

MAKE DISCIPLES: AN IMPERATIVE

In our last study we focused on the fact that, through his death and resurrection, Jesus had been given all authority in heaven and on earth. We are rescued from the dark domain and are now in his kingdom under his rule. One day everyone will bow and confess that Jesus is Lord. It is in this context that Jesus commands the 11 remaining disciples. The words he speaks are so familiar to us now, but have we fully grasped what Jesus is asking his disciples to do?

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Genesis 11:1, 4-8

¹ Now the whole earth had one language and the same words

⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶ And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.”

⁸ So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

Read Matthew 28:18-20. Mark references to Jesus with a and underline any **instructions**.

Write out below the specific instructions in v19.

What does the word “therefore” refer back to? In what way does this lend weight to the instruction?

What two verbs are in this instruction?

Note: When you look up the mood of these two verbs in Greek you discover that the imperative verb in this command is not “go” but is “make disciples”. It could be read, “As you are going, make disciples.” The main thrust of Jesus command is for the disciples to make disciples.

Who were they to go to?

Before we look closer at Jesus command to “make disciples,” let us reflect on God’s heart for the nations in the Bible.

Read Genesis 11:1,4-8. Mark the LORD with a and mark the people with a

V1 How is the earth described at this stage?

V4-5 What do the people decide to do? What is the purpose of their plans?

V6-8 How does God respond and what is the outcome?

This separation was the beginning of the nations in the Bible story. Move on 1 chapter!!

Genesis 12:1-3

¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Acts 2:1,4-7a ,11b



¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place....

⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying,

¹¹ "...we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

Revelation 7:9-10

⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Read Genesis 12:1-3. Mark God with a  and mark "bless, blessed" with a 

V1 Who does God speak to and what does He ask him to do?

V2 What does He promise to do for Abram?

V3 What will He do through Abram? How does this reveal God's purpose for the families of the earth?

Jesus spent most of his time here on earth with his own people, the Jews, but his plan to bless the nations never changed. Let's note what happened on the day of Pentecost, when the church was born.

Read Acts 2:1,4-7a,11b. Mark the believers with a  and underline "every nation"

V1,4 What happened as the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit?

V5 Who was in Jerusalem at that time?

V6-7, 11b What did each of them hear?

Apostle John is given a vision of the future when God's plan for the nations is fulfilled.

Read Revelation 7:9-10. Underline "nations"

V9 List the details describing the nations here.

V10 What are they crying out?

How do these passages about the nations connect with Jesus' commission to his disciples in Matt. 28?

God's plan for bringing blessing to the nations will be achieved through individuals who will become his disciples and who in turn will go and make disciples. So what does Jesus teach about being a disciple? What sort of people is he looking for to be part of his plans?

Luke 9:23-25

²³ And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?"

Luke 9:57-62

⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."
⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ⁵⁹ To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." ⁶² Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Galatians 2:20

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

"Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried."

- G. K. Chesterton

Read Luke 9:23-25. Mark Jesus (he) with a and mark "anyone/whoever" with a

V23 What are the three things needed to follow Jesus? Note the meanings and reflect on each one.

Deny—537—lose sight of oneself and ones own interests.

Take—142—to take upon oneself and carry, to bear

Follow—190—to go after one who proceeds, accompany

V24-25 What are the exchanges to be considered?

How would remembering about Jesus kingdom and authority help us make these choices?

Read Luke 9:57-62 and mark Jesus with a and mark each person with a Underline the phrase "let me first"

V57-58 How does Jesus respond to the person's desire to follow? Why do you think Jesus highlights the cost in this way?

V59-62 What is the common issue for the people?

What does the phrase "let me first..." say about them? How do we use this excuse?

V62 What image does Jesus use to describe such a person and what does he say about them?

In what way does Jesus' teaching challenge you? How would you finish the sentence, "let me first..." in response to Jesus's call to follow him?

Read Galatians 2:20. Mark "I" with a

How does Paul describe his life?

How does he describe the Son of God? How does this help him to entrust his life to Christ?

How does Paul's confession relate to the three statements - "deny yourself, take up your cross, follow me?" Ask God to help you grasp what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

About this study...

This resource has been designed to allow you to jump into God's Word and study it closely. It requires no preparation, and provides you with a structure to study a passage, with questions to help you think and reflect on it.

This study gives you a small insight into the world of inductive Bible study through three key parts:

Observe - What does the text say?

Understand - What does the text mean?

Apply - What does this mean for me?

By using this approach, we can study the Bible in a way that allows us to know God deeply, and to live differently.

About Precept Ireland...

Precept was founded in 1970 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and now works in 160 countries, and has Bible study material translated in over 70 languages. In 2001 Precept was established in Ireland, and has grown through it's mission to engage people in relationship with God through knowing His Word. Precept Ireland seeks to resource and train Bible study leaders to help students like you discover God's truth for yourself and be transformed by it. With more than 250 unique titles ranging from zero to five hours of weekly homework, Precept has a Bible study that meets you where you are.

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