*“We have sunk to a depth at which the restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.”* —George Orwell

**I. Mission Statement**

*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* ***Go*** *therefore and* ***make disciples*** *of all nations,* ***baptizing*** *them in the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ***teaching*** *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)

**II. Tasks**

1. **Specified Tasks: Go**

*“The commission is* ***not fundamentally about mission*** *out there somewhere else in another country. It’s a commission that* ***makes disciple-making the normal agenda*** *and priority of every church and every Christian disciple...”* — Colin Marshall & Tony Payne[[1]](#footnote-1)

*“To be a disciple is to be called to make new disciples…all are disciple-makers.”* — Marshall & Payne[[2]](#footnote-2)

*“…****start with the people in your church****, having no particular structures or programs in mind (it may become apparent that some programs no longer serve any worthwhile purpose)…* ***We should start with the people that God has given us****...”* — Marshall & Payne[[3]](#footnote-3)

*“…we must also see disciple-making as our* ***central task*** *in our homes and neighbourhoods and churches.”* — Marshall & Payne[[4]](#footnote-4)

*“…according to Jesus, disciple making involves* ***going****. It involves intentionally taking the gospel to people where they live, work, and play. Disciple making is…a command for us to go to others…****in every context*** *where we find ourselves.”* — David Platt*[[5]](#footnote-5)*

*Master Plan of Discipleship* (Robert Coleman): notice receptive hearts, especially those drawn to us…there are usually a few such persons within our influence

1. **Specified Tasks: Make Disciples**

Evangelism vs. Discipleship?

“*‘Disciple-making’ is a really a useful word to summarize this radical call, because it encompasses both reaching out to non-Christians and encouraging fellow Christians to grow like Christ*.”— Marshall & Payne [[6]](#footnote-6)

*When they had preached the gospel to that city and had* ***made many disciples****…strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.* Acts 14:21-22 (ESV)

“*Furthermore, in this more wholistic understanding, discipleship is not just one aspect of the church’s mission, but* ***it encompasses all that the church does****. Discipleship is the ministry of the church in helping all believers to grow in their discipleship to Jesus and reaching out to bring non-Christians to Jesus to become his disciples*.”— Michael Wilkins[[7]](#footnote-7)

“*Since all true Christians are disciples, the ministry of the church may be seen today in its broadest sense as ‘discipleship’ and all discipleship teaching is applicable to all Christians… Yes, some of us are called to specific areas of ministry and service not intended for all disciples, but when we hear the word disciple, do the ears of all of us open with expectancy?*”— Michael Wilkins[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. **Implied Tasks**

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**III. Assumptions**

*Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.* Matthew 12:30 (ESV)

Three people groups that Jesus dealt with:

- **Disciples**: Jesus’ true followers

- **Crowds**: the object of Jesus’ ministry

- **Religious Leaders**: Jesus’ antagonists

*Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”* Matthew 16:24 (ESV)

*Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple… So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.* Luke 14:25-27, 33 (ESV)

*“The response to Jesus’ call involved recognition and belief in Jesus’ messianic identity (Jn 2:11, 6:68-69), obedience to his summons (Mk 1:18, 20), and a personal commitment that was undertaken after counting the*

***cost*** *of allegiance to him (Mt 19:23-30; Lk 14:25-33).”* — Michael Wilkins[[9]](#footnote-9)

*“…you need to* ***commit*** *to* ***obey*** *what you have heard. The gospel does not prompt you to mere reflection; the gospel requires a response.”* — David Platt[[10]](#footnote-10)

*“Jesus’ true followers, his true disciples, are people who make a faith* ***commitment*** *to him.”* — Michael Wilkins[[11]](#footnote-11)

**Twin pre-requisites for discipleship:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **&** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Commander’s Intent**

*“[The commander’s intent] is the one overriding* ***expression of will*** *by which everything in the [mission] and every action by every commander and soldier in the army must be dominated.”* — Field Marshall Slim[[12]](#footnote-12)

- Commander’s Intent helps subordinates understand the **larger context** of their actions.[[13]](#footnote-13)

- Commander’s Intent allows subordinates to exercise **judgment** and **initiative** in a way consistent with the higher aim when the unforeseen occurs.[[14]](#footnote-14)

There are no cookie cutter approaches to discipleship; we have to apply absolute principles, but the method/application of those principles may vary given the situation/person.

The Commander’s Intent consists of three parts:

**Purpose**: Why?

**Method**

- How the commander envisions achieving mission success

- More descriptive than prescriptive

- Links the purpose to the endstate

**Endstate**

- Desired picture of the future; the goal

- Set of conditions that, when achieved, satisfies the purpose

**a. Purpose**

*And we all…are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.* 2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry,* ***for building up the body of Christ****, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.* Ephesians 4:11-14 (ESV)

*Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.* Colossians 3:9-10 (ESV)

*“Now the whole offer which Christianity makes is this: that we can, if we let God have His way, come to share in the life of Christ… Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole* ***purpose*** *of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else.”* — C.S. Lewis[[15]](#footnote-15)

*“God’s* ***purpose*** *is to make us like Christ.”* — John Stott[[16]](#footnote-16)

**b. Method**

*“The Scriptures provide not only the message but also the* ***method*** *for growing God’s people to maturity…[there are]* ***three foundational principles*** *upon which to build a process that leads to an intergenerational multiplication of fully devoted followers of Christ.”* — Greg Ogden[[17]](#footnote-17)

Three Foundational Principles[[18]](#footnote-18)

* Life Investment / Relationships
* Multiplication
* Transformation

**c. Endstate**

*“The* ***goal*** *was not mere converts but* ***committed disciples*** *integrated into a new community, who would, in fellowship with one another, learn and obey what Jesus had taught the twelve. And because what he taught them included this very commission, it ensured that disciples would reproduce themselves from generation to generation until he returned.”* — Thomas A. Tarrants, III[[19]](#footnote-19)

*“…living a fully human life in this world in union with Jesus Christ and growing in conformity to his image.”* — Michael Wilkins[[20]](#footnote-20)

***Through the process of discipleship, the endstate is committed disciples in fellowship with one another committed to learn and obey Jesus’ teachings in order to share in the life of Christ and to conform to his image.***

**V. Summary**

*If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there.*

*Activity is the illusion of progress.*

1. **Mission Statement**: Matthew 28:18-20

**Implied Tasks**:

- Obey

- Reproduce

- Multiply

- Love

1. **Specified Tasks**:

- Go

- Make Disciples

- Baptize

- Teach

1. **Assumptions**: Cost and Commitment
2. **Commander’s Intent**:

- **Purpose**: God’s purpose is to make us like Christ (“little Christs”)

- **Method**: Three Foundational Discipleship Principles

- **Endstate**: Through the process of discipleship, the endstate is committed disciples in fellowship with one another committed to learn and obey Jesus’ teachings in order to share in the life of Christ and to conform to his image.

1. Colin Marshall & Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias Media, 2009), 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., 18, 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2010), 94 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Marshall & Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*, 154 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Michael J. Wilkins, “Discipleship for Changing Times and Ministries,” *Knowing & Doing* (Spring 2011), 30 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 44, 46 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., 108 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Platt, *Radical*, 20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Wilkins, *Following the Master*, 115 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Field Marshall Viscount William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* (Lanham, MD: Cooper Square Publishers, 2000) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 (Washington D.C.: United States Government, 2001), 6-12, 6-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid., 6-12, 6-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1996), 153-154 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. John Stott, quoted in a speech given at the Keswick Convention, July 2007 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 121 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid., 121-122 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Thomas A. Tarrants, “The Transforming Impact of True Discipleship,” *Knowing & Doing* (Spring 2011), 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Wilkins, *Following the Master*, 42 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)