

Disciplemaking through Instruction

2 Timothy 3.10-17; August 12, 2018

Last week we kicked off this four week sermon series on Personal Disciplemaking. I argued last week that every disciple is called to follow Jesus and multiply disciple-makers. Why?

- Jesus commands it. We looked at Matthew 28:18-20 and concluded that Jesus wasn't offering his disciples, including us, a suggestion to consider but rather a command to obey. Disciplemaking is to be the task of our church and of every disciple.
- Jesus modeled it. We did a snap shot of Jesus' ministry in Matthew and saw that he had a ministry to:
 - The crowds
 - The twelve disciples
 - The three disciples in his inner circle.
- The vision painted by Jesus and the rest of the NT is of every disciple fishing for men and women. Every disciple making disciples. Everyone in the game of disciplemaking. No more spectators.
- Yes, the purpose of Sundays is to make disciples. Yes, the purpose of all of our groups is to make disciples. But, we're seeing the need at RHC for disciples to obey the command of Jesus and imitate the model of Jesus (and later of Paul) of making disciple-makers of a few (the inner three). This is what we are calling *personal disciplemaking*.
- The main way I asked you to respond last week was through an attitude of availability. I asked you to consider praying with me: "Lord, show me a man or woman whom I can intentionally invest in to help them become more like Jesus." Are you ready to get started? Let's go!

What is our aim in disciplemaking? What's our goal? What are we after?

- Personal disciplemaking is intentionally investing your life in others through instruction and imitation in order to reproduce mature and multiplying followers of Jesus.
 - Jesus is the goal: Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 1:28-29; Gal. 4:19
 - *Instruction*: you're going to teach them to obey everything that Jesus commanded us. The Word of God is going to be central in this task.
 - *Imitation*: you're going to set an example of Christlikeness such that you can say, "Follow me as I follow Jesus." You're going to invite people into your life and teach them to follow Jesus in the everyday circumstances of life.
 - *Multiplication*: you're going to equip and release them to reproduce your investment in another person's life.

Today, we're going to focus on instruction. In Jesus' command that we looked at last week, he gave three participles fleshing out how disciples were to go about making disciples. We are to make disciples by *going*, *baptizing* and *teaching*. We're going to look at 2 Timothy 2:10-17 today as we go about thinking about making disciples through instruction.

Context:

- In the beginning of chapter 3, Paul warns Timothy about false teachers and godlessness in

the last days. **Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5.**

- In contrast to these false teachers, Paul then turns to Timothy and directs him on how he must resist these opponents to the gospel and remain faithful. “But you...”

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17

- The first lesson Paul teaches Timothy is of the inevitability of persecution for Christians and a call for him to be loyal and endure persecution (3:12).
- The second lesson calls Timothy, in contrast to the false teachers (3:13) to remain faithful to the teaching he has received.

The Point: Disciplemaking prioritizes instruction because the Bible is the authoritative and sufficient word of God.

I. The Bible is the Authoritative Word of God.

One of the key phrases in this passage is Paul’s description of Scripture. He says, “All Scripture is breathed out by God.” Let’s unpack this.

What does “All Scripture” refer to?

- This word (*graphē*) is used throughout the NT to refer specifically to the writings of the OT

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, (Luke 24:44-45 ESV; cf. Luke 24:27; John 5:39)

- We also see this word being used by the NT authors in references to other parts of the NT.
 - Paul refers to the words of Christ in Luke 10:7 as Scripture
 - Peter refers to Paul’s words as Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15-16).
 - Paul wrote as if he were writing authoritative Scripture (cf. 1 Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Thess. 2:15).
- Conclusion: “All Scripture” refers not just to the OT but now to all of the Scriptures, including the entire NT.

What does it mean that Scripture is “breathed out by God”?

- Some of your translations may even say that Scripture is “inspired” by God.
- The word being translated here (*theopneustos*) doesn’t occur in any other Greek text prior to this letter.
- It is possible that Paul coined this term. His goal was to highlight the divine origin of Scripture and thus its resulting authority a person’s life. Additionally, he was stressing that “All Scripture” is the authoritative word of God as opposed to just “some.”
- Peter says basically the same thing in his letter:

...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21 ESV)

Implications:

- Our statement of faith: “The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God. Therefore, all scripture is authoritative, infallible and inerrant. The Scriptures are the only sufficient rule for faith and practice (Ps. 19:7; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).”
- Why is the reading and teaching of Scripture essential in discipling?
 - It’s the authoritative word of God.
 - Everyone has an opinion about life. We live in a world full of subjectivism. Your discipling relationships don’t need another opinion. They need the authoritative word of God.
- We prioritize the reading, teaching and instruction of God’s Word in our discipling relationships because God’s Word is authoritative, infallible and inerrant. It will never lead us astray. We can stake our entire life on God’s Word.

II. The Bible is the Sufficient Word of God.

But God’s Word isn’t just authoritative, it is sufficient.

- Paul says that Scripture is “profitable” or “useful” for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness and that when these things are done makes the man and woman of God “complete,” equipping them for “every good work.”
- Wayne Grudem in his Systematic Theology points to this text as the key for his the doctrine of sufficiency and he gives this definition:
 - “The sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly” (Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology).

God’s Word is sufficient for salvation.

- This what Paul unpacks in 3:14-15 (cf. James 1:21).
 - Paul may be referring back to the investment of his mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5).
- While our focus has been on how we bring God’s Word to bear in the discipling of followers of Jesus, the Bible is sufficient to lead someone to saving faith. It should be our primary tool in our evangelistic relationships (cf. Rom. 10:14-17; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23).

God’s Word is sufficient for sanctification.

- Paul says that Scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness.

- The first pair deals with beliefs
 - Positive: teaching (teaching truth)
 - This is how we grow in truth.
 - Negative: reproof (refuting error)
 - This is how we overcome error.
- The second pair deals with action
 - Negative: correction (correcting bad behavior)
 - This is how we overcome sin.
 - Positive: training in righteousness (training in right living)
 - This is how we grow in holiness.
- The Word of God is key to sanctification and becoming like Jesus (Ps. 119:9-11; Matt. 4:4; Heb. 4:12).
 - “No one succeeds at the highest level in sports without working out. No one makes it in music without lots of practice. No one excels in scholarship without years of study. And no one makes it far in the school of holiness without hours and days and years in the word.” (DeYoung, Taking God at his Word, 119).
 - God’s Word reveals sin in our lives. It reveals where we are not trusting and believing the promises of God, where we are being deceived by the promises of sin and believing lies.
 - But God’s Word is truth. It sure. It will never lead us astray. And the Spirit works through the Word. Jonathan Dodson describes it this way in *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, “Like lightning works through steel, the Spirit’s power is released through Scripture to awaken our hearts to the glory of God dazzling off the face of Christ. The Spirit was given freely to us for understanding and faith in God’s Word” (132).
 - When you get together with someone to read and study God’s Word, you are creating the context for the Spirit of God to be released to do his work of transforming us into the likeness of Jesus by inclining our hearts to believe the promises of God. Dodson says, “Approach God’s Word with God’s Spirit. Plead for the lightning while carrying the rod” (133).

Summary:

- At the core of discipling is teaching and what we teach is God’s Word. We are seeking to renew our minds such that it will change our affections and then produce godly character making us more like Jesus.
- When we get together with someone else, we are bringing the truth of God’s Word to bear on someone else’s life and praying that God would take his Word and bring about transformation through the work of his Spirit.
 - Our goal isn’t just knowledge. Our goal is life transformation. Jesus said, “Teach them to obey.”
- You don’t need anything but the Bible. You can use other Christian books, but the best Christian books take people to the Bible.
- “If you want yet another way of expressing the same point, what we are really talking

about is a *Bible-reading movement*—in families, in churches, in neighborhoods, in workplaces, everywhere. Imagine if all Christians, as a normal part of their discipleship, were caught up in a web of regular Bible reading—not only digging into the word privately, but reading it with their children before bed, with their spouse over breakfast, with a non-Christian colleague at work once a week over lunch, with a new Christian for follow-up once a fortnight for mutual encouragement, and with a mature Christian friend once a month for mutual encouragement” (*Trellis and the Vine*, 57).

III. How do I get started making disciples through instruction?

Let me clarify a few things:

- We should always be looking for opportunities to instruct on the way as we go. There are many teachable moments where we can bring God’s Word to bear on everyday life.
- What I’m talking about now is *intentionally and deliberately* investing in someone’s life.

1. Pray

- This is what Jesus did before selecting his twelve disciples (Luke 6:12-16).
- “God, who have you placed in my life whom I need to reach out and invite them to read the Bible with me.”
 - While we’ve been primarily focused on how we help believers follow Jesus, what I’m about to propose can be done with non-Christians.
 - Is there someone you know at church? Someone exploring Jesus? A new believer?
 - Is there someone in your Community Group? A new believer?
 - Is there someone living in your home (child, roommate)?
 - Is there a neighbor or co-worker?
 - Everyone needs a Paul, a Timothy and a Barnabas.

2. Invite

- “Would you have any interest in reading the Bible with me for a few weeks?” (Helm, *One-to-One Bible Reading*, 23).
 - Helm notes that if the person is already a Christian you could add, “I thought it would give us a chance to get together and learn from God’s word” (Helm, 24).
- This step is probably the simplest and the hardest. Why?
 - It requires boldness.
 - You may not think you are ready for this. You need to battle this lie with two key truths:
 - Gospel growth doesn’t depend on your abilities.
 - God’s Word is sufficient and powerful.

3. Meet

- What might the 1st meeting look like?
 - If you don’t know the person well, spend time hearing and sharing your faith journey.

- Decide which book of the Bible to read.
 - David Helm in *One-to-One Bible Reading* has the following recommendations:
 - Non-Christian: one of the Gospels (Mark)
 - New Believer: a NT letter (Colossians, Philippians, Titus, 1 John)
 - Established Believer: Romans
 - Use our RHC Bible Reading Plan
- Decide how long you desire to meet (6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months).
 - “It’s often good to put an initial time limit on your reading partnership so that neither of you feel trapped into an open-ended commitment. You can always choose to extend the time later if you want to” (Helm, 32).
- Schedule the next meeting (of the next few).
- What might a subsequent/regular meetings look like?
 - Read the text aloud, alternating every verse or section
 - Talk together about the text
 - Apply the text.
 - Pray.
 - Schedule your next meeting.

A few final encouragements:

- Don’t be afraid of not having all the answers. If there’s an important question, agree to set aside time next time to discuss it. This will give both of you time to do some further research and study before the next meeting.
- There’s no reason this can’t be employed one-to-two or one-to-three as well.
- *One-to-One Bible Reading* by David Helm is a great resource.
 - He spells out two simple frameworks for reading and studying the Bible.
 - The Swedish Method
 - The COMA Method (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application).
 - ***The 7 Arrows is another great Bible reading framework.
 - He has an entire chapter (10) dedicated to providing help with reading different genres of Scripture (Gospels, OT Narrative, Wisdom literature and poetry, Prophetic literature, letters, apocalyptic literature).
 - For those of you who want to learn more, this upcoming Saturday, we’re hosting a seminar at RHCC on this from 9-11am.
- Check out some of the other resources on the Resource Table:
 - Just for Starters (7 Foundational Bible Studies for New Believers)
 - Christian Living for Starters (7 Foundational Bible Studies for New Believers)
 - Short Steps for Long Gains: a little booklet with 26 short Bible studies on different topics. It won’t cover everything on each topic, but sometimes short steps are the best way to make long gains.

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