



## **Walking with Jesus in 2022**

By Daryll Stanton

Have you begun to think about your journey with Jesus in the coming year?

Walking with Jesus means we commit ourselves to being and making Christlike disciples. Discipleship along A Journey of Grace is a common theme in Nazarene churches today. And perhaps you are continually looking for resources to help yourselves and others develop a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. However, there is more to discipleship than studying and following Christ's teachings. True Christian discipleship is an invitation to become like Christ. We want to reflect His passions, behaviors, and wisdom, so we spend significant time with Him. This means we need to engage in a relationship with Jesus that shapes us into His likeness, and we engage in relationships with other people so we can inspire others to walk with Jesus.

Jesus' call to be and to make disciples requires our response to the Great Commandment and to His Great Commission.

The Great Commandment that Jesus emphasized points to the most important two-fold commandment based on Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18. When Jesus was asked "which is the greatest commandment in the Law, He responded: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Jesus confirmed: "This is the greatest and most important commandment." But, He added: "The second most important commandment is like it: Love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:36-39). On another occasion, Jesus said: "And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35)

How prepared are we to love God with our whole self in 2022? And are we prepared to genuinely love others to the extent that we are recognized as Jesus' disciples? Any involvement we have in Jesus' Great Commission needs to begin with our desire to obey this Great Commandment.

Jesus begins His Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) by affirming “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth” (v. 18). When we recognize Jesus’ full authority in our lives, in love, we “Go, then to all peoples everywhere and make them [Jesus’] disciples...” And, we can do so with confidence because He has promised: “I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”

In his book, *Walk with Me* ([2008](#)), Hal Perkins calls us to first become Christlike disciples and then become disciplemakers. Hal lays out five important components to the challenge before us:

- (1) It is important for each Christian to be engaged in a lifelong journey of being a Christlike disciple.
- (2) Wherever Jesus’ disciples are, they intentionally influence non-Christians to know Jesus (discipling-evangelism).
- (3) Mature disciples should be engaged in discipling other Christians toward maturity, intentionally and strategically influencing them to know and follow Jesus.
- (4) Mature disciples should be engaged in discipling/mentoring maturing Christians to disciple others toward maturity.
- (5) Some mature disciples should be engaged in discipling/mentoring other mature disciples to intentionally disciple/mentor others in making Christlike disciples (making Christlike disciplemakers to engage in number 4).

We need to go beyond basic discipleship and begin to intentionally teach others to be disciplemakers. *Walk with Me* explores the importance of teaching mature disciples how their Christ-influenced responses to everyday situations can be used to show others who Jesus is and what it means to be His disciple. With biblical insight, Hal explores the call to go and make disciples of all nations; he demonstrates how changing the way we act, think, and serve will not only help us fulfill the Great Commission but also answer the call to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and others as ourselves.

Does your Journey of Grace in 2022 include inviting others to join your walk with Jesus? As an SDMI leader, I challenge you to read *Walk with Me* and to provide copies of it to other mature disciples who will join you in making disciples and disciplemakers. And, I invite your feedback as you walk with Jesus and others along this Journey of Grace.

For more information and to give feedback, you can connect with me at [dstanton@nazarene.org](mailto:dstanton@nazarene.org).