

# THE LIFE

EMBRACING THE LIFE OF A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP  
LESSON 12: THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLESHIP, PART 3:  
DISCIPLES HELP OTHERS KNOW CHRIST MORE

**What we want students to learn:** That God expects them to be leading others to know, but equally as important, to GROW in their knowledge of God.

**What we want students to do with what they've learned:** To evaluate their disciple-making efforts and to commit to take steps to be more committed in this area of their lives.

**Scripture Focus:** Matthew 28:18-20

**Supporting Scripture:** Philippians 2:10-11; Acts 1:8

**Overview:** Your final look at some of the various purposes of discipleship is a challenging one. Not only are we supposed to lead people to a first-time saving relationship with Jesus, we are called to lead them DEEPER in their relationship with Christ. That's the awesome part of the Great Commission. It speaks to an investment in others, a journey to help teach and lead others to grow in their own discipleship.

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## TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **LIFE** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **LIFE** lesson 12 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 12, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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## BIBLE BACKGROUND

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

## THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his Gospel.
- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew's Gospel being written in the late 50's or 60's AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

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- **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

## THE SETTING

This passage is famously referred to as the Great Commission. It comes as the end of Christ's time on earth, and contains some of His final declarations to His followers. The lead up to this point is jam-packed. Jesus has been crucified and put into the tomb. On that Sunday, Mary Magdalene and her other friend Mary go to the tomb to check on Jesus, but to their amazement, it's empty! An angel of the Lord directs them to gather Jesus' followers and meet Him in Galilee because He has resurrected.

## THE MAIN POINT

The main point we want to make is that in Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus calls each and every follower to not only share the Gospel, but to make disciples by teaching them how to live like Christ. Our responsibility does not end at sharing, but is accomplished when we invite people into our lives to get an inside look at what being a devout follower means. A major part of the disciple-making process is teaching others what the Bible says and how to follow it. The thought of this may be intimidating to a student. They may think, "How can I make disciples when I'm still trying to get my life together?" Our prayer is that students would begin to see that they have a lot to offer those who are not as mature in their knowledge of God, and that they would embrace the call to make disciples.

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## LESSON PLAN

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

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## THE LEAD IN

- **Goal:** To open students' eyes that they are all teachers about what they are passionate about.
- **Set-Up:** None needed

FIRST, explain to students that they are going to have a chance to demonstrate their expertise on a topic of their choosing. Explain to your group that each person will have 60 seconds to create a "How To Be Successful" talk on any topic of their choice (with discretion of course). Topics may range anywhere from a particular sport, dance, band, gaming, driving, etc. Tell them to think of it as something like a YouTube tutorial video. It should be something that they are passionate about. You'll probably have a range of funny to informative talks, which is great. (If you want, consider going first and presenting a "how to" talk on a subject of your choosing.)

THEN, allow some of your students to share. The number of students you have may determine how you want to conduct the exercise. With fewer numbers, everyone can share. With a larger group, it may be better to allow students to raise hands or call on them. Spend about 5-10 minutes here.

NEXT, explain to students that this was a fun way to get them thinking about how we are all teachers of what we love

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and are passionate about. Say something like:

- **You all just taught the group something that you are knowledgeable of and passionate about. When it comes to this particular subject, even though you may not see yourself this way, you are a teacher! We all naturally talk about what we love: sports, pop culture, and so on. In most cases, we are educating those who are less informed about our topic when we speak. In the Great Commission Jesus calls each and every one of His disciples to share the “good news” and to teach others about what it means to follow God. You may think, “But I’m not a Bible scholar,” or “I’ve never disciplined anyone before.” That’s okay! Jesus used a group of twelve uneducated, normal guys to turn the world upside down for His Kingdom. The cool thing is that He wants to use you to do the same. Let’s take a closer look at what the Bible says.**

Transition into *The Main Event* portion of your lesson.

## THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help students see that God expects them to be leading others to know, but equally as important, to GROW in their knowledge of God.
- **Set Up:** You’ll benefit from a dry-erase board, but it’s not critical. Make sure students have a Bible or that they are able to look along with a friend.

FIRST, lead students to brainstorm a definition for the word “authority.” Write the word on a dry-erase board, and record their definitions. When they’ve slowed down supplying answers, or if they get stumped, write the following answer on the board:

- **Authority: the right to control, command, or determine.**

THEN, ask the following questions:

- **Can you name some people who have authority?**
  - Answers will vary, but may include parents, teachers, coaches, principles, policemen, judges, congressmen, military generals, CEOs, kings, the President, etc.
- **Think about the list of people we named. Is their respective authority limited or unlimited?**
  - Answer: They’re limited because they can’t apply to anyone not under their jurisdiction. For instance, the President of the U.S. cannot expect the people of Canada to obey an order from him—it’s only for citizens of that country.

Explain that you’re going to start by looking at what kind of kind of authority God has and what our response should be to it. Instruct students to turn to Matthew 28. While students are looking, make sure you take a few moments to provide the context for the passage using the Bible Background. Pay close attention to The Setting. Summarize it for your students so that they grasp exactly when this passage of Scripture occurs in Jesus’ ministry.

NEXT, read or have a student read Matthew 28:18-20. When students have finished, lead them in a short discussion. Instruct them to look back at verse 18. Ask something like:

- **Why does Jesus have all authority on heaven and earth?**

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o Answer: As God, Jesus has authority over all creation. Passages like John 1 and Colossians 1 tell us that Jesus was present at and part of Creation, and that His presence and power hold all things together. Furthermore, and in context of this passage, Jesus' authority comes because He overcame sin and death when He died on the cross and was resurrected three days later.

- **How should we respond knowing that Jesus holds this kind of authority?**

o Answer: We should seek to humbly obey Him. Jesus says in John 8:31 that His true disciples are the ones that abide in His Word and seek to do His will.

THEN, take a moment and read Philippians 2:10-11 to drive home the idea that Jesus is the supreme ruler of all. When you're done, ask:

- **There is no limit to Jesus' authority and power. All people will be held accountable to how they respond to Jesus. How does this truth impact you? Does this comfort you or scare you? Why?**

o Answers will vary, but remind students that it should lead them to be comforted because they know that His character is righteous, He loves them, and He is for their good.

Remind students that although Jesus is King and lord of everything, He still invites us into an active, vibrant relationship with Him. He desires for us to come to Him and to find life in Him. The fact that a perfect, heavenly King would want fellowship with broken sinners is scandalous news! It is only from this place of relationship with Jesus that we can carry out the mission He laid out for us in the next two verses.

NEXT, direct their attention to verses 19-20. Ask:

- **Why does Matthew throw the "therefore" in between verses 18-19?**

o Answer: As a result of His complete power and authority, we are empowered to share the Gospel and teach others to follow Jesus. His power becomes active in our obedience. Matthew is connecting the idea that the only way to accomplish this task we have before us is if God is the One doing it in and through us.

- **Now, the big question: What does it mean to make a disciple?**

o Answer: It means to intentionally build a relationship with another person while purposefully teaching them the Word of God. Each person's knowledge of God will differ, so we should seek out those less mature in the faith in order to add to their knowledge of the Lord in the hopes that it will increase their devotion and admiration of Him.

THEN, have students see if they can name three countries on each continent. (This is a trick question considering Australia is a country and Antarctica does not contain a country! But see if they can be the ones to tell you this!) When they've finished, say something like:

- **You all just brilliantly gave us a world geography lesson. Do you want to know why I asked you to do that? It's because Jesus calls us in verse 19 to make disciples of ALL nations. He calls Christ-followers to grow the Church in all of the nations we just discussed, and all of them we didn't even mention. He is calling us to participate in the global movement of disciple-making that countless Christians all over the world are doing each day. It's not just for adults. It's for you too.**

NEXT, read Acts 1:8 that ties into what Jesus is asking of us:

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- **What do you notice about the order of locations that Jesus gave here?**

- Answer: There is a centrifugal nature to the Gospel. This just means that it starts at the center and moves outward. Jerusalem was the hub of the disciples and home for much of their ministry activity. Jesus gives this location first, and then moves on to Judea and Samaria—the areas surrounding Jerusalem. Then, He calls them (and us) to witness to areas that are not close to home all over the globe.

Begin wrapping up the Bible study portion of your lesson by re-stating the idea that we are all called to “go.” But, lead students to wrestle with the idea of what their “going” should look like. Have them look back at verses 19-20 and ask:

- **What is baptism a symbol of?**

- Answer: It is representative of new life! The picture of baptism the New Testament paints is us dying to ourselves, being washed clean from our sin because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross, and raising to live in a new life found in Him.

- **Why does Jesus tell us to baptize people in the name of all three members of the Trinity?**

- Answer: There are two reasons. 1) All three members are involved in someone’s salvation, and 2) It is a testimony to the character and nature of who God is. He is three persons and One God.

- **In verse 20, we see Jesus instructing Christians to teach those they are discipling to follow God’s Word. Why is this important?**

- Answer: Many Christians act as if they believe the extent of the Christian life is making a salvation decision and coming to church. Those are both great things, but they’re only the tip of the iceberg! There is an expectation found in Scripture to grow in the knowledge of God and spiritual maturity, but people need guidance getting there. In order to accomplish the mission set before us, we must seek to be discipled and to make disciples.

- **Who are the people in your life that have discipled you and what did you admire about them?**

- Answers will vary.

- **How should Christ’s promise of His presence motivate us?**

- Answer: It should serve to remind us that we are never alone in this process. Diving into the mess of others’ lives can be hard and in some cases drive us to want to quit. In those moments, He is more near than we can imagine and He promises that if we keep going, we will in due time receive our reward (Gal. 6:9).

FINALLY, explain to students that the Great Commission isn’t just a nice suggestion that some elite class of Christians are responsible for. It’s for the new believer all the way to the seasoned, senior adult believer. Say something like this:

- **I hope you have felt the gravity of the call to be a witness in your life. On the surface, this command can appear overwhelming, but when we look on it with the right perspective, it can totally change our lives. We find joy in walking with others and seeing God move in their life. And in that process, God brings us closer to Himself. Step out on faith and believe that God wants to use you to teach others how to live for Him.**

Ask if there are any questions, then transition into *The Last Word*.

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## THE LAST WORD

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- **Goal:** To help students step back and evaluate how intentionally they are using their time to make disciples.
- **Set-Up:** You'll want to use a dry-erase board, or some other means to help students visualize the struggles and the benefits of being a disciple. Draw a line down the middle of your board and label one side "Struggles" and the other "Benefits."

FIRST, explain to students that as you begin to wrap up your lesson, you want to give them an opportunity to talk openly and honestly about what holds them back from living out this call on their lives. Open up the floor to hear their hang-ups and hardships in the process of making disciples. For example, they might say they don't have any time in their schedule or they might express feelings of inadequacy. Not that this should keep them from making disciples, but aiding them to see that there are obstacles to overcome will be helpful.

NEXT, ask them to brainstorm what the benefits to making disciples are. Encourage your group to dream about what could happen if they whole-heartedly jumped into the mission. Answers will vary, but once your group has given the list, say something like this:

- **Just like anything worth accomplishing in life, fulfilling God's call on our life is hard work. Making disciples calls us to pursue people that may seem immature in their faith, or may not want anything to do with Jesus at all. It's kind of like the example of a sponge. We soak in so that we can take that knowledge to be squeezed out into others' lives. It will be hard, but it will be so worth it.**

If you want, consider using this example as a way for them to visualize the goal: In the popular movie, *Wreck-It Ralph*, he gets tired of being the villain of his own video game. Therefore, he travels to other games where he meets a girl named Vanellope. She loves to race, but inevitably "glitches" while she races, which causes the other competitors to keep her from racing. Once the two meet, Ralph helps her to build a race-cart and teaches her how to use her glitch to her advantage. Vanellope eventually wins the race because of Ralph's instruction and help. Ask:

- **What did Ralph discover about himself?**
  - He realized that he could really help others discover their potential.
- **Who can you come alongside of and help show the way?**
  - They don't have to answer out loud, but tell them to think of someone in their mind.
- **What are some practical ways you can disciple them?**
  - Answers will vary.

FINALLY, take some time to challenge your group to take that next step and intentionally disciple one person. Then, let them know that you will be a resource to them along the way if they need any guidance or wisdom in the discipleship process. Allow time for any closing thoughts or questions from your students.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the **Social Media** guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).