

LOST

JESUS CAME TO FIND US
NOT JUST TO FIX US

SUNDAY 18TH JULY - 10AM

“THE MASTER’S
PLAN”



This week I suggest that we take some time to read the principals of The Masters Plan and each day seek the Holy Spirit for greater revelation and impartation to fulfil His plan and strategy to change the world.

Jesus is the only perfect person who has ever lived. His life on earth was flawless. His teachings are brilliant. His methods are masterful. He left us patterns and principals throughout His earthly ministry that reveal He lived with remarkable intentionality to fulfil His mission. So what did Jesus actually do when He was here on earth? Why did He do the things He did? What does the ministry of Jesus look like in today's world?. Finding the answers to these questions will enable us to become more effective disciples and disciple makers. Matt 28v19 reminds us that we too are called to the mystery, the message and the method Jesus revealed of the kingdom of God. What did Jesus set out to do? When Jesus came, He came to redeem to make all things new, to restore all things to their God given original design.

Rev 21-v1-5 *Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth, ”for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.*

Jesus devoted His entire earthly life to fulfilling that plan. He now invites us to partner with Him to fulfil the fullness of His plan. The great commission is both our invitation to become and make disciples. A disciple is essentially a follower of Jesus, seeking to live his or her life as He lived His. It's someone who is actively learning how to live like Jesus. It's an ongoing process, a journey that has a beginning but no end. Jesus told the disciples to go and make disciples because that is what He had been doing Himself. It was all part of the plan that would not fail because they were seeking to do what they had learned from Jesus.

Jesus' method of making disciples is brilliant because it is unassuming. He is brilliant because His strategy is so unassuming and silent many didn't recognise it. That's the marvel and mystery of it. He wasn't attempting to create big moments - although there certainly were some - He wasn't driven by big crowds either, even though He certainly had them. Neither of these things drove Him, He simply lived intentionally and consistently, nothing was accidental, nothing about His life and mission therefore is irrelevant or

without purpose because it resolves the very reason we were made, to know Him, love Him and find joy in Him forever.

There are nine principals identifiable in Jesus Master Plan. I call it the “Master’s Plan” because it is comprehensive. It started with the incarnation and reached its peak at the Great Commission, and it continues to this day.

1. **Incarnation** - Jesus came into our world to show us God’s love. People were Jesus’ priority. Jesus is the perfect photograph of God, the exact representation of His character and nature. When we see Him we see two things: who God is and who God wants us to become. In dying Jesus initiated our redemption, He made a way for us to know God and be changed into His likeness the Bible calls this being “Born again”. We are reborn into a new life - a life that flows to us but also in us and eventually from us. The incarnation is God’s love expressed in our lives. The incarnation is God for us, God with us, and God through us. The incarnation is love made flesh in Christ, but also in us. In living the incarnation, we are called to seek and to show God’s love in every way possible. Everyone loves to be loved because when you know your loved you open up - Jesus drew people to himself because He loved them. We get attention when we live the incarnation, when we live in love and from love people notice and any other methodology is hollow. Loving opens up the human heart because it is what people really want. So living in and from the incarnation is Jesus incarnate in us, Jesus made flesh for us, and Jesus revealed through us. Love is the beginning of the great commission. The incarnation is the beginning of changing the world.
2. **Selection.** People were Jesus’ strategy. Jesus was surrounded by people, multitudes gravitated towards him. He understood people needed more than teaching, preaching and healing, they need someone to follow, someone to lead them. They had many advisers or instructors but no leader. They were sheep without a Shepherd. Both the Pharisees and the Scribes had position and prominence, but they were blind leading the blind. People wanted something more - they came to hear John the Baptiser and they liked what they heard. Jesus seeing this began the process of selection (see John 1v29) John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away sin. The people who surrounded John were looking and seeking, both Andrew and John asked Jesus “Where do you live”. He responded saying “Come and see”. Not a bad place to begin to gather disciples amongst those who were already seeking. The lamb of God was the fulfilment of everything they hoped for and Jesus begins the process of selection. He selected 12 to be with Him, thousands wanted to be, but Jesus recognised His limitations. In doing so He shows us that you change the world one life at a time. How do we practice selection? Look for those who seem to have a desire to learn, look around and you will see them. God has planted people in your life and you just need to identify them. If they have seen your incarnational love they will be curious about you. Selection is foundational.
3. **Association:** Jesus stayed with them. Selection leads to association by building healthy relationships we are inviting people into our life. Association or relationship is the

foundation of discipleship. Jesus based everything He did on relationships, He spent a huge amount of time with His disciples. He fulfilled Deuteronomy chapter 6; *“⁴ Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [a] ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates”*. The same is true for us today, dinner, movies, meeting for coffee or playing or watching football is simply opening up your life up to others. We often find this difficult or unappealing because we are frightened people will see our faults and failings. I believe people don't expect you to be perfect but they do expect you to be authentic. Being real about life and your own struggles and brokenness but still believing in Jesus is incredibly attractive. Don't underestimate the ability of the Holy Spirit to show Jesus in and through you. Just keep it real.

4. **Consecration:** Jesus required obedience. Consecration is teaching people to obey *“and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”* (Matt 28v20). Obedience is simply our expression of Love towards Jesus. In John's gospel we read; *“if you love me, keep my commands”* (John 14v15). Love leads to obedience and although we continue to stumble and fall, we can never fail to be transformed when we love. I'm confident that love always leads to life in the Spirit and faith in the goodness of God. Rom 1v17 says *“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. The just live by faith”*. Love, Faith, and obedience are all part of the same truth. You can't really believe in Jesus unless you obey him. Not everyone who professes to follow actually obeys and if we truly believe in him we will obey him, because what we do reveals the truth about who we really are.
5. **Demonstration;** Jesus showed them how to live. In asking the disciples to follow him Jesus become their living example of what a disciple really is. In fact, if you want the life Jesus offers you need to live the life Jesus lived. Everything about Jesus' life demonstrated what it looked like to be a lover of God . How He prayed in Matt 6 caused the disciples to notice the rhythm of His life and they were attracted to copy it. Jesus' knowledge and obedience to the Torah is evident, it turns up in all He says and all he does. He believed it and lived it. His compassion was seen everywhere. Jesus cared about people and over 35 separate times the disciples saw him reaching out to connect with people who were far from God: Zacchaeus (Luke 9). Loving people to life was the ministry of Jesus and it is also the ministry, message, and mission of every disciple. Someone once said your time is twice as valuable when you're teaching someone else how to do what you do.
6. **Delegation.** Jesus assigned the work. Jesus found ways to get the disciples involved, building their confidence, using their gifts and abilities. The first assignment they had was to take care of hospitality. He went to their homes amongst their families, He

invited himself to dinner. What a beautiful way for someone to learn to minister. Jesus found natural ways to include and develop the disciples. He preached, they baptised. In Luke 10 He sends 72 of them out to do what they had seen Him do, to try out the kingdom. He says everywhere you go look for someone who is receptive and stay with them. Base your mission from a place of welcome. If no one is interested shake the dust off your feet move on - there is a harvest waiting. We are all called to ministry and we all get to explore the kingdom, to discover the unique part we play in reflecting Jesus to this world. We all have been with Jesus and have watched Him change our lives, we have a story to tell - some call it a testimony.

7. **Supervision;** Jesus continued to check on them. This was on the job training, and they learned as they went. Someone once said: "You build a road as you are walking on it". Jesus understood that responsibility without accountability would hinder their constancy. The way of the kingdom requires supervision from someone who may have already walked this way and can help you over some of the hurdles. Someone who can give you counsel but can also save you from some of the pitfalls they have already experienced. In Luke 10v21 Jesus celebrated that on this mission they were able to cast out demons. Celebration is important. He says *"Don't rejoice just because you have been successful, don't rejoice just because you have seen demons subject to you. Rather, rejoice that your name is written in the book of heaven."* In other words, rejoice not in your successes but in who you truly are – God's chosen children. If we focus on who we are in Christ, whether things have gone well or bad, we are celebrating because we are celebrated. Celebrating the right thing will strengthen our faith.
8. **Reproduction;** The fruit of intimacy is reproduction. Until you can see those you disciple reproducing, you can't really see if your discipleship of them has become effective. Jesus expected the disciples to reproduce because the strategy is multigenerational. He desires the whole world to know Him, and He longs to be known by them. His heart is that no one should live outside of Father's love and to God everyone is important. The whole of the New Testament is a book written for disciples, by disciples, who are seeking to make disciples. It would seem that the abundant life Jesus promised is fundamentally attached to such a mission. His idea of abundance is not material blessing alone but spiritual inheritance and legacy.
9. **Impartation:** Jesus gave Himself away and we are also called to give away our lives. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus was already indwelt and empowered by the Spirit. The Bible tells us He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness and tempted by the devil (Luke 4:1). The Spirit directed Jesus throughout His life. When He began His public ministry at Nazareth, He was invited to read the scripture that morning. He turned to the back to read what is now known as the 61st chapter of Isaiah and began to read from the scroll, *"The spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me to preach the gospel"* After He finished reading, He announced to that startled congregation: *"This Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. Everything that had been planned has now come to fulfilment in me."* Jesus completed His whole ministry in the

power of the Holy Spirit. In the same way, the Holy Spirit must be the power source for our disciple making efforts. We rely on God's Spirit because we cannot do it without His presence. In giving the final command to make disciples, Jesus makes this promise: *"I'll be with you always, even unto the end of the age"*. I believe this to be the greatest promise in the Bible. It is the only way we can fulfil all the other principles, because this promise is superhuman. The Spirit of Jesus Christ in these unworthy fallen vessels is recreating the ministry of Christ in us. He is breathing His life into us, but also helping us fulfil His ministry. That's the secret of discipleship, because the Spirit of God is doing it.