

Developing Christ-Followers...



...using the Disciple's Compass

The Disciple's Compass

The Mandate for Developing Christ-Followers

In Matthew 28.18b-20, known as "The Great Commission," Jesus said:

^{18b} "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Therefore, it is our mission to make disciples. But what is a disciple? If it is our mission to make something, it would only make sense that we should know what it is we are to make.

But first, it might be helpful to understand what Jesus did not tell us to make.

- 1) Note that Jesus did not tell us to make Christians! He makes Christians upon our choosing to become his followers.
- 2) Nor did Jesus tell us to make Saints, another popular NT word for followers of Christ. It is God who sanctifies...
- 3) Jesus didn't tell us to make Brothers (or Sisters), still another word the NT uses to describe followers of Christ. Brothers can't make brothers. We are brothers and sisters by *birth*.
- 4) Jesus didn't tell us to make Believers. That's easy to understand why. We can't believe for someone else. Each person becomes a believer through personal faith. And this is not from himself. It is the gift of God (Ephesians 2.8).

Jesus told us to make Disciples!

What do you think a disciple of Jesus Christ is?

The verb form of the Greek means: 1) to be a disciple of one and to follow his precepts and instructions, or 2) to make a disciple by teaching and instruction.

More popular is the noun form of the word: 1) a learner, pupil, disciple.

The term seems to be concerned most of all with those who had at the first begun to follow Jesus. With that in mind, I like to keep it simple: "A disciple is simply one who has decided to follow Jesus."

In short, a Christ-Follower.

Also, there is in the Greek a sense of structure or discipline in the word. So, a disciple is one who undergoes a discipline... one who is disciplined... A disciple is following Jesus in a disciplined way!

The Marks of a Christ-Follower

What are those attributes or qualities that characterize a follower of Jesus Christ? I have come to understand it best by thinking about a compass. We at Momentum Ministries have adopted The Compass as symbol of the way to follow Jesus. The Compass marks the way for us. So, think about the *six* points of the Compass:

1. Pivot Point
2. West Point
3. North Point
4. East Point
5. South Point
6. Point of Impact

Know God in Worship - pivot point

When we begin to follow Jesus, we admit, believe, and confess. Our sins are forgiven, we are given new life in Christ and we become true worshipers of God. God becomes the center of our lives!

THE ABCS OF A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

A Admit that you have sinned.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3.23)

B Believe that Jesus Christ died for you.

To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1.12)

C Confess Jesus Christ as Lord of your life.

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (Romans 10.9-10)

Pray the "sinner's prayer":

"Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that you died for my sins and arose from the grave. I now turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I receive you as my personal Savior and follow you as my Lord. Amen."

Be assured of your salvation:

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3.20)

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5.11-12)

Show Love in Relationship - west point

Then we have to determine just who is in our family, who are our companions? We must commit to being a part of the community of Jesus Christ. In short, we show love in (Christian) relationship...

Without the community, there is no following Jesus! Near the end of his life, Jesus said to his fledgling community. John 13.34-35: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

In these 2 verses, Jesus tells us, "If you choose to follow me, you will show love in Christian relationship." He gives us a mandate to love; he provides the model for love; and links our love to the mission he has given us.

The command to love

A new command I give you: Love one another (John13.34).

1. For love to be real there must be an object to that love. (But we also know that while it is the object we love, it is also the object that makes the loving difficult. In some cases it may seem impossible!)
2. Yet, Jesus did not give us an impossible goal. For Jesus to ask us to love like him would not be loving if he did not make it possible. He wants us to understand / see what his grace will enable us to do. As we follow him, he will give us this love: "God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us" (Romans 5.5).
3. Love is something **I do**. It requires action... Not a "Facebook family." The church is a community that requires that I get my hands dirty... "When we get close enough to feel someone's pain, they are close enough to feel our love."

1 John 3.16-18: ¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

John 15.12-14: ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.
¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.
¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command.

4. But love is also something **I am**.

That is why Jesus could demand loving one another, loving our neighbor as ourselves. Love involves a change of my nature. A sanctified heart is a heart of love. The old stony heart is out. The new loving heart is put in!

The community of love

As I have loved you, so you must love one another (John 13.34b).

We are accountable for what we model... Our community is looking on – our relationships as Christians – how we love our spouses, how we love other Christians, how we talk about people – models what people know about the love of God. And Jesus gives us the perfect model to follow!

His love is...

1. *Unusual*
2. *Unnatural*
3. *Unrelenting*
4. *Unconditional*
5. *Unlimited*

The contagion of love

By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another (John 13.35).

1. We try to do many things to impress the world that we are followers of Jesus:
 - a. Sound doctrine
 - b. Exemplary ethics and morals
 - c. Social programs
2. But Jesus says the way we will impress them is through our love!
This is the only commandment linked to the Great Commission by our obedience.

3. And he says it is love *for one another*... If I choose to follow Jesus, I will show love in Christian relationship ...

Grow Up in Discipleship - north point

In Luke chapter 2, there is a story from the life of Jesus that reveals this “mark” even in the life of Jesus himself. You may be familiar with Luke chapter 2. It is “The Christmas Chapter.” The Christmas Story – the story of Jesus’ birth – is told in the first 20 verses of the chapter. Those verses – along with a section from Matthew 2 (the story of the wise men) – make up the biblical materials that relate the circumstances surrounding the first months of Jesus’ life.

Jesus was born as God’s Son. And, he had even been presented to God in an act of dedication by his earthly parents. In short, he is part of the family of God. He’s in the community. But he needs to grow. Look at verse 52: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.”

Let’s follow the logic. Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men, and if I choose to follow Jesus, then it follows that I, too, will grow “in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.”

The Greek word for grow – *prokopto* – is instructive to us. It is from a root meaning to strike. And it means literally “to beat forward” or “to lengthen out by hammering [as a smith forges metal].” Growth is not easy – and the type of growth that Jesus went through is not automatic. Growth is forged in the fires of discipline and trial... It is the result of effort and focus...

It’s interesting that Luke – a doctor – chose this word to describe what was happening in Jesus’ life. It’s interesting because of the words he could have chosen:

- *mekyno* (3373) – natural growth – like plants grow.
- *Auxano* (837) – another word used for spontaneous or naturally occurring growth.
- *Ginomai* (1091) – to arise, to be made, to come into existence, to become, or even the sense of evolve.

All these types of growth are good – and are used with spiritual application. But Luke describes Jesus’ growth as *prokopto*. And if we want to grow up in discipleship – as we are called to do when we follow Jesus – then we must “beat ourselves

forward,” “lengthen out by hammering.” It’s not easy, but this type of growth never is.

Why is that? Why is growth difficult or hard? Let’s look how Jesus grew and how we are to grow.

Growing Up in Discipleship is... *Growing in Wisdom*

This is what I would call classical Christian growth. This is what we tend to think of when we think of growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Wisdom – *sophia* – This kind of wisdom is obtained through

- Study
- Open-mindedness
- Attention
- Observation
- Training
- “Trellising”

Those things aren’t easy!

Growing Up in Discipleship is... *Growing in Stature*

The word stature is *helikia* - and can mean increasing...

1. In **age**
2. In **size**
3. Then by metaphor – in **maturity**

Luke’s emphasis is not on Jesus’ age – not based on the word he chose to depict growth. It also is not on physical size because we cannot determine how tall we will end up just by willing ourselves to be taller. What Luke was concerned about – and what we need to understand – is the metaphorical use of *helikia*: As Jesus aged, he matured. There are some people who grow bigger and older but who do not mature in character!

Growing Up in Discipleship is... *Growing in Favor with God*

Growth – even Christian growth – is not for growth's sake alone. You don't get bigger just to be bigger. God has a plan and purpose for you.

The word for favor is *charis*, and it means grace, good will, favor. It comes from the verb that means to rejoice. Jesus grew in favor with God. He made God rejoice. Do you remember what God said of Jesus when he was baptized? "This is my son whom I love. With him I am well-pleased." Isn't it exciting to think that we can make the heart of God rejoice?

Growth in Worship... Growth in Discipleship... Growth in Partnership... Growth in Leadership...

Growing Up in Discipleship is... *Growing in Favor with Men*

Jesus' growth in favor was not just with God. It was also with man.

Growth in Citizenship... Growth in Christian Relationship... Growth in Partnership... Growth in Leadership...

Go Out in Citizenship - east point

Jesus – the Son of God – denied himself to go where his Father wanted him to go. The Bible says that Jesus left behind all the glories of heaven and become a citizen of this world! The Bible goes on to say in Philippians 2.5-8: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!”

Think about it. Jesus – the eternal Son of God became a citizen of planet earth in order to follow where God was leading him to go. How can I expect to do anything less? If I choose to follow Jesus, I will need to deny myself to go where God wants me to go, too.

Now, this is not a “biblical surprise.” God has always been in the business of sending his people to go out as citizens of this world:

- Abraham: Go to the land I will show you... (Genesis 12.1)
- Moses: So now go... (Exodus 3.10)
- Isaiah: Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? (Isaiah 6.8)
- Disciples: Go. I am sending you out... (Luke 10.3)
- Paul: Go. I will send you far away... (Acts 22.21)
- And of course, the Great Commission, in which Jesus said to his the disciples and to us:
Matthew 28.18-20: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore **go** and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Christians need to go! We need to be on the move! Aren't you glad of that? We are to be good citizens of this world, living as salt and light in every place we have an influence.

Where are we to go? Where are we to be good citizens? Just looking at one biblical author (the physician Luke) we get a good idea of just how comprehensive this going is to be...

- Home and family... If following Jesus doesn't make me a better husband, wife, etc., then I wonder how closely I am following him?
- Community... Community involvement and compassionate ministries are part of the DNA of a Spirit-filled follower of Jesus Christ.
- Work... A follower of Jesus Christ should be the best employee a company has!
- Those not like me... Reaching across racial, religious, economic, ideological, and even political lines!
- The ends of the earth... Go to all nations. Christian citizenship reaches beyond nationality and borders and even touches our response in such areas as immigration, environment, and world missions!

Sow Seeds of Partnership - south point

One way to partner in the church is to **pray**

There are 4 Prayer Partnerships:

1. Your Partnership with God
2. Your Partnerships at Home
3. Your Partnerships in Church
4. God's Partnership with You!

Another way to partner in the church is to **serve**.

In Luke 5, Jesus had an encounter with Peter after he had fished all night and caught nothing. From that encounter we discover several things:

1. My "Stuff" Really Belongs to God
Luke 5.3-4: He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."
Who owns your "stuff" (life)?
2. Working on My Own and for Myself Is Fruitless and Exhausting.
Luke 5.5: Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."
3. Working in My God-Given Strengths for His Kingdom Produces Amazing Results and Requires Personal Investment!
Luke 5.6: When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.
4. When I Partner with God and His People for His Work, I Choose to Let God Set the Agenda!
Luke 5.10b-11: Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." 11So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

A third way to partner in the church is to **invite**.

Have you ever considered that when you do not invite people to Christ and his Church you are failing to invite *him*?

A third way to partner in the church is to **give**

Here are some opportunities to express Christian stewardship:

Tithing (giving 10% of your income to God through the local church where you are a member)

Church Offerings (special giving for God's glory and others' good)

Support Christian ministries

Compassionate/Crisis giving

Anonymous gifts of blessing

Flow On to Leadership - point of impact

Knowing our bearings is not the end point of following Jesus. Every child of God is called to keep moving upward, onward and outward. We shouldn't just point ourselves in a direction; we need to move in that direction. As we do so, we discover that God constantly transforms us from followers to leaders. No matter where we are in the organizational structure of the church, we are becoming leaders, pointing others to Jesus. There are two key questions in this regard:

- Who is discipling me?
- Who am I discipling?

All followers of Jesus Christ are called to be leaders as well. No matter where we are in our journey with Christ, we are called to 'make disciples' – to help others come closer to Jesus.

The Making of Christ-Followers

Christ-Followers Are Spirit Made

See above "the ABC's of a Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ"

Christ-Followers Are Self Made

Individuals can utilize The Compass to follow Jesus.

Christ-Followers Are Sacramentally Made

Baptism

Lord's Supper

Christ-Followers Are Socially Made

Membership – joining a local church

The Method of Christ-Followers

Discipleship is passed on in a simple three-step process:

invite ... invest ... involve

No matter what leadership function we are providing, this model works. As we follow these steps, we will be able to help someone else grow in the Lord:

- Invite
 - Choose* – be proactive and reactive!
 - Challenge* - them to full consecration
 - Cherish* – spending time and showing care
- Invest
 - Intercede* – pray regularly for and with
 - Instruct* – how to walk with Jesus
 - CH101
 - Discipling Questions
 - SF141
 - Encourage participation in NazU and other classes
 - One-on-one or in “life group” (3-4 people)
 - Introduce* – to Christ, to the Holy Spirit, to other friends, and to the church ministries
- Involve
 - Serve* – with them in some capacity
 - Send* – expand their opportunities beyond your personal involvement
 - Supervise* – give them regular and intentional feedback and encouragement
 - One-on-one or in “life group” (3-4 people)

Disciple's Covenant

Recognizing my need to grow and serve in the body of Christ, I consecrate myself to God and to my fellow disciples as follows:

I. I will Know God in Worship

- I believe that Jesus Christ is my *Savior*, and I have assurance of the forgiveness of sins.
- I confess Jesus Christ is the *Lord* of my life.
- I will develop and nurture a life of surrender and worship to God.
- I will be faithful in my attendance at weekly services of worship

II. I will Show Love in Relationship

- I will become involved in the lives of others by joining a small group of believers for prayer, outreach, inspiration, nurture and teaching.
- I will act only in loving ways toward others, refusing to gossip or speak negatively about others.

III. I will Grow Up in Discipleship

- I commit to a life of spiritual growth through regular prayer, Bible study, devotion, personal and public worship, obedience, faith, service, and love.
- Baptism: _____ I affirm that I have been baptized in water for the remission of sins, or
_____ I agree to be baptized on _____ (date)
- I will participate in discipleship training programs as possible.
- I testify to the experience of entire sanctification or agree to honestly and openly seek the same.

IV. I will Go Out in Citizenship

- I will live a godly life being the best citizen I can be at home, at work, and everywhere I go.
- I will seek ways to serve my community and world.
- I will practice deeds of compassion for the poor, sick, bereaved, and downcast

V. I will Sow Seeds of Partnership

- Pray: I will pray with and for my church and fellow members and attendees.
- Serve: I agree to be equipped to serve by my pastors and teachers; I will develop a servant's heart; I agree to serve in the following identifiable and accountable ministries:
- Invite: I will invite un-churched people to attend and inactive attendees to return to our fellowship.
- Give: I will practice Biblical stewardship by bringing the tithe into the storehouse and by giving sacrificially as God leads.

VI. I will Flow on to Leadership

- As I grow in Christ, I will disciple others to follow him, passing on the faith which was given to me.
- I will obey the call of God to serve in leadership roles in the church and to participate in subsequent training as required by the position of leadership that I assume.
- I commit to follow the leadership in place by God's assignment and the church's affirmation.

Signed: _____ Date: _____