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## Making Disciples: The Great Omission

### Notes from Pat's message:

### The Big Idea:

#### Questions for Group Discussion and Application:

1. Which of the following statements best describes your progress in becoming a disciple of Jesus?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excited, but still not out<br>of the starting gate | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow, but moving forward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very motivated                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Making great progress    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> "In the zone!"           |

2. Now, look at which statement you checked. If you aren't "in the zone" or "making great progress," what do you think is holding you back?

3. According to John 13:34-35, John 15:8 and John 8:31, what are some of the characteristics of a disciple?

4. What disciplines could you cultivate to help you become a more effective disciple?

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5. Which of the following methods of discipleship most connect with you? (circle one or more answers)

- Preaching
- Teaching
- Christian literature
- Formal education
- Bible studies
- Small groups
- Private study
- Seminars and conferences
- Mentoring
- Informal discussions
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Next week we are going to talk about an idea that will help you reach out to men who may not have a relationship with Christ. In preparation for next week, please jot down the names of three friends, neighbors, or co-workers you care about who are not known to be Christians.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Supplemental Reading & Application

### Recovering a Vision for Making Disciples

By Patrick M. Morley

Before we begin Man in the Mirror's Saturday morning sessions of our *Success That Matters*® Seminar, I lead a bonus session for men interested in building an effective men's ministry in the local church.

Someone will usually ask, "How can I get my pastor excited about these ideas?"

"That's easy," I say. "Your pastor is already excited about these ideas. He's been talking about them for years. All I'm doing is repeating what he has been saying all along. It's not our pastors who need to catch the vision, it's us!"

But then someone will invariably say, "I've tried to get my pastor interested in men's ministry, but it just never seems to go anywhere."

Then I must add, "You will never be able to get a dynamic men's ministry going in your church until you grasp two things about the purpose of this ministry. First, you and the other leaders must have a vision for making disciples. Second, all the leaders must see that their calling is to prepare God's people for works of service."

#### THE VISION FOR MAKING DISCIPLES

The purpose and "why" of the church (that's us) is to glorify God.

The mission of the church or "what" we do is to make disciples.

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:18-20, NIV).*

Do you ever tire of hearing about the Great Commission? May it never be. If this doesn't excite you, go to your God and cry out for Him to break your heart for the lost. If you cannot weep for them, weep for yourself. Fast. Pray. Plead for God to break your heart to love the things He loves.

#### THE CALLING TO EQUIP GOD'S PEOPLE

If the mission of the church is to make disciples, then how do we do it?

In *The Living Bible* we see that some of us have been given "special abilities."

*Some of us have been given special ability as apostles; others have the gift of being able to preach well; some have special ability in winning people to Christ, helping them to trust him as their Savior; still others have a gift for caring for God's people as a shepherd does his sheep, leading and teaching them in the ways of God (Ephesians 4:11, NIV).*

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Are you one of these leadership people? If so, the essential question is “why?” –why would God give you such special ability? We find the answer in the very next verse:

*To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12, NIV).*

Why is it that He gives us these special abilities to do certain things best? So that God’s people will be equipped to do better work for Him, building up the Church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity.

If you have been endowed with special abilities from God, do you also understand why He gave them to you? The pastor is not the minister. The pastor is the pastor. It’s the sheep who are the ministers. The pastor’s “calling” or vocation is to equip these sheep so they also can do what they are “called” to do.

## **EVERY MAN HAS A TASK**

When we study the life of Paul we see a man who endured incredible hardships and rejection. In actuality, we pass through the same fires. Paul’s riot in Ephesus is our family feud. The plots to do away with Paul are like the intrigues of men who would steal our credit, our promotion or our client. The all-night preaching of Paul is equivalent to the all-nighter we pull to meet a production deadline.

The real question about Paul is not *what* he did, but *why*. Why would he go through all those troubles– and why should we? Everything makes sense when we understand his calling.

*However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace (Acts 20:24).*

Every man has a “task” (the Greek word is “diakonia”–meaning service or ministry). The Bible says there are different kinds of tasks (1 Corinthians 12:5), but we are all called to use them to the same end: making disciples.

Some, like Paul, evangelize; others set up the chairs where the people sit to hear the gospel message. Some teach God’s people how to walk rightly with their Lord; others invite them or transport them to where the teaching will take place. Some reach out among the hurting; others call to set up the appointments or give the money to make reaching people possible.

What is your task, ministry and service to God? Have you been given special abilities in starting things, winning men to faith, leadership, shepherding, teaching or even preaching?

Or are your spiritual gifts and calling more in areas of service, administration and non-speaking roles?

## **KEEPING THE ENDS AND MEANS CLEAR**

As we walk along the path, it's easy to look only at the ground at our feet and forget not only where we are headed, but why.

The works we do are important to God. But they are means, not ends. Our activity is not our purpose. What we do is only important if we remember why.

Paul was able to remain so passionate, so focused, so intentional, so urgent, so singular in purpose because he understood his task. **Everything Paul did, he did in light of his calling.** How about you?

If you are a pastor, remember. Remember why. The calling is to make disciples and equip them for service.

If you are a layman, remember. Remember why. The calling is to do good works in a way that draws men to Christ. *The Message* says, "Curiosity about Paul developed into reverence for the Master Jesus" (Acts 19:17).

Let our prayer be, "Lord, let curiosity about me develop into reverence for the Master Jesus."

Let's summarize:

- Why we exist: *To glorify God*
- What we do: *Make disciples*
- How we do it: *Fulfill our calling or "task"*
- For Pastors: *To make disciples and equip them for service*
- For Laymen: *To do works of service to make more disciples*

When we comfort people in their sorrows, teach them theology, invite them to a Bible study, help them solve a problem, or simply love on them; we must never lose sight of why we do what we do.

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## APPLICATION

Pastors and Leaders: If an outside “auditor” came in and reviewed your ministry, how would he rate you on these attributes:

- He has a vision for making disciples
- He has a plan for making disciples
- He has made \_\_\_\_\_ disciples
- He understands his calling to equip God’s people for service
- He has a plan to equip God’s people for service
- He has equipped \_\_\_\_\_ people for service

As a result of this audit what would you like to do differently?

Laymen: How would an outside auditor rate how you have responded to your pastor’s ministry in your life?

- He understands the purpose and mission of the church
- He has honored and responded to his pastor’s leadership
- He understands that the pastor is the pastor and he is the minister
- He has allowed the pastor to equip him for service
- He is serving Christ at \_\_\_\_\_% of faithfulness

As a result of this audit what would you like to do differently?