

# Maple Springs Baptist Church

**Series: Kaleo**

**Week 4: Called to Make Disciples.**

**1 Peter 2:21 Kaleo—Called to Make Disciples.**

**Clarity, especially when it regards an important assignment, is crucial.**

**Matthew 28:18-20** records for us Jesus's last words to His disciples before He ascended:

- In English, there are several verbs in that sentence; but in Greek, there's only one: **"make disciples."** All the others are actually participles, which means they modify the verb.
- **"Make disciples"** is the central verb of the Great Commission. Everything else—going, teaching, baptizing—is an extension of that.
- For everything else the church does, **"make disciples"** is the center, the core.

Most churches judge their success by **how many attend** or **how many decisions** or **baptisms** they count.

So, let's ask two questions today.

**1. What is a disciple? The word "disciple" comes from the Hebrew word "talmid,"** –common in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. A talmid was kind of like a "student" but much more. Aspiring Jewish religious & community leaders would find a rabbi, a teacher, someone they wanted to be like and whose cause they believed in, and you would go and sit at their feet. **Sitting at their feet was like your application to learn from them.** They would examine you—ply you with questions, watch your life, and **if they thought you could make a worthy disciple—someone who would carry on their cause—they would allow you to follow them.** And you would follow them for the next several years, imitating their every move.

**A disciple did not merely want to know what his master knew but do what his master did.** Highest compliment you could give a talmid was to say, **"The dust of your rabbi is all over you."** You were following his path so closely that whatever your Rabbi stepped in splashed up on you!

**2. What is my role in disciple-making?**

This commission to make disciples—the Great Commission—was given to every Christian. It wasn't a special assignment for a few, but the central calling for every follower of Jesus.

**Titus 2** Paul commands older women to train younger women. **2 Timothy 2** Paul tells Timothy to train faithful men so they can train others also. **Ephesians 6**, Paul tells fathers to train their children. **Hebrews 3** commands all Christians to exhort & build each other up every day. **Peter and Paul in their letters** command each Christians to use their gifts to build up and serve others.

**John 15:8.** In other words: **There is no such thing as a non-reproducing Christian.**

How do you prove you are a disciple? **By bearing fruit.** And if you are not bearing fruit, you have reason to question whether you are a disciple at all.

Discipleship was God's plan for teaching the world—ordinary Christians filled with the Spirit, making disciples everywhere they went. You are God's method. You may not all be able to teach or preach, but you can invite someone into your life to observe your walk with Jesus, to show them how to follow Jesus like you follow Him.

**The 5 core identities of a disciple** —these are the essential things Jesus was talking about when He said, *“teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*

**1. WORSHIPER: A disciple seeks to know, love, and obey God above all else.**

- Worship is not part of the Christian life; IT IS the Christian life. Everything starts with this.
- The Great Commandment –**Matthew 22:37**. A true disciple is first and foremost a worshipper.
- 2 aspects: A commitment to regular, corporate worship and a daily, personal worship.

**2. FAMILY MEMBER: A disciple is actively committed to church family.**

- Church is not just an event you should attend, but a family, you belong to.
- **Matthew 12:46-50**. It's a family connection found in the blood of Jesus Christ.
- **A disciple not only believes, he belongs.**

**3. SERVANT: A disciple gladly gives of themselves for the good of others.**

- One who has taken on Jesus' stance of service to the world—**John 13:12-17**
- For a true disciple, their whole life is characterized by service. We apply that in two ways: (1) **how we use your gifts & talents to serve others**; and (2) **how you serve the body of Christ, the church**. Do you have tangible ways that you serve others in the church family? Are you a committed servant—or just a consumer?

**4. STEWARD: A disciple manages God's gifts for God's purposes.**

- They realize that anything they have, ultimately is given by God not for our own purposes, but for God's. He gave them to you for a reason, and that reason was to serve HIS kingdom. And if you don't use those talents for that, you are stealing. **God didn't give you the resources He gave you primarily for you, but for His purposes.**
- A disciple asks: “God, all these things I have are yours. How do you want them to be used for your purposes?” **Matthew 25:34-40**
- Jesus' life was characterized by generosity and pouring His life out for others, so should ours.

**5. WITNESS: A disciple recognizes it is their responsibility to make disciples for Jesus.**

- **Matthew 4:19** That means **when you accepted the call to follow Jesus, you accepted the call to bring people to Jesus**. There is no such thing as someone who follows Jesus and is not actively attempting to bring others to Him.
- Who's the person you are praying for, seeking to build a relationship with and trying to point to Jesus? Do you have someone? If not, why not ask God to put someone in your path, on your heart, in your way?

Jesus was committed to making disciples, not just converts, and we are CALLED to Follow in His Footsteps —because this is the essence of the Great Commission.

**Are you a disciple? An actual disciple?** As your pastor—I'm not worried that most of you will become raging atheists. I am worried that many of you will never really become an actual disciple of Jesus.

Did you know, the first Christians did not call themselves Christians? They called themselves disciples. **Acts 11:26—“Were called”** – That's passive! What did they call themselves?

**Disciples**. In changing the word that we use to describe ourselves, **we lost the clarity that the word “disciple” conveyed about what a follower of Jesus actually is!** A lot of people who call themselves Christians are not actually disciples.

“But, I am a Christian because I believe in God.” But have you surrendered your life to be like Jesus, to live like Jesus? There's no such thing, biblically, as a “Christian” who is not a devoted disciple. So, “are you a disciple?” Be honest. Maybe you would say “Yeah, I am a Christian, but not really a disciple yet”?

**Are you a disciple-maker?** Are you intentionally bringing someone else along as a disciple? In the N T “**make disciples**” **applies to both helping someone with the initial act of conversion as well as helping them grow the rest of their life**. You are supposed to be involved in all of that.

**Bottom Line:** Every Christian is born to reproduce. **Every disciple of Jesus is called to be a disciple-maker.**