

Pastors and Leaders
ONE-TWO-THREE INFINIT Y



WHY IS DISCIPLE-MAKING SO INTIMIDATING?

The Challenge – Disciple-making is *the* fundamental way Jesus establishes his kingdom on earth. Yet, many Christians are uncomfortable with the idea that they are disciple-makers. For example:

- Many Christians believe disciple-making means filling out a notebook at a coffee shop with a bunch of other people. They believe they could never lead this kind of group.
- Or, they imagine it means walking around a busy, public location asking people if they know where they are going to go when they die. For many, this feels too confrontational.
- Or, they think that it is something an expert does – a highly-trained pastor or someone more “spiritual” than they.
- While any of these examples may be subsets of disciple-making, if considered to be the exclusive method for disciple-making, they limit who and how disciples are made.
- At its core, disciple-making is simply helping others grow spiritually.

The Response – When Jesus said to *all* his disciples, “Go and make disciples,” he was teaching that the way God establishes his Kingdom on earth is for each of his followers to engage in the ongoing process of helping others grow spiritually.

- Jesus commissioned this undertaking so that disciple-making saturates each moment of a Christian’s day. Then the Kingdom of God invades all of life, just like yeast permeates the entire loaf of bread.
- What follows is a common sense, simple approach to disciple-making that everyone can easily use. The goal is to demystify, decentralize and simplify Jesus’ expectation that his people would be disciple-makers.

A SIMPLE WAY TO THINK ABOUT DISCIPLE-MAKING AND IMPLEMENT IT INTO YOUR LIFE

Making disciples is more straight-forward and accessible than we think. Here are the very basic truths. A phrase as basic as “1, 2, 3, *Infinity!*” can guide us.

 **“One!”** There is ONE Lord who desires that everyONE would experience his transforming love and abundant life. Jesus, cares more about disciple-making than we do, and so...

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- The Holy Spirit works actively at drawing people, both Christians and non-Christians, into a deeper experience of God’s love.
- If this is true, we can organize our lives around that principle.
- To do that, we carry two profound interests within our soul.

 **“Two!”** Every disciple has TWO concerns:

- First, they listen for the Lord’s guidance. And...
- Second, they follow that direction.
- Listen and Follow -- this is how Jesus summed up the Christian life (check out John 10:3). This is the path to spiritual growth.
- This process is not always easy, but neither is it complicated.
- If disciple-making is the simple process of assisting others to grow spiritually, we do so by helping them listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow. Of course, we want to help them respond to the Lord’s direction, so we approach every interaction with these questions in mind.

 **“Three!”** Every disciple-maker asks (or prays) THREE questions in every interaction with another person:

- How can I help you? (Disciple-making is always initiated with service which helps another to experience our support. Then, at the appropriate moment ask...)
- What is God saying to you? (This helps another to listen)
- How are you going to respond? (This helps them to follow)

 **“Infinity!”** God is working in INFINITY ways, more ways than we can control or comprehend.

- Because God relentlessly calls everyone to experience Christ’s love and abundant life, the invitation to follow goes out to every person around us (and around the world.) Even those moments when we can’t see his work, we are assured of his work and presence.
- This releases us to confidently and to intentionally address God’s work with others. We experience freedom to serve. No guilt. No pressure.
- We recognize that we are only responsible to listen and follow into the disciple-making process, not the response of the other person.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR MAKING DISCIPLES

- How are these ideas new or different from your previous understanding of disciple-making?
- What are your concerns regarding these ideas of disciple-making?
- What are the possibilities for the Church if God’s people actually embrace these ideas?

TRANSFORMATIVE QUESTIONS

- **Insight** – What insights has the Lord given to you today about disciple-making?
- **Application** – How do you plan to respond to those insights?
- **Support** – Who can provide encouragement and accountability to you as implement your plan?