

HOLY HABITS: MAKING MORE DISCIPLES**Reading: Matthew 28:16-20****Theme: What is the task?****Where do we do it?****How do we do it?****What is the task?**

Read Matthew 28:16-20 and Romans 10:14 [*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?*]

The story is told of a monk called Brother John. He was a timid man who worked in the kitchen and who dreaded speaking in public. However the abbot insisted that everyone took their turn in speaking. On the day it was his turn to give a devotional message he was terrified. With his knees trembling, he faced the other monks and said, 'Do you know what I'm going to say this morning?' 'No' answered the monks. He then said, 'Neither do I,' and he ran from the room. The abbot, however, chased after him and insisted he do it again the following day.

The next day he arrived to give his message. Again he could only blurt out, 'Do you know what I am going to say?' This time, remembering what happened the previous day, the monks replied, 'Yes.' So he said, 'Then you don't need me to tell you.' Again he fled and again the abbot chased after him insisting he try again the following day.

So he tried again the third day saying, 'Do you know what I'm going to say?' Well the brothers did not know what to say and so half shouted, 'Yes!' and half shouted, 'No!' 'Ah' said brother John, 'then let those who know tell those who don't know,' and again he fled.

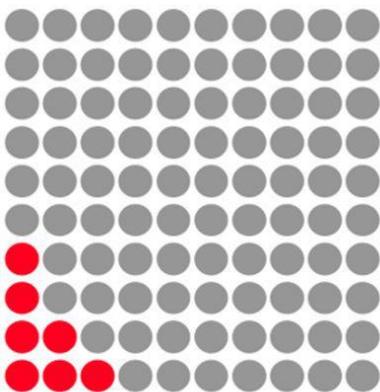
At first the brothers sat in silence. Then the words hit home: 'Let those who know tell those who don't know.' This was a word for Christians as they faced the world around them. The abbot chased after John again but this time said to him, 'that is the best sermon I have ever heard!'

For 3 years, Jesus’ disciples absorbed His teaching and observed His mighty works. He then left them to carry on His works, giving them the strength for the task and the promise of His presence through the Holy Spirit.

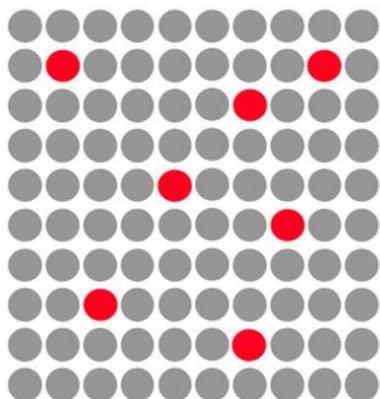
That task has been passed onto Christians today and our job is to pass on our experience of Jesus to others so that they too might become disciples. An exciting task!

Where do we do it?

Our dots diagram below demonstrates a problem. If we try to pass on the message in church, we come into contact with very few non-Christians because very few non-Christians go to church and even on our way to and from church we meet few non-Christians. We in fact meet far more non-Christians during our activities away from church than in it. [at work, at the school gate, football, dancing classes etc etc.]. Indeed the 7 Christians represented by the red dots in the diagram below have direct contact with only 5 non-Christians [the grey dots] in church whereas in the world each Christian has contact with 8 non-Christians. The message is very simple, evangelism largely happens in the world not in church because that is where the non-Christians are! [this can be put across in more imaginative ways with children - asking questions about who is next to who, possibly using two sets of Connect 4 to give you enough discs]



The Church



The World

How do we do it?

Of course it is much easier to talk about Jesus in church than outside. How do we speak to non-Christians about Jesus? The answer to that is telling our story. We talk about our experience of Jesus. Non-Christians may not be very interested in learning about Jesus, but they are interested in hearing about people's lives. People will be interested in our experience of Jesus.

Do we have an answer to the question 'why do you go to church? Or 'why are you a Christian?'

If we are Christians we will have some experience of Jesus working in our lives. It may be that we become convinced that Jesus is the Son of God through a miracle in our lives, it might be an experience of healing or God guiding us through a difficult problem, or it might be a sense of peace in a situation which previously had put us into a panic. When we become Christians, God transforms lives and there is always a story to tell.

Try to find someone who could tell their story in a way that would be helpful to children and young people and encourage them to try it themselves. Ask the young people if they have any experience of God in their lives?

Pray that our Heavenly Father will fill each of the young people with His Spirit, empowering them to witness to their friends.

(Bible quote from the NIV)

*Revs. Bob & Karen Street
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