

Learning to

serve

through being a disciple

Karl Holz

"If we could make disciples by preaching to people, the job would have been done long time ago"

-Greg Ogden

34 Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. 35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you

Mark 8:34-38 NLT

give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. 36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your soul?

Mark 8:34-38 NLT

38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:34-38 NLT

Jesus:

loved the crowd,

fed the crowd,

taught the crowd,

Healed the crowd

but He

did not

commit

Himself to

the crowd

Jesus Knows What Is in Man

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his

John 2:23-25 ESV

part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

John 2:23-25 ESV

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" 68 Simon Peter answered him,

John 6:66-69 ESV

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

John 6:66-69 ESV

25 They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. 27 But don't be so concerned about perishable

John 6:25-27 (NLT)

things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man[a] can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval."

John 6:25-27 (NLT)

Preaching was not
Jesus' primary means
of making disciples.

What was it then?

- The scriptural model for growing disciples is through relationships.
- Jesus called the Twelve to "be with him" (Mark 3:14), for their lives would be transformed through personal association.

- Proximity produces disciples.
- So Jesus chose the means of relational life investment as the way to form disciples.

- Jesus could not transfer his character, message and mission en masse. BECAUSE the crowd was not committed to Him...ready to follow Him..

A woman said to her pastor following worship one Sunday, apparently in response to his challenge to be a disciple,

"I just want to be a Christian, I don't want to be a disciple. I like my life the way it is. I believe that Jesus died for my sins, and I will be with him when I die. Why do I have to be a disciple?"

Seven Men Chosen to Serve

6 But as the believers[a] rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

2 So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. 3 And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. 4 Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

5 Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). 6 These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them.

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

7 So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

Stephen Is Arrested

8 Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed amazing miracles and signs among the people. 9 But one day some men from the Synagogue of Freed Slaves, as it was called, started to debate with him. They were Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia,

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

and the province of Asia. 10 None of them could stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke.

Acts 6:1-10 (NLT)

Quick outline *Acts 6:1-10*

Point 1: An issue arose

Point 2: Plan of Action-solve/address the issue

Point 3: Select respected men for this responsibility

Point 4: What qualities should these men have?

Not just any men

Point 5: Chosen and Commissioned to serve

Stephen was:

- I. a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit,
- II. full of grace and power,
- III. was doing great wonders
- IV. and signs among the people.
- V. 10 But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking

Stephen died with
two prayers
on his lips:

First:

59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Acts 7:59-60 (ESV)

Recalls Jesus dying words from the cross

46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

Luke 23:46 (ESV)

Second:

"Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

Recalls Jesus earlier prayer for the forgiveness of those responsible for his death

34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Luke 23:34 (ESV)

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists[a] arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said,

Acts 6:1-2