



Becoming Disciples

Acts 11:19-30 | Ryan Pfeiffer | June 14, 2026

Luke takes us back to Ch8 the persecution... how early disciples responded...

PPT. (Map) The result is the gospel is spreading! The Church is growing!

More and more people are believing...

Not only is it growing... Their passion/ devotion is rising... gaining momentum!

Why aren't the difficulties crushing them? Why isn't growth diluting them?

There seems to be a deep-rootedness about them... inner strength/ resilience

The church is not presented as perfect but as an unstoppable force for Good!

WHY? Luke shows us it has to do in part w/ how we understand discipleship.

Q: Can you be a Christian without being a disciple?

FOCUS. I want to look 1) at the crisis of discipleship in our culture. 2) What is a disciple? 3) the call to become disciple makers?

THE CRISIS OF DISCIPLESHIP. READ Acts 11:19-21.

More & more people are believing vss 21, 24, 26 "great numbers of people"

- V21 has this phrase... people believed and turned to the Lord.
- Great word! — Turning toward Jesus...Turning over our lives to Jesus...

In other words they didn't just believe in Jesus they gave their whole life!

The Crisis in West— many have settled for a decision instead of a devotion.

With being a Christian without being a disciple...

Barna Study found (and others)

1. 63% of Americans say they are Christian.
2. Only 4% are actually following Jesus. (Jesus, Bible, Church, Culture)

The challenge for us living in America is thinking that being a Christian is:

- About who my family says I am.
- Being an American.
- Being of a certain political party.
- Something I wear around my neck.
- Something I do on Sunday.

This is wearing the label of Christian but not embracing the lifestyle of Jesus

James 2:18 Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. πιστεύω pisteuō believe (same as vs 21)

If our believing isn't resulting in a Jesus lifestyle... something is missing.

ILLUS. UCSD 2008 150 leaders... 88% agreed w/biblical sexuality...

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE? READ Acts 11:22-24.

Why does the Church send Barnabas?

The early church understood the need to move from believing to lifestyle!

This is discipleship... But first... let's define what a disciple is:

- "A disciple is an apprentice of Jesus. Someone who is learning to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus is doing." — John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way.
- "A disciple is someone who follows Jesus, is being changed by Him and joins His mission" — Discipleship Collective.

I love the word "apprentice" for disciple... Chemistry vs jiu jitsu... Surfing!

To follow Jesus, then meant, to walk alongside him in a posture of listening, learning, observation, obedience and imitation. — Dallas Willard, The Great Omission.

Which is why people who saw these disciples called them Christians.

Because they talked so much about Christ, lived so much like Christ, and belonged so completely to Christ that the people of Antioch started calling them "christ-people" or "little- christs".

What did they see... I think Luke is showing us here... Disciples of Jesus:

1. Are willing to suffer for Jesus... v19
2. Are constantly talking about Jesus... v19, 20
3. Have an intimacy with Jesus thru the Holy Spirit... v24
4. Regularly gather with other Christians... v26
5. Gather for teaching... v26
6. Give generously to strengthen the Church... v29
7. Are contagious in helping others become disciples... v21,24,26.

THE CALL TO BE DISCIPLE-MAKERS. READ Acts 11:25-26.

Q) Would Paul have become the Apostle to the Gentiles w/out Barnabas?

Look at the way Barnabas imitates Jesus...

- He goes in search of Saul...
- He involves Saul in his mission...
- He partnered with Saul...
- Eventually he releases Saul to become Paul the Apostle.

Maturing disciples are fruitful in character & in reproducing their faith...

Intentionally investing in relationships to help others become disciples.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Notice... Jesus is with us as we join HIM in his passion to make disciples.

INVITE WORSHIP TEAM UP.

NEXT STEPS.

Some of us we are called to become disciples...

1. You've made a faith decision, recommitment, raised your hand, stood...

2. Are you taking the next step to learn with others to follow Jesus
3. Learning how to be with Jesus... become like him... and do what he did.

Some of us need to get on the field and become a disciple maker...

- To intentionally invest in others to help them follow Jesus...
- Maybe you feel inadequate... don't know where to start...
- Not sure you know enough or have enough time...

TAP THE CIRCLE ON BACK OF CHAIR... USE YOUR PHONE ON THE QR...

We as a Church are committed to helping you take the next step.