

Changing a World

We all have been gifted with what we need to change another person's world. The word disciple can be a scary word for many people, but it is something that we all do throughout our lives. Christ's example of discipling others is plain to see when reading through the gospels. Jesus ordered His life to accomplish the goal of growing the Kingdom of God. His life was arranged around this end goal.

When you think about your own life, there were times that you taught someone how to tie their shoe, bait a hook, spell a word, shoot a ball, put on a bow, drive a car, and many other things. We are already disciplers, and Jesus wants us to take that natural connection with people and lead them toward His salvation.

I was recently struck by the simple method used in the scriptures of people to tell their stories. We don't have to be an evangelist or take someone through the Romans Road or some other process to lead them toward Christ. All we have to do is tell people our stories. Tell them what Jesus is doing in our lives and what He means to us.

All I need to do is tell people about decisions I am making in my life and how the will and directions of Jesus inform my choices. The thing is, I need to be intentional about telling others and be intentional about consistently letting them see how Jesus is blessing me.

When we decide why we do things as individuals or as a corporate group, we should make those decisions based on "Biblical Whys." This should be the first consideration for all that we do. Is there a biblical reason, or "why," to do what we think we should? Second, is there a preferred future "why" that supports the actions we propose?

Jesus was laser-focused on two main groups of people - the twelve and the larger groups like the seventy-two. He spent most of His time with the twelve, living into their lives. This lifestyle discipleship is much more demanding than just asking people to come to a Bible study. It is more demanding on the disciples and the discipler. It is not teacher-student oriented, at least at first. It is much more relational. There are times and places where Jesus did teach, and He was known as a person who taught with great authority. Most of the hours that Jesus spent with His disciples were in the daily connections of tasks and taking care of the needs of everyday life.

How can we readjust our lives to reflect this kind of discipleship? How can we be intentional in reshaping our relationships in this direction? Who does God have in mind for our inner circle, and who does He have in mind for the larger group that we will influence? Jesus' method was to win the world through a smaller group of people who will win others who will win still others. We see this in the lives of the twelve and the seventy-two. He spent time with them, and as their lives were transformed, they influenced others.

Paul proclaimed this same truth in 2 Timothy 2:2. *"And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful people, who will be able to teach others also."* We can see an outline of how Jesus lived His life in these words and perhaps an overview of how He intends us to live our lives. If Paul were writing to us now, he might say, "Mary, Mark, Matthew, and Madeline, the things that I have taught you in the presence of many others, take that knowledge and experience and entrust it to faithful people who will teach others. We can see the intent is to invest in an individual or smaller group with the

expectation that these people will invest in faithful and trustworthy people who will invest in still others. This process is the overarching story of the book of Acts and the early church.

It takes change, sacrifices, and a willingness to get involved in other people's lives in natural ways. One of those ways is to transform our homes from retreats and fortresses into places of hospitality. We understand our residences to be places where we can retreat to get away from all of the world's troubles. I do it, too. I get home and close my door to all the life problems or walk the trails around my house. We do need times to get away with Christ and become refreshed, but our homes can be one of our greatest evangelic and discipleship tools. It is a safe place for people to come and meet your Jesus during natural life events.

Let us look at the life of Jesus as we consider why we do what we do, individually and corporately. What behaviors of Jesus can we engage in to move us toward our preferred future (To grow the Kingdom of God)? In the TV show *Sons of Thunder*, the main character asked people where ever he went, "Do you know Jesus?" This question was his tool to connect people with the Jesus he met personally. What are your tools to connect people to Jesus? The main character in the show told the people he met what the Bible said for specific situations, and at other times he simply tried to learn about Christ with the people God brought into his life. If we take a look at our lives and adjust them so they come in line with Christ's discipleship model, we can experience the book of Acts' growth.

Maybe you can just tell the stories of you and Jesus. Perhaps you can simply tell the people whom you are discipling why you care about others, give to ministries, make principled decisions, and how Jesus' words guide you.

We can all change the world of at least one person. Will we?

