



STAGES OF DISCIPLE MAKING
STAGE 1: COME AND SEE
Leadership Group Guide - January 2021

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)

The command to make disciples was the last instruction Jesus gave His disciples before He ascended into heaven. As present-day Christ-followers, making disciples is the calling for our life as well. Over the next five months, we will discuss the article, *“The Stages of Disciple Making”* by Bobby Harrington. Jesus displayed that discipleship is done relationally and is an ongoing process. This article goes over the five stages of relational discipleship Jesus demonstrated. This month, we will go over Stage One: “Come and See.”

1. “Come and See” Phase: John 1:39–4:46

The first phase of the journey to make disciple makers begins with Jesus’ baptism by John at the Jordan river, likely in the year 26 A.D. (C.E.) The Gospel of John provides a good picture for us. John describes the day after Jesus’ baptism.

“The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God!’ ³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.” (John 1:35–39)

This text describes the first time Andrew and Peter meet Jesus. I like Jesus’ response to the fact that they were seeking (an interesting word), He simply said: “come and see.”

This first phase is aptly called the come and see phase because, for some time, the disciples are simply in relationship with Jesus watching what He says and does. They get to experience Jesus at the wedding in Cana described in John 2 (a highly relational event where they also shared some good wine), Jesus turning over the tables in the Temple as described in John 2, a discussion mentioned in John 3 with Nicodemus at night (on how he had to be born again), an encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well from John 4 (it is a cool well that you can see and experience to this day), and finally to Jesus being rejected in his hometown of Nazareth, which was a small town with only several hundred people (in Luke 4).

In each of these settings, there are two things to note:

1. They are simply in relationship with Jesus (getting to watch and know Him in both enjoyable and tough situations).
2. They are not yet called into a commitment. They get a front-row seat to see and listen to what God would do (and does do) in a real human life.

Conversion is a process and Jesus loves His disciples well by letting them get to know Him before He calls for a commitment.

How do we apply the principles from this phase today?

In a like manner, we must remember that both parts of discipleship are a process—it is a process before conversion and it is a process after conversion. This first phase is before conversion. Like Jesus, we need to warmly welcome those who do not yet believe into relationships where we love them, spend time with them, and let them “see our lives.” Because of who we are as disciple makers, that will involve a lot of watching us talk about Jesus and real life and church. The lives we live are very important. The substance of the first phase is relationship and exposure.

We hope and pray that they will see our good lives and ask us for the reason for the hope that we have (1 Peter 3:13–17; Matthew 5:14–16). Non-believers are looking for love and life. Let them see that in our lives! Invite them to small groups, church, and especially relational gatherings. Help them to hear the Word of God, privately and publicly. If you can, help create Sunday gatherings that encourage and develop disciples, but also make room for non-Christians and seekers who just want to “come and see.” First Corinthians 14:25 describes non-believers in the early church services who would be, “falling on their faces, worshipping God and declaring that God is really among you.”

Key points in the first phase:

- Discipleship and conversion are processes, give people space.
- People need relationships, love, and to see our good lives.
- Expose them to the Word of God.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stands out to you the most from Stage One: Come and See? Was there anything new you realized about the importance of building relationships with those far from God?
2. Who are those far from God that He is calling you to invite into your life so they can see the goodness of God? After reading the application portion, what are some practical ways you can invite them into your life to build with relationally and responsibly in the midst of the current pandemic?

Prayer Points:

1. Pray for one another’s current prayer requests; for themselves or others in their relational circles.
2. Pray that there would be a surge of relationships being built by our church members with those far from God.
3. Pray by name for those God has called you to invite into your life and build relationally with so they can experience God’s goodness.
4. Pray that the virus would be crushed and that those who are affected by this pandemic (health, finances, relationships, schooling, etc.) would experience breakthrough and come to know God.