

Missional Identity_03

Script References

Introduction

Alexis: Hey, everyone! Alexis here, and today we're wrapping up this session on missional identity by looking at the Great Commission.

Right before Jesus ascended to heaven, this is what he said: **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. (Matthew 28:18-20)**

There it is - this is the mission. Jesus calls us to go and make disciples. And like I said at the beginning of this session, this mission is propelled by the greatest commandment – loving God and loving others.

Paul wrote about this in one of his letters. He said that Christ's love compelled him to share the Gospel - even though some people thought he was crazy for it, even though he suffered for it - he knew it was worth it because he was no longer seeing through a worldly point of view.

Pause the video right here and read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. Do you share Paul's perspective on and passion for the Great Commission? If not, why? What holds you back from telling other people about Jesus? Write down your thoughts.

Paul's whole identity centered around being an "ambassador for Christ" in God's mission of reconciliation. After his own radical encounter with God's love, there was nothing else for him to be. He spent the rest of his life inviting as many people as possible to share in the love of God that had saved him.

Making Disciples

That's what "making disciples" is really about, and that's what we're going to dig into in the next couple minutes. What does it mean to make a disciple?

Well, first, let's think about what a disciple is. A disciple is a student - specifically, a student who commits their life to following their teacher with the goal of becoming like their teacher.

Making disciples of Jesus means so much more than evangelism. Evangelism is the first step - evangelism is being willing to open your mouth and share the Gospel. But discipleship is a much longer process. Just think about how Jesus formed his first twelve disciples.

In the Gospels, we see that Jesus did life with those guys. Day in and day out, they were with Jesus - they sat at his feet while he taught, they watched him as he ministered and healed and proclaimed God's Word, they ate with him, partied with him, and generally shared life with him.

And Jesus didn't just keep them around to have an audience. Through all that time spent together, he was training and empowering them, so they could go out and do the same works and proclaim the same message that he did.

That's what making disciples is about. That's the mission.

Three Tips

And to that end, I want to give you three tips so that you can pursue this mission well.

1. First, to make disciples, you have to be a disciple.

To pour into someone else's life, you need people pouring into you. What I'm talking about is mentorship. Listen to what Paul wrote in one of his letters. He said, **"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)**

Who are the people in your life who are farther along in their journey with Jesus? Who is more Christ-like than you? Who is wiser and more mature?

You should be following those people as they follow Jesus. Ask one or two of them to take you under their wing, and be intentional about the time you spend with them.

2. Second, making disciples is about both your message and your actions.

We don't just tell people about the Gospel - we also show it to them by the way we live our lives and love others. Listen to what Jesus told his disciples. He said -

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)

You can bring glory to God by the way you live your life, but to do so, you've got to make sure to give the glory to God. Let the people around you know that anything good they see in you is because of Jesus' work in you.

3. And finally, making disciples requires playing the long game.

Out of love, you've got to be willing to invest in peoples' lives. People don't change overnight, and you certainly can't change them. Instead, you're called to faithfully show up for them, to share your life with them the way Jesus demonstrated with his first disciples.

Listen to how Paul described his time discipling new believers in Thessalonica. He said, *Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our lives as well.* (1 Thessalonians 2:7-8)

Did you catch that? Paul didn't just roll through town, preach a message, and then move on. He stayed with the new believers for a long time. Out of a deep and caring love, he shared his life with them.

Pause the video right here and ask yourself are you currently being discipled? Are you currently making disciples? If not, ask the Lord to show you with whom he wants you to begin intentionally sharing your life. Make plans to reach out to those people.

Remember how Paul put it in 2 Corinthians: You are an ambassador of Christ in God's mission of reconciliation, and your task is to make disciples.

And if that freaks you out, then don't forget the promise Jesus made at the end of the Great Commission. *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Jesus never leaves his disciples in the lurch. He's never going to leave you. Together, you've got this.