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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Why I Hate Making Disciples | | by Doug Burrier | | Hate is a strong word, but there are times when I get weary of the battle. Yes, disciple-making is a battle—a nonviolent battle for souls, a battle against the lies of the enemy that distract, derail, and destroy would-be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. In those moments when I see folks walk away from what God is doing in their lives for seemingly inexplicable reasons, I do hate making disciples—if only for a moment.   * I hate the pain of being unable to rescue someone who swims away from the Lifeguard into treacherous depths. * I hate the loss to the Kingdom   I am not talking about those who don’t get in. I am talking about those that walk away after tasting. It reminds me of the verse, | | And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. 2 Peter 2:20 NLT | | I hate it because I have been there and know what it feels like deep inside. I know that no matter their success, they, too, will have to face this and return. And worse, I know some will not return. My team does their best to remind me that the battle is bigger and that, unfortunately, there will be casualties in the war, but it does little to soothe me.  But if I walk away, then I am them.  Discipleship is messy and intimate and opens us to a world of hurt when things go wrong. It is easier to handle the losses in the battle when you aren’t in the foxhole when someone climbs out and walks away.   * I hate the struggle to not get indignant and pound their wrong behavior * I hate the war in my soul to love them * I hate what it does to the testimony of our Lord   But honestly, I hate that discipleship didn’t work. However, my only choice is to go back into the fray, to rescue as many as can be rescued, and to fight alongside those who will fight.  And I, too, have to fight the father of lies who tells me it isn’t worth it. I have to step back and look at the data. Most of them are making it. Most of them are being transformed. And having seen countless prodigals return home over the years, having seen wounded soldiers return, if only to the hospital of faith and not yet again the war - I must remember that this battle is often long.  I must remember Abraham, who invested his entire life in a bigger God picture that he never saw. I must remember Joseph, who endured abandonment only to see it used to save God’s people. I must remember Paul and Peter, who gave their lives so that I would hear the Word. | | *I will never help the many if I give up because of one.* | | So, though I hate the casualties of disciple making, no matter how few they are and how much pain each one brings, I must continue to make disciples, to lead people to Christ, to give them every opportunity to join the fight, and to give them every opportunity to find the abundant life.  The truth is that I will never help the many if I give up because of one who walks away. So today, I look at the prayer list of wanderers, and I pray for their return. I accept I hurt because I love. And I love them because he first loved me. And I turn to the thousands of successes that my King has made.  If you ever need to talk, to find encouragement in the battle for souls, I’m here because I have been there too. Don’t give up. | | A black and white logo  Description automatically generated | | |