

Making Disciples

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You may be quite familiar with what many people call the "Great Commission" of our Lord in **Mt 28**.

Part of this great command to us is the call to "make disciples".

In fact, it's the first part of this "Great Commission" from our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Mt 28:18-20 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 **Go therefore and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Our great purpose on earth, regardless of what our spiritual gifts may be, includes *making disciples*,...

... and, not only "of all nations", but even in our own backyard.

Some are called to go out to the corners of the earth with the Gospel; but others are called to "begin from Jerusalem", as the Lord mentioned in **Lk 24**.

Why do we begin this way?

In context, beginning from Jerusalem means starting right in your own backyard.

Lk 24:46-47 *and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, **beginning from Jerusalem.***

Where were the apostles living when Jesus said this to them?? - In Jerusalem, right?!

Some of us are assigned to make disciples in our own backyards, and some in the next city or state, and some in the next country, or even around the world.

No place is better than another, but we are all called to partake in this divine command.

We all have certain spiritual gifts from God, and we can all have a part in His Great Commission!

We are all given this command, and this privilege, to make disciples for our Lord, which includes teaching them all of His ways over time, and showing them how to follow Jesus.

But what exactly does it mean to "make disciples"?

HOW are we to do this??

First and foremost, **this requires a loving willingness to lead someone by the hand. And it requires a personal investment in lives of other people.**

What's our illustration? – It's Jesus' own approach, and how He made disciples out of His followers.

How did HE do it? How did HE teach others?

Interestingly, after Jesus preached repentance and faith, He said "follow Me".

Maybe, my friends, we should simply imitate HIS way. :)

He didn't just say to them "come to my rabbinical school M-F from 9-3."

No... Jesus said "follow Me"!

This means He allowed them, and even encouraged them, to be observant of and involved in **His personal life!**

In other words, "learn by being with Me and following Me".

Maybe we should take the same approach in making disciples, as He commanded us.

Mk 1:14-20 *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent and believe in the gospel.**"*

*16 Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "**Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.**" 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the*

*son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately **he called them**, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.*

Again, after He preached repentance and faith, Jesus said "follow Me".

And notice, He said "follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men."

Making Disciples: Following Jesus has a purpose; specifically, to bring the light of His Gospel to others as well! (Mk 1:17)

Let's look at the next chapter:

Mk 2:13-14 *He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. 14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "**Follow me.**" And he rose and followed him.*

By saying "follow Me", Jesus allowed them ON THE JOB training! ... as my dear Pastor Collins taught years ago on ***Why Are the Apostles So Encouraging?*** (a wonderful series on nccdighton.org - it WILL encourage you)

"On the job training" means much more than sharing the Word of God, but also allowing others to see the Light of His life in action...

... to see ALL parts of His life experiences and His godly responses to those experiences... even when He was

personally attacked! (see Pastor Collin's blog on *Steel Yourself* on nccdighton.org)

Think about how Jesus opened up His entire life to His disciples, and they were able to witness His love and wisdom in action, every day!

On a side note, Jesus was never surprised by the attacks and where they came from, because He knew well what was in man!

John 2:23-25 *Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. 24 But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, 25 and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.*

Therefore, WE should never be surprised either, but instead prepare ourselves, and even steel ourselves for the unfaithful sinful nature of man along our journey.

But back to *Making Disciples*...

... not only did Jesus teach them the Word throughout their many days together, but He also taught them by one of the greatest ways any of us learns, BY EXAMPLE.

Amen? Isn't that true?!

How many times have you said to someone, regarding anything in life, "but I need to SEE it... how do you do that? Can you SHOW me???"

Our Lord Jesus, the wisest Person who ever lived, knew this was the most effective way to teach His disciples.

That's one reason He often simply said "Follow Me".

And may I submit to you that **we should do the same**; to make disciples in the same way He did, BY EXAMPLE!

However, and this is a BIG... **this requires HIS LOVE in us!!!**

This is the only way we'll be able to successfully follow in His footsteps.

Christ's love MUST be our motivation; because only His love will give us the power and humility to serve others in this precious, intimate way.

Think about it; if you commit to disciplining others in the ways of Christ, you're letting people into your life to see the good, the bad, and the ugly about you!

You will have times of victory and failure.

But out of love, you're willing to be transparent with them; to let them see you are NOT perfect, but also you'll never quit on Christ no matter what!

And we can say, by faith: *"He gave Himself up for ME on that cross... I'm so grateful, and I want to pass this on to others who need to see His grace."*

As the Apostle John wrote in **1Jn 4:19** *We love because **he first loved us.***

And may we never forget; it's the Lord's merciful ear towards us that motivates us to love Him back:

Psa 116:1-2 *I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. 2 Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.*

And the Apostle Paul wrote in **2 Co 5:14a** *For the love of Christ **compels us,***

Here's something for us all to think about and pray about:

Christ's love and forgiveness should give us an inner desire to take others "under our wing" and mentor them in how to follow Jesus.

And as we've seen, we are COMMANDED by our Lord to "make disciples" in **Mat 28...**

... so we must go forward and follow His lead, by grace through faith!

As a father might take his son with him on the job, or doing chores, or visiting the sick, etc.... **those visual examples are priceless to learn from...**

... and in a similar way, we can take people under our wing and bring them along with us, if they're willing and humble to follow the Christ.

And I want to encourage you all today that ANYONE listening to my voice **can do this!**

You DON'T have to be a Bible teacher to make a disciple!

However, you must enter into the love of Christ; the love He first had for you, as your motivating factor!

It's His amazing, sacrificial love that leads us to put ourselves aside, as He did for us!

Jesus said in **Jn 15:13** *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.*

Now, this doesn't necessarily mean physically dying for someone...

... but it means laying down your own life... putting your own preferences and comforts ASIDE for the benefit of others.

As we've learned from Jesus' perfect example; **God's love is sacrificial** and it does things for the benefit of others, not for self.

This is a BIG part of our calling in Christ Jesus!

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Now, transitioning back to actually *Making Disciples...*

There are many people out there who are curious about Jesus...

... throughout history, some have called them "seekers".

They are at least willing to "dip their foot in the pool" and see if there's something to this Jesus thing.

They may not be true believers yet, but they are curious.

They might be willing to experience what some call "on the job training".

On The Job Training: We have the opportunity to take others by the hand and show them what the Lord has shown us. It's really that simple. Keep it simple!

Again, anyone can do this, even some uneducated fisherman (i.e. the disciples!). That's exactly the point.

Any one of us could mentor our sister or brother, our cousin or nephew, our neighbor or co-worker, **anyone who seems open to learning about the Lord.**

Heck, we could be mute!!... unable to speak! - But we could still put our arm around them and take them with us on our journey, to SHOW THEM the Lord's light in our lives.

Another thing to consider:

Jesus said: *"Go out and make disciples"*! - This also means don't just sit around and be lazy.

Jesus tells us to "go out", even if it is just outside of our home in our own neighborhoods.

Making Disciples: We are to "go out", and that means to REACH out, not waiting for others to come to us. Mt 28:18-20

Mt 28:18-20 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

And again, we can and should make disciples even in our own backyards.

And in our day and age, you could even "go out" and reach out to others on the internet, especially during a pandemic (let's pray that doesn't happen again!).

There are some apps that have chat rooms such as Paltalk, where you can go in and politely introduce the Good News to people.

Or when's the last time you privately messaged an old friend to see how they're doing, leading them to the Good News in your conversation?

There are many different ways we can "go out"; we must simply remember this point:

Making Disciples: We are to "go out"; and that means to REACH out, not waiting for others to come to us. Mt 28:18-20

That said; HOW might we go forward???

How might we share with others as we disciple them?

How about reading a passage with them about Jesus' call for us to repent? Or to "count the cost" of following Him?

Once again, ANYONE can do this... amen??

How about one day showing another person a few scriptures about the deity of Christ, so they understand who Jesus REALLY is? (such as the prophecies in **Is 7:14, 9:6**, or Jesus' own statements about Himself throughout the **Gospel of John!**)

Or, how about taking them to the market with you, to let them see how you treat people, even when they don't treat you well?

And how about talking to them on the phone late at night, about what's REALLY important in life, because you CARE about them and want them to be saved?!

These are just some examples of what we can do to "make disciples", and ANYONE can do this.

*It doesn't require your ability, my friends... but it does require loving sacrifice.

Again, as our Lord said; **Jn 15:13** *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.*

Think about it this way:

*If Jesus' love for us is our motivation, then making disciples will be easy.

And at the right point, if they surrender to the Lord in humble faith, you would encourage them to get baptized, ala **Mat 28**.

😊 (and give us a call here at the church if you want help with that).

And of course, you might invite them to church at the right time, offering to give them a ride even, if you can. (just think of how a parent would lead his child, holding his hand through the process)

Each one of us are still alive on this earth to bring God glory, and THIS is one major way we do so, by showing others the light of Christ...

... by actually caring about them and mentoring them to follow Jesus!

And let me say this so you don't have unrealistic expectations... to find someone who's WILLING to be shown The Way (**Joh 14:6**) might be few and far between.

As Jesus told us, even though "many are called", it's comparatively "few" who will be saved, unfortunately 😞 ...

Matt 7:13-14 *"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."*

Matt 22:13 *For many are called, but few are chosen."*

As I've been discovering even recently, there aren't a lot of people who really want to know the Truth. They want the "self" life, instead of God's plan for them. And they are in denial that they need the Savior.

BUT, THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT IT ONLY TAKES ONE PERSON AT A TIME TO DISCIPLE.

You might invest your heart, and your time, in ONE person for the next several years and that might be your calling before the Lord takes you Home!

And that is wonderful enough, isn't it?! Jesus would have come to sacrifice His life even for only one, and we should willingly put our lives aside for only one (thus why our website is 4only1.org). **Mat 18:10-14, cp. Joh 10:14-18**

Again, **Jn 15:13** *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.*

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Even the apostle Paul encouraged people to imitate his faith...

... but for someone to imitate your faith, they must be close enough to observe it!!!

In other words, you have to be willing to let them into your life, out of love.

Here's Paul's encouragements...

Php 3:17 *Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.*

1 Co 11:1 *Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*

And here's what we are all encouraged to DO:

Heb 12:11-14 *For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. 12 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. 14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*

Strive for peace and holiness, to help others see the Lord in you.

Again, people learn best by the EXAMPLE of others...

... and if they don't see holiness in your lifestyle, if you don't **live set apart for Christ**, then they won't see the Lord in you.

That's just how it works. And remember, people are ALWAYS watching you, to see if you really believe what you say!

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Continuing on with Jesus' command to "go out and make disciples"...

We must also teach people WHY we believe what we believe.

People around us are curious as to what makes us tick, and why we have the faith that we have!

And again, **people are always observing you and your behavior** as a Christian. Whether we think that's fair or not, we are always representing Jesus Christ to others.

i.e. - They don't just want to walk around the car, they want you to show them what's underneath the hood.

Again, this is why **making disciples requires an investment in other people.**

You're willing to let them see your strengths and your weaknesses,... your soft underbelly will be exposed, vulnerable...

... but THIS very thing is what reaches people... and that's what love is willing to do.

People crave to see **real life and real faith**; someone **transparent** enough to say "oh yeah I'm a sinner, but this is what Jesus did for me".

And again, Christ's love must be our motivating factor! Without love, all our efforts will amount to NOTHING in God's eyes!
1Co 13

And we must be humble enough to share with others **that the only reason we love God is because He first loved us**, period.

1 Jn 4:19 *We love because He first loved us.*

We might say to others: "**God's love** is the reason that I'm even sharing the Truth with you right now."

Ps 116:1-2 *I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.*

2 Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

We must always give God all the glory for loving us first. (He did have to!)

Making Disciples for our Lord: We strive to show people that **they don't need us; we are just vehicles/messengers, THEY NEED GOD. They need the Lord, Himself. They need a personal relationship with the Lord who died for them. Jn 14:6, 1Jn 4:19, Ps 116:1-2**

They need to be pointed to Jesus!

John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

We must make it clear to others that it's all about HIM, it's not about us. We are simply messengers!

As we give the Gospel, we aren't to make ourselves the heroes or saviors in their lives, but we are to point to the one and only Savior, the one and only Hope of mankind.

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Making Disciples: Discipling also involves teaching; teaching others the ways of Christ.

And when Jesus said "follow Me" to the disciples, He meant it literally.

Today, we follow Him through obeying His Word and His Spirit.

We share God's promises with others, especially regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And we teach them, formally or informally, to follow the Lord's commands...

... and according to the Bible, that's what pleases the Lord, and that's what loving God looks like!

Mt 28:20a *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

Jn 14:15 *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

Obeying the Lord's commands is evidence of our love for Him.

2Ti 2:24-26 *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

Remember, my friends, as we represent the Lord to others... love is patient and love is kind! **1Co 13**

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Now, here's a special interjection from the Spirit, especially for the volatile times in which we live...

... are you ready?? brace yourself! :)

Making Disciples: As believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to transcend (rise above) things like political preferences, NOT allowing them to become a stumbling block to others, for the sake of His Gospel!

During this time of turmoil in our world, are we believers called to focus our energy and emotions on politics, OR are we called to transcend it all and keep focused on Christ, our true King??

And can we reach others who are frustrated, and even in despair over our leaders, with the joy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

THAT'S our mission, my friends! Stay focused on the prize!

Transcending Worldly Things for the Gospel's Sake: It's a trap from Satan to get preoccupied with things like politics, wrongly operating like a citizen of THIS world instead of a citizen of heaven, which we believers are! Choose to rise above it all and share with others about the true King, the eternal King, instead! Eph 2:19, Php 3:20.

This is NOT to say that we should be bad citizens; in fact, we are told in the Word of God to be good citizens. But God does not want us to get wrapped up in the things of this world!

As one of Pastor Collin's blogs taught us, you don't want to be caught playing the game on the wrong ballfield!

In other words, are you fighting the right fight in your life??

i.e.- Are you fighting to make more disciples for worldly leaders, or are you fighting to make disciples for the Lord??

I think of a boxing ring... ask yourself if you're even in the right fight.

Or do the wiles of Satan have you expending your energy on the wrong opponent?

Satan would love us to get wrapped up in the things of this world, and therefore distracted from our Lord's Great Commission!

2 Tim 2:3-4 *Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets **entangled in civilian pursuits**, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.*

That's what our calling looks like.

Eph 2:19 *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.*

Does that speak to your soul??

Php 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

If you're a believer in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then you ARE a citizen of heaven.

Ask yourselves a question; I did and I was surprised...

... When you look at yourself in the mirror, would you say you think more like a citizen of your nation, or more like a citizen of heaven???

God our Father calls us to keep our eyes on the things above, instead of on the things of the world.

Do we still have to work hard and take care of our families?? Of course, and those are good things.

But what are the eyes are your heart focused on?? Who gives you purpose in life??

Col 3:1-4 *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

Transcending Worldly Things for the Gospel's Sake: One of the greatest favors you could do for someone else is to NOT take sides politically with them, but instead give them the Hope

above all hopes; the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. 1Ti 6:15, Rev 17:14,19:16

And you might open your Bible and show your friends these verses! (or text it to them, or email it to them, to encourage them:)

Remind others who might be obsessed with politics of how TEMPORARY this life is, and that the only truly GOOD leader is the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Transcending Worldly Things for the Gospel's Sake: Don't make others stumble because of your political affiliations; instead, show them how you refuse to let that spoil your happiness in Christ. Rise above it all, for your sake and for their sakes!

Tell them and show them in the Word of God that **we live in the devil's world for now**, and Satan is seeking to capture the souls of men! **2Co 4:4, Eph 2:2, 2Ti 2:26**

2 Cor 4:4 *In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Eph 2:1-2 *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.*

With this reality in this world, we mustn't allow worldly leaders (like politicians) to become like gods to us!

We must cling in our hearts to Christ alone as our Savior (worldly leaders can't "save" us, as they are all imperfect!).

And you might help save someone from all the hysteria and hopelessness **by teaching them to trust in Christ alone**, not in worldly leaders or political parties.

1Jn 5:20-21 *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. 21 Little children, **keep yourselves from idols.***

Do you see how oddly John ends this letter?? It almost seems out of place.

But we all have a bad habit of making idols in this world.

So let's always beware of satanic distractions through worldly politics!

i.e.- Are we idolizing any political figures in this world? Are we believers relying on them and their success for our peace?? - **May it never be!!!**

Maybe, just maybe, we should adopt Jesus Christ's attitude towards earthly politics! (and this is all related to making disciples!)

We do what we need to do and should do as good citizens, but earthly politics is not the believer's main purpose in this life.

Again, Jesus is our great example in this area, as well!

For example, even though the Romans were captors over the Jews, God's own people, Jesus didn't come and condemn the Romans and fight against them, did He???

In fact, one of Jesus' 12 apostles was known as Simon the Zealot, a reference to his political and even violent aggressiveness against the Roman authorities.

But Jesus called him out of that old life into a new one of following GOD'S will for his life, not his own will.

Sometimes our thoughts SEEM right and good, but they can end in various forms of death if we don't repent and follow God's thoughts instead.

Prov 16:25 *There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death.*

We must be careful that we're not trying to do God's plan in our own way. And only learning the Word of God can protect us from this!

Isa 55:6-9 *"Seek the Lord while he may be found;*

call upon him while he is near;

7 let the wicked forsake his way,

and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

*8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.*

*9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Again...

We must be careful that we're not trying to do God's plan in our own way!! And only learning the Word of God can protect us from this!!

For example...

The Jewish people of Jesus' day also wanted the kingdom of God NOW. They wanted and expected the Messiah to come and conquer the Romans who ruled over them!

But their timing was off; it wasn't God's plan at the first.

God's plan was to first come and save His people from their own sins!

Jesus came to seek and save the lost, right??

Did the Lord Jesus, who is the promised Messiah, allow Himself to get distracted from His Father's mission for Him?

Did He lead an insurrection or rebellion against ungodly authority and political figures, like many of the Jews
THOUGHT was the right thing to do???

NO! - Jesus was focused on the Gospel; the Good News of why He came! He was focused on saving souls, one person at a time, and so should we be!

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."*

Do you think, maybe, we should follow Jesus' example in this way? :)

And remember, He simply said to His disciples "follow Me"!

In fact, regarding the government, Jesus also told people to rightly pay their taxes to earthly leaders, and of course, give to God the things that are God's.

Lk 20:22-25 *Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" 23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, 24 "Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." 25 He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*

And regarding the Temple tax, Jesus also told Peter to pay both their taxes **so that no one may stumble**, even though as sons of God they were free!!

Mt 17:24-27 *When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?" 25 He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus*

spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" 26 And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. 27 However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

Do you notice how Jesus didn't want to make other people stumble, even when He was in the right, so that they might listen to the Gospel without distraction??

We believers don't want to let any earthly things, such as politics and taxes, cause others to stumble away from listening to us about the Gospel!

Even when we're in the right, we are wrong if we don't act in love.

For the sake of others, be willing to look bad or to sacrifice, so that they might hear and be saved.

Big Picture Questions: What are we seeking to do with our lives? What's our top priority??

A Simple Biblical Answer: We should be seeking to learn what Jesus taught and did and follow His example. Amen???

Do you see how the Lord REFUSED to make a big issue out of politics or taxes, or anything related to human governments?!

Let's follow His example! :)

The Apostle Paul also tells us to pay taxes rightly while here on earth, as they take care of the ones God has allowed to be in power.

But then, Paul shows us how to transcend it all... it's really beautiful.

Ro 13:1-8 *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities.*

For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,

4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

8 *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*

As Christ's beloved ones, we can and should rise above it all, staying focused on God's love no matter what the situation!!

And we must not lose sight that our hope is in heaven, NOT in anything or anyone on this earth!

And this right, godly perspective helps us stay focused on making disciples for our Lord !

As another example...

Jesus told Pilate, an evil Roman ruler about to crucify Him, that His kingdom was not of this world!

Our Great Example: Jesus was facing a horrible death, but He refused to engage in Pilate's temptation to focus on the kingdoms of this world! Jn 18:36

Jn 18:36 *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

It may be tempting for us to take sides politically and "take off the hockey gloves" and fight and debate, especially if we think it's defending our freedoms. **BUT, our Lord wouldn't fall for it. He didn't take the bait, and neither should we believers.**

Big Picture Again! - We have the privilege of turning people from the deceptions of this world, and turning them to the Truth of Jesus Christ.

Let's be good and faithful servants, and teach others Whom we should FIRST be submitting to and obeying; namely the Lord Jesus Christ!

A big part of making disciples for Jesus Christ is not allowing anything to be a stumbling block for others, especially for those who are weaker than you spiritually, or are even unsaved. Rom 14:1-3, 15:1-7

What a shame to us if we allow earthly things to distract people from listening to the Good News with an open heart!

Ro 14:1-3 *As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.*

Ro 14:13 *Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.*

Again, our topic is "Making Disciples", and the Spirit interjected this for us so we don't make an issue of our personal political preferences.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ must remain #1 in our hearts, far and above earthly things!!

Is this your attitude? Is this your perspective on life on this earth???

Col 3:1-4 *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4*

When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

That passage can always help our eternal perspective!

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Finally, another part of "making disciples" is also **teaching others His Word.**

Again, you don't need to be able, but simply willing.

You don't need to have the ability to teach another person, just the humility.

After all, the Word says we should ALL be teachers. **Heb 5:12**

i.e.- Do you realize you could open up the Bible anywhere and read a passage with someone and God would use it for His glory???

As an exercise, let's try this right now, let's open our Bibles and see the power of God and His Word.

And depending on what the person you are discipling needs, you can bet the Spirit will open to a certain passage that they need to hear.

(let me randomly open our Bible and see what we find)

And it might be a good idea to sit down and purposely show others important passages about the Gospel!

But you don't need to plan ahead and make it a big project,...

... don't buy the lie that you don't have the ability to teach another person.

The Spirit gives us the ability, the grace and the power!!

Again, you could be mute! But the Spirit leads you to open a Bible and point out to your friend a certain passage.

IT'S NOT ABOUT US! - We must rely on His Spirit within us, and the fact that God's Word never comes back empty!

The power is not in our ability to speak, but it's in the Word of God!

Isa 55:10-11 *"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

We must NEVER forget this promise.

Here are some key passages that you might sit down and read with someone, one at a time, in no rush.

Mk 1:14-20 - Repent and follow Me.

Jn 3:1-18 - You must be born again.

Lk 9:57-62, 14:25-35 - Jesus explains it means to follow Him, to count the cost.

Eph 2:1-10 - From sinners to saints by God's grace alone.

Ro 3:9-26 - Being under sin, we're only justified by faith in Christ.

As we close this series, here are some thoughts from Pastor Joshua Mokua from Kenya.

He's had a lifetime of experience in the Word and making disciples for our Lord.

Here's what he wrote us:

When I go to a new place where we want to make disciples, I always start by asking them if they know God... like, "Do you Know God," or, "Who is God?",...

"Does God want us to have a relationship with Him?" ... "Is God good or bad?"

"Is God looking for mankind or is it mankind looking for God?" - So many questions revolve around God.

*Of course, you know this is a free discussion. They also ask many questions, where you allow some of them to give suggestions. **Then you come and give biblical reference**, for example Genesis chapter 1 and John 3:16.*

Then we discuss a bit on the attributes of God. We evaluate and monitor their interest. We pray with them and for them for the word of God to take effect.

*Even when we get one person interested, then we know God is going to establish a church there. **But we don't go there with an intent to plant a church, but with an intent of making disciples.***

Even if they request for the planting of one, don't yield easily. For many have gone out to (wrongly) preach the prosperity Gospel, that once you have a church planted, you can prophesy and have things happen for you.

(Thinking about in the Gospels how many times Jesus didn't yield easily to the people! He tested them quite often, to help them look at their motivation.)

Tell them your work is to make disciples, and it is the work of God to plant a church.

Tell them who a disciple is and why make them.

- *Jesus commanded it. Matt 28:19-20.*
- *In this way Jesus builds His church. Matt 16:18*
- *Multiplication not addition. 2 Tim 2:2.*
- *Every member of the body of Christ must be developed. Eph 4:11*
- *To develop their gifts. Eph 4:11*
- *Develop strong relationship of love within the body of Christ. John 13:34,35.*
- *To do the will of the Father and to finish His work. John 4:34-35, Rev 5:9, Matt 24:14.*
- *To occupy until Jesus returns. Matt 24:42-51, Lk 12:35-48. Jn 21:11-17.*

Steps:

- 1. Tell them*
- 2. Show them*
- 3. Have them do it.*
- 4. Correct them.*
- 5. Have them do it again.*
- 6. If correct, complement them.*

I have always followed those six steps in my teaching career and they have borne me tremendous results. I have also used them in making disciples and they have worked.

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Now, this isn't the only way to make disciples. We are each uniquely made by our Lord and should be ourselves when approaching others with the Gospel.

But these are just some ideas you could try, or at least dwell upon.

Here's some final advice on the subject:

Making Disciples: Spend some time in prayer. Ask God to affect your heart with the urgency of the mission He has given you and the other Christians in your life. Ask Him for the strength, wisdom, and perseverance to pursue His mission by the power of His Word and His Spirit within you!

Each of our relationships with God are very personal.

Go to Him and ask Him for help, because He is a good Father who is eager to answer us.

Luke 11:13 *"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"*