

Rediscovering Discipleship

Jesus gave us a commission before he left his disciples. It is known as the GREAT COMMISSION. For those who may not be familiar with it look it up in Matthew 28:19. It reads, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Have you ever wondered what makes this commission GREAT?

It could be GREAT because it is such an awesome and daunting task. Perhaps it's GREAT because it is not accomplished easily or quickly.

It could be GREAT because of the difference being a disciple makes in one's life and in the world.

My perspective on why it is GREAT is that it is something that involves us all. Jesus could have said that this was something he would do alone, but he did not. He recruited every Christian to join him in making disciples.

I have long believed that disciple-making is *the ministry of the church*. Disciple-making, as Jesus imagined it, is something we are all to be working on together.

Somewhere throughout the ages, Christians have lost the art of disciple-making. Christians are not comfortable talking to others about their faith, about their relationship with Jesus Christ.

My commitment this year; our 190th year as a region, is to focus attention to REDISCOVERING DISCIPLESHIP.

I spent a good number of years as a young adult in the Bible Belt. So I fully understand why just mentioning discipleship creates considerable discomfort. It drums up images of uninvited and unwelcome intrusion into our private space.

This, in my understanding, is not disciple-making. This is not how Jesus approached people. Nowhere can I find Jesus pressuring people into discipleship.

Disciples are formed through loving relationships.

I invite you to join me in dedicating 2018, year 190 for American Baptist of the Rochester Genesee Region, a year when we REDISCOVER DISCIPLESHIP.