

The Great Commission:

being & making disciples
of Jesus together



“

The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose."

— **C.S. Lewis**, *Mere Christianity*



“

And if we answer the call to discipleship, where will it lead us? What decisions and partings will it demand? To answer this question we shall have to go to him, for only he knows the answer. Only Jesus Christ, who bids us follow him, knows the journey's end. But we do know that it will be a road of boundless mercy. Discipleship means joy.”

— **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**, *Cost Of Discipleship*



“

The church is the bearer to all the nations of a gospel that announces the kingdom, the reign, and the sovereignty of God... It is not meant to call men and women out of the world into a safe religious enclave but to call them out in order to send them back as agents of God's kingship.”

— **Lesslie Newbigin**, *Foolishness To The Greeks*



“

The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as “Christians” will become disciples—students, apprentices, practitioners—of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him. Jesus poured His life into a few disciples and taught them to make other disciples.”

— **Dallas Willard**, *The Great Omission*



**“Oh, are you
talking to me?”**

Lacking intimacy with God

Lacking clarity in the Church

Lacking purpose for the Church



Encounter with the Resurrected Christ

peace I proclaim

Matthew 28:8-10 niv

So the women hurried **away from the tomb**, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “**Do not be afraid. Go and tell** my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”



A Disciple's Response

worship | doubt

Matthew 28:16-17 niv

Then the eleven **disciples** went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When **they saw him**, **they worshiped** him; but some **doubted**.



All Authority

new power

Matthew 28:18 niv

Then Jesus came to them and said, “**All authority** in **heaven** and on **earth** has been given to me.”



The Great Commission

Matthew 28:19a niv

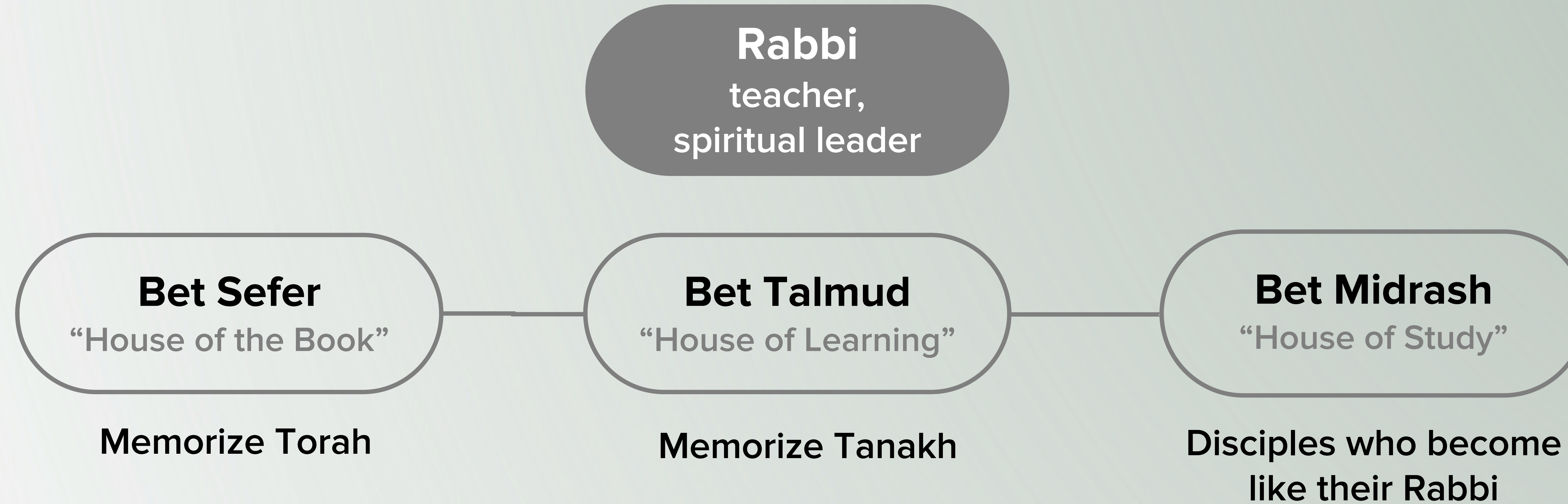
“Therefore **go and make disciples...**”

- *What is a disciple?*
- *How do you ‘make’ a disciple?*
- *Where should I go?*
- *Am I qualified to make a disciple?*
- *Am I even a disciple?*



What is a disciple?

cultural context



“

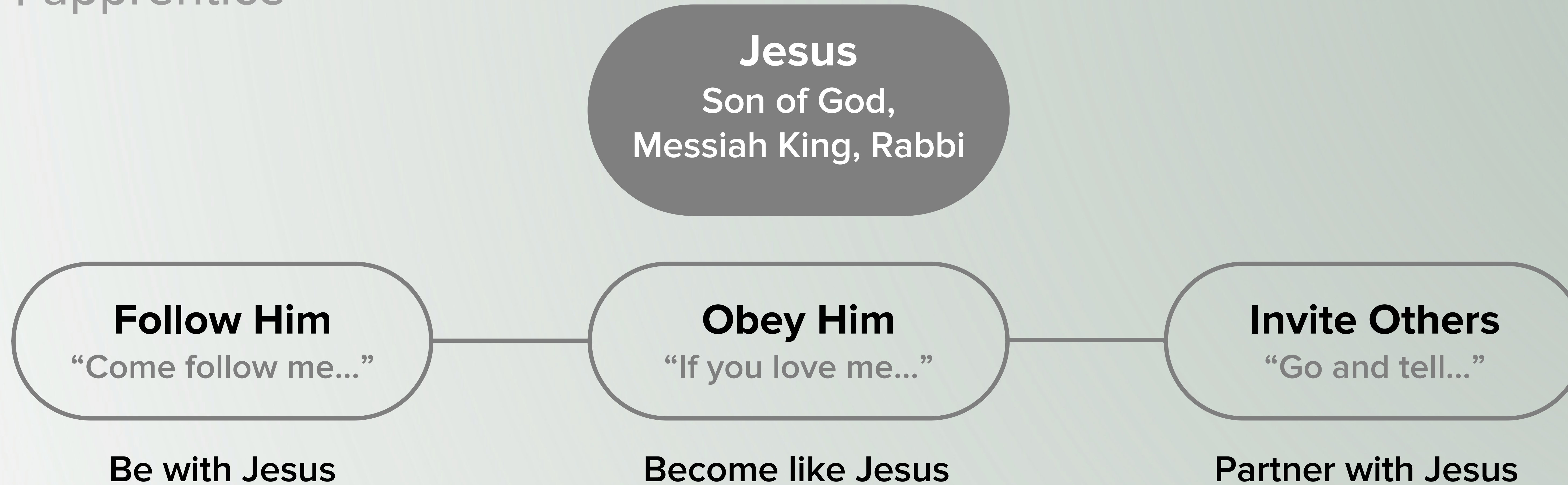
After twelve or thirteen, gifted students joined the Beth Midrash (“House of Study”) where the focus was understanding and applying the Torah and oral tradition to daily life in a more intense way. Study was conducted under a famous rabbi. The student, usually called a talmid (*disciple*), would attach himself to and travel with the rabbi as part of his education. His goal was to become like his rabbi and learn his halakoth (*way of life*) until he internalized it... the first two stages seemed to have been affordable and accessible to the average Jewish boy, while the third stage was for boys who were intelligent, talented and from well-to-do homes.”

Michael Oluikpe, *Jesus & Rabbinical Schools*



What is a disciple?

learner | apprentice



“

Jesus lived in a deeply religious culture that highly valued biblical understanding. Rabbis were greatly respected, and to be a disciple of a famous rabbi was an honor. Rabbis were expected not only to have a vast knowledge about the Bible, but to show through their exemplary lives how to live by the Scriptures. A disciple's goal was to gain the rabbi's knowledge, but even more importantly, to become like him in character. It was expected that when the disciple became mature, he would take his rabbi's teaching to the community, add his own understanding, and raise up disciples of his own.”

Lois Tverberg, *Walking In The Dust Of The Rabbi Jesus*



How do you 'make' a disciple?

Disciple: a **PERSON** who follows Jesus to become like him & partner in his mission.

Discipleship: the **PROCESS** of following Jesus to become like him & partner in his mission.

Disciple-maker: a disciple who intentionally **HELPS** others become disciples of Jesus.



Who can be a disciple?

All Nations a new identity

Matthew 28:19 niv

“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...**”



What do disciples do?
All Commands
a new way of life

Matthew 28:20a niv

“...and **teaching** them to **obey** everything I have commanded you.”



What if I screw it up?

Always

new presence

Matthew 28:20b niv

“And surely **I am with you always**, to the very end of the age.”



How do we become like Jesus?



Barna asked U.S. teens and adults of no faith to...

“Imagine a Christian you would be interested in learning from.

Which of the following characteristics would you use to describe them?”

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| - Listens without judgment | 39% |
| - Is honest about doubts | 33% |
| - Does not force a conclusion | 31% |
| - Cares about them as a person | 30% |



“

In our qualitative interviews, we discovered that people don't learn to follow Jesus simply by having lots of great head knowledge about him (although having the right beliefs matters, as we'll see). Experiencing Jesus is found along a relational pathway with family, friends, and other people who love and experience Jesus. We are loved into loving Jesus.”

David Kinnaman, *Faith For Exiles*



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Be a disciple: schedule time to love and learn from Jesus
(spiritual rhythms)

Be with other disciples: join a small group to love and learn from Jesus
with *(community)*

Invite someone to join you: love and invite _____ to come be loved
by and learn from Jesus *(where you live, work, play)*



Love + Delight

not guilt + duty

1 John 4:16-17 niv

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: **In this world we are like Jesus.**

