

GO CHURCH JOZI – 24 March 2019

Discipleship - Growing Jozi Beyond The Conversion Experience

Introduction

Desirable social media conversations and newspaper headlines on things like:

- *Jozi Fridays – The Discipleship Indaba Continues*
- *Jozi Church Making Disciples That Make Other Disciples*
- *Learner, student, apprentice? Jozi Church Revolutionizes Discipleship*
- *28181920: Your Multi-Generation PIN*
- *Jozi Church Unlocks The Discipleship Lifestyle In The City*
- *Biblical Discipleship - The Future Of The Church*

RATIONALE FOR THE MESSAGE

1. We are a movement of God-honouring believers progressively discipling nations by communicating and demonstrating the Kingdom of God. One of desires is to disciple people, cities and nations. Period.
2. Our strategy is to transform the thinking of generations by: Making Disciples, Building Families, Raising Leaders, Establishing Churches and Transforming Society.
3. We are passionate about equipping people to impact and reform society in their sphere of influence.
4. Christianity in Africa is "a mile wide and an inch deep. Evangelised continent but not adequately disciplined.
5. Our desire is to keep the basics of the gospel beautiful and the main thing the main thing more so as we plant Churches.

Anchor Scripture:

Mark 16:14-18

¹⁴ Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up

serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Luke 24:44-49

⁴⁴ Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ And you are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

All authority in heaven”

Jesus establishes the expansive nature of His authority. He doesn't just have the earthly jurisdiction that one would ascribe to a king or a Caesar, or City Premier or MEC or President. He has an all-encompassing authority that could only belong to God. The term all authority normally refers to delegated authority. The Great commission rests on the authority of Christ.

Jesus words echo Daniel's prophetic vision:

Daniel 7:13-14

¹³ “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.

“Therefore go”

Because all authority is His, Jesus is able to issue His command. It's important to note that “go” isn't the imperative command. In the Greek, the imperative is on the command to “disciple”. How are we to make disciples? By baptizing them and teaching them all that Jesus commanded. “Make disciples” is the primary command of the Great Commission. “Going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching” are the means by which we fulfill the command to “make disciples.”

This means that the emphasis of the passage lies in the requirement to make people mature followers of Jesus.

The instructions to “go,” “baptize,” and “teach” are indirect commands—participles in the original.

There are various ways to do this some of which include:

Jesus gave this command not only to his twelve personally chosen disciples but to the entire Church. The charge was to take his words, and the entirety of what Scripture teaches, to the ends of the earth.

- Sharing the gospel with those around us. Discipleship begins with sharing the Word of God. We are missionaries everywhere we find ourselves.
 - Family
 - Education
 - Church
 - Government
 - Business & Economics (including agriculture)
 - Health, Science and Technology
 - Media & Communication
 - Arts, Entertainment and Sports
- Going also involves leading studies to help people learn to follow Jesus more closely. Tools you can use include Rebuild.
- Contributing financially to ministries or organisations that are spreading the gospel.
- Praying for the spread of the gospel locally and abroad so that His Kingdom can be expanded.
- Great Commission is to be loved and supported and advocated for by all who love what Jesus loves.
- Many understand Acts 1:8 as part of the Great Commission as well: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The Great Commission is enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility is to preach and teach Christ's dynamic gospel; it is the Holy Spirit's responsibility to make our witness effective.

- We are to be Christ's witnesses, fulfilling the Great Commission in our cities (Jerusalem), in our states and countries (Judea and Samaria), and anywhere else God sends us (to the ends of the earth).

“Make disciples of all nations”

Jesus' words evoke something more involved than simple evangelism. They couldn't just go out and make new Christians. They needed to invest time in disciple-making. If the church was going to spread, it required converts with maturity and depth.

A disciple is not what is sometimes promoted as such.

A disciple is not...

- A person who once prayed the sinner's prayer or made a decision for Christ.
- Someone who claims to have been a Christian for a long time.
- Someone who attends church services and programmes.
- Any good and moral person.
- Someone who knows the Bible very well.
- Someone in “full-time” ministry.
- A person with a very supernatural ministry.

All of these things may be good but they do not necessarily equate to discipleship.

Make Disciples. i.e. Characteristics of a disciple:

1. A disciple is learner, a student and an apprentice.

The word for disciple means “one who sits under teaching.”

A disciple is someone who receives instruction from another person; a Christian disciple is a baptized follower of Christ, one who believes the teaching of Christ. We live in a world where many revolutionary leaders and extremists have had followers some for the wrong reasons.

(i) Discipleship involves learning. It is associated with a Latin word [*disciplina*] which means “to learn.”

This is why when we want to know what someone is learning at an academic institution we can ask them what their “discipline” is.

True discipleship is more than learning in that it always leads to a changed lifestyle that corresponds to the teaching that has been received:

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. If you don't obey, you are only fooling yourself. –NLT

Questions:

(a) Have you disciplined yourself to consistently sit under the teachings of Jesus and obey them. Sitting under His teaching in Church or other teachings settings and over and above that systematically study His Word?

2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

If we are going to effectively disciple the domains out there we need to know our story. Yes, there is grace and all but let's be diligent to study the Word and explain our story right.

Let's us be a humble people who will never say, I am there. I have arrived. Let's us be the kind of disciples with a continued learning attitude and culture. Let's also extend our learning to understanding and being clued up about the domains we are called to, about the things we are passionate about, about our spheres of influence. When we couple a thorough understanding of the Word of God with firm knowledge of what ever domain you are passionate about. There are greater chances you will be more impactful in your discipleship pursuit of that Domain or sphere of influence.

(b) How changed is your lifestyle in terms of being conformed to the image of Christ? Have you been walking on this journey consistently? What are your shortcomings? What are you doing to resolve or work through them?

Romans 8:29

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Our job in discipleship is not only point out to those we disciple and say sort this and that but to also stop and inquire of God: Lord what are my own discipleship gaps? How can I effectively close them?

The heart of Jesus is that we become discipled followers of Him and systematically lead others to become that. To become that with the view infiltrating all areas of life, with the teachings of Jesus, His lifestyle and with His desire and purpose for this world.

My heart for our Church is that all as we are discipled and as we disciple:

- We become so diligent in studying the Word of God and asking the Holy Spirit for revelation of the things of God that you would not be a victim of the schemes of false doctrines. That we would be doctrinally pure, exegetically on point and practically relevant. That the essence of the discipleship strategy in our Church is Christo-centric, honours His Word exhibits the fruit of His Spirit and does not promote the teachings of men.
- That we would be the kind of disciplers and raisers of disciplers that do not teach anything outside the parameters of the Word of God.

2. A disciple is someone who has a desire to be like their master (Jesus).

Luke 6:40

The disciple is not above his teacher: but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

As we walk through a process the process of discipleship we should aspire to be like Jesus in thought, speech, conduct, deeds, passion, vision.

A disciple of Christ imitates Jesus' example, clings to His sacrifice, believes in His resurrection, possesses the Holy Spirit, and lives to do His work.

3. A disciple is someone who is passionate about achieving their destiny.

Ps 139:13-16

¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book, they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

David affirms that the work of God in his life extended back to his development in his mother's womb. In Your book: The idea is that the life of a person and the structure and meaning of that person's life are all established from the beginning by God. When God created us, He did so with a unique purpose. Your discipleship process involves a journey of understanding how you are wired so that you can fully understand your destiny or what you are called to do. Likewise as you disciple others it is important to help them understand how they themselves are wired so they too can fully understand their calling.

The key questions you have to answer for yourself as you walk the journey of discovering your purpose in the discipleship journey are (or ask those you are discipling) are:

What are you gifted at? Supernatural endowment.

What growth phase or life-stage are you in? What relationships are key in this life stage? Which ones do I need to invest in, nurture, exit or terminate in this life stage so that I can effectively fulfil my destiny?

What are your talents – what do you do naturally? What comes to you easily. What do people come to you for? You can do it without much effort, It is to do with how your brain is wired. The way you think. Making things with your hands, speak convincingly and persuade, etc.

What are you passionate about? – What do you really love doing (fire in the belly). Without passion, talent will be dormant. Passion is like the engine of a car...keeps the talent going. Without passion you can have a talent but not go anywhere. What makes you move against the difficulties in your life? It is your passion. Your passion moves your talent. Fire in your belly. When you have talent but no passion then it leads to dis-

satisfaction. Be very careful when you have passions that are not linked to your call. They can move you away from your calling. They can also affect your relationships as people around you feel that you are consumed with something that is purposeless. Be careful when your passion is without purpose. Passion develops based on value systems, environment, needs being met.

What experiences (positive and negative) have or are you going through? When talent and passion meet reality. Experience helps you to perfect yourself. When you are given opportunities to be faithful with the small, God can give you much.

What training and mentorship have or are you going through or need to go through? – what you have learnt to do. Formal and informal. Most times (80% of the time) it's not in the direction of your passion. What you trained in is not a waste of time. Over time you will find a way to engineer your engineering into your music (if you studied engineering but are passionate about music). What are you by talent and what you by training. A lot of people have found a way to use what they studied in their purpose. Some people are not endowed with a great gift but have the exposure, training and mentorship. This helps them to maximize their gift.

What is your individual style?

Two people can have the same gift but different individual styles. Embracing your individuality will help you to maximize your gift. Are you singing according to your voice range or are you trying to be a soprano because it is what is admired.

Philippians 3:12-15

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

Question: To what extend are you prepared to contend for your destiny? A disciple is someone who is passionate about achieving their destiny. And raising disciples who do the same.

4. A disciple is someone who is willing to enter into close relationship with other people.

Disciples are made through personal relationships with others and letting others into our lives. We cannot separate the call to discipleship from the call to community. There has got to be a healthy degree of vulnerability and accountability.

Spiritual Health Audit.

Historical Issues:

- Describe your upbringing
- How did you come to know the Lord and be discipled?
- Do you have any time-bombs or patterns of weakness that keep holding you back in your discipleship process?
- Are you in any unhealthy relationships that may be holding you back spiritually?

I. Devotion

- How is your personal time with God (regularity, content and approach)?

II. Stewardship

- How is your time management?
- Do you believe you are fully utilizing your time to glorify God?
- What are the time-wasters in your life?
- How well are you managing the money God has given you stewardship over?
- Are you being a good steward of your body (physical health, nutrition and fitness)?
- What will you endeavour to do to become a better steward in this area?
- Have you been using the gifts and skills that God has given you?
- If not, what are the hindrances to this?
- Are you currently aligned to your life call and vision?

III. Relationships

- How is your relationship with your pastors and other church leaders?
- When was the last time you practised hospitality in your home?
- How are your relations at work?

- How are relations with your extended family?
- How is your relationship with your children?

IV. Marital Relations

- What were your positive contributions to your marriage in the previous week?
- What were your negative contributions to your marriage in the previous week?
- When was the last time you did something for the first time in your marriage?
- Where is your spouse in his/her love tank? (Out of 10)

V. Personal Development

- What books are you currently reading?
- What is your strategy for personal study?
- Describe the progress you are making in the mentorship you may be currently receiving?

VI. Outreach

- How are those you are discipling?
- How are those you are mentoring?
- What are you doing for the community?

VII. Purity

- Do you have any blind-spots in your life that you would like to make yourself accountable concerning?
 - Are there any issues you have been convicted of during the previous week?
 - Where are you in your emotional bank account? (Out of 10)
- It is in this accountability settings that we learn to have quality conversations, difficult conversations.
 - That grow together
 - Discipleship is more than spiritual growth but growth of whole man: emotionally, relationally, physically, mentally etc.

5. A disciple is someone who is open to correction.

Jesus often corrected or rebuked His disciples for their own growth and development.

Matthew 8:26

But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

Mark 8:33

But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not ^[a]mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

- A wise person is someone who can receive correction from others (Pro. 9:8; 10:17; 12:1; Ps. 141:5)

Proverbs 10:17

People who accept correction are on the pathway to life, but those who ignore it will lead others astray.

Proverbs 12:1

Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.

Question: How open are you to rebuke and correction? I have people close to me who do that with me from time to time. It is not always comfortable but great for my growth. Remember as you grow as a disciple be open to rebuke and correction and be prepared to rebuke and correct those you disciple too.

6. A disciple is someone who makes other disciples.

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Making disciples is helping a person know, follow and become like Christ through an open, loving relationship.

Disciple-making is characterized by the following:

- Prayer
- Care
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Accountability
- Correction

Disciple-making focuses on cultivating the following:

- Character
- Understanding
- Ministry

Disciple-making utilises practical method of example and modelling.

Titus 2:3-8

The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things--that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

Philippians 3:17

Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

Philippians 4:9

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Quotes:

Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life – Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Discipleship is the art and science of helping people find, follow and fully become like Jesus. Discipleship happens as God's people show love, share truth and live life with one another, making new disciples along the way. – Brandon Cox

It is possible to know all about doctrine and yet not know Jesus. The soul is in danger when knowledge of doctrine outsteps intimate touch with Jesus.Have I a personal history with Jesus Christ? The one sign of discipleship is intimate connection with Him, a knowledge of Jesus Christ nothing can shake – Oswald Chambers

The pursuit of God is not a part-time, weekend exercise. If it is, chances are you will experience a part-time, weekend freedom. Abiding requires a kind of staying power. The pursuit is relentless. It hungers and thirsts. It pants as the deer after the mountain brook. It takes the kingdom by storm...The pursuit of God is a pursuit of passion. Indifference will not do. To abide in the Word is to hang on tenaciously. A weak grip will soon slip away. Discipleship requires staying power. We sign up for duration. We do not graduate until heaven – RC Sproul

In our faith we follow in someone's steps. In our faith we leave footprints to guide others. It's the principle of discipleship – Max Lucado

Our Lord's conception of discipleship is not that we work for God, but that God works through us – Oswald Chambers

What makes authentic disciples is not visions, ecstasies, biblical mastery of chapter and verse, or spectacular success in the ministry, but a capacity for faithfulness. Buffeted by the fickle winds of failure, battered by their own unruly emotions, and bruised by rejection and ridicule, authentic disciples may have stumbled and frequently fallen, endured lapses and relapses, gotten handcuffed to the fleshpots and wandered into a far county. Yet, they kept coming back to Jesus – Brennan Manning

Salvation is free, but discipleship costs everything we have – Billy Graham

CONCLUSION

Colossians 1:28-29

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labour, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

Galatians 4:19

My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you.

Disciple-making communities move us forward in our walk with Christ.

They help to move us from being:

- Biblically illiterate to biblically literate.
- Passive recipients to proactive ministers.
- Professional ministers to “every member a minister.”
- Consumers to producers.
- Spectators to participators.
- An audience to an army.

Disciple-making communities help us to discover if we are true disciples.

2 Corinthians 13:5

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -- unless indeed you are disqualified.

Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular check-ups. You need first-hand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it. –MSG