

# **Kingdom Living and Disciple Making - Discipleship Made Simple**

Mano "D.L.E." Juvane

## **Executive Summary**

The Lord Jesus Christ was sent by God the Father to earth with a mission. The four Gospels in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) reveal to us that His mission was to demonstrate the Kingdom of God through preaching and teaching the Word of God, healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing the lepers and making disciples (Matt. 4:17-25). The main task of His mission was His death on the cross, which would redeem mankind and creation from its fallen state (Jn. 3:16; Col. 1:16)

After His death and Resurrection, He instructed His disciples to go into all nations and make more disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). By demonstrating Kingdom culture through His life and ministry, He is the perfect example of a Person who had a missional perspective of life. His followers ought to follow His example and have the same mindset, which will result in a fruitful life and multitudes of souls flocking into the Kingdom of God worldwide.

## **Target Audience**

This work is for Christians from all facets of life, whether it be Church leaders, Business men, Doctors and Lawyers. Because every believer is instructed to obey the Great Commission, this teaching is applicable to all followers of Christ.

## **Introduction**

Looking at Church history, the common traditional belief was that clergymen (Church leaders) had a higher calling than the laymen (regular church members).

However, this contradicts the Word of God, for all believers are exhorted to make their calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10). In other words every believer has a high calling from God, and has an equal responsibility to make disciples and demonstrate the Kingdom of God.

## **The Kingdom of God**

The Kingdom of God (or Kingdom of Heaven) was the central theme of messages preached by John the Baptist and Jesus. In the Garden of Eden, mankind once lived in sinless perfection before the Lord, and was given dominion and authority over creation by their Creator (Gen. 1:28). At this point mankind lived according to God's perfect order, and submitted to His Lordship. In other words, God's Kingdom was established

Things changed when mankind decided to succumb to Satan's deception and sin against the Lord. Mankind became sinful and fallen beings, and the God-given authority and dominion over creation they once had was lost as a result (Gen. 3:13-24). The once immortal mankind became subject to sickness, physical and eternal death (eternal separation from God).

God the Father sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to restore God's original order. "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" were the first words He preached as He began His ministry (Matt. 4:17). What did He mean by that? Mankind was living according to worldly standards and worldly ways, and had carnal and worldly ways of thinking.

In other words Jesus was telling them "I know you are living according to worldly standards. But guess what! God is restoring His original order back to earth. Therefore turn from your worldly ways, because His Kingdom is at hand." Jesus Himself is the King of the Kingdom, and His followers are to submit to His rulership - that is Kingdom living.

The Kingdom of God is not a visible Kingdom, but a spiritual Kingdom. It is a Kingdom that is within every believer in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, and who have submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Matt. 12:28). Jesus also taught that the Kingdom of God, and righteousness of God ought to be the priorities of our lives, and everything that we need in life would automatically follow us if we lived according to this principle (Matt. 6:33).

Looking at Jesus' ministry, lifestyle and character, we get revelation of Kingdom culture, Kingdom authority, and Kingdom reality. A culture is defined as the values, norms and common beliefs among a group of people. By preaching and teaching the Kingdom of God, He taught us God's values, norms and beliefs. E.g. in the worldly cultures teach us to retaliate when people wrong us, but the Kingdom cultural belief in this regard is to love our enemies (Lk. 6:35).

Kingdom authority is demonstrated through His life by His authority over sickness, death, demons and nature. He healed the sick, raised the dead, cast our demons and commanded the storm to halt (Matt. 4:23-24; Mk 4:39). After Jesus did all of this during the 3 years of His ministry, He commissioned His disciples to go into the world and do the same. He promised that because He was going to Father, we would be able to not only to what He did, but greater (Jn. 14:12).

### **What Does This Mean for Us?**

It's simple. We just need to obey our Master. Many times we may think that the careers and field of study we pursue are simply our choices. Many times, we make these choices because God has given us passions for those fields, and graced us with talents and abilities that enable us to operate well in those areas. For example, if you are a believer who always dreamed about being a dentist since childhood or youth, and you excelled academically at medical school, chances are that God has called you to be dentist.

Others have a calling to Five-fold ministry. Ephesians 4:11 talks about the Five-fold ministry offices, which are the offices of a Pastor, Evangelist, Prophet, Teacher and Apostle. Verses 12 on the same chapter go on to tell us that the Five-fold ministry exist to equip the church with the Word of God, in order to prepare them for the work of the ministry.

Whether we are Christians in Church leadership, or cutting hair in a barbershop, we are equally called by God to represent His Kingdom on earth and to make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts. 1:8).

### **The World Needs You**

Although they may not realize it, the people of the world who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior really need you. If you don't know it, God has called you to be a missionary in the field you are positioned in, whether you are a student or in the workplace. Begin to realize that the reason God has graced us to pursue our careers is not simply to make a good living and accomplish our agendas, but primarily to position us to accomplish His agenda - the Great Commission.

The world is in a fallen state; billions of lost souls on their way to Hell, corruption, economic crisis (even in the most developed economies), and political instability. However the solution of all the problems we face through the ages is the same, preaching and teaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and making disciples like our Lord Jesus did (Acts. 1:1).

### **Before You Make a Disciple Become a Disciple**

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying,  
"All authority has been given to Me in heaven  
and on earth. Go therefore and **make disciples***

*of all the nations, baptizing them in the name  
of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Matt. 28:18-20

First of all, before you are a Church leader, teacher, medical doctor or student, you are a disciple of Jesus Christ entrusted with the duty of making disciples of **all the nations**. But before you make disciples, you need to be a disciple of Christ Himself. Being a disciple of Jesus means that you follow Jesus' example as you live your life, despite your human flaws and imperfections.

Here below is a short list of some characteristics of a disciple of Christ:

- i) **Character** - A disciple of Jesus will have a Christ-like character. Galatians 5:22 gives a list of the 9 fruit of the Spirit.
- ii) **Lifestyle** - As a disciple of Christ, you should live your lifestyle that lines up with Jesus' lifestyle, applying what He both did and taught as He walked upon the face of the earth (Acts. 1:1).
- iii) **Relationship with Christ** - A follower of Jesus has an intimate relationship with Jesus, through reading the Bible and prayer.
- iv) **Disciple maker** - Another important mark of a disciple is a desire to make other disciples, as the Lord instructed us to do.

Always remember that a disciple is never a perfect person. Although we will stumble and fall on our journey, we must always maintain a repentant attitude. Jesus Christ alone is the Source of grace for this challenging Christian walk (Heb. 4:15). As He taught us, the road is straight and narrow, and only by His grace and the power of His Spirit may we walk on victoriously.

**Discipleship Made Practical**

Although there are various strategies and techniques that ministries develop and implement in order to make discipleship effective in our communities, there are simple and practical methods that we may apply that may really impact sinners. One doesn't need to be a spiritual giant or Bible scholar in order to obey the Great Commission. Despite our weaknesses and shortcomings, it all starts with a willing heart.

Here are some simple techniques and principles we may apply in order to make impact and produce more followers of Christ in our lives:

1) **Relationships with sinners** - Jesus clearly stated that His followers are in the world but not of the world (John 17:14). In other words we live in this world physically, but do not live according to the ways of the world. It is therefore key to have relationships and friendships with people in the world, but yet being vigilant enough not to compromise our faith.

Some of the people that Jesus greatly impacted were not people that Jesus preached sermons to, but simply people He fellowshiped with. An example is Jesus' relationship with Zaccheus. Zaccheus was a chief tax collector, and had a very bad reputation for cheating people with money. Jesus didn't preach any sermon or implement any strategy to save Zaccheus. All he did was dine and fellowship with Zaccheus. Through that Zaccheus saw the light in Him, and decided to repent and pay back the people he had duped (Lk. 19:1-9).

ii) **Stay close Jesus** - This is the most vital principle, as being a Christian is defined as being a disciple (follower) of Christ (Acts 11:26). We ought to have an intimate relationship with Him, by prayer to Him and spending time daily reading the Word of God, and applying the Word of God in every area of our lives. Despite your imperfections, your life will begin to shine bright in this dark world, and people will be attracted to the lifestyle and follow.

An intimate relationship with Jesus combined with relationships with sinners who

don't know Him will inevitably produce more followers of Jesus.

iii) **Building bridges with sinners** - Begin to look at common interests and hobbies you may have with somebody you are trusting God to save. Besides this being an effective way of building relationships with sinners, they will perceive the truth of God as relevant when they see that you have common interests. Identify these common interests, and use it as a bridge to build upon, that will make you connect with them.

In our lives we can also be intentional about developing key relationships with sinners. However one must be careful not to engage in sinful activities that may get you entangled in sin. E.g. think about the hobbies, sports and fun activities that you common enjoy. If you both like soccer, try and schedule times to watch soccer games together. Combined with prayer, this will result in them seeing the light in you, and eventually pursuing it.

iv) **Throwing the "Matthew Party"** - This may be more applicable to people who have a flare for organizing get together (this may be in the form of a braai, party etc.). In Luke chapter 5, Jesus called Levi and commanded him to follow Him. Soon after that Levi through a party, and invited several tax collectors, and Jesus Himself was present.

Although Levi didn't do much preaching or teaching of the Word, he exposed more sinners to the truth by throwing a party and connecting them to the Truth Himself (Jn. 14:6). We can apply this same simple strategies by inviting sinners to our braais, dinners, parties or get togethers, which also gives them exposure to God's truth by connecting them to other believers and ourselves.

v) **Witnessing to unbelievers in a relevant way** - Although there are many contemporary methods of sharing the Gospel (especially due to technology), there is no substitute for witnessing to unbelievers. The Lord Jesus clearly instructed His disciples to be a witness for Him prior to His ascension (Acts. 1:8). However, one

must be intentional about sharing the Gospel in a way that is relevant, without having to "shove it down peoples' throats".

*But you shall receive power after the Holy  
Spirit comes upon you; and you shall be  
witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea  
and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

Acts 1:8

The Bible verse shown above clearly teaches us that one of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to give us power to be witnesses for Jesus. Our lives must first be a testimony (i.e. not perfect, but witness that we follow Jesus), and we must share the truth to our unsaved friends and family members. In John chapter 4, Jesus had a general conversation with the Samaritan woman which began by Him simply asking her for water. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, He shifted the direction of the conversation and preached the Gospel to her by eventually stating the He was the Living Water that would quench all her thirst.

### **Conclusion**

I hope that this writing cleared you from the misconception the preaching the Gospel of Christ is only the "preacher's duty". When God created you, He knew that with the skin color, talents and gifts, voice tone, career and ministry that He gave you, you would be able to reach certain multitudes with the Gospel. I pray that this may translate to more effective witnessing for Jesus in your life, and more souls flocking into the Kingdom of God.