

Disciples Who Make Disciples (Matthew 28:16-20)

At the start of 2022, it's important for us to hit the pause button and ask a very important question: what is this about? What are we doing here? Why does Local Church St. Pete exist? Simply put, we are disciples who make disciples; followers of Jesus inviting others to follow him. Let's lift the veil of mystery over what it means to be disciples who make disciples. Let's reject perfectionism and call out consumerism. We don't need another celebrity pastor; we don't need another polished event. We need communities of real people humbled by grace and compelled by love; willing to step out with faith and courage.

1. The mission comes from King Jesus (Matthew 28:16-17)

The AUTHORITY (the power, right, full authorization) was given to Jesus and now resides IN Jesus. It's not a divine suggestion or important recommendation. It's a commission (a charge; mission).

2. To us (Matthew 28:19-20)

The emphasis is on *"making disciples."*

= *"While you go into the world OR as you are going...wherever you go...make disciples."*

Mike Wilkerson: *"God doesn't redeem you and me so we can be happier all by ourselves; he is on a mission to make his name known to the whole world. We who have been redeemed are swept up into HIS story and sent out on HIS mission."*

A disciple-making culture. Culture is a set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterize a group of people. In other words it's a way of life.

3. With instructions (Matthew 28:19-20)

It involves *baptism* – full on identification with Jesus (his life, death and resurrection).

It involves *teaching* them to OBEY all that Jesus commanded.

Our responsibility is to teach the way of Jesus with words AND live it out with our lives.

"Watch me; imitate me!" 1 Cor. 11:1; 4:16 – 1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7

The goal? Self-initiating, reproducing disciples of Jesus.

4. Jesus comes back for the mission (Matthew 28:20)

Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; John 20:21 *"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

John Stott: *"He (Jesus) did not stay in the safe immunity of his heaven. Instead he emptied himself of his glory and humbled himself to serve. He actually entered our world. He took our nature, lived our life and died our death. He could not have identified with us more closely than he did....And now he calls us to enter other people's worlds, as he entered ours...We are called to enter other people's social and cultural reality: into their thought-world, struggling to understand their misunderstandings of the gospel, and into the pain of their alienation, weeping with those who weep. And this without compromising our Christians beliefs, values and standards."*

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Matthew 28:16-20. What does Matthew 28:16-20 reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?
2. Were you challenged or encouraged by this passage and/or sermon? If so, how?
3. What does Matthew 28:16-20 teach us about being a disciple of Jesus? What does it teach us about making disciples of Jesus? What should be involved in the process of disciple-making?
4. How does *the* local church play a critical role in making disciples? Have you ever thought about *your* participation in this local church as a means of "making disciples"? How does participation in Local Church St. Pete either pave the way for discipleship to happen or become an expression of discipleship itself?
5. Have you ever been discipled? What was it like? Where are you presently making disciples?
6. How have you grown/matured in your faith as a result of discipling someone else?
7. Discuss the "weightiness" of this mission set before us. How is it both a responsibility and joy?
8. What or who makes this mission attainable/possible? See Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4; John 20:21