

“Calling Kingdom Disciples”

Matthew 28:16-20

Introduction

We have a clarion call for Kingdom Disciples – men and women who are committed to pursuing a relationship with Jesus Christ while submitting to His authority. Kingdom Disciples make a conscious decision to prioritize God’s views even when those views do not align with commonly held worldly beliefs.

Far too many Christians fail to understand that we belong to another kingdom. This kingdom is run by a King operating by a playbook not governed by the standards of the current culture. In Matthew 28, Jesus, while in Galilee, called His disciples and reminded them that they were to be part of the culture and nation, but not defined by either. Jesus wants His present-day disciples to have the same mindset! When we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, we become Christians. But Jesus is calling each of us to more than that. He wants us to be disciples and to make other disciples as well. A disciple of Jesus Christ is a visible and verbal follower of Jesus Christ. It is only when we are activated as disciples that Jesus is willing to transfer His authority over us.

The directive Jesus gave to His disciples involves three principles based on the Greek construct. The first is “to go” (v. 19). Jesus wants us to go – not to stay. He wants us to go public with our faith, and to also combine tangible action to what we say we believe. We can talk about love, righteousness, and justice with our brother, but if we haven’t “broken our huddle” and “gotten in the game” by engaging in real ways with what we believe, then we are not operating in the way that Jesus would require.

The next directive is “to baptize” (v. 19). Baptism results in the public identification of a follower of Jesus Christ. The Greek term baptizo can mean immersion. For the believer, this implies the believer is covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. It also indicates the total commitment and involvement of the believer’s life moving forward in obedience to Him. If you are a Christian, you are baptized in and defined by the blood. While the blood of Jesus Christ does not deny man’s humanity and uniqueness, it does define our unified commitment to Him.

The last directive is “to teach” or to explain the meaning and application of God’s Word (v. 20). Followers of Jesus Christ should learn the Word, live the Word, and teach the Word to others. Christ gives authority to observers who are ready to implement His truth, not merely discuss it. As observers – or disciples – we should not only follow God’s truth in the church as we sit and listen to the sermon on Sunday mornings, but also in our homes, at our place of vocation, in the realm of politics, and all other spheres of influence.

Every believer is called to be a disciple and to disciple others. Jesus does not relate to all Christians equally. He commits Himself to those who are committed to Him, as evidenced by their life of discipleship. When we answer the clarion call to be Kingdom Disciples and disciple others, then Jesus acts to transfer His kingdom authority to His own.

Getting Started

1. The fight against racial injustice has taken a front-row seat in the news. How have the images, the commentary, or the reactions of others affected you?
2. Based on the challenges we face culturally, what practical steps have you felt compelled to take as a kingdom disciple?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Based on the three directives Jesus gave the disciples in Matthew 28, do you fit the qualifications for a disciple? Why or why not?

2. Which of the three areas of active discipleship presents the biggest challenge for you personally? Based on the sermon, how have you been challenged to engage more fully in your discipleship experience?
3. Do you consider yourself to be public with your faith? Why or why not? What do other people see in you, or in how you operate, that communicates to them that you are a follower of Jesus Christ?

Take the Next Step

1. Every believer is called to be a disciple and to disciple others. How are you actively discipling others? Are you teaching and/or leading by example? Share what active discipleship looks like in your life?
2. What practical steps can you take this week to be more intentionally engaging in being a disciple and discipling others? Think about your sphere of influence — your home, work, community, church, etc. How can you connect the directives of discipleship to your world?
3. Want to go deeper? Take a look at the following passages: 1 Corinthians 15:5-9; Psalm 89:14; John 2:23-25; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 2:2; 4:2.

Renew Your Mind

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20
