They needed God's supernatural work in them and through them. The key to seeing that happen was prayer.

Before *going*, Jesus' followers did some essential *waiting*: for God's timing, for God's power, for God's strength, for God's leading, for God's courage, for God's transforming work.

In the following passage, what did the Disciples do that was essential to their future disciple-making efforts? Record your observations below.

Acts 1:4,12-14 - *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.."*¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.¹³ When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Our Natural Tendency?

Like the Disciples, success in any endeavor breeds independence. In this week's message Pastor Dave points this out in the failed attempt on the part of the Disciples to cast a demon out of a young child (read Mark 9:14-18). A year earlier they had cast out multiple demons from the sick and inflicted (read Mark 6:7,13).

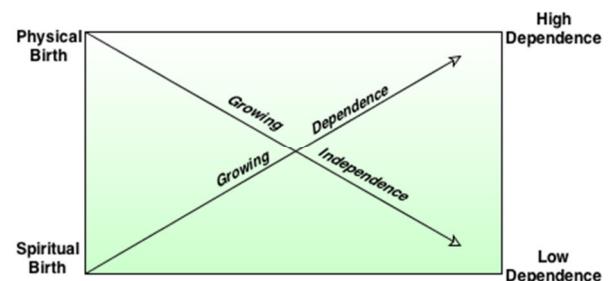
This time they could not do what they did many times a year ago. Puzzled, they asked Jesus for an explanation. Here is Jesus' answer found in both the Mark and Matthew accounts:

Mark 9:28-29 - *After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"²⁹ He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."*

Matthew 17:19-20 - *Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"²⁰ He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

Have you fallen into the same trap? What signs would indicate this has happened? For you to operate in the supernatural disciple-making realm, what must you remember and do?

Is this descriptive of your walk with God?



Reach Out to Unbelievers

As promised, after waiting for God's supernatural help for the disciple-making challenge, the Holy Spirit was given. And in His power, the Disciples began witnessing to the world about what Jesus had done. They spread the message from Jerusalem out into the world. Check out the chapters below and note how the early Christians witnessed.

Acts 2 – _____

Acts 3 – _____

Acts 4-5 – _____

Acts 6-7 – _____

Acts 8 – _____

Acts 9 – _____

Acts 10-11 – _____

Acts 13 – _____

Going into the world is indispensable for life-changing impact. It's assumed that Christ-followers will go. Wherever we go, whatever we do, we can tell others about Christ through what we say and do.

"The evangelistic harvest is always urgent. The destiny of men and nations is always being decided. Every generation is strategic. We are not responsible for the past generation, and we cannot bear the full responsibility for the next one; but we do have our generation. God will hold us responsible as to how well we fulfill our responsibilities to this age and take advantage of our opportunities."

Billy Graham

No Impact Without Contact

Joe Aldridge, former President of Multnomah School of the Bible, said, "You can't make an impact on unbelievers without contact with unbelievers. There will be no impact without contact."

Is it no wonder Jesus hung out with unbelievers? How do the following verses speak to the importance of lost people In Jesus' life?

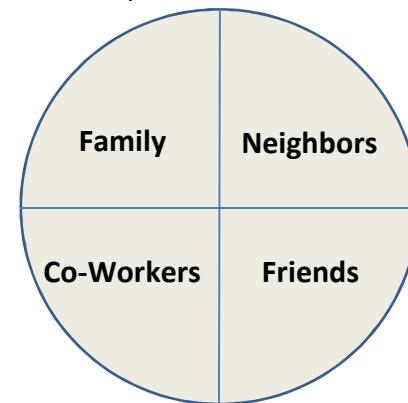
Luke 5:27-32 – _____

Luke 7:33-35 – _____

Luke 15:1-2 – _____

Would you say you are a "friend of sinners" like Jesus was? In what specific ways? _____

Your circle of influence is composed of four key types of relationships:



Who do you know (by name, regular contact, and relational connection) that needs the Lord? What can you do in the next 4 weeks to reach out to them?

Not One Without the Other

So which is more important, talking to God about others or talking to others about God? Yes! Neither one is more important than the other. Both are vital to effective life-changing disciple-making. Effective witnessing is dependent on devoted prayer. Devoted prayer leads to effective witnessing.

Note how Paul brought both into focus in his request to the church at Colossae:

Colossians 4:2-4 - Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Taking into account Paul's learnings, an effective disciple maker must pray:

- Fervently (*devote yourself to*)
- Expectantly (*keeping alert in it*)
- Thankfully (*with an attitude of thanksgiving*)
- Specifically (*for open doors & clear words*)

On a scale of 1–10, how are you doing in praying for unbelievers and reaching out to them in Jesus' name?

7 Specific Ways to Pray for Unbelievers:

1. That they would believe in God (Rom 1:20)
2. That God would draw them to salvation (John 6:44)
3. That they will reach out to God (Acts 17:27)
4. That they would believe the Scriptures (1 Thes 2:13)
5. That someone would witness to them (Rom 10:14)
6. That they would turn from their sin (Acts 3:19)
7. That they'd believe in Jesus for salvation (John 1:12)

Your Next Steps?

So what's the Lord been saying to you today? And what does He want you to do with today's learnings? Take a few minutes to reflect over these final questions. Then pray over your thoughts, and the person you are, and the person the Lord wants you to be. **God wants to use you!** He wants you to be successful at making disciples. If you'll take what you've learned today, and apply it, you'll be amazed at what God will do through your life.

For Further Reflection

1. Have you ever made a serious commitment to disciple-making? Why or why not?
2. If you get to heaven and God asks you, "Did you do the one thing I asked you to do – make disciples?" what will you say?
3. For you to make disciples in the future better than you have in the past, based upon today's 2-part focus, what new commitments do you need to make?
4. How can you get started in these new commitments in the coming 24 hours? In the coming week? Over the next month?
5. Where will you need the most help? Is there anything you can do to get the help you need?
6. If one thing were to come out of today's study, what do you hope it would be?