



GO, THEREFORE

Disciple Making Studies for the Church



GO, THEREFORE

We sometimes ask the question, “What would Jesus do?” But when it comes to making disciples, a better question is, “What did Jesus do?” Jesus describes disciple-making in Matthew 28:19-20 through two basic phases: (1) going, that is, reaching out, witnessing, and evangelism; and (2) baptizing the new disciples and teaching them to obey all that he taught. The first phase involves going to those separated from God and the second phase involves the nurture and spiritual growth of the new believer.

Jesus was mission-driven: **“For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost”** (Lk 19:10). In seeking and saving the lost, we can learn much about outreach by observing Jesus in action. His conversations and discussions with the lost are filled with wisdom and insight. He shows us how to best relate and communicate to them, how to live in their presence, and how to serve them. Although most of us do not have the gift of evangelism, we can learn to be the feet, hands, and voice on behalf of Christ. His desire for mission was to continue through his followers, **“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you”** (Jn 20:21). As feet, we are to intentionally go to places where we find non-believers (our neighborhoods, our social and sports clubs, our family members and friends, etc.). As hands, we are to serve non-believers through prayer and using our gifts and abilities. As voice, we are to take the opportunities that the Lord gives us to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those in our contexts.

This study focuses on Jesus going to those separated from God and its purpose is to learn how:

- Jesus related to people outside of the kingdom of God.
- Jesus declared, discussed, and shared the good news of the gospel.
- To apply the knowledge, wisdom, and means of Jesus in our own outreach efforts.

In order to do this, we will look at three encounters that Jesus had with people separated from God, and then look at our role as the feet, hands, and voice of Jesus.

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GO, THEREFORE

Following Jesus to the Samaritan Woman

(John 4:1-42)

After traveling for some time, Jesus and his disciples arrive around noon at a well outside of the town of Sychar in Samaria. Jesus, like any other traveler, was fatigued from the travel. While resting, a Samaritan woman arrives to draw water. Since Jesus had no way to draw water himself, he asked the woman to do it for him.

Jumping to the end of the story, the woman believes in Jesus, returns to town and invites the townspeople to meet him, the Messiah. Being convinced by her, they too go to the well. This simple drawing of water and contact with Jesus led to a stunning spiritual awakening among the Samaritans. “Many Samaritans from the town believed in him.” Why? “. . . because of the woman’s testimony” (Jn 4:39). Jesus stays two more days with them, and “many more believe.” They conclude that he was “the Savior of the World” (Jn 4:39–42).

Big Idea: Following in the footsteps of Jesus to reach out to those separated from God requires our intentional effort to have spiritual conversations leading to the gospel.

If we are serious about following in the steps of Jesus in evangelism, we must make the effort to go out of our way to reach out to people separated from God, which may mean overlooking various barriers in order to have spiritual conversations with them.

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OPENING QUESTIONS:

- What obstacles might we face in evangelism?
- Which of these, might cause Christians to retreat from sharing the gospel? Why?

GOING DEEPER

How did this woman come to believe in him? How did the townspeople do the same? First, we must be clear that Jesus did not go about life and ministry haphazardly for he was committed to doing the Father's will (Jn 4:34), especially when it came to proclaim the Kingdom of God. Engaging this Samaritan woman in a spiritual conversation was right in line with what God, the Father, wanted him to do.

Read John 4:1–42

1. Who are the main characters in the story?
2. How is Jesus described in the passage? What terms are used to identify him?
3. Take a look at a Bible map to see where Galilee and Samaria are located. In order for the Jews to travel north to Galilee, there were three routes that could be taken: (1) a seacoast route; (2) an eastern route through Perea; or (3) straight through Samaria. According to the ESV Bible, v. 4 says that Jesus “had to pass through Samaria.” Why do you think Jesus intentionally chose the straight route, knowing that most Jews avoided it? Is there any significance to this?
4. What were the obstacles or barriers that Jesus had to overcome in reference to the woman's race? Gender? Her sin? Her religion? (besides John 4, see also 2 Kings 17:21–41).
5. In John 4:7–15, Jesus begins to speak to the woman about eternal issues, using the everyday life example of drinking water. How does Jesus make the “bridge” from physical water to having a spiritual conversation with the woman?
6. Looking over the entire passage, John 4:1–42, Jesus discusses more than “living water” with her. In fact, they have a discussion about a number of issues. Make a list of the issues that were discussed in the encounter with the woman.
7. How would you label the discussion that Jesus had with her? Terse? Easy going? Respectful? Indirect? Direct? Mean spirited? One-way or two-way conversation? What could that mean for our evangelism?

Following Jesus to the Samaritan Woman

8. In looking over the entire passage, what were the things that Jesus revealed to the woman? In other words, what did she learn that she may have not understood or known before?
9. How would you describe woman's interest in spiritual matters? What things indicate this?
10. What was it that the Samaritan woman did that convinced the people to search out Jesus? Why do you think the people became convinced enough to go out to the well for themselves?
11. What does John 4:35 indicate about the Samaritan people? Does this help us in any way in our evangelistic efforts?
12. What can we learn from John 4:37 in our evangelistic efforts?

SO, WHAT?

- Based on the entire passage, what lessons can we draw from Jesus for sharing the good news of the gospel with our friends, family members, work colleagues and others that we might encounter?
- What would it mean for you to go to and stop in "Samaria?" Who would be the people involved? What would it take for you to go to them?
- Think of people that you know. Are there any barriers that might be keeping you from reaching out to some of those people? Why?
- For the sake of the gospel, would you be willing to have a respectful discussion with religious people that might cross your path? For example, are you willing to have a conversation with a Jehovah's Witness or Mormon who comes to your door? What about conversations with the Muslim or the "New Age" guy at work or school?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Go out of your way in the next week or so, but before your next meeting, and meet a new person—in your neighborhood, at work or school, or in the club or organization that you volunteer at, or other. Learn a little about the person—where they grew up, some things about their family situation, etc.

RESOURCES

For added understanding, go to the following:

- **Jesus Film Project** | www.bible.com/videos/3015
- **Study notes in the Appendix**
- **Study notes of Dr. Thomas Constable** | www.studylight.org/commentaries



GO, THEREFORE
Following Jesus to the Rich Young Man
(Mt 19:16-26; Lk 18:18-27; Mk 10:17-27)

Matthew 19 starts with the words, “Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.” Such words signify an important transition in the ministry of Jesus. For the last two years, Jesus had been going about his evangelistic missionary work in Galilee. But now there is a geographic relocation—he moves to “the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.” Thus, he is now in Perea, the region across the Jordan. Here, he is followed by multitudes of people. The Pharisees put him to the test regarding divorce (Mt 19:3–15). In an instant, probably with parents and children present, a person comes to Jesus and his disciples, seeking eternal life. However, Jesus’ attempt to evangelize ends in failure—not failure on the part of Jesus, but on the part of the individual. Instead of responding positively to Jesus like the Samaritan woman, the young man reacted negatively and walked away.

The Big Idea: Evangelism is not a drive-by affair, shooting the gospel in rapid fire. It often involves a dialogue with the person in need of the gospel. This is often necessary in order to understand what is the idol(s) keeping the person from truly following Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Helping people to examine themselves in light of the gospel is part of the journey to truly knowing God. Once discovered, they either give up all to follow Jesus or walk away from him.

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OPENING QUESTIONS

- How would you know if you were successful in an evangelistic effort?
- How important is it to know where a person is spiritually before sharing the gospel with them?

GOING DEEPER

Read Mt 19:16–30 (parallel in Mk 10:17–27 and Lk 18:18–27).

1. Identify the person that Jesus is talking to. Who is this guy? (see Mt 19:20, 22 and Lk 18:18).
2. Based on Mk 10:17, how did this man approach Jesus? Why did he come to Jesus? What is his exact question? Is his motive pure? How do you know?
3. Based on Mk 10:21, how does Jesus feel about the young man? What does this passage and Mt 22:39 teach us when engaged in outreach?
4. What does the young man's question, "What good deed must I do to have eternal life?", reveal about his beliefs? And possibly about himself?
5. Based on Mt 19:17, Jesus does not directly answer his question about eternal life. Why does he not give an answer? What does Jesus do to further the conversation about eternal life? How does he do it? What is Jesus getting at in asking his question?
6. Why would Jesus say to the young man, "If you would enter life, keep the commandments"? (Mt 19:17) To which the young man replies, "Which ones?" Jesus responds by giving him five of the ten commandments: "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother." Then Jesus adds another commandment from Leviticus 19:18, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." All are commands related to personal relations. The young man not only says that he is keeping them, but that he has kept them since his youth (Mk 10:20). What is Jesus trying to get at?
7. What idol led this man from following Christ? (Mt 19:22)
8. How did the young man respond once he understood the implications of what Jesus was saying? What do you think was going on in his mind?

SO, WHAT?

- Looking over the passage, what overall lessons can we draw from Jesus for outreach to our friends, family members, work colleagues and others who might show an interest in spiritual things?

Following Jesus to the Rich Young Man

- Why can't we assume that religious people are in the kingdom of God?
- Jesus spent time learning where the young man was spiritually. Without being offensive or abrupt, how could you go about discovering where a person is spiritually? Have you ever done this? If so, what was the result?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Go to an unchurched person that you know (you might mention to them that you meet with a small group of people from your church to study and discuss the Bible. Tell them that the leader of the group gave you an assignment which was to ask someone their opinion about a religious question). Then ask, "Can I get your opinion on that one question?" If yes, ask, "Why do so many people in the world believe in God?"

RESOURCES

For added understanding, go to the following:

- Study notes in the Appendix
- Study notes of Dr. Thomas Constable | www.studylight.org/commentaries



GO, THEREFORE *Following Jesus to Nicodemus* (John 3)

We know that Jesus is in the city of Jerusalem (Jn 2:23) and that he just had a run in with his fellow Jews at the temple. Being enraged at what was going on there, he poured out the changer's money and overturned their tables, creating a big scene. He was deeply offended at what was taking place, and he immediately had a confrontation with some of the Jews (2:14–22). We also know that some of the people in Jerusalem were responding to him in a positive way. However, their faith was most likely superficial since "Jesus did not commit himself to them" for he knew what was really in their hearts (2:24–25). With this background, Jesus encounters Nicodemus, another person whose faith was superficial.

Big Idea: True conversion to Christ occurs only when a person is born again by the Spirit of God, which is determined by the sovereign will of God and cannot come by any other means. It cannot be controlled by any human effort or means, including any evangelistic methods employed.

OPENING QUESTIONS

- Why do some, maybe many, religious people become blind to biblical truth?
- Jesus seemed to have a lot of run-ins with religious people, but less with the not so religious. Why do you think that is?

GO, THEREFORE

GOING DEEPER

Read John 3:1-15

1. Based on the passage, describe the basic background of Nicodemus.
2. Is there any significance to the fact that Nicodemus “came to Jesus by night.”? (3:2; cf Jn 7:50; 19:39)
3. What is the significance of Nicodemus’ statement in John 3:2?
4. Based on the following references from the same writer, the Apostle John, what else happens when a person is “truly, truly” born again? (John 1:12-13, 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4)
5. In explaining further, Jesus defines being “born again” as being “born of water and the Spirit.” What is he referring to? (see Ezek 36:25–27) What is he saying has to happen?
6. Based on John 3:8 and the example that Jesus cites about the wind, are there any implications for doing personal evangelism?
7. Does Nicodemus become a believer? Why? Why not? (See Jn 7:40–52 and 19:38–42)

SO, WHAT?

- Based on the entire passage, what lessons can we learn in relation to personal evangelism?
- Because there is much misunderstanding about what it means to be “born again” (Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Hindus, etc. use the term), how could you explain the concept to an unbeliever without using the expression “born again”?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Go to an unchurched person that you know pretty well (you might mention to them that you meet with a small group of people from your church to study and discuss the Bible. Tell them that the leader of the group gave you an assignment which was to ask someone their opinion about a religious question). Then say, “Can I get your opinion on that one question?” If yes, ask, “What keeps people from believing in God?”

RESOURCES

For added understanding, go to the following:

- Study notes in the Appendix

Following Jesus to Nicodemus

- **Study notes of Dr. Thomas Constable** | www.studylight.org/commentaries
- **Jesus Film Project** | www.jesusfilm.org/watch
(*Video Title: Talk with Nicodemus*)



GO, THEREFORE

The Church –the Feet, Hands, and Voice of Jesus (1 Cor 12:12-27)

Because God is a missionary God, he sent Jesus into the world to seek and save the lost (Lk 19:10). To do just that, he also gathered people around himself who would follow after him, namely his disciples. His disciples would become “fishers of men” (Mt 4:19). Living and traveling with Jesus, they observed him in action. He modeled the way of evangelism. In time he sent them out two by two to seek and save the lost, just as the Father had sent him. After his death and resurrection, Jesus wasted no time in telling them: “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (Jn 20:21). Jesus wants his disciples to understand very clearly that being his follower involves “sentness.” Jesus is the head of the church and we are his body. We are sent. What Jesus did in his physical body, we, as those sent into the world, are to continue as his spiritual body. In the making of disciples we are to act as his feet, hands, and voice to those who are separated from God. How do we do this? Through service, witness, and evangelism.

The Big Idea: As the body of Christ we can reach out to those separated from God in three meaningful ways: (1) as the feet and hands of Jesus through service, through acts of kindness and good deeds; (2) as his voice through witness, telling of our personal experience of Jesus Christ; and (3) as his voice through evangelism, sharing the gospel by telling of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, and inviting people to commit themselves to Jesus as their Savior and Lord. There is often a progression from one to another.

GO, THEREFORE

OPENING QUESTIONS

- Would you agree or disagree? The greatest need of our time is for the Church to become what it has not often been in practice—the feet, hands, and voice on behalf of Jesus? Why? Why not?
- Although the expression, “the body of Christ,” is a metaphor, do you ever think of yourself (being part of the body of Christ) as representing the feet, the hands, and the voice of Jesus in this world—particularly in your neighborhood, at your school or at your work? If so, what did you do?

GOING DEEPER

Service

Service, manifested through acts of kindness and good deeds for people separated from God, gives glory to God and shows the power of the saving gospel.

1. This service should be part of our lifestyle. According to Matthew 5:16, what exactly did Jesus have in mind for his faithful followers with the words “let your light shine?” How can this shining light be seen in our world today? Be specific.
2. I Corinthians 12:12-27, describes the body of Christ and its employment of spiritual gifts. Such gifts build up the church. However, spiritual gifts can also be used to touch the lives of those who have no relationship with God by fulfilling the 2nd greatest commandment given by the Lord Jesus: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:39). Although most of us have not been wired with the gift of evangelism, God has given other gifts that can be used to serve people separated from God. Choose two or three of the following spiritual gifts and explain how they could be used to reach out to non-believers—Faith, Mercy, Exhortation, Giving, Administration, Leadership, Helps, Service, Teaching.
3. In Acts, the early church is seen “having favor with all the people” of Jerusalem (Acts 2:47; see context of Acts 2:42–46). It had a very positive reputation in the eyes of the community of Jerusalem. Later, the apostle Peter exhorted the church regarding its personal testimony in a hostile environment. What are your observations about 1 Peter 2:13–17 in reference to service and good deeds toward the unbelieving?

The Church –the Feet, Hands, and Voice of Jesus

Witness

Not only does outreach include service, especially doing acts of kindness and good deeds, but it involves being the voice of Jesus on his behalf.

1. According to Acts 1:8, what are your observations in relation to “witness”? What does witnessing like this look like?
2. What insight does 1 John 1:1 tell us regarding the concept of witness? How does this relate to Jn 1:7; 4:5–15, 28–30, 39–42; Jn 9:1–34; Mk 5:1–20; Mk 7:31–37?
3. The impact of being witnesses for Jesus brought some significant results for the growth of the early church. What do the following passages tell us about that growth? Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1, 7; 9:31
4. As can be seen by the above biblical references, the church grew at a tremendous rate. But the believers had no buildings, no Christian literature, no youth groups, no worship bands, no choirs, no Christian radio programs, no Bibles, no Bible schools or seminaries, etc. How did it happen?

Evangelism

Believers in the early church not only served non-believers, but witnessed to non-believers about their experience with Jesus. They also evangelized, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those very people. They specifically told about his death, burial, resurrection and invited them to enter into the kingdom of God by repenting of their sin and believing in him as their Lord and Savior.

1. Based on Acts 8:1–4; 11:19–21; 19:8–10, what are your observations of these believers regarding evangelism? Who did the evangelism, for example?
2. As the church matured, both Paul and Peter encouraged the church in its evangelistic efforts. Looking at Col 4:3–4 and 1 Peter 3:13–15, what did they want the believers to learn and practice?

SO, WHAT?

- How could your group practically live out being the hands and feet on behalf of Jesus in the next two months?
- In its most basic sense, to witness means to tell of one’s experience with Jesus Christ. In 2-3 sentences, tell how your relationship with Jesus impacts your person life. If opportunity came up, who would be a good person to tell your experience to?

GO, THEREFORE

- Do you feel that you, yourself and/or your fellowship group needs to raise its evangelistic temperature? If so, why? How could you raise it one degree?
- Of the three kinds of outreach—service, witness, evangelism—in which of these do you feel that you need to make the most improvement? What are two steps that you could take in the next month to make that improvement?
- What will it take for you to intentionally (allow time in your schedule) to aim at having spiritual conversations with non-believers?
- Have you ever thought about joining a club or organization for the sake of serving and intentionally reaching unbelievers?
- What are the strengths, gifts, and talents that reside in your fellowship group that could be used to have an evangelistic outreach as a group?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Go to an unchurched person that you know pretty well (you might mention to them that you meet with a small group of people from your church to study and discuss the Bible. Tell them that the leader of the group gave you an assignment which was to ask someone their opinion about a religious question). Ask them, “Can I get your opinion on one question?” If yes, ask, “What keeps people from believing in God?” Or you could ask, “Christianity is growing in the world, what is your opinion as to why so many people are believing in God?”

RESOURCES

For added understanding, go to the following:

- Study notes in the Appendix

CONCLUSION

It is evident from our study that Jesus had no “cookie cutter” method of evangelism. His approach varied with each person and circumstance. Some of those he encountered, he gave a little nudge toward the kingdom of God. Others needed to be firmly challenged. Those that were not ready to enter the kingdom of God walked away, but often with a question which caused them to reflect on their idolatry or self-righteousness. It is also evident that as a witness for Jesus, we have our limitations.

Although we speak and try to be persuasive for the gospel, we cannot argue anyone into the kingdom of God. We also know that no one can come to Jesus “unless the Father who sent” him “draws him” (Jn 6:44). And we know that it is the Spirit of God that produces spiritual birth. We further know that Jesus

The Church –the Feet, Hands, and Voice of Jesus

has given us a challenge. We have been sent into the world by Jesus (Jn 20:21) with the good news of the gospel. We are to “go” (Mt 28:19). To do what? To serve and build relationships with those separated from God; to tell of our personal experience with Jesus in witness; and to share the gospel through our evangelistic efforts.

Sounds good. But will we? Will we be willing to make an effort to reach out and build a relationship with the person across the street or the person who lives in the apartment next door? If we are willing to take a risk for Jesus, the Lord may very well open up the door to be his witness and share the good news of the gospel.

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ENGAGE
TOGETHER**

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