

DISCIPLE MAKING

A PODCAST WITH DR. JOHN TOLSON

Episode 24 - Disciple-Making: The Potential Impact

Which do you think is greater: addition or multiplication? In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul takes the same concept Jesus presents in Matthew 28:19 but says it this way (talking to Timothy): “The things that you've heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” There's this ongoing multiplication here.

Which do you think will have a greater impact: preaching or disciple-making? Billy Graham (one of my heroes) did his crusades, these large meetings with thousands of people, all over the world. The Billy Graham Association said that if he preached to a crowd of 100,000 people, about 4% of the people would come to know Christ. That was pretty much the average. So, let's say in your church, or any church, the preacher preaches to 100,000 people per day. He'd get pretty fired up about that 4% that comes to Christ - that's 4,000 coming to know the Lord daily! If a preacher did that for 365 days a year, that'd result in 1,460,000 new believers. If he preached to 100,000 people every day for 16 years, that would be 23,360,000 new believers.

So that's the preaching model. Here in Dallas, we've got some of the greatest churches and some of the greatest preaching in America. If preaching was going to change the city of Dallas, Texas, it would have happened already. But it hasn't.

Now let's look at the disciple-making model. If you were to take two people per year and disciple them for one year and get them ready to disciple someone else, those two people at the end of the year would each spin off and disciple two more people and you would disciple two new people as well. If you start all alone doing that and you did that for 10 years, you would have 59,049 individuals that have been discipled and are ready to disciple others. 59,049 just from starting with one person discipling two people.

Imagine if you had a group of 10 people in a church who said “Sign me up! I'm going to make disciples! I'll take two a year and I'll get them ready to do the same!” Assuming no attrition or fallout, you'd have 590,490 disciples of Jesus Christ! In a big church where you could handpick 100 people that would take two a year, and that went on for ten years, you'd have 5,904,900 disciples.

Do you see it? There is no plan that makes the impact that disciple-making makes. Jesus' plan to change the planet is disciple-making. So, the question is, are you making disciples who are making disciples? You think about that and think about that seriously.

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