

Jesus Christ, Evangelism and Missions

By Mike Morris

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read the comments related to Matthew 28:18–20 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What does “make disciples” mean?

Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Mark 8:38 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What does being “ashamed of Me and My words” mean?

Assignment Three

Read the comments related to Romans 1:16 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: In what ways can disciples demonstrate that they are “not ashamed of the gospel”?

Scripture to Memorize

For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. Mark 8:38

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand Jesus's role in and relationship to evangelism and missions.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Bill responded to an altar call at his church, and he was baptized at a young age. He intellectually believed in Jesus then, but he is now not sure whether he ever surrendered his life to Jesus in repentance and faith. Bill, now in high school, enjoys the social interaction at church, but he was embarrassed recently when his pastor participated in a panel discussion at his school and discussed Christ's atonement for sin and the second coming of Christ. He is not interested in evangelism. As Bill's friend, what should you say to him?

Read Matthew 28:18–20 (the Great Commission) out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 18. authority. Jesus said He had the authority to give commands.

Verse 19. Go therefore. Because He had the authority, He commanded them to go. The Greek word translated as “go” has the same command force as the main Greek verb, which is translated “make disciples.” Christians must be intentional about going. They should not merely wait for opportunities to witness. Rather, they must engage in planned witnessing activities on a regular basis. **make disciples of all the nations.** This includes cross-cultural missions. Not all believers will become vocational missionaries overseas, but they can support missionaries in various ways. **make disciples.** Depending on the context in which the word *disciple* is found, the word can mean a temporary listener who is not a Christian (John 6:64–66), any Christian including a new convert (Luke 14:33; Acts 6:7), or a fully trained Christian who is mature (Hebrews 5:14; Luke 6:40). The context in Matthew 28:19–20 is clear because of two words that follow the main verb. The Greek words translated as “baptizing” and “teaching” show how disciples are made. In this context, to “make disciples” means to make fully trained Christians.

Why is baptizing important in this process? Baptizing is one of the first steps of obedience after conversion. The immersion of the new convert in water is a public witness that represents a spiritual reality. One statement of faith describes it as “an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.”

Teaching is also necessary to make fully trained disciples. Disciples must teach converts to obey “all” that Jesus commanded. Handing new converts a Bible and telling them to obey it is insufficient. The Bible can easily be misinterpreted by new converts. Maturing disciples must teach all the basic doctrines. This process takes time.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: What does “make disciples” mean?

Discussion Question

What is the difference between making converts and making disciples? Can Christians make disciples without making converts?

On Your Own

In the space below, write some immediate steps you can take to be obedient to the Great Commission. When everyone is finished, the group can compare answers to the Scripture

passage and make changes where needed.

Read Mark 8:38 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 38. ashamed of Me. Notice that Jesus condemned those who were ashamed of Him and His words. This shame can take many forms. **adulterous and sinful generation.** Some people try to distort Jesus and His words in an attempt to make Him more acceptable to a sinful generation. Other people say that good people can go to heaven without faith in Jesus. Prosperity teachers see Jesus as a Santa Claus figure who can be manipulated to give people what they desire. Other people view Jesus as merely a good teacher, not as God.

The Nicene Creed (325 AD) describes Jesus as having the same essence as God the Father: “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father.”

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: What does being “ashamed of Me and My words” mean?

Discussion Question

How do people try to distort Jesus on television and at school to make Him more acceptable to an adulterous and sinful generation?

On Your Own

In the space below, write some things you know for sure about Jesus Christ. These things should be nonnegotiable characteristics that can never be distorted. When everyone is finished, the group should compare their answers to the Scripture passage and make changes where needed.

Read Romans 1:16 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 16. ashamed. The same Greek root word is used for “ashamed” in this verse and in Mark 8:38. Sometimes people sneered at the apostle Paul (see Acts 17:32), but he continued to faithfully make disciples as a cross-cultural missionary. Jesus spent about three years teaching His disciples, and Paul taught disciples “night and day for a period of three years” in Ephesus

(Acts 20:31).

The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. This type of belief means more than just agreeing that something is true (see James 2:19). Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire person to Him as Lord and Savior.

Assignment Three Feedback

The persons who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: In what ways can disciples demonstrate that they are “not ashamed of the gospel”?

Discussion Question

How much time does it take for the average convert to become fully trained?

On Your Own

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23–28. In the space below, write the ways in which Paul suffered for the gospel. When everyone is finished, the group can compare answers to the Scripture passage and make changes where needed.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

The Great Commission includes evangelism, baptism and teaching. Making converts is not enough. The Great Commission calls upon Christians to make disciples. The apostle Paul obeyed the Great Commission as he made disciples cross-culturally. Making disciples requires lots of time. Jesus spent about three years teaching His disciples, and Paul spent three years teaching at Ephesus.

Jesus said that at the time of His second coming, He would be ashamed of those people who were ashamed of Him and His words (Mark 8:38). This warning should be heeded by people who attend churches. Not everyone who attends a church is a believer.

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, and he was willing to suffer for Christ. Becoming a Christian means more than just agreeing that the Bible is true. Satan knows the Bible is true, but he is obviously not a saved being.

Christians are people who have surrendered their lives to Christ in repentance and faith. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith involves complete commitment to Christ. It is a lifelong commitment of one's entire life, including possessions. The rich young ruler appeared to be outwardly righteous, but he was not willing to surrender his wealth and he walked away from Jesus, sadly (see Mark 10:17–27).

People who are disciples of Christ want to be obedient to the Great Commission. They join Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in making disciples of all peoples. Disciples are active in local churches and continually involved in the ongoing process of evangelizing, baptizing and teaching.

Follow Up Question

What is the relationship between Jesus and evangelism and missions?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.