

Jay Wegter on the Passions involved in Disciple-making

Here are the areas of passion and desire regarding the discipleship of believers and Christian leaders:

- 1) Discipleship is not only learning the Bible, it is systematic training in righteousness. That means teaching our disciples to observe (obey) what Christ has commanded. And joined to this mandate to train in righteousness is the soul care which expresses itself in the encouragement, admonishment, and exhortation needed to help keep our disciples on track. A mentor plays a vital role in identifying and recommending specific course corrections along the way—the pulpit cannot do it all.
- 2) Obeying the Great Commission in disciple-making is how we follow Christ fully. True believers do not live as passengers, spectators, or 'warehoused believers'.
- 3) Discipleship is primarily a lifestyle; it is not something that can be adapted to seasonal church programs. Discipleship as a lifestyle flows out of a paradigm shift that is anchored in biblical ecclesiology. Therefore, seeing church as the outworking of Christ's pattern for His Body means we can no longer view church as primarily a weekly event with programs and services.
- 4) We cannot improve upon Colossians 1:28-29. We proclaim Christ and equip our disciples in the gospel in order to move them to completeness (maturity). The gospel drives sanctification because moral exertion and ethical behavior modification have their limits—ultimately they do not have the ability to transform us into Christ's likeness.
- 5) Care for one another in the body of Christ is the bridge-building necessary to form the spiritual partnerships that become discipleship relationships. When we preach the 'one another's' we should preach them in a context of deliberateness in our disciple-making.
- 6) We must provide pastors with a solid set of metrics to assess their ministries by means of the Great Commission. We must patiently equip Christian leaders to understand the difference between 'vine work' and 'trellis work'. Vine work builds disciple-makers, trellis work (which can support vine work) involves planning and administrating programs. Only by discerning between these two kinds of labor will a church move toward ministries that are discipleship-based.
- 7) Church leaders need to be able to demonstrate how the courses and classes that are taught in church exist for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission—that means explaining with precision how each class contributes directly to training disciple-makers.
- 8) The Great Commission ought to provide the shape and contours of our philosophy of ministry (and resultant strategy). Church leaders tend to fixate on the forms and structures (the moving parts) that make up church life, while losing sight of the goal to

present each and every believer complete (mature) in Christ. The Great Commission is about keeping the goal central.