



Episode 034: What is Contagious Disciple Making? - Paul Watson

Paul Watson is a missionary kid who grew up in Asia. He has learned a great deal from and with his father David, who he has co-authored the book *Contagious Disciple Making*. He has trained many disciple making teams around the world. He and his wife Christy make their home in the Pacific Northwest where they are actively promoting and catalyzing disciple making movements in that area as well.

Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be passionate about missions and disciple making.

- We moved overseas when I was seven. I graduated from a Singapore American school and returned to university where I met my wife Christy. We have three kids together.
- Having grown up in the missions environment, I saw many evangelism strategies and I saw some work and I saw many that didn't work. I had friends overseas that would never come to a church no matter how many times I asked.
- Often our approach to evangelism is outside of our cultural norms.
- So I began to ask, "How do I be obedient to what God has asked us to do without raising cultural barriers that keep people from coming to Jesus?"

Discipleship – it is a term that is often used in the church – how do you define disciple?

- A disciple is someone who loves the Lord deeply and because of their love for him they seek to obey all of his commands and transform their families, their community and their nation.
- The motivation for obedience does not come from external pressures, or from a feeling that we need to earn our salvation, but it comes from our love for Jesus.
- I believe that doing what God says means that people's lives will be better both here on earth, now, and later in eternity.
- If you do not obey Scripture, you are not a follower of Christ and you are not God's disciple. These aren't my words; these are Jesus' words.



Give us a brief overview of the mindset of a disciple maker. What are key characteristics of a disciple maker?

- *Advocacy* – they see themselves as an advocate for the community that God has planted them in. We see this in the Bible through Nehemiah.
- *Generosity* – we need to be generous with our love, our time and our finances. Generosity is what it takes to overcome great evil and we have a lot of great evil in this world. It is the combined generosity of God’s people that will help overcome this evil. We need to speak out against human trafficking and hunger and poverty.
- *Love* – There are a lot of organizations that take care of the social needs of people but hold back from sharing the love of Christ. If all we do is feed and clothe people, but we do not share the love of Christ, that is not love. Love is helping them understanding that there is a God who loves them.
 - When I walk down a street where God has planted me, I realize that God has already given us the territory and I’m saying to God, “See the homeless person over there? That’s my homeless person. How would you like me to interact with them today?”
 - Any problems in the community are not just the community’s problem, it’s my problem.
- Most people are not aware of the differences between the Bible and their Christian culture. We need to look at our culture and recognize it for what it is – the good and the bad – and to love where we came from, but to understand that it is not a requirement for a person to be a follower of Christ.
- We need to figure out what is cultural and what is scriptural and make sure that we are reproducing the gospel, not our culture.

One of the desirable outcomes of disciple making are movements – reproducing movements. What do you mean by disciple making movements?

- We look at a few things when it comes to movement:
 - We look for people coming to know Jesus and communities of faith being established – we call these churches.
 - We look at generational depth – a Christ follower shares Christ and a community of faith is established and then someone from this community goes on to makes disciples of another community growing into a church and those disciples go on to share Christ with others establishing yet another community of faith– this is the third generation. We aim for 4 generations.
 - We look at breadth – we want multiple streams of churches reaching a 4th generation.
 - We talk about a timeline – about a 3 to 4-year period.
 - A timeline is helpful because if you see growth plateau you can begin to ask the question, “What isn’t working here?”

There are certain practices that help set the stage for a movement to take place. One of them is “Finding a Person of Peace.” Can you describe what this means?

- Finding a person of peace is the most misunderstood part of disciple making movements.



- If we are talking about living as a disciple of Christ, working and relating to your neighbours and your colleagues, you don't need a person of peace to do that. That's just life. Here you are just looking for opportunities to disciple the people in your lives into a relationship with Christ.
- When we go to communities that we are not naturally a part of, and that will require resources, time and effort to engage, this is where we're looking for a person of peace.
 - A local community offered an emergency medical technician course – something I've been interested in – and so I signed up and this gave me an opportunity to meet people from nearby communities. For nine months, I was in regular contact with people who didn't know Christ and so here I was looking for a person of peace. I was asking God, "What are you doing in this community and is there anyone here that is ready to be discipled?"
 - If you find a person of peace, invest time and resources and energy into that community. It's not long term but for a time, as you disciple the person of peace to go and make disciples.
- A lot of people want to force or manipulate disciple making, but you only need to force things if you're inexperienced or you aren't fully relying on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you.
- We need to see people, not sell Jesus. He has arranged the time and place of introduction.

If a church or an international worker wants to learn more about contagious disciple making – how can they learn more?

- www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com has tools and resources that are available to everyone.
- We do a free webinar each month that you can tune into or receive the audio recording afterwards.
- Our goal is to spread what we're learning.

If any of our listeners would like to be in contact with you or learn more about you, how might they do that?

- Twitter - @pauldwatson
- Facebook.com/pauldwatson
- Instagram – pauldwatson
- Or you can email me through our website – www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com

