

DO YOU HAVE AN 8 TO 15?

Pastor David met with Pastor Ryan to discuss the importance of leveraging our sphere of influence, 8 to 15 people with whom we often have contact so that we can play more a role in the work that God is doing in this world.

Pastor David here, and I am in Jackson, Tennessee. I wish you could see how beautiful it is! All of you should visit the South at some point in time. It's just... I mean this is just as close as you can get to heaven. And here's what is really good about being here. I got my jacket on right here, and don't let everyone know that... they're Volunteer fans here. I mean, Volunteers. Who wants to shout, "Go, Volunteers!" No, Alabama Crimson Tide! So, I am wearing this jacket with pride here. But what is really special about today is I'm joined by Pastor Ryan McElrath. Ryan has moved to Jackson, Tennessee because of the ministry that he's going to be a part of here. So, I thought it would be fun to stop in and visit him to do this devotional together.

MAKE DISCIPLES

Matthew 28: 18-20 reads:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Now, that's a power passage right there. Many of us have probably experienced good Bible teaching, which helps us to realize that the main verb in this particular passage is "make disciples." That is what we are all about. We are priests, and we are inviting people into a deeper relationship with Jesus.

There's a concept in this book that Pastor Ryan and I really love. The concept in this book is the *oikos* principle. The *oikos* principle says: at any time in your life, you have 8 to 15 people that you do life with on a regular basis that don't know Jesus. Those 8 to 15 people are the ones that you are going to invest your time, energy, prayers, and passion into. This is unavoidable! Everyone has an 8 to 15! You, at Cornerstone, have an 8 to 15 in your life as well. And I like to think of it like this: if we put our hands in the shape of a "V" pointed outward from the chest, wherever we are, there is a sphere of influence that we have.

Our responsibility to one another is to invite each other into a deeper relationship with Jesus, especially those 8 to 15 who do not know Jesus. We get the opportunity to proclaim the good news to them and make disciples, make followers of Jesus.

We want to exhort you to find your 8 to 15. Just think about those people in your life, and let's be about the business of making disciples. We're priests, and we are inviting people into a deeper relationship with Jesus. Now, for some, that means we proclaim the gospel to them. For others, that means that we walk with them as brothers and sisters in Christ. That's what it's all about! Whether we are in Southern California or in the middle of Tennessee.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

For your 8 to 15, don't just think about them in your head. Go and write their names down, physically. Put them on your fridge. Put them on your mirror. Write down those names and pray for them every day! The first seven steps in this book, 8 to 15, is pray, pray, pray, pray, pray, pray, pray!

Let's keep our focus on proclaiming the good news to people who need to hear and walking with brothers and sisters in Jesus. Amen. God bless you.

NEXT STEPS

- 1) Read Matthew 28:18-20.
- 2) Consider the two groups of people in your sphere of influence, your 8 to 15. Make a list of those with whom you have contact but who do not know Jesus. Put it in a place where you could be reminded to pray for them. Begin praying for them and their salvation.
- 3) Pray for your boldness and courage to tell those on your list the good news of Jesus.
- 4) Consider the brothers and sisters in your sphere of influence. Pray for them as well. Ask God to make you a servant in their lives, pointing them to a deeper relationship with Jesus.