



THE **FOUR** CHALLENGES OF JESUS

From the book *4 Chair Discipling* by Dr. Dann Spader

LIKE JESUS

WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING DISCIPLES?

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20

When Jesus commissioned us to “make disciples of all nations,” He fully understood that disciple-making was a process of turning self-serving people into fully devoted followers.

Every step of that process was supernatural. Jesus understood that people were at different stages of the process, and He ministered to them at their level of spiritual growth and maturity.

In a world of instant everything, we need to be reminded that spiritual insight and maturity is a life-long process...slow, and steady. Disciples are made via the “crock-pot” method, rather than the “microwave” approach. It is normal and healthy to recognize that people are in various stages of progress toward Christ-likeness.

The Four Challenges of Jesus (shown as 4 chairs) represent the intentional moving of individuals a disciple-making pathway toward Christ-likeness.



THE **FOUR** CHALLENGES OF JESUS

1

“**COME AND SEE**”

John 1:39, 46, 4:29

“THE SEEKER”



This first challenge is given in John 1:35–39. It is the invitation to Andrew and John (who is assumed to be the second disciple) to “come and see.” This challenge gives us insight into how Jesus developed His initial relationships with several of His early disciples. Andrew and John were spiritual seekers who were engaged with the ministry of John the Baptist, who preached that the Messiah was coming after him. In fact, John had just identified Jesus as the Lamb of God. So the two men began to follow Jesus as He taught. When He saw them following Him, Jesus asked them a simple question: “What do you want?”

“Where are You staying?” they asked.

Jesus replied, “Come and you will see.”

The Greek word translated “come” literally means “just show up.” This is a critical first step for seekers to take. They must be willing to just show up in order to learn more.

The new Christian is someone who has come to understand his or her need to “repent” (change their mind about their sin, self and the Savior) and “believe” upon the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a point of decision causing them to become a new “creation in Christ”. (2 Cor. 5:17)

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2

“FOLLOW ME”

John 1:43

“THE BELIEVER”



The second challenge, represented by Chair 2, was given to many in various ways. We see it first in John 1:43, where we are told that Jesus “decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, ‘Follow me.’” This second challenge moves the seeker in Chair 1 to the status of a believer. It implies that a person has made a decision about Christ. An inner transformation has taken place. A seeker has been moved by the Holy Spirit to “repent and believe” and had decided to trust Jesus for salvation. Now they are ready to take the next step. The second challenge is, “Follow me.”

Throughout the disciples’ journey, Jesus challenges them to “follow me” as a reminder of their primary responsibility. At the beginning of their relationship, Jesus tells Matthew the tax collector, “Follow me,” and “Matthew got up and followed him” (Matthew 9:9). This word translated “follow” is the Greek word *akoloutheo*, and it means to come behind, to follow in my steps, to join me in the journey as a disciple.

This challenge is a call to a deeper level of the discipling journey than just “come and see.” It assumes a desire to learn from the rabbi. It demands a learning process of walking in the steps of the master.

It paints a picture of becoming like the one we are following, allowing Him to lead us. It demands that we walk as He walked, love as He loves, do what He did, serve as He served. It is a challenge to be a learner, which is what the word “disciple” (mathetes) literally means.

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3

“FISH FOR PEOPLE”

Matthew 4:19, Mark 1:17

“THE WORKER”



The third challenge is a call to leave the comfort of Chair 2 and move into Chair 3. Matthew 4:18–22 and Mark 1:16–20, help us understand this challenge from the heart of our Master Disciple-Maker. “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men,” is one of the most misunderstood & least lived-out of the teachings of Jesus.

It comes as a surprise to many people to learn that the events recorded in Mark 1:16–20 took place at least eighteen months into Jesus’s ministry. In these verses, Jesus is passing along the Sea of Galilee when He calls to Simon (Peter) and Andrew, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Contrary to popular belief, this is not the first time Jesus encounters these men. They had been following Jesus for several months. But in this episode, Jesus challenges them to go deeper. They move from simply following Him to becoming His ministry team.

First and foremost, this challenge is relational. Jesus is going to make an even greater investment of time in these men, who will later become a part of His twelve apostles.

These are not the Twelve yet—they are simply what I call His ministry team: a team of faithful followers that He is going to take deeper. Second, this challenge is clearly intentional. Jesus says, “I will make you.” He had a clear goal and a clear plan for developing His disciples as reproducing disciple-makers. Immediately after challenging these disciples to become fishers of men, Jesus led them on six “fishing trips” to give them confidence in sharing their faith.

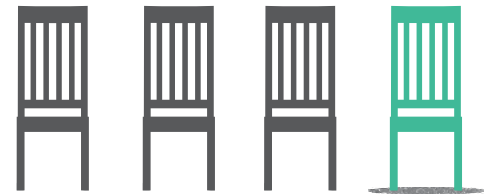
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4

“GO & BEAR FRUIT”

John 15:16

“THE DISCIPLE-MAKER”



At the end of Jesus’s ministry, He had just finished His last Passover meal with His disciples in the Upper Room. They sang a hymn and made their way to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus would be betrayed. On the way, Jesus stopped in a vineyard & delivered His famous teaching about the vine and the branches (John 15:1–11). During this final lesson before His arrest, Jesus makes a few profound statements.

First, Jesus calls His disciples “friends.” Throughout the book of John, Jesus’s descriptions of His disciples become increasingly intimate. In John 1, they are called seekers. In John 2:11, they are identified as disciples. By John 13:13, Jesus calls them servants or coworkers. But now, Jesus says, “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15). Jesus moves His disciples to a whole new level of relationship with Him, from Chair 3 to Chair 4. And the reason for this is clear. He will be going away soon, and they must “go and bear fruit” (John 15:16). Jesus is now saying, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21).

The challenge is for them to go and do what He did. They are to repeat the process in others. I have shown you, now go and do likewise.

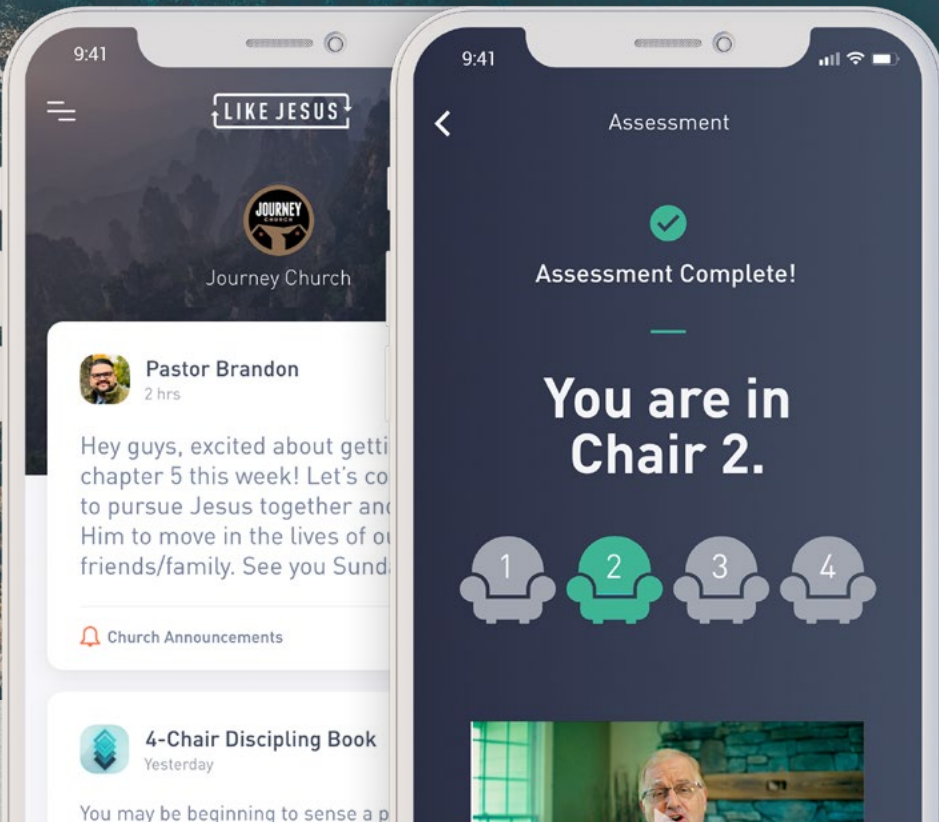
This challenge is not easy, but it is simple. Fruit bearing requires that we “abide” in the Vine (Jesus) and allow the Vine to produce fruit through us. Our task is abiding. His task is bearing fruit. We will bear fruit to the degree that we abide in Him and walk as He walked.

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THE **FOUR** CHALLENGES OF JESUS

A RECAP OF THE 4 CHALLENGES OF JESUS



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1



2



3



4



BIBLICAL NAME	LOST	BELIEVER	WORKER	DISCIPLE-MAKER
BIBLICAL CHALLENGE	"Come and see" John 1:29	"Follow Me" John 1:43	"Fish For People" Matt. 4:19	"Go and bear fruit" John 15:16
BIBLICAL DESCRIPTION	Spiritually Dead	Infants	Young Men	Fathers
BIBLICAL CONCEPT	Winning	Building	Equipping	Multiplying

JESUS MODELED HIS LIFE & MINISTRY FOR US TO FOLLOW.

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