

God's passion for us spills over into real life.

Understandably at Easter we focus a lot on the final week of Jesus' ministry and life as it leads him to the cross, along with his death and resurrection. There's a world of emotion for us as followers of Jesus as each year we recount his joy, his sorrow, his sacrifice, and his display of ultimate power and love.

As disciples of Jesus the call on our lives is to **make and grow disciples**. Not sit on our hands, not pretend it is someone else's problem, or that we're too old, or because we don't have any young people that we couldn't possibly do that. Last time I read [Matthew 28](#) there's no retirement asterisk or sunset clause.

Jesus died on the cross to offer us complete redemption and reconciliation with the Creator God, and in his resurrection showed us that God's power was complete and all-embracing...and that power is offered to us to participate in God's mission as we make and grow disciples of Jesus Christ.

The mission of God we are called to participate in is for us to be involved in making and growing of disciples...and I'll offer we need to be prioritising doing that with young people, though there is room for everyone.

We can start by *taking Jesus' message seriously*. God is direct in the call to mission and the task at hand, and Jesus gave us the best examples of discipling people. The Holy Spirit is with us to enable, encourage, and envelop us in the work as we love people like God does.

As we grow *warm relationships* with people, we'll be challenged to talk about our faith. Share parts of our story, and reflect on how God has worked in our lives directly and through others as an example of the life-changing and generous love, mercy, and grace of God.

If we're bold enough, we'll *prioritise ministry with young people and their families everywhere* in our congregations. This might mean we have to sacrifice the things that we hold most precious about our congregation for the good of others...our budgets, our programs, and especially how our services run. It's uncomfortable, and it's challenging, and it's what God calls us to.

In welcoming new people – especially new young people – into our congregation and lives, we'll need to show them what it means to be the *best neighbours*. It will also mean that we need to show this love to the those who don't come to our church in the same way. Be a part of the lives of those around us and participate in things that are important to our community. An active faith engages in the work of God already around us, and does so because God calls (not because we're expecting a big payoff).

To grow young disciples means making ways to encourage and develop them in *leadership*, though not just casting them to the wolves. Mentor them. Find small things they can participate in that offer them room to grow, and support them!

We can best help these young disciples by really listening to them. Understanding what they are passionate about and where the pressures are in their lives and showing *empathy* toward them. It's a big difference from sympathy because it means we're identifying with their challenges and are prepared to sit next to them and show that they value to us.

Without discipleship, passion week is passion-less. Without discipleship, Jesus' sacrifice is meaningless. Discipleship is everything.

God's call on all our lives, for the entirety of our lives, is to **Make and Grow Disciples**. #MGD