

## January 2017 Devotional

### MAKING DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES

One year ago I suggested that a recipe for a blessed 2016 would include at least four ingredients: (1) Make God first in our lives; (2) Spend time alone with Him each day; (3) Be filled with the Holy Spirit; (4) Ask God for a **Word** to focus on during the year or a **Mission Plan** to help achieve our prayerfully thought out dreams, ambitions and goals in the different facets of our lives: personal, family, business, community, financial, intellectual, physical and recreational. *Did your life include some of those ingredients? Were they beneficial to you in having a blessed year? How were you blessed?*

This year I encourage you to focus on what we were called to do as followers of Jesus: **Make Disciples Who Make Disciples**. Of all the action plans you put in place this year, make this one a priority. This is what the men and women of Capitol Commission are busy doing in state capitols across our nation. Their mission is accomplished through prayer, presence and proclamation. *Is it a priority in your life? Is it a priority in your local church?*

Looking back several years, the church has focused on various ways to grow and reach the lost. We have had the Jesus Movement, the Suburban Church Movement, the Urban Church Movement, the Seeker Friendly Church Movement, the Large Church Movement, The Satellite Church Movement, the Prosperity Church Movement and the Home Church Movement. The one Movement we seldom or never see today is the Missional Church Movement.

Why don't we, as believers living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, see or seldom see the Missional Church Movement? I believe it is because we prioritize our daily schedules and church agendas with good things, exciting events and appealing activities that are important and meaningful, but not of first importance according to Jesus. I ask you and same question I'm asking myself: *Are we making disciples who make disciples?* That is the \$64,000 question.

Is it wrong to hold outreach events, workshops, community seminars on current social issues or operate a thrift store, day care center or sports academy? No, these are all thoughtful ways to engage the culture, serve our neighbors and demonstrate God's love in our communities. We can do many innovative things that are good, valuable and pave the way for accomplishing the mission Jesus gave to His disciples found in Matthew 28:19-20: *"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."*

We are to be about the mission of.....

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Before we embark on this mission, let's:

**(1) See people as God sees them: priceless and worthy of being served.** (*John 13:14; Matthew 20:26*)

**(2) Develop a relational mindset by making yourself accessible to others.** (*Luke 14:23;2 Corinthians 5:15*)

**(3) Pray for opportunities to engage, love and meet needs.** (*Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 5:12*)

**(4) Always be ready to give an answer to the hope that is in us.** (*1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:6*)

Jesus would have us leave the classroom of book learning, enter the laboratory of life learning and model the four steps He demonstrated in making disciples:

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**Step 1 - He ministered to the people and had his disciples watch him.** (*Mark 1:29-34*)

**Step 2 - He ministered to the people and had his disciples assist him.** (*Matthew 14:14-21*)

**Step 3 - He had his disciples minister to the people and he assisted them.** (*Mark 9:17-19, 25-29*)

**Step 4 - He sent his disciples out to make new disciples.** (*Luke 10:1-17*)

I'm reminded of the poem "*Sermons We See*" by Edger Guest, affectionately known as the "People's Poet:

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;  
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.  
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear,  
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;  
And the best of all preachers are the men who live their creeds,  
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.  
I soon can learn to do it if you'll let me see it done;  
I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too fast may run.  
And the lecture you deliver may be very wise and true,  
But I'd rather get my lessons by observing what you do;  
For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give,  
But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

We have our mission, our model to follow and the promise given to us by our Savior. Be encouraged by His words: "*I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these....*" "*If you love me, you will obey what I command.*" (John 14:12, 15) "*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last.*" (John 15:16)

Let's begin 2017 by engaging the culture, discipling as Jesus disciplined and enjoying the blessings that come from *making disciples who make disciples*.

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