God's Will for You: to Make a Disciple

(Created to Reproduce)

Discipleship Series

Introduction: God's Goal in Saving us: Christlikeness and then Reproduction of Christlikeness in Others

How do you know whether you are a Disciple?

Are you a true citizen of Heaven? (Matthew 7:21)
Is your life characterized by Obedience, Submission, Love (Jn. 13:35), Prayer & Bible Study

I. WHY SHOULD I DISCIPLE SOMEONE ELSE?

1. BECAUSE GOD COMMANDS DISCIPLESHIP

A. DISCIPLESHIP IS THE GREAT COMMISSION (Mt. 28:18-20) ("Teach" = lit. "make disciples")

B. DISCIPLESHIP WAS THE PRACTICE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

1. Discipleship is expounding "the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:23-28)

2. Discipleship is declaring "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:18-20, 26-27)

For full discipleship to take place, you need:

a. public teaching of the Word in a church (see Acts 11:26)

b. private teaching of the Word in a home (see Acts 18:23-28)

Personal discipleship does not contradict the ministry of a church--it complements it. You need both! Don't substitute one for another. A pulpit ministry does not substitute for personal evangelism and discipleship, and vice-versa.

3. Discipleship is giving to others what has been committed to you (II Tim. 2:2)

   a. Christ discipled the apostles (who were called His disciples (see the Gospels)
   b. The apostles discipled Barnabas (implied in Acts 4:36)
   c. Barnabas discipled Paul (Acts 9:27)
   d. Paul discipled Timothy (I Tim. 1:2)
   e. Timothy discipled Ephesian saints (I Tim. 1:3)
   f. Paul discipled Aquilla & Priscilla (implied in Acts 18:2, 18)
   g. Aquilla & Priscilla discipled Apollos (Acts 18:23-28)
   h. Apollos discipled the Corinthian saints (Acts 19:1, I Cor. 1:12)

4. Discipleship is the goal of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-13)

2. BECAUSE NEW BELIEVERS NEED DISCIPLING

A. NEW BELIEVERS (like newborn infants) NEED LOVE, PROTECTION, FOOD AND TRAINING

1. They are more <u>vulnerable</u> than mature Christians

   a. More easily deceived by Satan (I Th. 3:5)

   b. More easily led astray by false religions, false movements, and false teachings (Acts 20:29-31)

2. They have a great <u>potential for growth</u> (change)

   a. Fastest growth rate is in early childhood (just as the early stages of growth are vital to an infant, the early stages are vital to a new convert)

   b. Patterns are established early that will continue

B. NEW BELIEVERS NEED TO KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE IN CHRIST (II Cor. 5:17)

1. Teach him that he has a <u>new faith</u> (change in beliefs) (Acts 2:42 - "continued in apostles' doctrine)

2. Teach him that he has a <u>new food</u> (change in diet) (I Pet. 2:2; Mt. 4:4)

3. Teach him that he has a <u>new family</u> (change in relationships) (Prov. 24:1; I Cor. 15:33; II Cor. 6:14-16)

4. Teach him that he has a <u>new</u> <u>fight</u> (change in conflicts) (Put on new man - Eph. 4:24; I Thes. 3:1-5; II Tim. 3:12; James 1)

5. Teach him that he has a <u>new</u> <u>future</u> (Eph. 2:1-10)

   a. Change in <u>direction</u> (new goals) (Eph. 2:1-5)

   b. Change in <u>destiny</u> (new hope) (Eph. 2:6-7)

      1) We anticipate <u>no judgment for sin</u>
      --We face no condemnation (Ro. 8:1)
      --We have passed from death to life (Jn. 5:24-25)

      2) We anticipate a <u>new body</u> (I Cor. 15:51-58)

      3) We anticipate a <u>new home</u> (II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-8)
      We must live like citizens of Heaven - Phil. 1:27; 3:20; Eph. 2:19

   c. Change in <u>duty</u> (new responsibilities) (Eph. 2:8-10)

Serve (work for) Christ and His children with love as your motive (Jn. 13:34; I Jn. 2:7-8).

We are not saved to sit, soak, and sour, but to <u>serve</u>!

C. NEW BELIEVERS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT CHRIST IS NOW THE LORD OF THEIR LIVES.
(Teach them the Lordship of Christ)

1. Who is Jesus?

   a) He is Master & Lord (Jn.13:13)

   b) He is over all things (Col.1:16-18)

   c) Every knee shall bow before Him (Phil.2:9-11)

      (He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords - Rev.19:16)

2. How must we respond?

   a) Follow Him (without question) (Lk.5:27-28)
   (cp. Lk.9:23: To do so you must: deny self die to self)

   b) Obey Him (Lk.6:46)

   c) Serve Him (Jn.12:26)

   d) Live for Him (II Cor.5:15)

      (see Rom. 12:1,2)

Christ is Lord over our: personal lives, family relationships, use of money & time, friendships, possessions, careers, etc.

If God commands discipleship, we must obey.

If new believers need it, we must love them enough to commit ourselves to this great task.

II. HOW SHOULD I DISCIPLE SOMEONE ELSE?

How Do You Make a Disciple?
(Selected Scriptures)

"Over the past generation or two a number of worldwide organizations has placed a strong emphasis on disciple making. However, there has been much confusion about what it means to make disciples. Some have emphasized that it means leading people to Christ. Others have stressed having people study a series of books on selected topics which various organizations have prepared.

However, making disciples is more than leading people to Christ or having them study a series of books. (In this study) we will see that making disciples is sharing our lives with people so that they become like us whether that is good or bad. Only as we are becoming like Christ will those with whom we are sharing our lives become like Christ. That is why Paul said in I Corinthians 11:1, " Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ." (NKJV)

In order to share our lives with people we have to spend time with them in a variety of different situations." (Church Planting Through Disciple Making - 1997 Duane L. Anderson, p.3)

Contrast the Greek theoretical impartation of facts & knowledge verses the Hebrew practical impartation of wisdom by lifestyle & example. Jesus taught using the Hebrew method and not the Greek style.

A Be all that you need to be with a real love for Jesus Christ (Mt. 22:37)
Matthew 22:37
Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

B. Pray fervently for someone to pour your life into (Luke 6:12-13
And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.
And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

C. Start developing a relationship & friendship with the fellow-Christian, who God leads you to disciple

Men disciple men
Women disciple women (Titus 2)

1. Your disciple will need your time & attention (Mk. 3:13-14)

Mark 3:13-14
And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach

2. Your disciple will need to see your Christ-like Example (I Cor. 4:16, 11:1)

1 Cor. 4:16
Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.
1 Cor. 11:1
Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

I Timothy 4:12

Being an example is a vital element to influencing others for God:

- Joh 13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you
- 1Pe 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:
- Php 3:17 - Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
- 2Th 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us
- 1Th 1:7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.
- 1Pe 5:3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
- I Thess.1:6-7 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

1 Timothy 4:12 - Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

"Despise" - To think down upon; to under-rate; to think slightly of.
Some might think: "what does he know about God, spiritual matters, about fathering, etc. He's but a young man, inexperienced, etc.

"Youth" - not necessarily someone who is a teenager or pre-adolescent.
"In the ancient world a person between 30 and 40 years old could be considered young (Kelly). One Rabbi said that a person at 30 was fit for authority and at 40 he was fit for discernment (M, Aboth V, 21) (cited by Reinecker, p. 627).

Being young is no excuse for a bad testimony, language ("word"), lifestyle ("conversation"), relationships ("love"), attitude ("spirit"), convictions ("faith"), morals ("purity").

"Be thou an example" (present, middle, imperative - ginou from ginomai) - Become thou. Regardless of your past, start setting a good example. Perhaps you have been a failure in your past; this word points to a new beginning.

The present tense implies a continual (lifelong) example.
The middle voice implies choice and determination (an act of the will) that you will decide to be exemplary.
The imperative mood implies that it is an obligation not an option for you to be the right example.

"Example" - tupos from which we translate "type."

Tupos primarily denoted "a blow" (from a root tup--, seen also in tupto, "to strike"), hence,
(a) an impression, the mark of a "blow," <John 20:25>;
(b) the "impress" of a seal, the stamp made by a die, a figure, image, <Acts 7:43>;
(c) a "form" or mold, <Rom. 6:17> (see RV);
(d) the sense or substance of a letter, <Acts 23:25>;
(e) "an ensample," pattern, <Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5>, "pattern"; in an ethical sense, <1 Cor. 10:6; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thes. 1:7; 2 Thes. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12>,
(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)
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Brethren, we need to be . . .
--a mold worth duplicating.
--a pattern worth copying
--a model worth imitating

"Of the believers" - God is not calling upon us to model the world (TV examples), but what a believer should be.

--He has unique standards for His children.
--He is not calling upon the lost to be an example (they cannot be).

Example . . .
1) Example plays an important part in th formation of character; and its influence is felt more than that of precept.
2) Example may be good or bad (it is never neutral).
3) Example is teaching by action

1) Be an example worth copying in your LANGUAGE
(Can your disciple model how you TALK?)
"In word" - in speech; refers here to what you say and how you say it. The content of your words and the manner in which you say them.
Inflection, tone, pitch, etc., communicate more than the actual words you say!
Eph. 4:29 - Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

2) Be an example worth copying in your LIFESTYLE
(Can your disciple model how you ACT?)
"Conversation" - An old English word which meant behavior, conduct, manner of living, or lifestyle.
"Your walk talks and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks."

3) Be an example worth copying in your RELATIONSHIPS
(Can your disciple model how you LOVE?)

What is your relationship to your family?

4) Be an example worth copying in your ATTITUDE
(Can your disciple model your ZEAL FOR GOD?)

The first three words ("word, conduct, and charity") emphasize our outward example, while the next three words ("spirit, faith, purity") emphasize our inward example (the manifestation of a Godly inward disposition).
"In Spirit" - (T.R. & KJV) - to be an example "in Spirit") means to have a zest (zeal) for spiritual things; to have an enthusiastic attitude about God and the things of God.
This person is not dull, drab, or depressed, but is excited about Christ and the new and abundant life He gives.

5) Be an example worth copying in your CONVICTIONS
(Can your disciple model what you BELIEVE?)

A conviction is a belief you would be willing to die for.
Do you have "Sunday morning only" convictions?
Does your faith drive you to action? Does it influence your behavior?
If it produces no works, then it is surely dead and useless (you really don't believe).

6) Be an example worth copying in your HOLINESS
(Can your disciple model your MORALITY?)

"Purity" - Holiness or sanctity. The word refers to purity of act and thought (Lock).
The word covers not only chastity in matters of sex, but also the innocent and integrity of heart (cp. II Cor. 6:6) (Kelly) (cited by Reinecker, p. 627)

"Be ye followers of God as dear children"

Questions about our command to Make Disciples

a. Do I feel comfortable in asking people to imitate me? - I Cor.11:1

b. If I do not feel comfortable asking people to imitate me, what things do I need to change in my own life so that I am working to imitate Christ?

c. If I do feel comfortable asking people to imitate me as I imitate Christ, are there adjustments that I need to make in my life so that a small group of people can have the opportunity to observe me in many situations?

d. Am I learning to Make Disciples in the strength that Christ provides rather than in my own strength? - Acts 1:4-8

(Church Planting Through Disciple Making - 1997 Duane L. Anderson, p.11)

C. Your disciple will need your unselfish Love (Mt. 22:39; John 13:34-35)

Matthew 22:39
And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

John 13:34-35
A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. [35] By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Discipleship is Relational and Requires:
- Loyalty
- Warmth
- Availability
- Patience
- Honesty

III. Begin Teaching your Disciple by your words, Character, & Conduct

A. Your disciple will need your Training (Matthew 28:19-20)

1. Teach him/her to Glorify God (The Purpose that drives our life)

1 Cor. 10:31
Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

2. Teach him/her how to establish a daily devotional life

a. Prayer
b. Bible Reading/Study/Meditation/Memorization

3. Teach him/her how to Think God honoring Thoughts

Teach him how to have a mind controlled by the Spirit of God

Eph. 5:18; II Cor. 10:4-5
Ask God to:
--Search your thoughts and reveal to you any evil (Ps. 139:23)
--Create a clean thought life in you (Ps. 51:10)
--Control your thoughts each day

How to improve your "thought life"

These truths apply only to the "born-again" Christian, because only salvation gives man
the ability to think spiritually (Eph. 1:18).

1) Renew your thoughts (Rom. 12:2)
2) Discipline your thoughts (II Cor. 10:3-5)
3) Focus your thoughts (Phil. 4:8)
4. Teach him/her how to Make God honoring Decisions

God created man with an intellect (to think); emotion (to feel); and a will (to make choices).

- Every decision is important.
- You are responsible for the decisions you make in life.
- Your decisions both reveal your character and form it.
- Your present circumstances are (in large part) a result of your past choices.
- The decisions you must make today may be a result of decisions you made in your past (Our choices can result in a vicious or victorious cycle)
- God is concerned about the details of your life.
  (He cares about the choices you make - Mt 10:30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.)

Some Warnings about Decision Making:

1) Beware of making hasty decisions (Quick decisions)

2) Beware of making carnal decisions (Decisions when you are not close to God)

3) Beware of making self-serving decisions (out of selfish motives)

4) Beware of making unsure decisions (If its doubtful, its dirty)

5) Beware of making emotional decisions (without reason)

6) Beware of making faith-less decisions (throwing out "the fleece")

5. Teach him/her how to become faithfully involved in Church ministry (Acts 2:42, 45-47)

Acts 2:42
And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:45-47
And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. [46] And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, [47] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

B. Your disciple will need Accountability

Teach him/her how to correct weaknesses & overcome sinful habits (Gal. 6:1-2) (Requires loving confrontation)

I Thessalonians 5:14-15

We are called to be spiritual physicians and spiritual workers who must know how to handle the irritable. We must know how to deal with those who "rub us the wrong way"; those who "get under your skin."
As Christian counselors, we need to learn how to help the helpless, to direct the directionless, to encourage the discouraged, to love the unlovable.

V. 14
"Brethren" = God is addressing believers in general.
While dealing with faulty members is in special measure the responsibility of the pastor, it is not confined to him. All believers must be ready to minister! (D. Edmond Hiebert, I Thessalonians, p. 234).

The three classes of Christians in need of help may have been the 3 groups who already had their problems addressed in this letter:

1."Unruly" = idlers (4:11-12)
2."feeble minded" = worried about death and salvation (4:14-17; 5:9-11)
3."Weak" = those who were tempted to lapse into immorality (4:2-8)

Three types of people needed special attention in the Thessalonian church; and each type needed different treatment.
Different needs must be handled in different ways.

We must apply GOD'S MEDICINE to those who are spiritually ill.

(See: I Thess 5:14)

What does God prescribe?

1. God prescribes confrontation of those who go astray

(We must help straighten out the thinking of those who go astray)

"Unruly" = a military term that described a soldier who neglected his duty and was out of order, out of step, and out of rank. It also described an army that was marching and advancing toward the enemy in disarray (disorderly confusion).

One who is unruly is one who…

1) is not doing what he should do (sin of omission)
   EX: not working (cp. II Thess. 3:6 - idleness)
2) is doing what he should not do (sin of commission)

How do we handle such a person?

"Warn" = is the same word as translated "admonish" in f. 12. It basically means to put into the mind, to confront the mind; to correct someone's thinking.

Thinking affects behavior.

Wrong thought patterns result in wrong patterns of behavior.

Many times we waste a lot of time trying to change someone's external actions without dealing with the cause (the root) of sinful thinking. What a person thinks reveals what he is (his character)

To confront someone who is going astray, you need:

1. To know Bible doctrine
2. To have courage and boldness (confrontation is not easy)

2. God prescribes comfort for those who are easily discouraged

(We must strengthen the hearts of those who are easily discouraged)

The word translated "feeble-minded" does not refer to someone with a mental deficiency, but to someone who has a mind and heart filled with worry, fear, and discouragement (the word literally means "little-souled).

Why do people get discouraged?

a. Adverse circumstances
   (financial misfortune, physical suffering, opposition for the faith, family hardships)
b. Struggle with sin
   (a deep consciousness of their own sinfulness which causes them to despair of being able to live the Christian life - Hiebert, p. 235)

Many people seem by nature (old nature, of course) to be negative. Perhaps through parental example they learned to fear the worst. They face each trial in life with apprehension and timidity.

What they don't need is for you to pound them over the head and say, "I can't understand how you can be this way! Don't you know the Bible says that `God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind?'" (II Tim. 1:7). I'm not saying this verse is not a good one for this type of person. It's excellent! It's how you say it that matters!

Don't blast him! (he needs to be cheered up, not chopped down).

The discouraged Christian does not need to be rebuked like those who are deliberately walking disorderly. He needs to be cheered up; softly and tenderly encouraged; stimulated by caring words--well-thought-out words; to continue in the battle; to not give up; to re-focus his eyes on Christ and the promises of God!

3. God prescribes support for those who are without strength

(We must support the weak knees of those who can't stand on their own)

It is said of Job that he was a man who "strengthened the weak hands." His words had held up "him that was falling." And he had strengthened the feeble knees (Job 4:3-4).

"Weak" = lit. "without strength" The word here does not refer to physical weakness in context, but to moral and spiritual weakness.

a. Weak areas are often problems of the lust of the flesh. Examples:
   1) Poor self-discipline
   2) Out of control appetites
   3) Sinful thought life

"Support" = lit. to "hold on firmly" or to "cling on" to someone

It means to give support to someone by putting your arms around the weak and holding him up. God is not calling on us to condone sin!

We are never to sympathize with the sin, but with the struggling sinner. We are not to smear the sin in their face, but we are to lift them up out of it!

b. How can we support (hold up) those whoa re sapped of spiritual vigor or moral muscle?
   1) They must confess their weak areas to you (James 5:16)
   2) You must keep the information confidential and pray for your brother or sister (James 5:16)
   3) In an encouraging way, you must hold that person accountable.

(Periodically check up on that person)

4. God prescribes patience in all cases

(We must suffer long with everyone we care for)

Patience is how you apply the medicine. It's your attitude in putting on the needed balm.

"Patient" = to be long-fused; long-tempered; lit. to be able to put up with "much internal heat" without "blowing your tope" or "Losing your cool" with someone.

"Patient toward all" - would specifically include those 3 types of people just mentioned.

It would be easy to lose your patience with the unruly, feeble-minded, and weak.

C. Your disciple will need to see in you a Christ-like BALANCE of Godly Characteristics (I Thess. 2:2-12)

But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.
3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:
4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.
5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:
6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.
7 ¶ But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:
8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.
9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.
10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:
11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,
12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

A balanced approach in dealing with people is vital to effective ministry.

(To influence others for God, you need a Godly balance in the way you deal with people)
(To be effective in your evangelism and discipleship, you must have the qualities that Paul had)

3 Qualities (characteristics):

1. Honest Steward (v. 2-5)
2. Gentle Mother (v. 6-9)
3. Concerned Father (v. 10-12)

A steward is duty oriented. His only concern is getting the job done right (ethically and honestly)
A mother is care oriented. She is careful how she treats people (particularly her children).
A father is training/discipline oriented. He is concerned about what he does, what he does with his children.

1. TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MINISTERING GOD'S WORD, YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF AN HONEST STEWARD (v. 2-5)

(Paul's Motive)
The picture of "steward" comes from the words "put in trust" (v. 4)

A steward is one who is put in trust (in charge) with something. He owns nothing, but manages what belongs to His master (EX: Joseph, Gen. 39:1-6).
A steward is task-oriented. He has a job to do and he does it.

An Honest Steward:

a. Tells the truth with boldness (v. 2)

As stewards we have no choice but to guard and invest the Gospel for our Savior.

Our boldness (courage, liberty) to speak the Gospel does not come from ourselves. We are "bold in our God!"

An Honest Steward:

b. Tells the truth with right motives (to please God) (v. 3-4)

You can please men with externals. But you can only please God if He approves of your heart.

An Honest Steward:

c. Tells the truth with sincerity (v. 5)

When you give Biblical Advice, don't butter up the person. Don't ever lie and tell people something about themselves that you really don't mean. Be sincere! Don't stoop to use gimmicks. Be straight-forward with people. They will appreciate you for it! I don't mean to be rude and crude, but be honest in a loving way. David hated flattery (Ps. 12:2).

2. TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MINISTERING GOD'S WORD, YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A GENTLE MOTHER (v. 6-9)

(Paul's Manner)

The picture of a "mother" comes from v. 7.

a. A gentle mother is not burdensome (v. 6)

b. A gentle mother shows warm affection (v. 7)

c. A gentle mother shows sacrificial love (v. 8-9)

3. TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MINISTERING GOD'S WORD, YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A CONCERNED FATHER

(V. 10-12)

(Paul's Method)

The picture of "father" comes from v. 11.

a. A concerned father is godly in his walk (v. 10)

(he sets the proper example)

b. A concerned father is serious in his words (v.11-12)

Be balanced with:

1. Exhortation (to affect the intellect)
2. Comfort (to affect the emotion)
3. Insistence (to affect the will)