

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

The Great Omission

(The Epic Life)

Matthew 28:16-20

2002

Introduction

John 15:16 tells us that we have been appointed to bear fruit - make disciples!

We have meetings, events and conferences, but we don't make disciples.

We give of our time and resources to church, but we don't make disciples.

We have rallies, political action committees, concerts and community events, but we don't make disciples.

We feed the poor, clothe the naked, and support missions, but we don't make disciples.

We build mega churches with magnificent buildings and big mortgages, but we don't make disciples.

We offer aerobics for the body conscious, meetings for the single, divorced, teens, over 50s, and support for every kind of addiction, but we don't make disciples.

We train our leaders at Bible Schools or seminaries how to preach and teach the scriptures, how to benefit from church history and apologetics, how to counsel the confused, how to marry and bury them and everything in between, but we don't teach them how to make disciples!

WHY?????

Because it is costly! It will cost you:

Time (it limits other commitments)

Emotional and physical energy

Financial resources

Transparency

Being mutually accountable

Requires spiritual growth and maturity

Being a spiritual role model

YOUR LIFE!!!

We have a choice. We can either participate or not. But the choice we make will have lasting impact on our own lives and the lives of those around us.

I The Consequences of Non-Participation

A. Spiritual boredom

1. Always preparing but never engaged
 - 2 Tim. 3:7 They [the godless] are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always leaning but never able to acknowledge the truth.
2. Spiritual disciplines are a drag
3. Spiritually dry
 - Rev. 3:15-16 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm -- neither hot or cold -- I am about to spit you out of my mouth.
4. Lack of zeal
 - Gal. 4:17-18 Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them. It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you.
5. Lack of love for God
 - Rev. 2:4-5 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first.
6. Neglect of fellowship
 - Heb. 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
7. Vulnerability to sin - 2 Sam. 11:1

B. Spiritual immaturity

1. Ignorance
 - Philemon 1:6 "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."
2. Instability
 - Eph. 4:13-15 "Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching

and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ."

3. Developmental delay

- Heb. 5:11-14 "We have must to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food. Anyone who lives on milk, being still infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

C. Spiritual Vulnerability

1. Hunger for the experiential

a. Supernatural

- Col. 2:18 "Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinew, grows as God causes it to grow."

- 2 Pet 2:10-16 "This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts, they too will perish."

- Jude 8-10 "In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings. But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'"

b. Misuse of spiritual gifts - 1 Cor. 14:1-20

c. The newest fad (i.e. laughter, H&W, NI&CI)

- 2 Cor. 2:17 "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God."

-James 4:2-3 "You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do

not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

- 2 Tim. 4:3-4 "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers who say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

- 1 Tim. 1:3-7 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work, which is by faith. The goal of this command is love which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Some have wondered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm."

- 2 Peter 2:1-3 "But there were also false prophets among the people just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them -- bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping."

2. Vulnerability to heresy

a. False teaching

- 2 Cor. 11:3-4 "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough."

- 2 Peter 2:1-9 "But there were also false prophets among the people just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping."

- 1 Tim. 6:3-5 "If anyone teaches false doctrines, and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy,

strife, malicious talk evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain."

b. Cultic teachings

- Rev. 2:24 "Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets: Only hold on to what you have until I come."

D. Spiritual **Apathy**

1. Fading desire for the **mission**

- 2 Tim. 2:3-6 "Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs-- he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops."

2. Spiritual objectives take a back seat to our own desire

- 2 Tim. 4:10 "For Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica."

3. Gradual shift of priorities from spiritual to **worldly**

- 1 Tim. 6:10 "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

James 4:4 "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."

Rev. 3:17 "You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked."

4. **Hypocrisy** - Matt. 23:13- 36

a. Legalism

5. We go AWOL (absent without leave)

6. Rationalization for non-participation in the mission

II The Benefits Of Participation

A. Love for God

- John 14:21 "Whoever has my commands and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

B. Assurance that we are His **disciples**

- John 15:8 "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

C. **Purpose**

- John 15:16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

- 1 Cor. 9:24-26 "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air."

D. Discipline

- 1 Tim. 4:7-8 "Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

E. **Maturity**

- Heb. 5:12-14 "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

F. Zeal

- Rom. 12:11 "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."

G. **Joy**

- Luke 10:17 "The seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.'"

H. Fruit

- John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

I. **Reward**

- 1 Cor. 3:8-15 "The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor... If what he has built survives [the fire], he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames."

- Rev. 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done."

Conclusion

God's command is for us to go and make disciples. The Enemy will do everything he can to distract or discourage us from obeying God's directive. The greatest act of kindness or service to others is helping them come into friendship with God, grow in their walk and become spiritually reproductive.

Be encouraged that whether you have been a Christian for a few weeks or several years, the only thing that's truly important is having a heart for God, a heart for people, and the humility and determination to learn how to help people grow in the Lord. We have several simple, practical tools that you can use if you want. God will help you learn how to do it; just take baby steps. It's all about loving God and loving others.

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