

# THE CALL AND COST OF DISCIPLESHIP





# DISCIPLE DEFINED

- The word disciple is both a noun and a verb.
- Noun: It means a learner, a pupil, a follower, an adherent, a student of a great master, religious leader or teacher.
- Verb: Describes the process by which the learner or pupil grow in knowledge, obedience, or faith.
- The term “disciple” described followers who were committed to a particular cause, teaching, and/or set of beliefs.

# A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

- a. Disciple as a noun: A follower of Jesus Christ.
- b. There is a difference between recognizing Christ as a person and being a follower of Christ.
- c. Over 500 witnesses saw the risen Christ at various times and places.
- d. Only 120 were present in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost.



- a. Disciple as a verb: One who believes and accepts Jesus claims of His identity and truth of His words.
- b. One who learns with the purpose to obey what is learned.
- c. One who not only believes but lives the lifestyle of a follower of Christ.
- d. One who is committed to the mission of establishing the Kingdom of God.
- e. A disciple is a disciple maker who intentionally helps others to follow Jesus Christ.

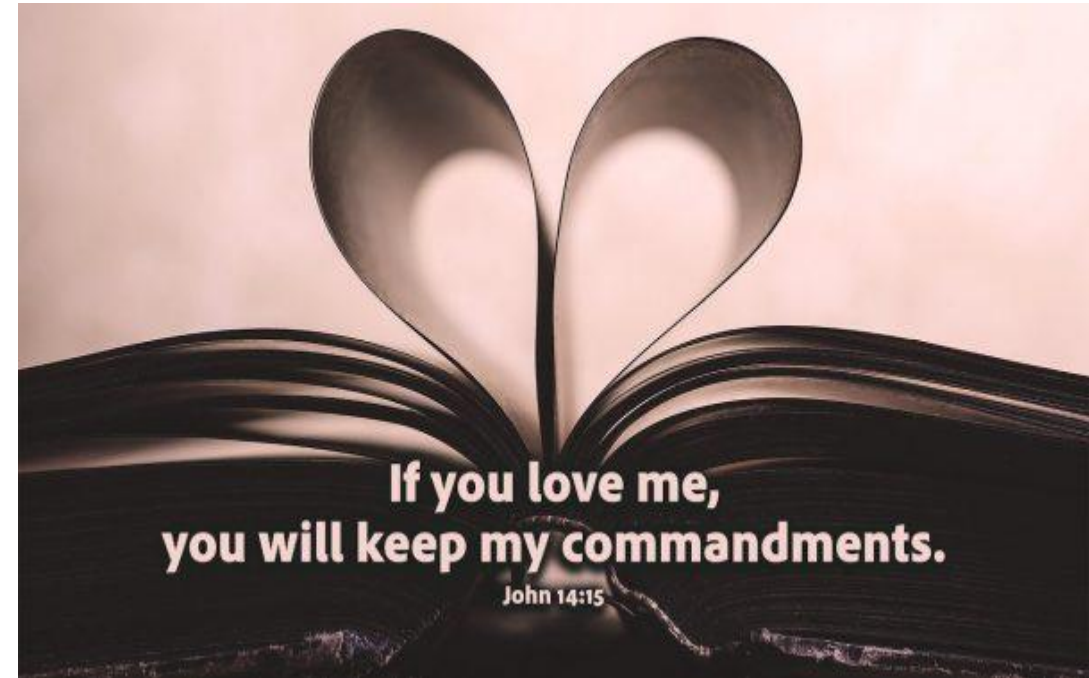
# DISCIPLE

- Being a disciple of Jesus means that we are being transformed into His image. God wants to change us so much that it intrigues others.
- Ephesians 5:1 “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.”
- 1 Corinthians 11:1 “ Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.”
- We are to go out with the same message, ministry and compassion, exercising the same servanthood and experiencing the same suffering. (M.J. Wilkins)
- Jesus made religion a thing of the heart, not a rabbinical learning or rabbinical theology. (Rev. F. W. Robertson)



# DISCIPLESHIP DEFINED

- Discipleship is the process of growth and development as a disciple.
- It is learning with the purpose to obey what is learned.
- Describes the process by which we encourage others to follow Jesus.
- Helping people to know and follow Jesus. (Mark Dever)



# JESUS' DISCIPLESHIP

- Jesus implemented a unique form of discipleship, far different than others.
- Prospective disciples of a rabbi **approached the rabbi** and asked to **study the law** with him.
- **Jesus, the rabbi, approached** his disciples and called them to obey Jesus' call to **follow** Him.
- It was unique to His status as the Messianic “Son of God” whose disciples ultimately “worshipped Him”, an action reserved solely for God with His people.
- Matthew 28:17 “When they saw Him, they worshipped Him....”

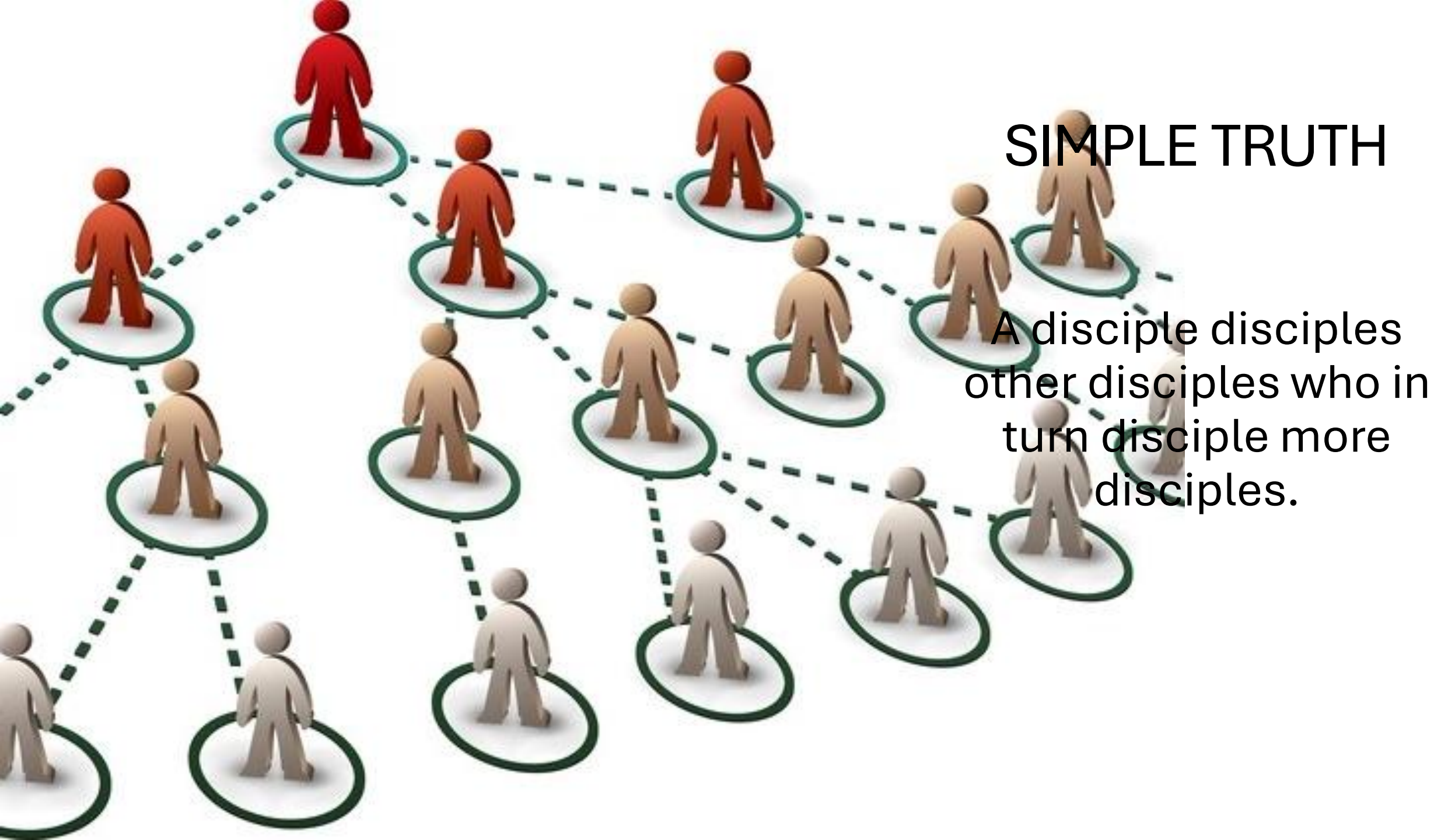


“For discipleship to be understood and practiced most clearly, the view of Jesus with his disciples from the Gospels must come first as we attempt to apprehend what it is like for discipleship today: living a fully human life in this world in union with Jesus Christ and growing in conformity to his image” (Wilkins, “Disciples & Discipleship,” *DJG*, 206).





You cannot be an obedient disciple without discipling. It would be like calling yourself a cook without ever actually cooking!



# SIMPLE TRUTH

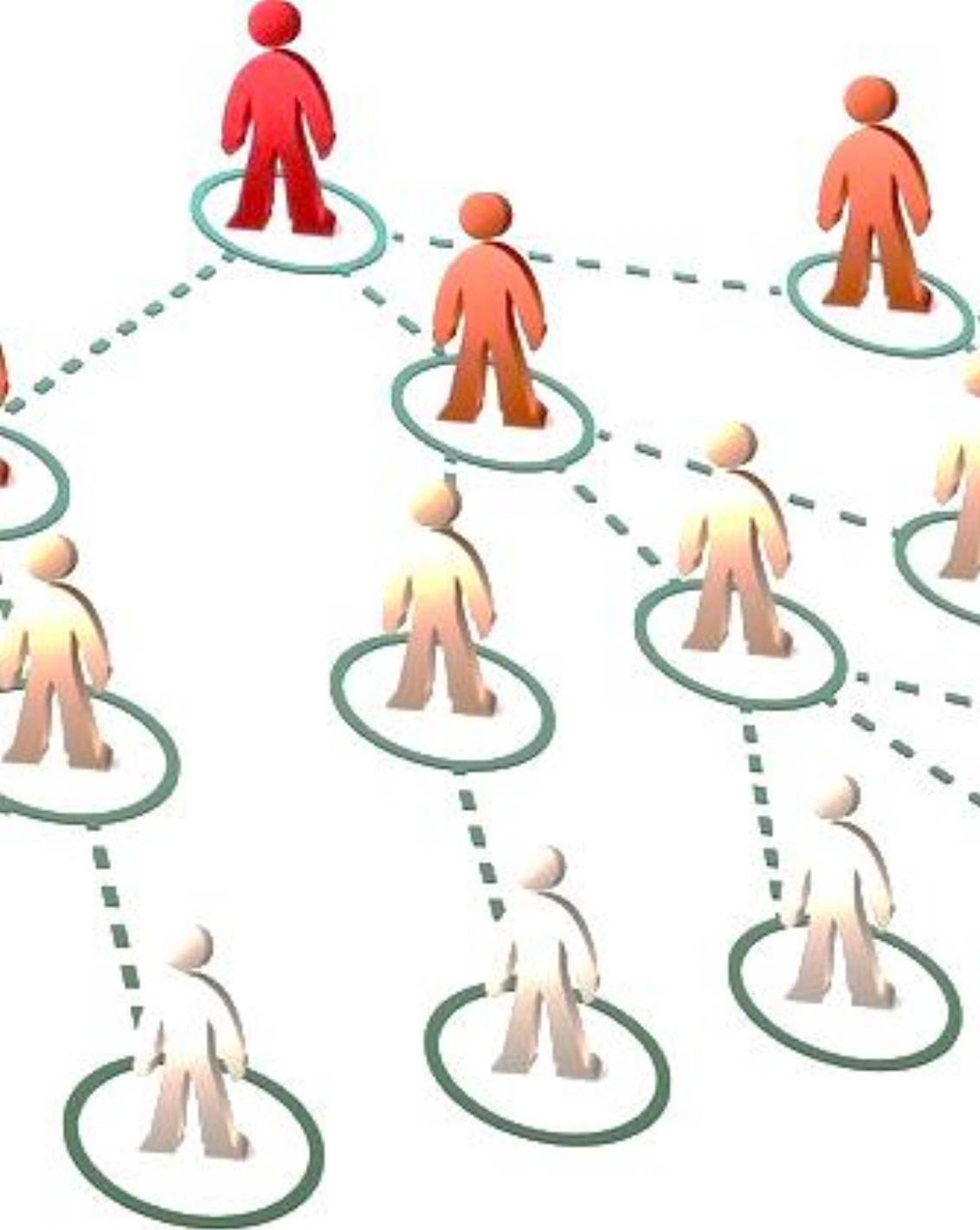
A disciple disciples other disciples who in turn disciple more disciples.

# JESUS: THE DISCIPLE MAKER

Jesus' ministry of calling, training, and sending out disciples stands as a captivating historical phenomenon. (M. J. Wilkins)

Jesus did not simply lead a weekly Bible study. He invited His disciples to learn through actions as well as words.





Jesus spent His earthly ministry investing in a small group of people, teaching them, challenging them, and walking with them.

His model wasn't flashy or rushed—it was relational, consistent, and transformative.

**Side note: A great master with female disciples was an unusual occurrence in Israel in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century.**

- Jesus' disciples were called by Him, followed Him and were commissioned by Him to build the Kingdom of God.



# THE **KINGDOM** OF GOD

## CALLED BY JESUS

Called to respond to the call of Kingdom life.

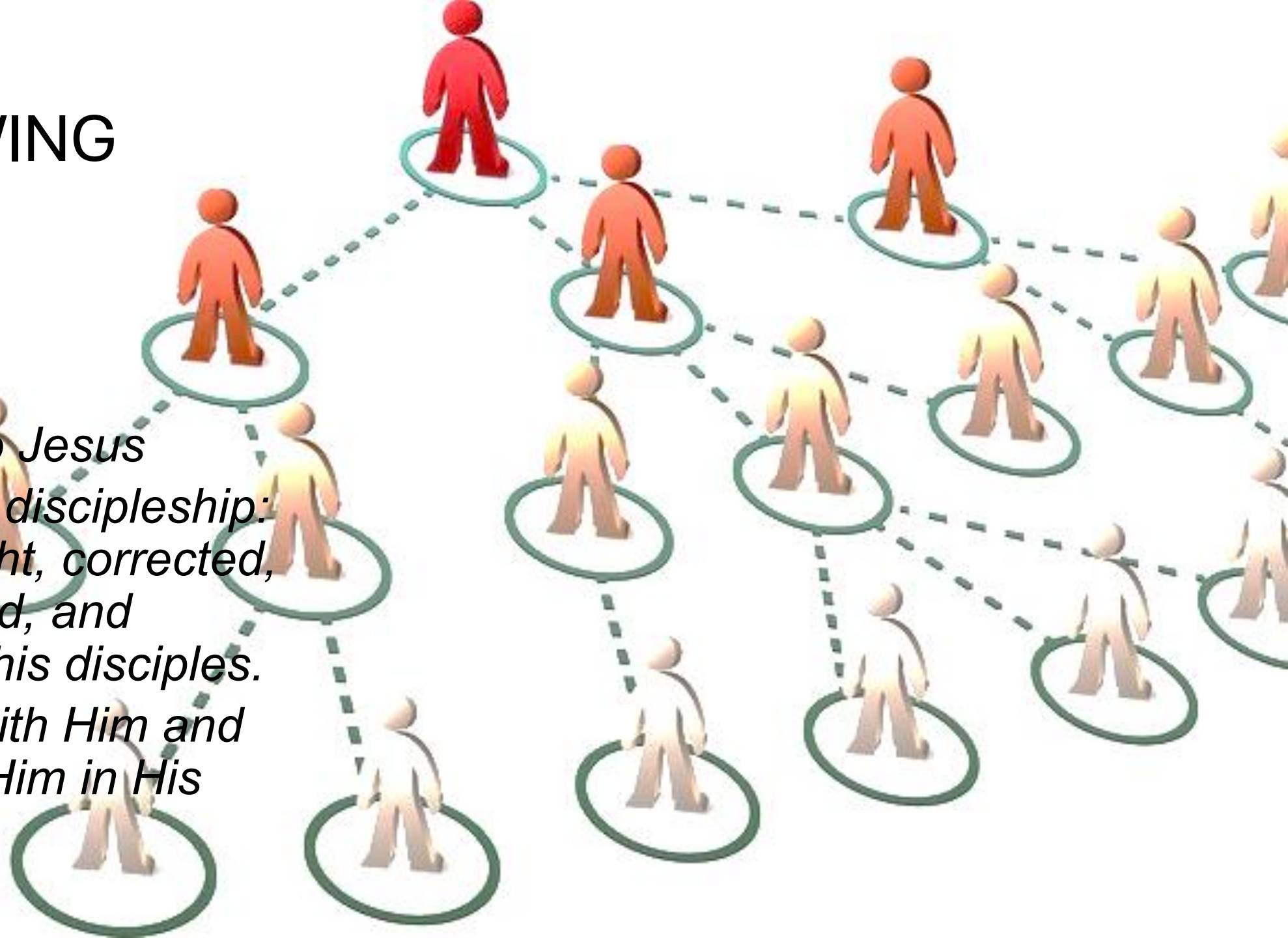
Called to count the cost (Luke 14:25-33)

Called to lose one's old life and finding new life in the family of God through obeying the will of the Father (Mark 3:31-35)

You have been called by Jesus.

# FOLLOWING JESUS

- *Attached to Jesus*
- *Growing in discipleship: Jesus taught, corrected, admonished, and supported his disciples.*
- *Together with Him and service to Him in His mission.*



# COMMISSIONED BY JESUS

MATTHEW 4:19: “And He said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

“The meaning of ‘making disciples’ is to proclaim the gospel message among those who have not yet received forgiveness of sins, with the intent of them becoming disciples . . . In the early church, to believe in the gospel message was to become a disciple.” (Wilkins, “Disciples & Discipleship,’ DJG, 207)



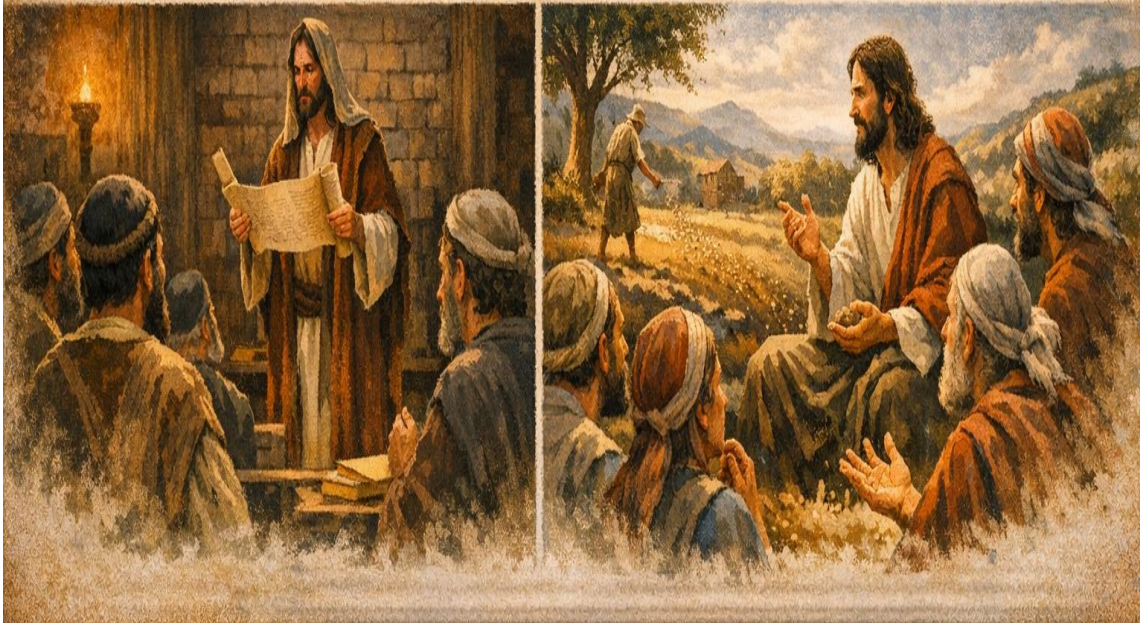
# BECOMING LIKE JESUS

Luke 22:39-41 <sup>39</sup>”And He came out and went, as was His **custom**, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him. <sup>40</sup> Now when He arrived at the place, He said to them, “Pray that you do not come into temptation.” <sup>41</sup> And He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and *began* to **pray**.”

# Luke 4:16

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.”





## MARK 10:1

“Getting up, He went from there to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan; the crowds gathered around Him again, and according to His custom, He once more began to teach them.”

The goal of the believers' life of faith is made clear: His disciples are equipped to make disciples.



*“Imagine Jesus walking up to the first disciples and saying something like this, ‘Hey, would you guys mind identifying yourselves with Me in some way? Don’t worry. I don’t actually care if you do anything I do or that you change your lifestyle at all. I’m just looking for people who are willing to say they believe in Me and call themselves Christians.’”*



# THE GREAT COMMISSION

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. <sup>19</sup> Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

# JESUS' FINAL COMMAND

- Jesus committed His earthly ministry to making disciples within Israel.
- Jesus believed in discipleship so much that He commanded His followers to spend their lives teaching others to follow Him.
- It is God's master plan of salvation of mankind.
- It is the good news for the whole world; God shows no partiality.
- Jesus invited all of us to be a part of His plan.

# A RECENT BARNNA STUDY

- BARNA is an Evangelical Christian policy firm.
- When asked if churchgoers had “heard of the Great Commission,” 51% said they did not recognize this term.
- 25% said they have heard of the “Great Commission” but don’t know what it means.
- Sadly, 76% of those who go to church have no clue what the Great Commission is all about.

# Barna

# PROBLEM:

- The Biblical principle of disciple-making has been neglected.
- There has been a lack of doctrinal training.
- There has been a lack of discipline and self-denial by believers.
- We have developed a culture where a minister ministers and the rest of us sit back and enjoy “church” from a comfortable distance.
- People are looking for something worth living for.

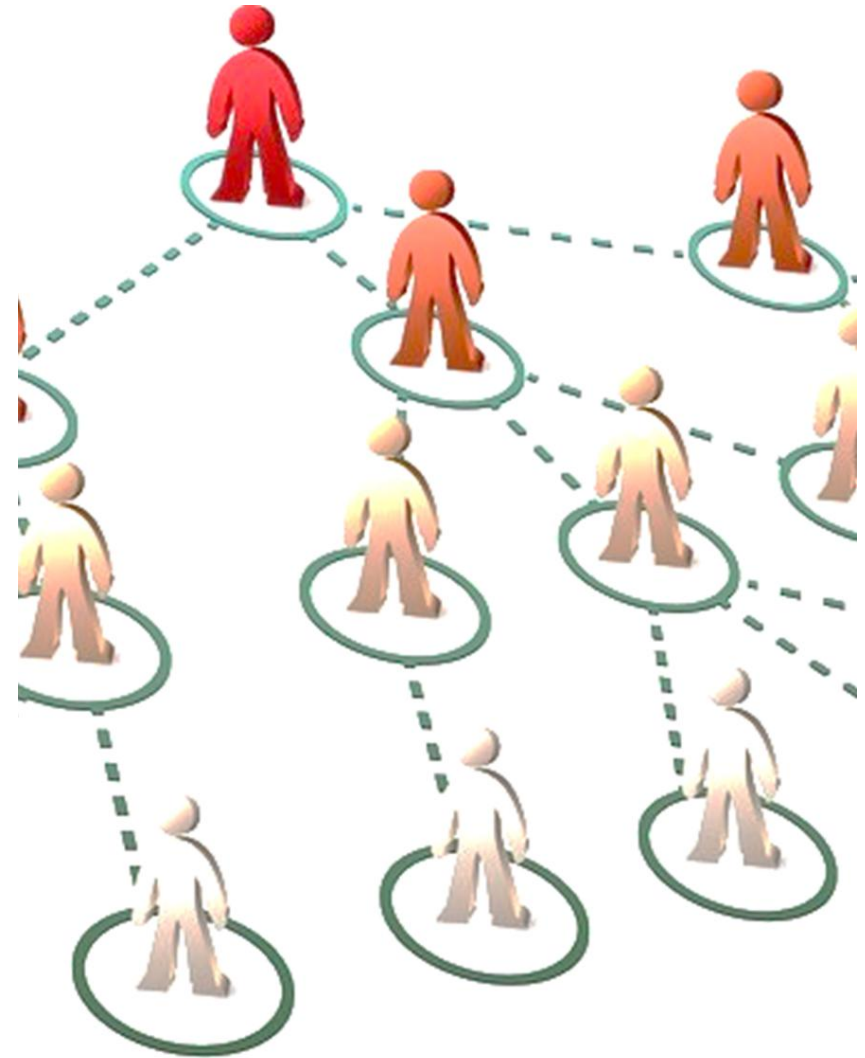


The Solution to the Problem:

**WE KNOW  
THE TRUTH**

## Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. <sup>19</sup> **Go**, **therefore**, and **make disciples** of **all the nations**, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> **teaching them** to follow all that I **commanded you**; and behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.”

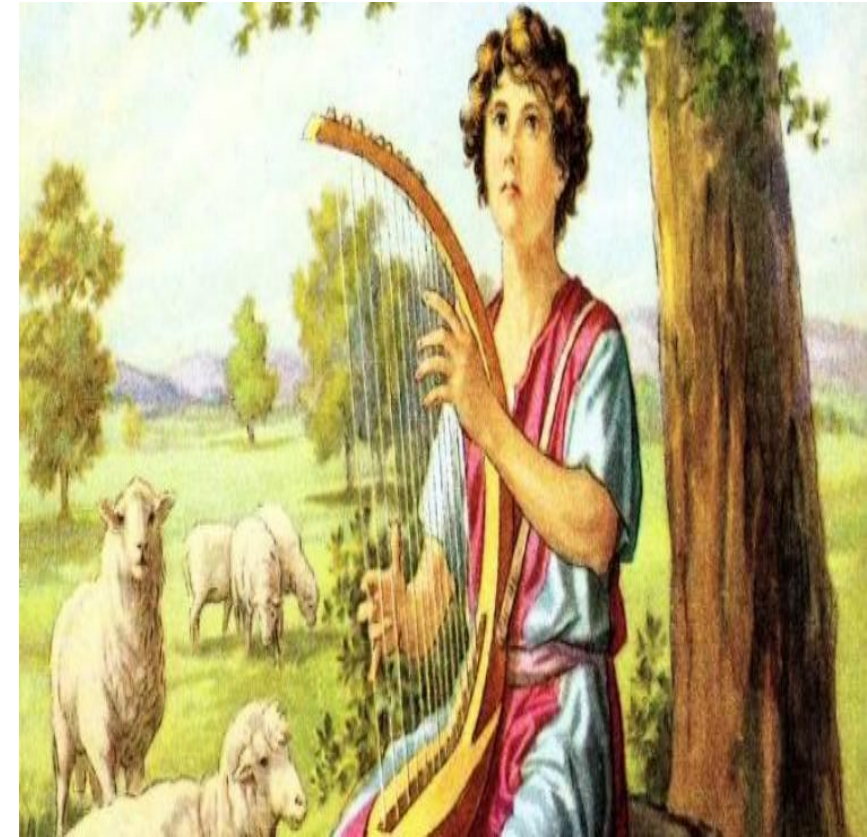


# ROMANS 10:14

“But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?”

# Psalm 51:10-13

- 10 Create in me a clean heart, God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.  
12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
And sustain me with a willing spirit.  
13 Then I will teach wrongdoers Your ways,  
And sinners will be converted to You.
- Even King David understood discipleship as a faithful servant of God.



The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2



# I am not qualified!

Jesus' disciples recorded both positive and negative behavior.

Consider the first 12 disciples:

Ambitious

Fearful

Selfish

Impulsive

Argumentative

Immature

Weak in Faith

Slow to Learn

They were ordinary people like us.

God is looking for the willing.



**NOT  
QUALIFIED**

# I AM NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

- You will never be “good” enough; our only righteousness is in Christ.
- Look at the list of the members of the Hall of Faith in Hebrews.
- God elevated the faith of a liar, a murderer, a adultery, a prostitute and a doubter.

# John 15:4

- “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.”

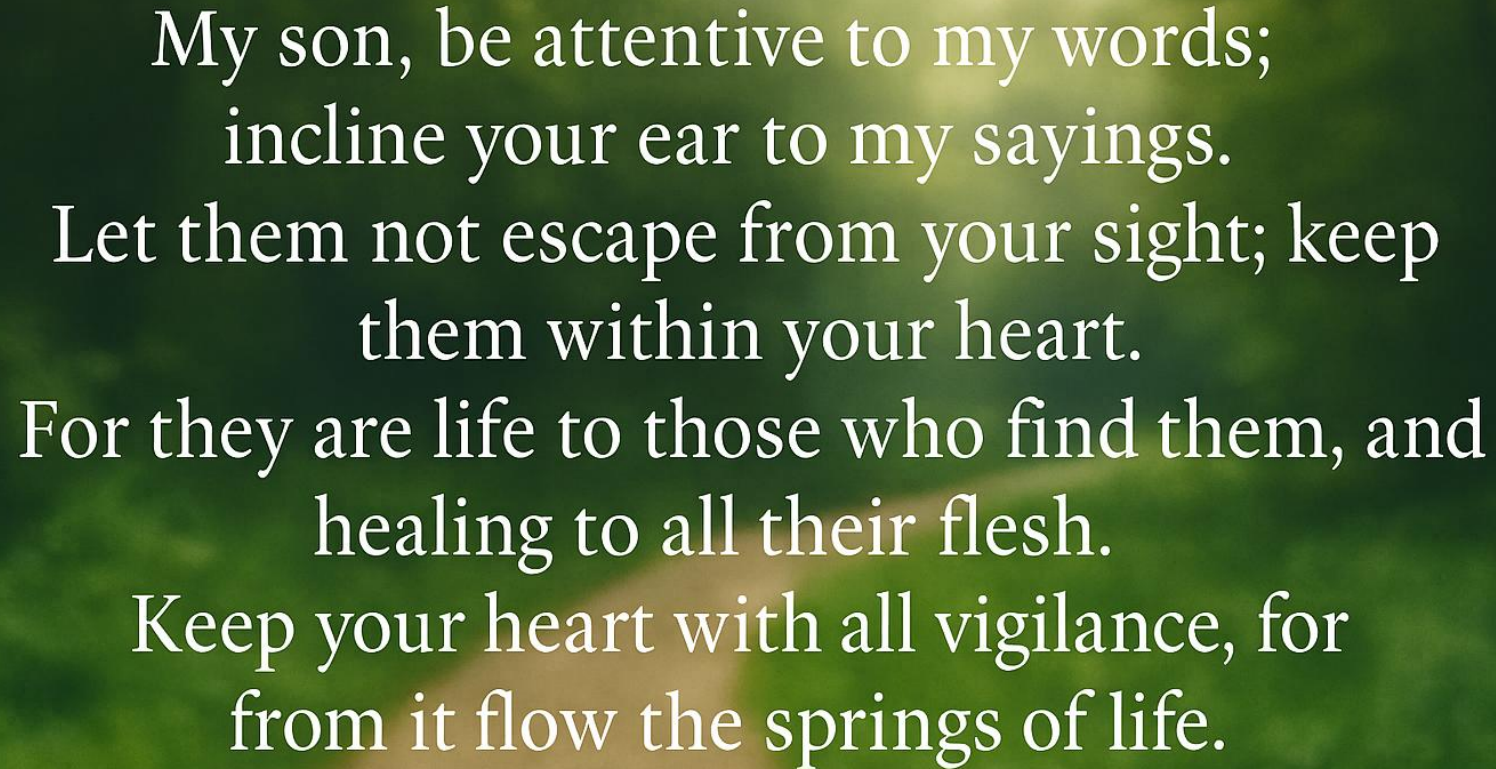
# SO, HOW DO WE DO THAT?

- Discipleship is a life-long journey with the Holy Spirit leading you.
- Discipleship is God's truth transferred through building relationships.
- Discipleship is how God's love flows from one heart to another.
- Discipleship helps each person to grow in faith.



# START WITH FAMILY

“Hear, Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup> And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup> And you shall repeat them diligently to your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> You shall also tie them as a sign to your hand, and they shall be as frontlets on your forehead. <sup>9</sup> You shall also write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.  
Deuteronomy 6:4-9



My son, be attentive to my words;  
incline your ear to my sayings.  
Let them not escape from your sight; keep  
them within your heart.  
For they are life to those who find them, and  
healing to all their flesh.  
Keep your heart with all vigilance, for  
from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 4:20-23 ESV

# FIRST STEPS

- Pray specifically for God to lead you to someone to disciple.
- Get to know your neighbors, co-workers, colleagues, business partners, a teenager at church, or someone in your small group in SS class.
- Plan to intentionally spend and invest time with individuals, getting to know them.
- Show interest and build a relationship with individuals.
- Ask questions: People typically like to talk about themselves.



- Establish a time and day on a weekly basis to meet together; maybe an early breakfast.
- Invite individuals to come to your house to visit and have a meal.
- Once a week invite individuals to come to your house to join with a bunch of other people from church and/or neighborhood.
- Share with them what has been going in your life and ask them to share.
- Plan to spend a little time reading a small portion of scripture with them or read from a daily devotional and discuss.
- Ask them “How can I pray for you ?”
- Have a men’s or women’s breakfast one Saturday a month with a short devotional.





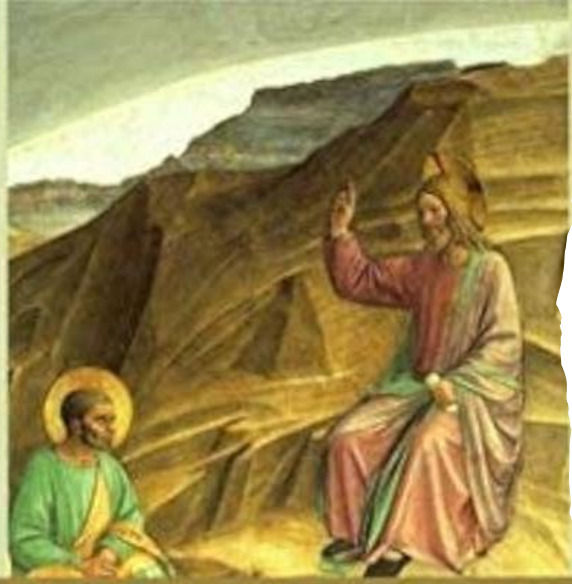
# REMEMBER

- It is not about having all the answers!
- Just show up, share your faith, point to Jesus, and let God do the transforming work in their lives.
- You are not called to be successful; you are called to be faithful!
- All the success is from God's transforming grace.

# COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ-suffering that every person must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is that dying of the old man which is the result of his encounter with Christ. When Christ calls a person, He bids him come and die.

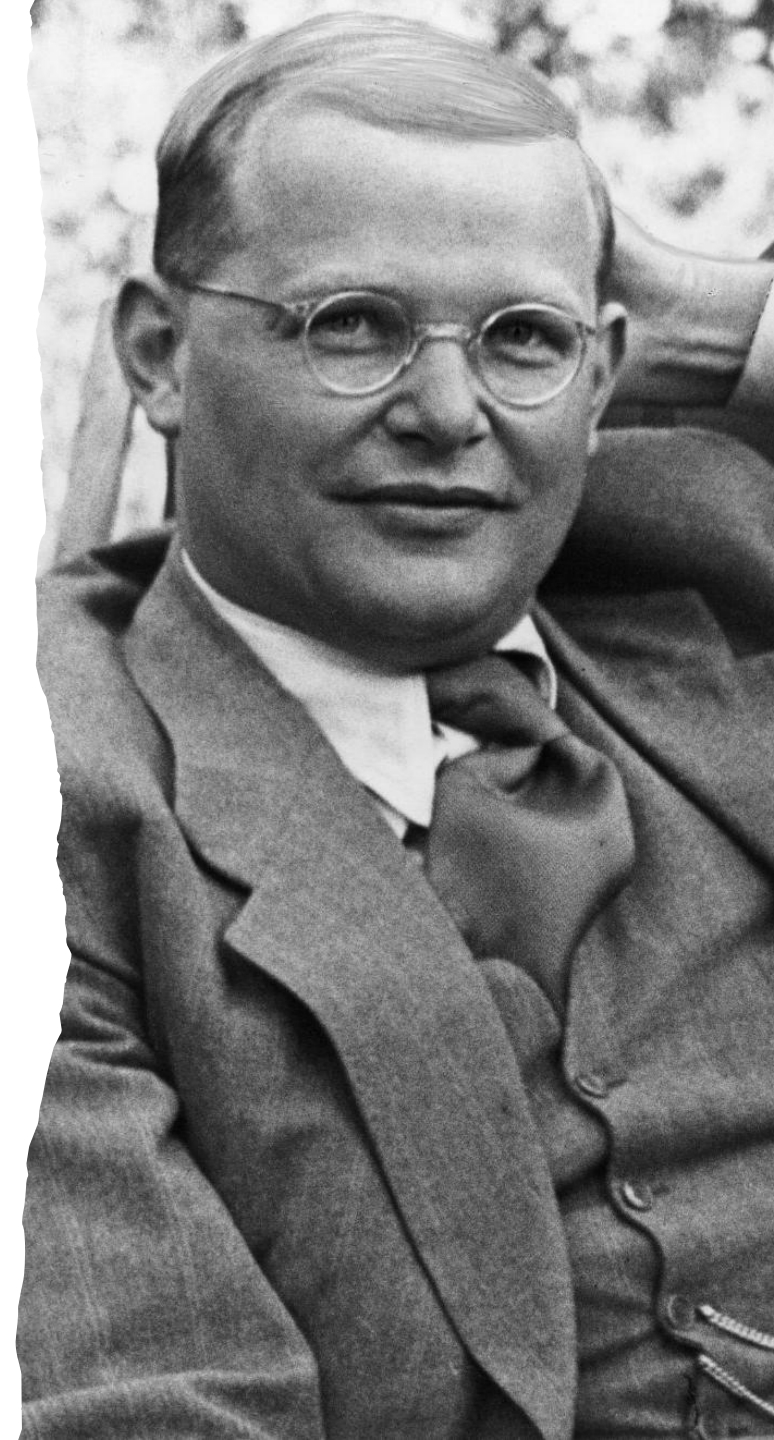
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer.)



THE COST  
OF DISCIPLESHIP

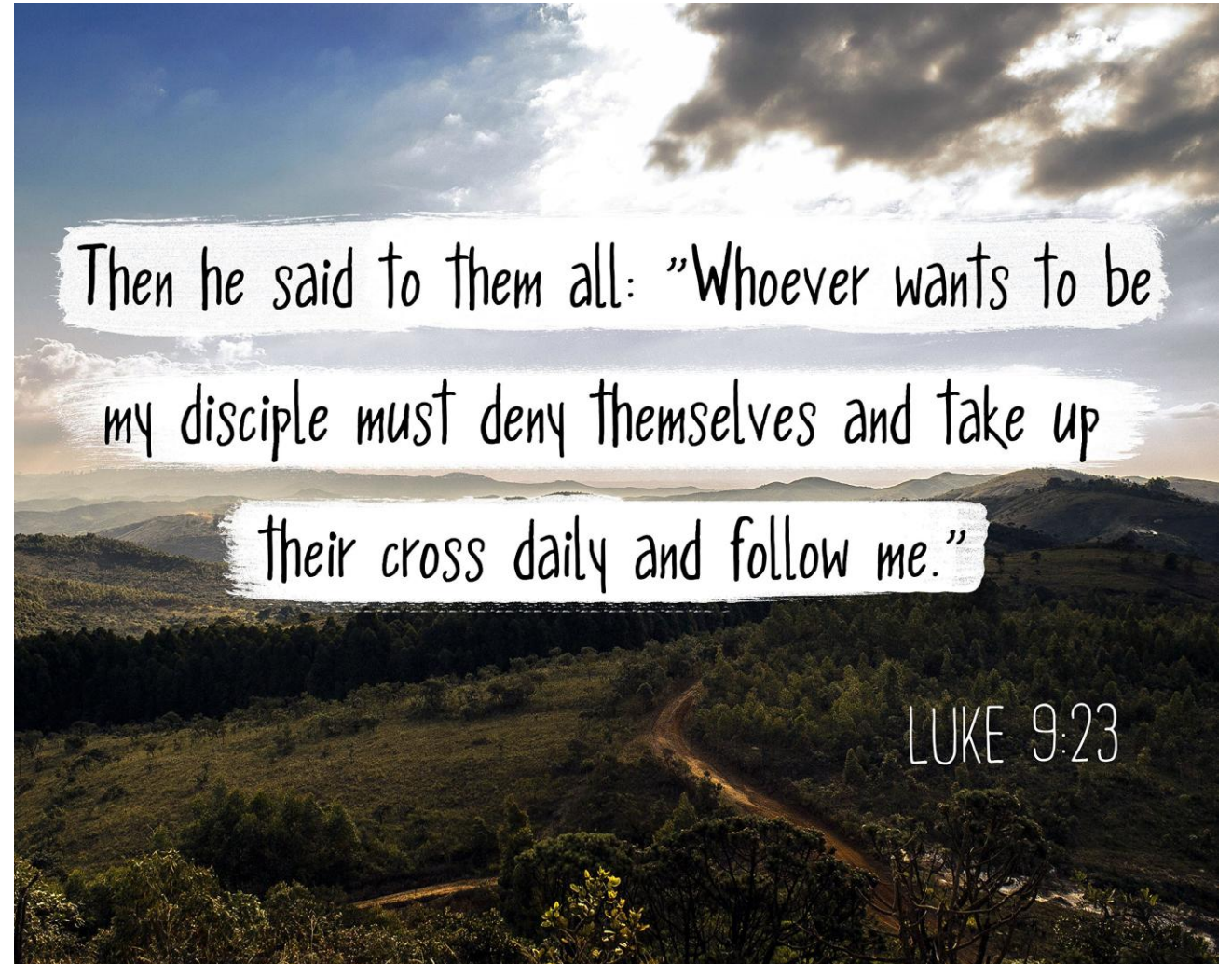


DIETRICH  
BONHOEFFER



# 4 LAWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. Law of self-denial:  
Let him deny himself.
2. Law of sacrifice:  
Take up his cross.
3. Law of submission:  
Follow me.
4. Law of occurrence:  
Daily.



# MATTHEW 16:24

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.”

- A call to wholehearted loyalty to Christ that accepts suffering, rejection and loss.
- Place Christ above our ambitions, comforts and reputations.
- May face rejection, persecution and family division.

# LUKE 14:33

- “So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not **give up** all his own possessions.”
- Un-reserved surrender—daily.
- God claims the right of disposal of all our possessions.
- We are only trustees and stewards of what He has given you.



STEWARDSHIP

# LUKE 14:26

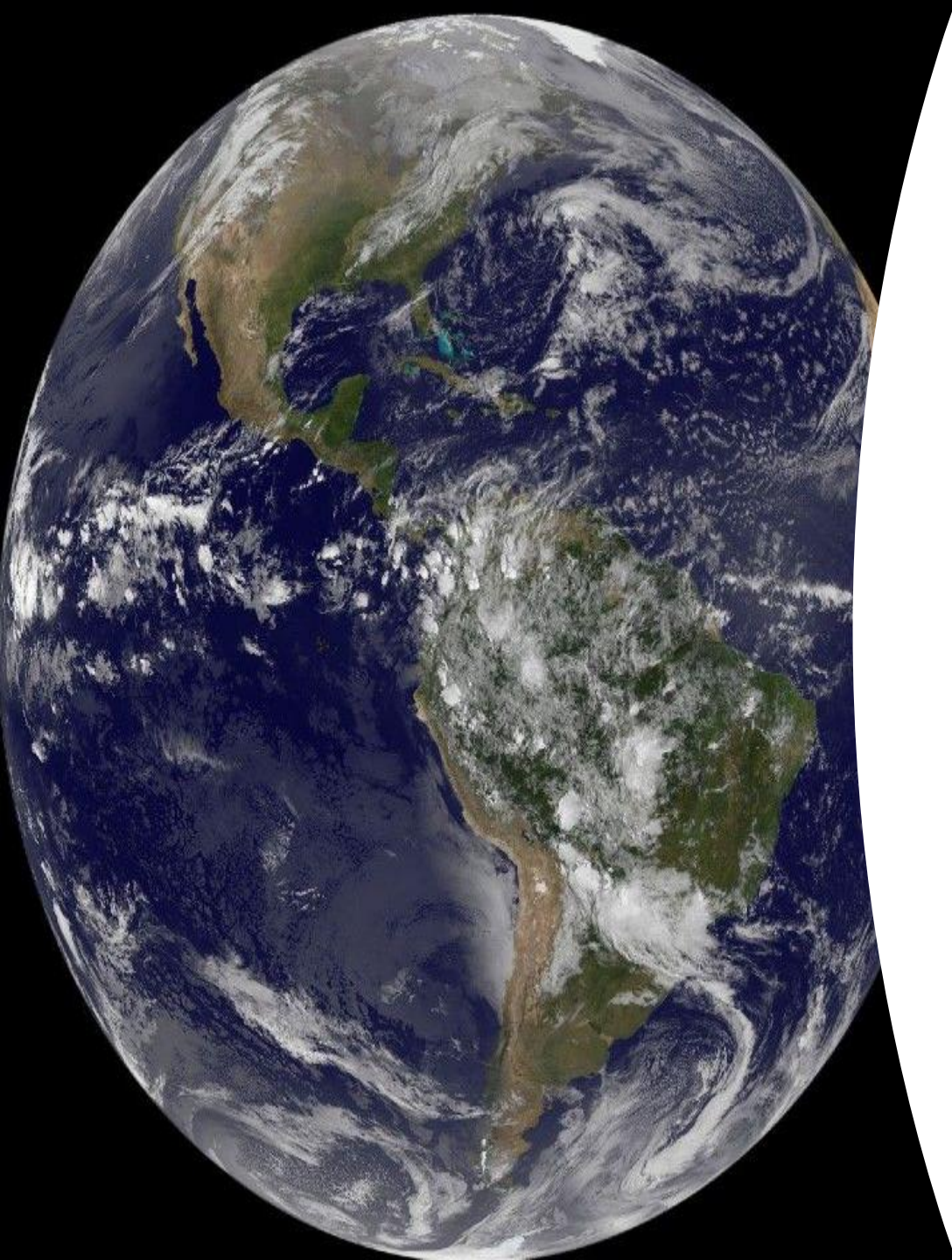
- “If anyone comes to Me and does not **hate** his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.”
- Unrivaled love for Christ.
- “Hate” is a Hebrew idiom meaning to love less than Christ.



**“Your will be done.”**

Luke 22:42

The hardest, the severest, the last lesson which man has to learn upon this earth, is submission to the will of God.  
(Rev. F. W. Robertson)

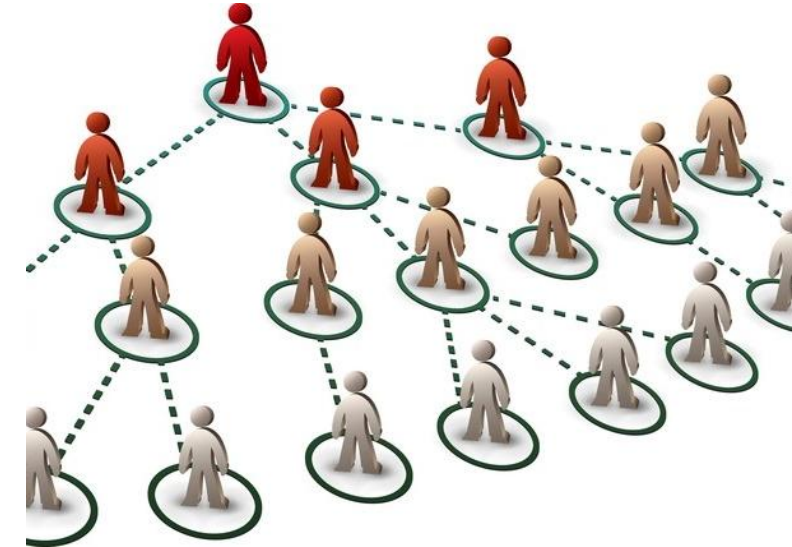


## MATTHEW 16:25-28

<sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup> For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul? Or what will a person give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every person according to his deeds.



## SUMMARY



The Great Commission is a call to go and tell the world what Jesus has done for us, displaying His love by being His hands and feet, and helping discover a relationship with the God who created them.

# What one person will you pour into in 2026?



**Success.**

