What We ‘Get’ To Do

Lon Whelan 27 September 2018



When I was very young, youth leaders in our church held daily 6 a.m. prayer times at the church. Our youth meeting was on Wednesday evening and the youth leaders led the Thursday morning prayer time as well. I remember some of the youth leaders would ask me if they had to come to prayer in the morning. My response was always the same: ‘You don’t have to come, you get to come.’

Over many years of leadership and raising children, I have repeated this phrase many times. It is a subtle mindset shift that can change our perspective and attitude. It’s easy to forget the privilege of being a member of a family, church or apostolic partnership. What was once a delight can become a drag if we allow our attitude to shift from ‘I get to’ to ‘I have to.’

What Has God Called Us To Do?

‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’ (Matthew 28:19-20)

Here Jesus is giving His last bit of encouragement and instruction to His beloved disciples. He is exhorting them to spend themselves on bringing all nations into the Kingdom. He is enlisting them in continuing the work He started with His birth, ministry, death and resurrection.

> How often have we asked the questions, 'What is Your will for my life? What should I do next?

Can you imagine being there with Him? Can you feel the buzz, the electricity in the air? They were a part of the most monumental moment in history. Part of the movement of the Messiah and now He is giving them His marching orders, their assignment. If only we could know what that was like. What would you give to sit face to face with the living, resurrected Jesus as He tells you what to do next?

How often have we asked the questions, 'What is Your will for my life? What should I do next? How can I make a difference or have an impact for the Kingdom?' And here was the answer to all of them right under our noses. Maybe it's not as complicated as we think. Maybe it's really very simple and we just have to do what Jesus instructed. Maybe we don't need another book by another writer giving us another 15 steps to finding God's will or purpose for our lives. Maybe it's just as simple as 'go and make disciples of all nations'.

What Does it Mean to 'Make Disciples'?

Jesus instructs us to make disciples. The word 'make' means to actually create something. When I want to make a meal, I take different ingredients and I use them to create a desired result. We need to be intentional with the people we mean to disciple. In The Message, Peterson puts it this way, 'Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life. Jesus took fishermen and tax collectors and made disciples.'

Lovingly Correct Them

When I'm making a meal, I test it to see if it needs anything. Sometimes it needs more salt or pepper. We need to look into the lives of those we mean to bring through and ask , 'What do they need to help bring the flavour of Christ through?' Do they need some salt? Do they need a tweak here or there? Do we see an area of pride, arrogance, laziness, etc.? Loving them and loving Jesus means we go after those things and address them for their good and for the good of the kingdom.

Baptise Them

He tells us to baptise them. One of the dictionary definitions for the word baptise is ‘give a new name to.’ When we make disciples, we are actually reshaping their identity. We are giving them a new identity. We are helping someone become who God intended them to be. They should look, act and believe differently when they’ve been properly discipled. In Philippians 3:12 Paul writes, ‘..that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus’. We want to help people lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of them.

Teach Them

He also tells us to teach them. We can make the mistake of expecting people to grow without help from the more mature believer. Jesus didn’t just tell His disciples to go and fish for men – He showed them how to do it. We get to show people how to love and serve Jesus the way we do. What an awesome privilege.

Our Privilege and Obligation

Paul says that we are co-laborers or co-workers with God. God’s work is to make disciples of Christ; to prepare a bride without spot or wrinkle. The reality is that this is not just a privilege but also an obligation. We have been enlisted in this great campaign. We have to see ourselves properly as those who work alongside, becoming and helping others become all that God has intended.

The truth is that we ‘get to’ **and** we ‘have to.’ Jesus and the Kingdom deserve nothing less.