

Practical Work

- Pray with your congregation for people that need Jesus, those near you and those in far away, neglected places.
- Show your people how to tell others in a friendly way about Jesus, especially their family and friends.
- Limit the number of meetings during the week, to give your people time to go evangelize their friends.
- Practice all the important elements of worship during your main weekly meeting.
- Help every believer to do something that edifies the others, during your meetings.

Command of Christ #3

Make Disciples



A few days later Mr. Wise returns on the bus and walks to Learner's house. Sara tells him, "Learner is at the shop. I am glad you came. He is discouraged."

"Why? What happened?"

"Mr. Foolish and his friends are complaining to everyone. They criticize Learner for teaching about religion without studying first in some kind of academic theological institution. They say he sounds like a common person when he speaks, and not like a proper clergyman or well educated church official."

Mr. Wise hurries to the woodworking shop. They talk about what Mr. Foolish and his friends are saying. Learner laments, "I'm not a good speaker. I'm not eloquent."

"Your group is too small for you to preach in the traditional pulpit style. You should rather tell Bible stories or read something, and ask questions to encourage the small group to discuss it freely."



"That is what I do. I do it the same way that you did for me. I read or tell a story, then ask questions for the people to answer and discuss. I encourage everyone to participate. But that's not what Mr. Foolish wants. He wants to listen passively, as a 'hearer only'."

"Must we do them in that order?"

"Do them in the order that works best for you."

Helper says, "I think a new church or a very small group of one or two families can do these things when they meet together."

"When you meet in a home with a small group," Mr. Wise cautions, "You should also have a definite beginning and a definite end for the worship time. Otherwise the worship is confused with other activities and fails to bring us into God's awesome presence with serious reverence."

"I already discovered that," Learner says. "To start the service we ask everyone to stand and repeat a Psalm of praise. To end it we stand for a special prayer of dismissal and blessing. This way the children know when to stop playing and making noise, and when they can start again when the worship time is over."

Mr. Wise says, "I showed you and your family how to do a simple form of family worship. You do it well and others like Helper and his wife Rachel have joined you. But I will not always be here. At any time I may have to leave. You will have to lead without my help. Learner, give each person something to do. Remember what each person enjoys doing. It will correspond to their different spiritual gifts. Then all can participate."



Mr. Foolish picks up his cage of lizards and leaves the shop, one of his hands covered with stain. Helper continues to discuss making disciples. "In Acts chapter 2, the apostles could not stop talking about Jesus, His death and His resurrection. By the power of the Spirit, many people repented. The apostle Peter told them to have a change of heart and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Three thousand repented and were baptized, and were added to the church that same day!"

Mr. Wise adds, "And after baptism the apostles taught them immediately to obey all the other basic commands of Christ. It says in Acts 2 that the people heard and practiced the apostles' teaching, had loving fellowship, broke bread together, prayed, and gave to those in need. That is how the first church started!"

Learner exclaims, "Our church also is starting by obeying Jesus just like those first Christians did. They loved each other. We also help each other to obey all that Jesus commanded. We will make obedient disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Good," Mr. Wise responds happily. "Some of Christ's commands we practice when we meet together, such as the Lord's Supper and loving fellowship. Obedience to Jesus is the essence of true worship. But we also obey Christ when we are not at the meetings. We obey Him joyfully throughout the day, praying, telling others about Him and serving the needy."

Learner asks, "What things should we do when we meet together as a body to worship God?"

"I will list for you The Important Parts of Worship:

- Pray,
- Praise God,
- Confess our sins and receive assurance of forgiveness,
- Celebrate the Lord's Supper,
- Have fellowship with one another,
- Give,
- Study the Word of God."

"That is very wrong, according to James 1:22 and 1 Corinthians 14:26. Many Bible verses tell us to teach, correct and admonish one another. This means that we must talk to one another during our meetings. We are not simply to listen. Large congregations, to meet God's requirement for a church, must form small groups that can discuss God's Word and plan together to apply it to their lives and ministries. Jesus does not tell us to be eloquent. He wants us to make disciples. You focus on the wrong objective if you worry about being a good public speaker. It is far better to be a good shepherd. Let us consider Jesus' Command to Make Disciples.

Exercise

Please find in **Matthew 28:18-20** the main thing that our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to do:

- Exactly what do we do to make disciples?
- What, specifically, are the disciples to do?

Helper, Learner's brother, arrives at the shop with his guitar. "Listen to my new song, Mr. Wise. I composed it to teach the commands of Christ." He sings a simple list of Jesus' seven basic commands.

"Very good!" Mr. Wise congratulates him. "Please teach it to the new congregations."

"Come join us," Learner says to Helper, "We are talking about making disciples."

Mr. Wise points at the woodworking tools lying on the worktable and says, "Christ called ordinary working men to be His disciples, not famous speakers. He does not want His followers simply to sit in church meetings and listen to good speakers. He commands his disciples to do things that are vital for healthy church life. Let me tell you About Jesus' Promises to Those Who Follow Him:

Exercise

- Please find in Luke 5:1-11 what Jesus said we would become if we follow Him.
- Also find in Luke 5:27-32 two things that Levi (also called Matthew) did immediately after starting to follow Jesus.
- Jesus did not come to be a friend only of very good people. What kind of people did He say He came to save?

Helper says, "I am trying to tell my friends about Christ, but I'm shy. I find it hard to talk to people that I do not know well."

"God will help you," Mr. Wise explains. "Here, let us help Learner stain this new cabinet that he's making. We can talk while we work. Jesus promised His disciples that they would be fishers of men. Like Peter, we can do nothing to reach men for Christ without God's help. Only by His power can we call people to repentance and faith. He gives us power through His gift, the Holy Spirit. We receive and use this power far more effectively when we work together, in teams of two or more."



"That is why it was hard for me to talk to people about our Lord," Helper reasons, "I tried to do it alone."

Mr. Wise suggests to Learner, "Take your brother Helper with you when you tell others about Jesus. Let us pray for both of you right now, that the Holy Spirit will anoint you and give you more coworkers, as Jesus promised in Matthew 9:38."

After praying, Mr. Wise explains, "When Jesus called Levi, he left everything and immediately followed Jesus, just as Peter and the other disciples did. True disciples let Jesus rule over every part of their lives and obey Him immediately."

They hear someone at the door. Mr. Foolish has come to the shop with a small cage holding green lizards. "They eat flies," he explains. "They will keep your house free of flies and fleas. Buy one. Here, I will show you." He releases one on the floor and it runs out the door. A cat pounces on it and runs away with it.

They talk about Learner's responsibility as an elder, to make disciples. Mr. Foolish hits his fist against the worktable, upsetting a can of stain. He says loudly, "You cannot make disciples until you learn more theology. My cousin says his pastor studied for many years before he tried to teach anyone about God. You are a hypocrite if you try to tell others about God when you do not know hardly anything yourself!"



"No!" Mr. Wise interrupts forcefully, "What exactly do you want Learner to do to prove that he is capable of shepherding the flock that God has given him? Walk on water? He cannot stop caring for other people just because he is not perfect in every way! When we come to Christ we love others more than ever."

"Let us get back to the subject we were talking about," Learner begs. "We want to make disciples. The first thing Matthew did as a disciple of Jesus was to call his friends together for a meal so that he could present Jesus to them. We help new disciples to present Jesus to their own friends and family. We tell them about Jesus, His teaching, His miracles, His death and His resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:2-5 clarifies that the good news is that Jesus died and rose from the dead, and by doing so brought men forgiveness and eternal life."

Helper says, "I read that last night to my family. The teachers of the law called Levi and his friends 'sinners.' Peter also called himself a sinner. These sinners were the people Jesus came to call to repentance and make fishers of men. Jesus called groups of sinners, like the tax collectors at Matthew's party, into His church. He changes them!"