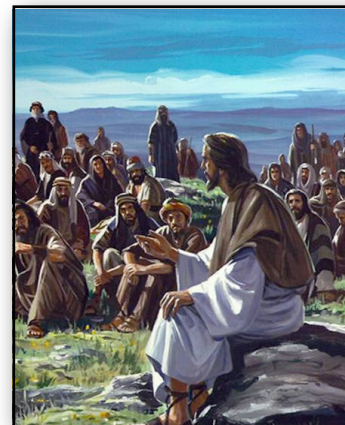


PREPARING TO SERVE

Jesus gave his Great Commission to his disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, but he had been preparing them for service for the entire three years they had been together. He had not only taught them by word; he had also modeled life to them.

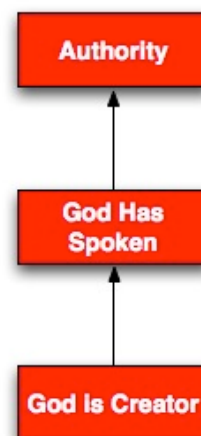
Matthew 28:18-20 says, “*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.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



1. What is the meaning of Matt. 28:18-20?
2. What does this passage teach you about Jesus and his authority?

The call to discipleship is grounded in the authority of Jesus. Our Lord claims to have “all authority in heaven and on earth.” This authority has been given to him by the Father (1 Corinthians 15:27-28).

In lesson 1 we learned that God has authority because He created man. The creation itself is foundational to our faith in the God who made us. A second source of authority we saw in lesson 1 was the Bible. The Bible is authoritative because it is from God, it is truth, and it contains the very Word of God. Now we see that Jesus himself has authority because it has been given to him by the Father and because of the resurrection.



By his authority, Jesus calls on his disciples to 1) go into all the world (*ethnos*)¹; 2) make disciples; 3) baptise; and 4) teach. Thus the process of discipleship is more than simply telling someone about Jesus. The one led to Christ must continue to be taught even after he is baptised.

This process of discipleship has been instituted by Jesus, the one to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given. He has instructed his disciples to follow this pattern to make disciples of all the world.

3. How would you define the words “disciple” and “discipleship”?

4. Why did Jesus concentrate his efforts while on this earth on 12 men?



From observing Jesus, in the pages of the Gospels, it is clear that he did more than simply lecture to his disciples for the three years they travelled together. Jesus shared life with these men. They lived together, ate together, and worked together. Jesus not only told them how to live and what to teach; he also modeled life in their presence. In most areas of our lives, we learn better when someone comes alongside us and teaches us.

As we disciple others, it is vital that we learn to share our life with them. We will be much more effective if we demonstrate how to live, not just tell others how to live.

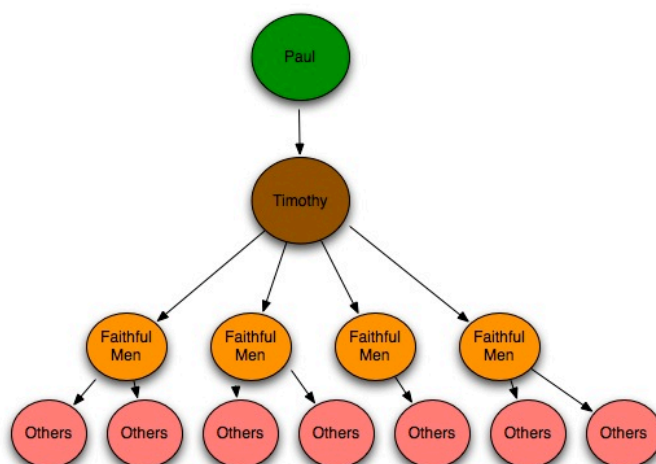
Jesus spent great amounts of time with twelve men because investing in twelve men produced greater results than small snippets of time spent with multitudes of men. Imagine for instance if one evangelist led twelve people to Christ in a year. While we would rejoice at such victory, how much greater would be the harvest if he invested time in twelve men who then were prepared to go out and reach twelve more men. In this way, we are able to multiply our efforts. After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples who were now well-trained carried out the task of taking the gospel to the world.

¹The meaning of *ethnos* is: “a group of individuals or people bound together by the same manners, customs and other common distinguishing features.” Weerstra, Hans M. *Mission to the Nations: A Biblical Word Study of Ethnos* in the International Journal of Frontier Missions, Vol. 9:3 July 1992.

In no way do we wish to diminish the evangelistic zeal of anyone, but we also recognise that with our limited time and human frailty one person may not be able to reach, teach, and train everyone he might wish to reach, teach, and train. While we should reach multitudes when we can, we must also invest in true discipleship.

5. How does 2 Timothy 2:2 support the efforts of working intensely with small numbers of people?
6. What does 1 Corinthians 4:17 and 2 Timothy 2:2 tell you about Paul's relationship to Timothy?

Notice the stair step approach that Paul supports in 2 Timothy 2:2. Paul taught Timothy who taught faithful men who taught others. The multiplying effects of this type of discipleship should not be underestimated. Not only is it practical and effective, but most important: it is the example that we find in the Bible.



7. Have the churches where you have been involved been successful in making disciples? Why or why not?
8. What did Jesus say about discipleship in Luke 14:25-33?
9. What does 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 teach about the authority of Jesus in the life of the disciple?

In preparation for the next lesson please answer as completely as possible the following questions.

1. Read Luke 9:18-27. For this passage, what did Jesus expect from his disciples?
2. **Memorise** Luke 9:23-24.
3. What traits would you expect to see in a true disciple of Jesus? (List as many as you can and provide Scripture references where you are able.)
4. Where are some areas where you fall short of what you might like to be in your own discipleship? (You do not need to answer on this sheet unless you wish to do so.)