

Titus 2:1-10 — “*Your Joyful Privilege as a Christian: Be a Disciple & A Disciple-Maker in Your Local Church*”

Introduction:

A person asks you: “*How can I serve in this church?*” What do you say?

“If we shift our mind and remember that the real work of God is people work, the prayerful speaking of His Word by one person to another — then the jobs are never all taken. The opportunities for Christians to minister personally to others are limitless” (Colin Marshall & Tony Payne, *Trellis & the Vine*).

The VISION [*our goal/long term ambition*] is: TO BE A DISCIPLE-MAKING CHURCH.

At the core of our duty in life is the reality of being disciples of Christ & disciple-makers for Him. Structures don't grow ministry any more than trellises grow vines, and, most churches need to make a conscious shift —away from erecting and maintaining structures, and towards growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ. We are disciple-making disciples of Christ. (Marshall & Payne, *Trellis & the Vine*).

THESIS — I will provide for you 3 pastoral encouragements on being a “disciple-making Disciple of Christ”

I. UNDERSTAND THE DEFINITION OF DISCIPLESHIP [*what?*]

Discipleship:

- ✓ A disciple is one who follows Christ & helps others follow Christ.
- ✓ Discipling means helping others follow Jesus. Discipling is a relationship in which we seek to do spiritual good for someone by initiating, teaching, correcting, modeling, loving, humbling ourselves, counseling, and influencing. (Mark Dever)

II. UNDERTAKE THE DUTY OF DISCIPLESHIP [*how?*]

Think of all the contexts in which discipleship can [and *should*] occur: in the context of a home (husband and wife; parent and child); another believer [can't disciple an unsaved person]; a fellow church-member in your congregation.

Matt 28:19 - Go therefore and make disciples...

1. The older men —
2. The older women —
3. The younger women —
4. The younger men —

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You say: how can I do this?

- Go thru the Catechism together;
- Study CFBC’s What We Teach statement;
- Engage in One-to-one Bible readings

To help: remember: COMA - **C**-context; **O**-observation; **M**-meaning; **A**-application

III. UNLEASH THE *DELIGHT* OF DISCIPLESHIP [why?]

Jesus never gave us a program to follow but he did give us his example and a broad, far-reaching command to do it.
As a result, we have both great freedom and a great burden for discipling (Mark Dever).

Some creative suggestions in looking for ways to disciple others in your church:

- *Discipling happens when* a guy wants to be married but doesn’t have a game-plan for how to go about it. He asks another brother for guidance and help. This brother takes him out for lunch and talks through some biblical and practical principles. He then commits to pray for him, to be available for questions, and to meet occasionally to talk about his progress.
- *Discipling happens when* a mom with two toddlers drops something off that she borrowed from another sister at church. During the exchange they get to talking and the young mom expresses her feelings of fatigue and failure to measure up to her perceived standards of motherhood. The other woman listens to her, reminds her of Scripture, prays with her, and then continues to come alongside of her for encouragement in the gospel.
- *Discipling happens when* a dad points out a scantily dressed lady and tells his teenage sons that what they see is not beauty. He explains to them what beauty is as it relates to God’s character and will. He continues to tell, show, and emphasize the true beauty that God delights in (1 Pt. 3:3-4).
- *Discipling happens when* a brother notices another brother is running hard after his job and neglecting his family and ministry. He comes alongside of his brother to remind him of the true and lasting treasure, and the proper perspective on work.
- *Discipling happens when* a mom is at the park with her children. At one point the kids become unruly and she patiently, graciously but faithfully, disciplines her children. There are many watching eyes around her. Both the believing and unbelieving women are intrigued. Conversations begin and soon the fruit of the Spirit points to the matchless worth of Christ.
- *Discipling happens when* a mom takes an opportunity with her kids in the neighborhood to speak truth to the unbelieving neighbors & then shepherd & teach her children as to the importance, impact & centrality of the gospel.
- *Discipling happens when* a single woman senses another single woman’s discontentment in being single. She makes it a point to come alongside her for encouragement in the goodness of the gospel.
- *Discipling happens when* a member greets a new visitor to the church, invites them for dessert after church, discusses the sermon & invites them to join together for the CARE group or prayer meeting this week.
- *Discipling happens when* a few men meet every other week for a lunch & work thru a book of the Bible together: read it, apply it & pray for each other.

Acts 13:52 - The disciples were continually filled with *JOY* and with the Holy Spirit!

Conclusion:

A few important factors related to being a disciple-making disciple of Christ:

- Discipling is **INTENTIONAL** (deliberate) -- doesn't just 'happen'; gotta do it.
- Discipling is **ENCOURAGING** -- encourage other believers to persevere with Christ)
- Discipling is **FOCUSED** -- not 'hanging out', hobbies; or moral reformation or some club; but a focused *priority on speaking truth into the lives of fellow believers.*
- Discipleship is **WORD-BASED** -- rooted in the Word of God; studying, searching, memorizing, praying & discussing the Word (not our ideas)
- Discipling is **LOVING** -- caring for the soul of another saint is *most loving!*
- Discipling is **RELATIONAL** -- it involves intentional sharing of oneself with another person as you grow together *in Christ.*

Even for the Puritans, we learn that discipleship was a way of life. It involved many facets as they sought to live out the gospel and stay oriented to the truths of God's Word. They kept themselves under the preaching of Scripture as they regularly read and heard sermons. They read devotional writings and made use of catechisms, creeds and confessions of faith. They observed the Lord's Day and sought to exemplify the gospel in their homes. In all these ways, we have much we can learn from the Puritans. May God grant us their zeal in our day as we seek to shape our lives to the glory of God.

WHEN SAINT TO SAINT, IN DAYS OF OLD

Tune of: “Jesus Shall Reign”

When saint to saint, in days of old,
Their sorrows, sins, and sufferings told,
Jesus, the Friend of sinners, dear,
His saints to bless was present there.

As members of his mystic frame,
Together met to bless his name;

While humbly at his throne we bow,
As “God with us” he's present now.

O blest devotion! thus to meet,
And spread our woes at his dear feet;
Call him our own, in ties of blood,
And hold sweet fellowship with God.

SPEAK O LORD

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your Holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes for Your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility;
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.

Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow'r that can never fail—
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us—
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises,
And by faith we'll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

One of the many reasons why I LOVE CFBC

CFBC SEEKS TO APPLY THE VISION STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH, NAMELY, TO BE A DISCIPLE-MAKING CHURCH.

The mission of CFBC is quite clear. CFBC exists to glorify God by preaching the Word, evangelizing the lost, *discipling the saved*, and obeying Jesus Christ — all by the power of the Spirit. And furthermore, the vision of CFBC is to be a disciple-making church. CFBC has the conviction that every Christian — every single one! — is a disciple of Christ and thus is called by Christ to be a disciple maker. Every Christian whom God has called to Himself must make it his ambition to proclaim the gospel to others so that the lost are saved and so that the saved are growing.

Amazing realities that stem from the mission and vision statements are that people are concerned about people. There is person-to-person relationships that have begun, that continue, that endure, that will remain because of a commitment to grow one with another in the Word of God and in prayer.

Rather than exerting much, or all, of our energy in building great trellises, or programs, CFBC makes it its goal to build great vines. That is, ministry is *people* work. It's pouring into people. It's pouring into their lives. It's ministering to them. It's shepherding Christ's Word to their own hearts. After all, all Christians, since they have the Spirit of God, can admonish one another in the Word of God. All are competent to counsel each other.

This kind of person to person, life on life ministry at CFBC looks different in the various relationships. But we encourage people to be actively involved in a discipling relationship with another person during the week. We encourage the flock to work progressively through a book of the Bible together. Both are speaking the Word into each other's lives. Both are praying together. Both are growing together as Spirit-indwelt, sanctified people. Both strive to bear each other's burdens and minister Christ to each other through speaking truth to one another. This is practical shepherding!

God has so blessed CFBC with folks who hunger for discipleship. The people enjoy meeting together. They are growing in meeting one with another. The relationships, the friendships, and the spiritual growth that happens is encouraging!

DISCIPLESHIP:

toward a definition & some goals.

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Some of the last words of Christ contain the commission to His followers to go into all the world and make more disciples. To be a disciple of Christ is to be a follower of Him; that is, a learner of His Word and an imitator of His ways.

DISCIPLESHIP is the progressive journey of growing in Christlikeness until every believer is presented completely mature in Christ.

I. CONTINUAL.

Discipleship must be continual; that is, it must be an ongoing pursuit of every believer. The author of Hebrews says that believers must encourage one another day after day. The Christian life is not a momentary phenomenon; it is a relentless ambition. To follow Christ means that one surrenders to Christ and His Lordship and continually, zealously, resolutely, and single-mindedly grows in Christlikeness. To grow does not happen alone; it happens in Christian community, with the Body of Christ. It is impossible for a Christian to grow on his own just as it is impossible for a limb in a body to live and thrive on its own unattached from the rest of the body. It is impossible. So, the journey of Christlikeness is a continuous resolve and a constant pursuit. If a child of God wants to grow into the character of Christ, he must live a life of continuous discipleship following after Christ and growing with Christ's people.

2. INTENTIONAL.

Growth does not happen in neutral. God's people must thrust themselves into an intentional battle of conformity to Christ. Meeting with God's people just does not merely happen. It requires sacrifice, intentionality, focus. The children of God who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ must make it their resolve to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ so that they may serve Him by serving His body, the Church. And in so doing, they will fellowship with other believers, shed old sinful habits and reflect more of the glorious character of the God-man, Jesus Christ. Discipleship requires intentionality. Just as a lump of clay does not become a beautiful vase by happenstance; it requires care, skill, precision, time, and intentionality from the potter. So it is in the life of the believer. To grow, as earthen vessels, into a glorious piece of God's workmanship, believers must devote themselves to every good deed by intentionally focusing on their heart, their mind, their passions, and their lifestyle. Godly growth never happens automatically; but with intentionality and with the power of the Spirit, God's children can grow more into the image of God and reflect more of the character of Christ!

3. BIBLICAL.

The Christian life is shaped by one Book: Scripture. Nothing so owns the man of God like the Word of God. Because the Word of God is the very words of God, the believer gives to Scripture the same reverence that God deserves. Thus, Christian growth cannot happen in isolation from the Truth of God revealed in the Scriptures. Godliness comes with knowledge of, meditation on, and application of the Word of God. Those who have been redeemed must let the Word of Christ dwell in them richly and believers must speak of these things with regularity. This must not only happen in the public setting of corporate worship but even in the home environment with the smaller family units. Every aspect of life must be guided and governed by the authoritative Word of God. To live the godly life, the instruction manual is found in one book, the Bible. It is utterly impossible for a person to grow in Christ who separated himself from the Word of Christ. But when believers come together to study the Word together, to open

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the Word and read it together, and to search it and mine out its glorious riches together, and to search the breadth and length and entirety of the Word together, then Christian growth occurs at unprecedented speed. A husband must lead his wife biblically. A father must lead his children biblically. A pastor must lead his flock biblically. Older women must lead younger women biblically. Elder men must lead younger men biblically. Discipleship occurs when the Bible is sought, spoken, savored and submitted to and applied by the power of the Spirit.

4. PRAYERFUL.

To grow in Christ means that a person will pray to Christ. Christ is God and deserves all worship. He is the Lamb who was slain for sinners by bearing their wrath and becoming their Curse. Growth requires communication. To excel at a job, one communicates with someone else in the workplace who helps by providing feedback. Similarly, to excel at the Christian life, one must commune and communicate with God to please Him more and reflect Him better. To pray is to shatter the stronghold of Satan. To pray with others is to provide ample opportunities for growth, for thanksgiving, for petition, for confession, for accountability, and for praise! And when God hears and answers those prayers, and the great things that God has done is testified one to another, thanksgivings abound to the glory of God and resulting in the joy of His people! This is why discipling relationships between Christians should include a time of prayer. Paul often told the churches to pray for him. And often those prayers revolved around the believers petitioning God to grant Paul an open door for the gospel and that Paul would speak truth with boldness. Let believers gather regularly and pray fervently so that God, who is always present, will hear and act!

5. REPRODUCING.

Christians meet to grow in Christ. When others come to faith, an opportunity exists to welcome that new believer in to the discipling relationship. Or, after a few believers meet together for a season looking at the Word of God together, and when they complete their engaged period of study together, they can separate to each find a new person to disciple in the Word thus reproducing themselves and making more disciples. This is intentional, bold, reproducing discipleship. Again, to grow in Christ means that one exert effort, energy, time, and resources to grow in Christ and help others grow in Christ. The biblical admonitions often reflect this very truth. Take what you have heard and pass it on to faithful men who can teach others, is what Paul told Timothy to do. Christ told His disciples to make more disciples. Thus, they must reproduce themselves. Follow me as I follow Christ. In so far as I imitate Christ, you imitate me. Come my children listen to me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord! Parents must teach their children to fear God and to obey God so that the children learn the gospel, embrace the gospel, and love Christ fervently. True discipleship is reproductive and always fresh since there are always new believers in which to invest.

6. VULNERABLE.

Christ made Himself vulnerable with His disciples. He loved them dearly and they saw Him in His weakest moments and in His most sorrowful seasons. Nevertheless, He remained faithful at discipling them. So it is with Christians today. Christianity is authentic, real, and not sugarcoated. There is no true fabricated, easy, effortless Christianity whereby one simply slides into heaven. Everyone must strive to enter the kingdom and make violent war against sin — his own personal sins in his life. To refuse to engage in this war is to remain a nonbeliever. To not fight sin is to become friends with the Devil himself. To love the world is to make war with God. To live like the world is to prove that one has no interest in God, Godliness, or the glory of Christ. So when believers meet together and honestly and openly express their griefs, their struggles, their afflictions, their pursuits, their prayer needs, this vulnerability enhances growth in godliness. Believers walk together on the journey toward the heavenly city. And walking together entails trials, sorrows, joys, and hardships. Being willing to openly share these with another person can take a friendship deeper so that hearts are knit closer together rooted in Christ and established in love. Christ made Himself vulnerable with His disciples. He openly and honestly spoke with them. Believers should do the same with other believers.