

In 1996 after months of pouring out my heart to God trying to find what my purpose is supposed to be, I heard Him say, "Take care of my children." Instantly I thought I was going to go to college to become a pastor. Finally I had direction of what I was going to do with my life, until the first day I went to college. I realized right away that college was not for me and I wondered what God really meant when He said, "Take care of my children."

I spent the next 10 years trying to find a job that I was supposed to do and different leadership positions in the church to fulfill those words God spoke to me. It wasn't until 2006 at a "Discipling Others Seminar" held at Myerstown that it all made sense; God wants us to make disciples.

Matthew 28:18-19 says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

After leaving the "Discipling Others Seminar" I began praying for God to lead me to a wise Christian to disciple me and teach me how to disciple others. But yet again God had other plans. As I prayed, I was led to three of my friends that were leaders of small groups in our church. I asked them if we could get together to pray for our small groups and to go through a study on becoming a stronger Christian. Wow, was God faithful! As we studied and prayed, we saw God change our lives and the lives of the people in our small groups.

As summer grew to a close, so was the time we were going to spend together due to the demands of our schedules during the school year. So I started praying again that God would lead me to two more men that I could disciple, and again God was faithful. Since the fall I have met weekly with two men from my church, and as we study God's word together, we are also sharing our lives together. Never before have I had people I could trust with my true feelings and know that they want to help me work them out. But that is what we do for each other. Over the last six months I have seen God work, not only in the lives of these two men, but because we go through it together in my life as well.

In Matthew Jesus tells us to "go and make disciples." I am living proof that you do not have to be a spiritual giant to make disciples. God wants you and me to live each day with the desire to see people grow in Him. I have heard discipleship defined as someone desiring to grow in Christ and taking others with him. I believe without a doubt in my mind that the # 1 purpose for our churches and our lives is to make disciples. Over ten years ago God told me to "Take care of my children." What better way to take care of God's children than to help them grow in their faith with Christ? Will you help me to take care of God's children by starting to pray that God will lead you to people to disciple and grow closer to Him?

Doug Zerbe – Akron Grace EC Church