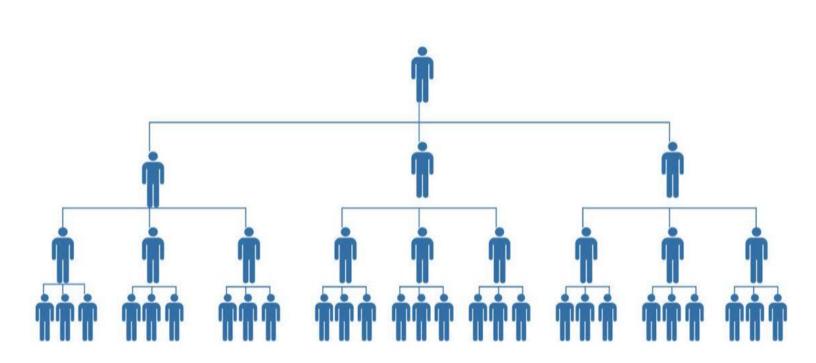
Go Make Disciples

Lesson 4: Step 1 Go





Go Make Disciples

Lesson 4: Step 1 Go

Learn where and how to go in your efforts to make disciples

Watch the free video or listen to the audio of this study @ www.godsaidso.com/dgw238

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Study Number: DGW238

Written by Eric Krieg

About the author: My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

Copyright: Copyright © 2018 GodSaidSo Press. Please use this material to God's glory and honor. Feel free to copy and distribute this material in any way that will bring God glory and help souls to be saved. However, you may not take any of the material out of context or change the material in any way. Please provide the author with the proper credit for the material.

Scripture quotations: Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

FIND MORE FROM THE DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES @ WWW.GODSAIDSO.COM

Go Make Disciples

Lesson 4: Step 1 Go

Up to this point, we have been trying to understand the work of making disciples, make sure our hearts are right in order to accomplish the work, and push beyond our comfort zones so that we actually do accomplish the work. Now, I really want us to focus on *how* we go about doing the work. Actually, when you look at the "Great Commission" (particularly in Matthew 28 and Mark 16), I believe there are four steps to the work God wants us to be doing. Look at these two passages again.

Matthew 28:18-20 says, "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."

Mark 16:15-16 says, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."

As I introduced at the end of the previous lesson, the four steps I see in these two passages are as follows. Step number one is "Go." Step number two is "Preach." Step number three is "Baptize." And, step number four is "Continued Teaching." When these four steps are completed and the individual is receptive every step of the way, the result is a disciple-making disciple of Jesus Christ!

Now, this lesson will begin to explore the first of these four steps. So, we want to consider how

it is that we can find opportunities to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Recognize that Jesus clearly indicates all the work of making disciples begins with going. This is a determined effort with a specific goal in mind. Namely, the goal of your going must be to make a disciple for Jesus.

Yet, we can have all kinds of questions about how we can best accomplish this work. For instance, who should we try to go to? What methods should I use? When is the best time to go? The Scriptures help you to find the answers to these questions – and we want to explore them during this lesson.

Where To Go

A basic study on Bible authority reveals that there are two types of authority: Generic and specific. Specific authority specifies how something is to be done, whereas generic authority does not. And, notice that the authority given in the "Great Commission" regarding where to go is generic in nature. All the disciples were to take the gospel throughout the whole world. But, in this passage, Jesus did not specify where each disciple was to go. And, so it is with you today. You have been given generic authority regarding where you go with the gospel. Therefore, you must carefully evaluate your opportunities so that you can make the best use of them.

Prospects are everywhere

As you consider where you should go with the gospel, you must recognize that there are "prospects" everywhere. Now, whenever I speak of a "prospect" for the gospel, I am speaking of someone who is a potential disciple of Christ. For, the fact of the matter is that the overwhelming majority of people in this world are *not* true disciples of Jesus Christ.

Remember what Jesus taught in Matthew 7. In verses 13 and 14, Jesus told us to seek to enter the narrow gate that leads to eternal life in Heaven. He said that this way is difficult and few will enter it. In contrast, He said that there is a broad path that leads through a wide gate into destruction and there are

many who will walk on this path. In addition, in verses 21-23, Jesus even said that there will be many people on the Day of Judgment who will have claimed to follow Him, yet be eternally condemned because they did not keep God's commandments.

So, there are prospects everywhere there are people. Consider some Biblical examples of where New Testament disciple-makers found prospects. Some were with people they had relationships with already. Some were with complete strangers. Some were in public places. Some were in private settings. But, regardless of where they were, these disciplemaking disciples were diligent to do what they could to bring others to Jesus.

Think about Philip. After he had found Jesus, "Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' And Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see'" (John 1:45-46). So, for Philip, the first step in his going was to find Nathanael and bring him to Jesus!

Think about Jesus (the Master disciple-Maker). In John chapter 4, Jesus stopped by a well to rest from His travels. Then, while He was resting there, a Samaritan woman came to draw water from that well. Jesus saw this woman who crossed paths with Him at this moment as a potential disciple and took advantage of the opportunity (see verses 7-26).

Think about this Samaritan woman. After she heard and believed the truth Jesus had taught her, she left her waterpot, went into the city, and said to the people, "'Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?' Then they went out of the city and came to Him" (John 4:29-30). Later, the text says that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman" (verses 39-42).

Think about the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. Although aided by miraculous events, the apostles took advantage of an opportunity to go to the people who had gathered in Jerusalem "from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). There, each of the twelve apostles preached to the thousands of people

(probably hundreds of thousands) who had gathered on that occasion.

Think about the persecuted Christians in Acts chapter 8. When Saul had brought severe persecution on the church in Jerusalem, many of the Christians there fled into other areas. But, they used this as an opportunity to go. Acts 8:4 says, "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word." They went even as far as "Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch" (Acts 11:19).

Think about Paul, Silas, and Luke on a Sabbath day. In Acts 16:11-15, Luke writes that while they were in Philippi, "on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there" (verse 13). Of these women, there was a woman named Lydia who was particularly interested in what they had to say and wanted to hear more.

Think about Paul and Silas in prison. Later in Acts 16, Paul and Silas were put into prison. After a great earthquake opened the prison doors and released the prisoners from their chains, the guard woke up and supposed all the prisoners had escaped. So, he drew his sword to kill himself. But, rather than being focused on escaping, Paul saw the opportunity to make a disciple in this guard (as verses 28-34 reveal).

Think about Paul in Athens. While he was waiting for his travel companions there, his spirit was provoked whenever he "saw that the city was given over to idols" (verse 16). Then, verse 17 says, "Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there." Later, he also preached the gospel on Mar's Hill.

Think about Paul when he was testifying before Governor Felix and King Agrippa. In Acts 24-26, Paul was called before these two individual as it related to his imprisonment. But, rather than spend his time merely defending himself, he used it to tell his story of conversion and preach the gospel.

Think about Paul while he was under house arrest. In Acts 28, Paul arrived in Rome to make an

appeal to Caesar. Verses 30 and 31 say, "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him."

While these are certainly not the only examples of disciples of Christ going in New Testament times, I do want you to step back from these and consider what we have seen. Through these examples, we have seen disciples going to many different places, in many different circumstances, to many different people, in many different ways.

So, as you consider where you ought to go, you need to begin by recognizing that prospects are everywhere. There are prospects right now who you have relationships with (start with your spouse, children, and other immediate family members and friends). There are prospects right now who are complete strangers to you. There are prospects right now outside your city. There are prospects you cross paths with regularly. There are prospects you may only cross paths with once. So, you must open your eyes and see the opportunities that are all around you every day to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

Pray for doors of opportunity

Consider what is recorded in Matthew 9:35-38. "Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Jesus could see that there were opportunities and prospects all around Him. Having compassion on those who were lost, Jesus told His disciples to pray. Specifically, Jesus recognized that although the harvest (the potential) was great, there were not many laborers. So, they needed to pray that God would send out laborers into His harvest.

This is one of the things we should be praying for. Pray that God will send more disciples into these fields (that are still plentiful today)! Pray that more disciples of Jesus Christ will recognize that God *has* sent them into these fields (through the instructions given in the New Testament). Pray that more will have the heart of a disciple-maker and devote themselves to the work of making disciples. Then, pray that these individuals will have plenty of opportunities to preach the word of God and do the work of making disciples.

Then, consider another area of prayer in this work, as identified in Colossians 4:2-6. "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

You should be asking God for help in your work of going to make disciples. Every day, pray for God to open a door for the word to be shared. Pray this prayer for both yourself and for others. Pray that you will have opportunity to do and say something today to help make a disciple for Jesus — and that others will have opportunities as well!

Then, you should pray that you will recognize the opportunity and take advantage of it whenever it is presented. Notice that Paul also sought prayers from the Colossians that he would speak as he should speak. Pray for wisdom in dealing with those who are outside of Jesus Christ as you try to lead them to Christ (compare with James 1:5). Pray that you will respond to people in the ways that you should.

Therefore, you should not view yourself as going alone. Instead, be prayerful in your daily life that God will help you in this work. He can providentially work to open up doors of opportunity for the word of God to be spread. He can help you know what you should say in those moments. He can help you have wisdom to know how you ought to respond to the various situations you encounter.

Know what to look for

As you go out to make disciples for Jesus Christ, you should consider what it is you are looking for. For, I think that there are many doors of opportunity opened for disciples of Christ every day that are not used appropriately. In fact, many of them go unnoticed. Others are avoided. So, what is it you should be going out in search of as you try to make disciples for Jesus Christ?

To answer this question, let's consider 1 Corinthians 3:5-8. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor."

First, you must *not* go looking for an opportunity to make a name for yourself. The fact is that the work of making disciples is not about the disciple-maker. Instead, it is all about the one we should all follow – Jesus Christ! Paul recognized this when he said that neither the one who plants or waters the seed of God's word is anything. Unfortunately, there are many people who make disciple-making about a particular preacher.

This has been the motivation some have had for preaching the gospel in the past (and continues today). Paul spoke of some who preached Christ "from envy and strife...from selfish ambition, not sincerely" (Philippians 1:15-18). Now, although Paul was glad that Christ was preached (regardless of the motive), this did *not* mean God approved of the ones preaching from bad motives. Therefore, you must not go looking for an opportunity to make a name for yourself or to fulfill any kind of selfish purpose!

Instead, you must go looking for an opportunity to plant and water the seed of God's word. God's word is like seed (see Luke 8:4-8, 11-15) that needs to be planted in all the soil (hearts) that is around you. For, whenever God's word is planted and cultivated in the right kind of soil, the result is spiritual fruit that is pleasing to God. And, the more

spiritual fruit that is produced, the more God is glorified!

Now, I want you to think about a few significant points relative to the work of planting and watering the seed. First, consider that you should be looking for opportunities to plant and water the seed across every type of soil. That is what Jesus taught in the parable in Luke 8. It was not the sower's job to determine what kind of soil would be receptive to the seed and which ones would not. Instead, it was just his job to scatter as much seed as he possibly could. And, so it is with you and me. It is not our job to prejudge who will and will not be receptive to the gospel. It is just our job to go to everyone we have the opportunity to go to.

Think of this work another way. Whenever God told Ezekiel to take His words to the people, God said Ezekiel was like a watchman on a wall. Listen to Ezekiel 3:17-21. "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

In the same way, not only do you have the opportunity to preach the gospel, but you have the *responsibility* to take God's word with you everywhere you go! God will hold you responsible for whether you go to others and work to make them disciples. For instance, the apostle Paul said that he was "innocent of the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26)

because he had done his part to preach the whole counsel of God to the people around him. But, what about you? You must go to everyone you can to plant and water the seed.

Second, consider the need to both plant and water the seed. Some people you go to have never heard the truths you will tell them. So, you are planting these gospel truths in their hearts. However, there are other people who have heard some (or all) of the gospel truths you are presenting. In this case, you are watering seed that has already been planted by reminding them of these truths and encouraging action to be taken on them. Sometimes your watering follows your own work of planting. But, sometimes your watering follows the work others have done to plant the seed. Regardless, you must simply do whatever you can in a given moment to plant and/or water the seed.

Although there are opportunities to plant and water the seed throughout the regular activities of life (i.e. through daily conversations), you should especially be looking for opportunities to have a Bible study with another person. Although your conversations can present an opportunity for gauging peoples' interest in spiritual matters, the best opportunities to make disciples usually come from personal Bible studies in which you can sit down with another person for the purpose of planting and watering the seed of God's word in their hearts. And, the best way to get these Bible studies is just to ask for them!

So, whenever someone expresses some interest in spiritual things, asks a spiritual question, etc., take advantage of their interest by asking if they would like to study the Bible with you. Or, even when someone has not expressed interest, you could simply be bold enough to ask for a Bible study. When you try this, you may be surprised how many people are actually willing to study the Bible with you! But, you will never know if you do not ask!

How To Go

Now, I want to spend some time making application of the Scriptures we have discussed. Again, there is a lot of generic authority given in the Scriptures regarding the work of individual Christians in disciple-making. So, consider some authorized ways disciples should go in the work of making disciples.

Individual "going"

First, consider some individual "going." That is, consider the work you can accomplish going by yourself. We have already seen some examples of people who have worked to make disciples while they were working alone (as far as working with any other man/woman). For instance, remember Jesus and His one-on-one work with the Samaritan woman at the well. And, remember Paul in Athens. Even though he was all alone, he was determined to do what he could with the opportunity that was given to him.

One of the great benefits of going as an individual is that you are not constrained by other peoples' schedules. You can do what you can to go whenever you have the opportunity and ability to do so. Even if you just have ten minutes of free time, you can do something in the work of making disciples.

Another of the benefits of individual going is that you will not always be with someone when an opportunity is presented. Like Jesus and Paul, you may find yourself alone whenever you have an opportunity to plant and water the seed. If every disciple waited till they could work with other disciples to do the work of making disciples, these opportunities would be missed!

So, no matter where you are or who you are around, you should be committed to going as an individual disciple of Christ. As an individual member of the body of Christ, you have unique skills, abilities, and opportunities to use in the disciple-making process. In addition, you have relationships and interactions with others throughout the day that present wonderful opportunities for you

to do the work of making disciples. Don't wait for others to do this work!

Team "going"

Second, consider some team "going." That is, consider the work that you can accomplish by working together with other disciple-makers. We have already seen some examples of people who have worked to make disciples alongside other disciples. For instance, consider the apostles in Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost. And, consider Paul and his travel companions (whether Barnabas, Silas, Luke, etc.).

One of the great benefits of going with other disciples is that those who go provide strength and encouragement for each other along the way. For example, consider the principles in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 about the value of companions. "Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Another example of team "going" that should not be overlooked is when disciples work together in their earthly families. Aquila and Priscilla are an excellent example of this. This husband and wife duo were truly a team for the Lord. For instance, in Acts 18:24-28, when they heard Apollos preaching and recognized that he only knew about John's baptism, they took him aside privately and explained the way of the Lord more accurately to him. This "small" thing had a big impact — as Apollos continued preaching to others (now with an accurate understanding).

Another example of these two working together can be seen in Romans 16:3-5. Paul said that they risked their own lives for him. This not only impacted his ability to live for the Lord, but their impact extended to others when Paul was able to continue to teach others. Furthermore, Paul sent greetings in this passage to the church that met in their home.

So, you should work together with other brothers and sisters in Christ to go and make disciples for Jesus (remember that Jesus sent people out two-by-two in Luke 10). Work with like-minded brothers and sisters who have the heart of a disciple-maker in your family, in the local church, or others you can connect with. Perhaps their strengths can compensate for your weaknesses (and vice versa). Find ways to encourage one another and motivate each other to do even more in the Lord's service!

Evaluating some methods

When you boil all the methods of "going" down, you end up with only four basic methods. Consider them with me for a moment – along with some examples of each. Before we consider these, listen to Paul in Acts 20:20. He said that he taught "publicly and from house to house." We should do the same.

- (1) Private one-on-one "going." This would include inviting a friend, family member, or neighbor for a Bible study. This would include teaching through private conversations as you have opportunity (as you meet individuals). This would include handing out invitations to study, tracts, etc. to those you meet (and then following up with them). This would also include inviting someone to come and worship with the local church you worship with.
- (2) Semi-private "going." This would include having a family Bible study, neighborhood Bible study, etc. (Note: If you do not want to teach, you can find someone else to teach or utilize technology to view Bible study DVDs or online videos). This would include internet Bible studies for your friends, family members, neighbors, etc. This would include teaching through social media posts, group emails, etc.
- (3) House-to-house "going." This would include door-to-door canvassing. This would also include mailings. This could even include making phone calls to residents in an area.
- (4) Public "going." This would include the regular assemblies of the local church and Gospel Meetings. This would include teaching at fairs, festivals, and other public events. This would include preaching done through a website, blog, social

media, etc. This would even include having a billboard or yard signs that advertise Bible studies, etc.

Always Be Going

You should try to utilize as many opportunities you can when you "go." Take advantage of whatever opportunity you have available at any given moment! Make an attempt to utilize as many avenues as you can to spread the saving message of the gospel! If each local church will be devoted to this and if each Christian will be devoted to this, the gospel of Jesus Christ can once again be spread to everyone! In fact, your focus should be that you are always going. Never take a moment "off." Always have a "going" spirit that looks for the opportunity to make disciples for Jesus.

Always be watching for open doors

When you pray for God to open doors of opportunity and you have determined to do the work of making disciples, you should train your eye to see the doors that are opened. And, you should recognize that they do not always look like you might expect. In fact, some don't even look like good opportunities at first glance. But, the fact is that opportunities are not always scripted events you can anticipate in advance. Instead, you just must train yourself to always be watching and ready when they happen. Consider two examples.

Think a little more about Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. When Jesus arrived at this place, he was tired from his journey. He was thirsty. And, He was (evidently) hungry. Then, a Samaritan woman came along to draw water, minding her own business. This already does not feel like a great opportunity for disciple-making. Then, the text reveals that there was a social barrier because Jews did not have any dealings with Samaritans (verse 9). However, because Jesus had the heart of a disciple-maker, Jesus saw this opportunity for what it was and did what He could with it!

Then, think a little more about Paul and Silas in prison in Acts 16. When the earthquake caused the

doors of the prison to open and the chains to fall off the prisoners, the jailor woke up and went to kill himself (supposing all the prisoners had escaped). Now, prison may not seem like the best opportunity. Yet, these opened prison doors were an open door of opportunity for the word of God – and Paul was determined to make the best use of it!

So, you should never consider yourself to be "off-duty" as a disciple-maker. Instead, you should always be going. Even when you are just going about your daily routine, you should maintain a "going" spirit and look for the doors of opportunity for the word to be opened!

Make intentional efforts

Now, while it is certainly true that you should always be going and looking for doors for the word during your daily life, it is also true that you should make intentional efforts to go. This is also supported by the Scriptures. For instance, consider the work of Paul and his companions on their "missionary" journeys. Paul, Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Timothy, Luke, and others intentionally went about the work of making disciples. They intentionally went into different cities and villages to make disciples. They intentionally went into marketplaces, synagogues, from house-to-house, and other places they knew they could find potential disciples for Christ.

Unfortunately, I think this work has been forgotten by many disciples today. Although full-time gospel preachers ought to be doing this work, why shouldn't every Christian show some intentionality in going to make disciples for Jesus? Every Christian could intentionally take some time every week (i.e. on the weekend) to do something to make a disciple! Remember, Acts 8:4 gives the approved example of the Christians who were scattered going everywhere preaching the word!

Do whatever you can with your opportunities

Now, God does not hold you responsible for what people do with the gospel. He only holds you responsible for whether you plant and water the seed whenever you are given the opportunity to do so! So, you need to think of yourself as a steward of the gospel.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 says, "Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." Notice that Paul considered himself as a servant of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God (which are revealed in the gospel, see Ephesians 3:3-5).

Now, Paul had the added stewardship of being an apostle. However, we should still consider ourselves with this passage. We have been entrusted with the message of the gospel into our hands. And, if we do not utilize the opportunities God gives us to go and make disciples, He will hold us accountable. The "blood" of others (spiritually-speaking) will be required of us. We will have failed to do the work God has given us to do. Therefore, we will help others spend eternity in Hell.

So, you should simply determine to do whatever you can do with your opportunities. Some opportunities present greater possibilities than others. But, no matter what the opportunity is, you must take full advantage of it!

Conclusion

Pray to God for opportunities and do everything you can to take advantage of them! The fields are white and ready for harvest all around you. But, the laborers are few. Don't let God's harvest be lacking because you will not go like you should! Develop the mindset that you will always be going — in your daily life and intentionally going at specified times!

Study Questions

What are four steps in the process of making disciples for Jesus?

1. Where To Go

How many "prospects" are around you? Identify some New Testament examples of where others found opportunities to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

How should you be praying in your work of "going"?

What should you be looking for while you are going?

2. How To Go

Why is it important to go as an individual?

Why is it important to go as a team?

List some examples of going with the following four methods:
(1) Private one-on-one "going" –
(2) Semi-private "going" –
(3) House-to-house "going" –
(4) Public "going" –
3. Always Be Going

Why should you always be watching for open doors?

Why should you make intentional efforts?

Why should you do whatever you can with your opportunities?