

What Can We Do to Make Disciples?

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When I started teaching this sermon series, I thought: “The Bible is so big it would take years together to develop a good understanding of God’s Word.” Therefore, I felt I should lay a good foundation on which to build:

- 1) We have clearly understood we have a problem of sin and death;
- 2) We have learned that Jesus is the answer to our problem of sin and death;
- 3) We have seen that Jesus, as God, removes our sin and gives eternal life;
- 4) We know that Jesus has given us His Spirit to help us be Christians; and,
- 5) We are commanded that our mission is to make disciples of Jesus.

What can we do to make disciples? Specifically, what are the words and deeds that need to be a part of our lives so that others have a chance to hear about Jesus? When is it a good time to start telling people about Jesus?

Of course, it can help to know a bit about the Bible. Learning about doctrines of Christianity can be important, too. Like, what is: “Saved by Grace through Faith?”; “What is Faith”; or, “What is Grace?” Is it okay to tell about Jesus’ love for people and, yet, not be able to fully explain something? (The answer is “Yes”). How much do I need to know to “witness” to others? Well, we need to tell whatever we know. We start from wherever we are!

I have been studying the Bible since I was a small boy, if you can imagine me as a small boy. It is true; I was once a small boy. I was also very “busy” as my teachers would tell my parents. However, that is a story for another day.

At 5-years-old, I was invited to a little summertime Bible school in the yard at a neighbor’s house. After playing games and having fun, she explained about Jesus. Then, the nice neighbor lady asked who wanted to have Jesus live in their heart. I raised my hand and, I said a prayer. I do not remember what I said exactly. But, I remember that I looked up at the bright blue sky and asked Jesus into my heart.

50 years later, I can look back and tell you that I never expected my life to go this way. Even though I had plans to be all kinds of things in my youth, God had His plans for my life. In my younger school days, I wanted to be a fire fighter or a police officer. I also thought it would be great to be an astronaut or a scientist. Of course, I did not want to be a crazy, mad scientist like in the movies. As I got into high school, I wanted to be a famous musician. Then, I started studying in university to be a choir director. I soon discovered that writing Christian Music and performing were some of my unique gifts, more than becoming a music teacher or choir director.

Instead, I headed off to Bible College to learn more about Jesus. I also wanted to figure out how I could write and record music and sing and play concerts around the world. I even became a little famous as a Christian performer in my region in the state of Washington. Eventually I had a chance to travel around quite a bit singing at churches, Bible camps, street corners and wherever I could find people for whom I could sing.

I also spent time living in Russia. I travelled around Russia performing in concert halls and singing at schools and colleges. I did interviews for newspapers, radio shows and television. Everywhere I went, I told about Jesus. I talked about who Jesus in the Bible was. Then, I told people about His love and forgiveness. On one trip, after my yearlong visa was about to expire, the Russian government refused to renew my visa. I had thought I may stay in Russia for many years. Now, I had to leave.

I also thought that spending my life hiking and camping in the beauty of nature in the mountains would fulfill me, until I was not able to do that anymore. At one point, I thought having a Mercedes and a big Ford truck would make me happy. Yet, not long after I had gotten each of those vehicles, life forced me to get rid of them (long stories). I had even thought that being a famous Christian singer would be my life's calling. In the end, I cannot tell you how many times my life was full of turns in the road I had not expected. Sometimes, I was disappointed because my life was not following my plans and my dreams.

Yet, here I am on Jeju Do. I am continuing to fulfill *God's* plans for my life. I had never heard of Jeju as of last July 17th. Then, Dr. Kim and his wife Insoon came to talk with the president of my seminary. The next day, the seminary president, Dr. Schultz, told me about Jeju. We could not even pronounce it correctly. ("Je je, Ju je, Ja ja?") I thought, "That is nice. I am sure someone will have a good time doing ministry on Jeju." At the end of our conversation, though, Dr. Schultz said, "I think *you* should think about going." My response was, "I don't think so." As I was leaving the building and walking down the stairs to my car, I saw, "This is it! This is it!" flashing in my mind like a neon sign. I turned back around and got the phone number for Dr. Kim. Here I am!

I have been involved in worship leading, Bible teaching and evangelizing wherever I have been. Whether I was paid or not in ministry, I have kept sharing Jesus wherever and whenever I can.

On a side note, pastors and worship leaders are people, too. We are all sinners and, we all need to be encouraged. Please, support and protect pastors. Be kind and gracious. We all know that being a teacher gives us greater responsibility but, it also paints a target on our backs. The devil is constantly looking "for whom he may devour". So, can we promise to work together with pastors and leaders to help them. We need shepherds on Earth.

Can we be nice sheep, too? Can we be kind and not overly critical? Could we offer to help more often rather than complaining or gossiping? Could we be thankful for all that we have, not be discouraged for all we do not have? Of course, I say this knowing how wonderful you all are. You are all quite amazing and so hospitable. I am grateful for your kindness and love for me. Sometimes, I am reminding myself that I can do better.

So, what are the things we can do to share the love of Jesus? The reason I told you all these experiences from my life is to give examples of how God has been involved in my life. You have your own gifts and talents that God gave you to share His love. We need to learn more about Jesus as we live together in the Church. We need to read the Bible. We should pray for God's will and God's wisdom. We need to learn to

tell people who Jesus is and what He did. We should explain to people what Jesus has done in *our* lives. We need to share Jesus' teachings found in the Bible.

Yet, following Jesus is not like following Buddha or Mohammed. They were mortal and sinful men. They died and, they are still dead. Jesus was sinless. Jesus' perfect righteousness conquered death. Jesus lives today! No one else in the history of humanity has conquered death. We are disciples of *the* Risen Savior, who came from Heaven! There is no comparison to any manmade religion. We follow Jesus, who is God in human form.

By the way, if one takes Buddha out of Buddhism, there are still the teachings of Buddhism. If Mohammed is taken out of Islam, there are still the teachings of Islam. Nothing changes. However, if we take Jesus out of Christianity, there is nothing left in which to believe. Christianity depends on the Words *and* deeds of the person of Jesus Christ. The Bible is meaningless without the proof of a living, Risen Savior in Jesus. Without Jesus, there is no acceptable sacrifice for sin. Therefore, our sins are not forgiven. We die condemned by our sin. Without Jesus, no one has hope. Without the forgiveness Jesus offers through His sacrifice on the cross, we would all be destined for Hell, forever. Jesus Changes Everything!

That is why we share the Good News of salvation in *Jesus only*. Jesus commands us to “...**make disciples of all nations...**” Nations in Greek is ἔθνος, (eth'-nos) which means a race, a people, a nation, Gentiles. This means cultural groups or groups that are related by languages and customs. In Revelation 5:9, the Lamb who was slain is worshiped in Heaven. That is Jesus. Here, we get a deeper understanding to describe all the types of people Jesus saves:

9And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, **10**and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”
(Revelation 5:9-10)

We see “every tribe and language and people and nation” in Heaven. Regardless of how we describe “our people”, we need to do everything possible to reach *all* people for Jesus! Everyone needs to hear about Jesus and choose to follow Him, or not. Jesus made us a “Kingdom and priests to our God”. It is our responsibility to share Jesus, however we can to “every tribe and language and people and nation”. So, what can we do to make disciples? We need to learn and grow in Jesus. In the process, we must tell others about Jesus and His love. However we can share Jesus, it is our responsibility as a “Kingdom and priests to our God” to offer salvation to as many as possible. While we have breath in our lungs, we must tell others about Jesus. That is how we can *all* make disciples, anywhere, anytime, until we breathe our last breath.

Let us pray...