

best intentions...



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making disciples in consumer culture



"We need to lower the bar on what it means to do church and raise the bar on what it means to be a disciple"

Neil Cole

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what does a disciple of jesus look like?



"Evangelicals make nice neighbors but they aren't people you'd want to spend any length of time with."

G K Chesterton

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the end game?...



a haircut and a real job?
cosmetic surgery or deep heart and lifestyle change?

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'trust and be nice'?...



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Go into all the world and...



Matt 28:18

Make disciples, baptising & teaching to obey

Col 1:28

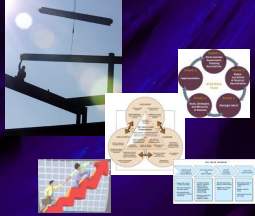
present everyone mature in Christ

Eph 4

become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

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What is your church's plan for making disciples?



discuss

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jesus' idea of discipleship

(Luke 9:23-25 NIV) Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. {24} For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. {25} What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"



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jesus' idea of discipleship

(John 12:24-26 NIV) I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. {25} The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. {26} Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.



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jesus' idea of discipleship

(Mat 13:33 NIV) He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."



engaged and distinctive swimming upstream

radical discipleship?



Only he who believes is obedient and only he who is obedient believes.
D Bonhoeffer

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what is the problem?

The leading assumption in the American church today is that you can be a Christian but not a disciple. That has placed a tremendous burden on a mass of Christians who are **not** disciples. We tell them to come to church, participate in our programs and give money. But we see a church that knows nothing of commitment. We have settled for the marginal, and so we carry this awful burden of trying to motivate people to do what they don't want to do. We can't think about church the way we have been."

Dallas Willard

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How did *this* happen?...

"It is possible today for a person to come into the cultural pattern of the church without having met the Head of the church. This is disastrous beyond description. We have been so afraid we might lose potential members that we have been willing to take them on their own terms. Then we wonder why the church is relatively impotent and doesn't have the power to transform human life, to shake society to its very roots."



what do **you** think?...
how did we get **here**?

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2 rich men and Jesus

(Luke 19:8-10 NIV) But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."



"One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." {22} At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.



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To become an 'admirer of Jesus' is much easier than to become a follower."

Soren Kierkegaard



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the narrow path



But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Mat 7:14

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identity



'one percenters'?
Discuss - what can we expect?

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seriously...



'How come discipleship seems to have been undervalued by the church and attendance seems to have been overvalued.'

Carl Engels in 'What's gone wrong with the Harvest'

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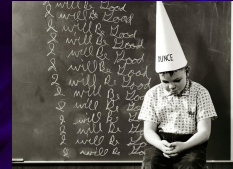
normal discipleship

{28} Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" {29} "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel {30} will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. {31} But many who are first will be last, and the last first."



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wise man... foolish man



What was the difference?...

(Mat 7:24-27 NIV) "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. {25} The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. {26} But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. {27} The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

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blah blah blah

"Every moment and every situation challenges us to action and to obedience. We have literally no time to sit down and ask ourselves whether so-and-so is our neighbour or not. We must get into action and obey - we must behave like a neighbour to him. But perhaps this shocks you. Perhaps you still think you ought to think out beforehand and know what you ought to do. To that, there is only one answer. You can only know and think about it by actually doing it. It is no use asking questions; for it is only through obedience that you come to learn the truth."

Bonhoeffer

Discuss - why is action and obedience so critical to developing disciples?

what do we do about this?

why do we resist Jesus call so often?

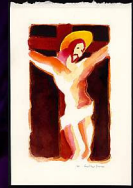
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the upstream calling

The cross is laid on every Christian. It begins with the call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is that dying of the old man which is the result of his encounter with Christ. As we embark upon discipleship we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with His death -- we give over our lives to death.

Since this happens at the beginning of the Christian life, the cross can never be merely a tragic ending to an otherwise happy religious life. When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow Him, or it may be a death like Luther's, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time -- death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at His call.

That is why the rich young man was so loath to follow Jesus, for the cost of his following was the death of his will. In fact, every command of Jesus is a call to die, with all our affections and lusts. But we do not want to die, and therefore Jesus Christ and His call are necessarily our death and our life. D. Bonhoeffer



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the curious paradox...

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. {24} For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. Luke 9:23-24



I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
John 10:10

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the big questions



1. How compatible are middle class values with the kingdom of God and the life of discipleship Jesus calls us to?
2. How do we develop authentic disciples in a post christian world?
3. What will it mean to live counter-culturally in Australia in 2005?
4. What needs to change in the way we do church if we are to see discipleship increase?

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