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Disciplmaking 1 Being His Witness

INTRODUCTION

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20

THE COMMAND TO MAKE DISCIPLES

After Jesus was crucified, He appeared to His disciples several times before He ascended into heaven. At one of those appearances on a mountain in Galilee, Jesus gave His disciples the commandment that is quoted above. That important commandment is known as the Great Commission. The individual product of obedience to the Great Commission is a disciple. Obedience to the Great Commission is a multiplication process.

THE DEFINITION OF A DISCIPLE

A disciple is a student and follower of Jesus Christ ... one who lives by and spreads His teaching. Jesus set high standards for those wanting to be His disciples. Jesus explained that His disciples must put Him above their own lives, relationships, and all, Luke 14:26-33. He said that being His disciple means abiding in His Word, John 8:31-32. Notice that He speaks to believers in those two verses. Jesus added that our love for one another demonstrates to the world that we are His disciples, John 13:35. In addition, He explained that we glorify the Father and prove to be (i.e. become) His disciples by bearing much fruit, John 15:8.

THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLEMAKING

The definition above makes disciplmaking seem to be out of reach. However, it is God's work combined with our work ... and therefore attainable. The first step is belief. A nonbeliever becomes a believer. Then that new believer, being baptized and taught to obey, grows to become a disciple. However, the process is not complete until that disciple becomes a disciplmaker. In the Great Commission, Jesus stated that we are to be *"teaching them to observe all that I commanded you"*. One of the commandments He gave was the Great Commission. Therefore, the process of disciplmaking includes teaching disciples to be disciplmakers.

COMMITMENTS

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:2

Paul instructed Timothy to entrust what he had taught him to faithful men who could teach others. The process multiplied to a fourth generation ... from Paul ... to Timothy ... to faithful men ... to others also. That kind of multiplication is the goal in this course. Each lesson is a building block in the process of becoming a disciple and a disciplemaker. For this process to work, it takes effort on the part of both the teacher and the student.

THE COMMITMENTS TO TAKE THIS COURSE

Be available. Make the time available for these lessons.

Be conscientious. This requires effort ... pray, study, and review.

Be teachable. Be willing to learn, think, grow, and change. Apply what you learn to your own life. Then teach someone. Apply and multiply.

THE COMMITMENTS TO TEACH THIS COURSE

Be committed to them. Give your time as a teacher and as a friend to those you teach. Be available to them. Remember, they are to be disciples of Jesus Christ ... not of you.

Be an example. Your life is a demonstration of your commitment to God, to His Word, and to the process of disciplmaking. Your thorough knowledge of the materials will show that the lessons can be learned.

Be flexible and firm. Be patient ... it takes time to learn and to apply the content of these lessons. Give enough time to your student(s) to learn, to grow, and even to fail. Encourage them and hold them accountable to learn ... to apply what they learn ... and then to teach others also.

Be prepared. Know each lesson thoroughly ... and study the appendix on improving your teaching skills.

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Abiding in His Word****SALVATION**

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

AN ETERNAL DECISION

The Bible makes it clear that everyone will live forever ... the only question is where that will be. The answer to that is based on our decision about Jesus Christ ... to believe in Him or to reject Him. With eternity in the balance, no other decision is as important as our decision about Jesus.

THE PROBLEM

Simply stated, our sin separates us from God. We are guilty by association with the human race (imputed sin). We are afflicted with a natural tendency to sin (inherited sin nature). And on our own, we do wrong things (personal sin) that separate us from Him. Without God's intervention, we would face an eternity away from Him.

THE SOLUTION

We are incapable of solving this problem ... but God is capable of solving it. He took the initiative. He sent His Son to die on the cross in our place. When we believe in Jesus as our personal Savior, His substitution pays for our sins (redemption) ... satisfies God (propitiation) ... changes us (reconciliation) ... and gives us His righteousness (imputation). Then God declares that we are righteous (justification).

THE RESULT

We are born into God's family when we put our personal faith in Jesus. Our good works do not save us ... they do not produce faith. But good works demonstrates real faith. Good works are a consequence rather than a prerequisite of our faith. As believers, we have the wonderful privilege of knowing that we have eternal life. We are eternally safe because no one can snatch us out of His hand.

SIN

The Bible makes clear statements about sin. It states that sin is real in our lives. The result of our sin is very serious ... separating us from God ... on our own to face an eternity away from His presence. However, God provided a remedy. He offers that remedy to us as a free gift.

THE REALITY OF SIN. Sin is anything that does not express or conform to the goodness of God. It can be a thought, Matthew 5:27-28 ... a deed committed, John 8:34 ... or a deed omitted, James 4:17. The words for sin in the Bible mean missing the mark, transgressing the Law, rebelling, defiance, disobedience, wickedness, evil, and unrighteousness. Sin can be against others or against ourselves, 1 Corinthians 6:18. Ultimately all sins are against God, Genesis 39:9, Psalm 41:4 and 51:4, and Romans 8:7. Three categories of sin are described in the Bible. The first category is imputed sin described in Romans 5:12-21. It is guilt by association with the human race ... in Adam all sinned. The second is our inherited sin nature referred to in Ephesians 2:3 and Psalm 51:5. This is our natural tendency to sin. That natural tendency brings us unavoidably to the third category, personal sin. Personal sins are those that we commit in thought or deed ... in attitude or action.

THE RESULT OF SIN. The reality of sin in each of our lives is unavoidable. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23. It is also unavoidable that we must deal with the consequences, or results, of that sin. One result is that we are alienated from God. We are His enemies, Romans 5:10. We are separated from Him. *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God."* Isaiah 59:2. We stand before God guilty, judged, and condemned. On our own without God's intervention, we stand condemned to an eternity *"away from the presence of the Lord,"* 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ... and condemned to *"disgrace and everlasting contempt."* Daniel 12:2.

THE REMEDY FOR SIN. Sin and its accompanying condemnation are humanly unavoidable. However, God has provided the remedy for sin in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. *"While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."* Romans 5:6. *"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross."* 1 Peter 2:24. *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all."* 1 Timothy 2:5-6. *"Everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."* Acts 10:43. Everyone will deal with the sin problem in one of two ways: (1) by eternal separation from God, or (2) by God's solution received through faith in Jesus.

SALVATION

In His great love, God provided salvation through the death of Jesus to all those who believe. Salvation has different facets ... directed toward God, sin, and man. An understanding of salvation is rooted in these different aspects of His great gift. Six of these are described below.

1. SUBSTITUTION ... JESUS TOOK MY PLACE. He died on the cross as our substitute. All of salvation is based on this one fact. It is more than His dying for our benefit. He died in our place.

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."
Romans 5:6

"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter 3:18

2. REDEMPTION ... MY SIN WAS PAID FOR. This is directed toward sin. Redemption is buying or delivering by payment of a price. Redemption is a payment for sin ... made to God. The payment was the blood of Christ. The life, or soul, of the flesh is in the blood, Leviticus 17:11. The payment was His life. Jesus Christ gave His life for our sins.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us." Galatians 3:13

"Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."
1 Peter 1:18-19

"For Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Revelation 5:9-10

3. PROPITIATION ... GOD WAS SATISFIED. This is directed toward God. Propitiation means satisfaction. The Bible states that Christ Himself is the sacrifice that satisfies God ... that appeases or placates God's wrath. The justice of God has to be satisfied.

"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:17

"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." 1 John 2:2

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10

SALVATION (continued)

4. RECONCILIATION ... I WAS AND CAN BE CHANGED. This is a change directed toward man. It makes man acceptable to God. Reconciliation brings two into harmony ... makes them compatible again. God did not change. He does not need to change. Man needs to be changed. At the cross, mankind was changed ... made savable. We are changed individually when we believe. Then we are given the ministry and word of reconciliation ... to share the Gospel with the lost people of our world.

"For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:10

"Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

5. IMPUTATION ... DOUBLE TRANSFER. Upon belief in Christ, all of our sin is transferred to Him ... and all of His righteousness is transferred to us. The sinless Christ became sin on our behalf ... and we, the unrighteous ones, were given His righteousness.

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

"And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

1 Peter 2:24

6. JUSTIFICATION ... GOD DECLARED ME RIGHTEOUS. Justification is a declaration of righteousness. It is God's pronouncement that we are right in our standing before Him. The cross makes us righteous. Justification declares that we are righteous. As a part of our salvation, we are justified by Christ's work on the cross. After we have been saved, our resultant good works justify us ... they declare our salvation, James 2:24.

"Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1

"So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, so even through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous." Romans 5:18-19

A REVIEW OF SIN AND SALVATION

SIN

Sin is very real in every person's life ... and it produces a serious problem as a result. Each person's inherited sin nature (innate tendency to sin) unavoidably leads to personal sin. Then that personal sin separates him or her from God. If it weren't for God's intervention, we would have to pay the debt for our sin - eternal separation from Him. However, God sent Jesus to pay for our sin by His death on the cross. We are born again when we receive Jesus as our Savior by believing in Him. His payment on the cross becomes our payment for sin at the moment of our belief in Him.

SALVATION

When Jesus died on the cross, His substitution...
propitiated (satisfied) God for mankind, and
redeemed (paid for) sin for mankind, and
reconciled (changed/made savable) mankind.

However, no individual was (or is) automatically saved by this. All of the above was accomplished on the cross ... but no universal salvation consequentially saved all mankind. Each person must individually be born again through personal faith in Jesus.

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When you put your personal faith in Jesus ... a double imputation is transacted for you in that your sin is imputed (transferred) to Jesus and His righteousness is imputed (transferred) to you.

Then His substitution on the cross...
propitiates (satisfies) God for you, and
redeems (pays for) your sin, and
reconciles (changes) you.

Therefore, you are justified (declared righteous) by God.

SECURITY

Scripture states that salvation is eternal, permanent, and cannot be lost ... once saved, always saved. Our eternal security is based on God's strength. It is His work, not ours. Assurance is our response to security. You can *"know that you have eternal life."* 1 John 5:13. *"He who hears ... and believes ... has eternal life, and does not come into judgement but has passed out of death into life."* John 5:24. *"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."* John 6:37. *"And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father ... is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."* John 10:28-29. You are not holding onto Him in your strength ... He is holding on to you in His strength.

A greater understanding of eternal security comes from the following four subjects ... none of which affects our eternal security.

1) Believer's judgement. Every believer's works will be judged by fire, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. What remains after the fire, determines rewards. If nothing remains, *"he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved"*, verse 15. Salvation can never be lost ... only rewards can be forfeited.

2) The three tenses of salvation ... past, present, and future. We have been saved from the penalty of sin, Luke 7:50, Ephesians 2:5,8. We are being saved from the power of sin, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Corinthians 2:15. In addition, we will be saved from the presence of sin, Romans 5:9-10, 13:11. None are lost in these three stages. Actually the opposite is clearly stated ... all who have been saved will ultimately be saved, John 6:39 and Romans 8:30.

3) Justification is a declaration of righteousness. *"A man is justified by works, and not by faith alone."* James 2:24. Our good works declare our salvation. Our good works do not save us or keep us saved.

4) God's discipline of His children. Hebrews 12:4-13 describes His discipline, which is based on His love. God disciplines all believers. However, He does not take back our salvation as part of His discipline.

The strong conclusion is that nothing *"shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 8:35-39.