

Joshua Edwards | Season 2 Episode 03

Making Disciples Like Jesus

Josh Yates: And welcome again to season two of the everyday disciple makers podcast. And with us, I have a Chicago land area coordinator, Josh or Joshua, I should say Joshua Edwards and Josh. It's great to have you on the show today.

Joshua Edwards: It is, it is a joy to be here. Josh Yates. it's a weird thing being a Joshua. I'm going by Josh or Joshua. And what do you prefer? What do you want? But you have that problem too. So.

Josh Yates: I do I do. And I've always known you as Josh. In fact, actually you are the same age when I met you, that my son is now. So my son is 13, and I think you're actually possibly 12, maybe 13 when I met you for the first time. So many years ago, I think we were on your dad's back. Porch and I was cutting your hair and making a big fish in the back of your, your, your, your head.

I don't know if you remember that. That's what you wanted. So I shaved your head and made a big fish. Remember that?

Joshua Edwards: I back when we were both much cooler less, less beard hair but more hair on top of our heads. Right.

Josh Yates: That would, that would, that would be true. That would be true. Josh is coming from Chicago land and I had a short time of my life when I was in ministry early on going to school at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. There's a big battle, big debate on what is the best Chicago pizza. So I, gotta just make sure we set this clear. Are you a Giordano's fan or are you a Lou Malnati's fan? Cause this might just direct the rest of our conversation.

Joshua Edwards: Giordano's all the way every day. Unlike Lou Malnati's fans I have no need to downplay how good Lou Malnati's is. Lou Malnati's is very good pizza. Giordano's is just at her, that's. Those are the, those are the facts that

Josh Yates: I see, I see, I see the divide. Yeah. This is a legitimate battle among, among the two fan favorites. My wife introduced me to Lou Malnati's is a Chicago pizza. And so I have to say that I'm on that side of the fence, but let's maybe, maybe we go somewhere maybe. What about the Cubs versus the White Sox?

That's another big debate in Chicago, depending on where you live. So I think we can agree that Wrigley field is where it's at.

Joshua Edwards: Wrigley field. Always it, it was fun. I got to go with my son up to a Cubs Brewers game up in Milwaukee. And that was, that was a fun experience. And it's always

fun to go to whatever the White Sox stadium is called in any given year. Cause they're always changing it, but the Wrigley field and the Cubs is, is where I like to be. And unfortunately this year we're kind of teetering on an okay season, but on a couple of big victories recently, so that's fun.

Josh Yates: All right, so we can agree on the Cubs. We can disagree on our pizza, but one thing that we know we always come back to is our love and our passion for following Jesus and making disciples. And so that's what the conversation is about today. We want to spend some time talking specifically on a four chair discipling and it's kind of a, it's a word picture that's used to explain really the process, the method that Jesus did of disciple-making and I thought today would be a great chance for us to, to talk through. Okay. What is the four chairs and how does this help us make disciples? Thinking through that, that framework, how to implement that. And the other thing too, Josh not only, you serve as Sonlife, but you also are a youth pastor and a church there in Oak Park. And so your Bible occasional with us also serving and, and local ministry, but as well as teach at Moody Bible Institute, as I think adjunct professor.

But as well, so you wear many hats. And so today, as a practitioner, someone who is in the field of making disciples, I thought, man, what a great opportunity to kind of wrestle through what is this four chair discipling?

Joshua Edwards: Yeah. So in short the, the brief version and example of kind of what four chairs is. Is how Jesus made disciples. So how he took someone who didn't know him, didn't even know who he was, no context or reference of, of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and, and brought that into a place where they themselves were a disciple makers.

And so the four chairs is a visual, a picture of how Jesus did that. So the idea is that every person in the world is sitting in one of these four chairs. So if you don't yet know Jesus, then you'd be sitting in, in chair one. Don't yet know, or believe in Jesus. And when, when Jesus encountered someone who didn't yet know him, who was in chair one his invitation was always the same.

And that invitation is to come and see. So this model of making disciples for chairs for chair disciple-making would be the same thing that anyone who is following Jesus today could look at. Evaluate themselves and then also evaluate their ministry or other people in their lives and then say, how do I. Invite people the same way Jesus did on this journey kind of this path of following him.

So again, chair one people who don't yet know Jesus, the Bible calls these people lost and Luke 15. And so talking about people who are lost Jesus says they need to be found and they can be found by coming and seeing who Jesus is.

So the invitation to come and see. And then repent and believe. So if they come and see who Jesus is, Jesus is the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the father, but

through him. So the invitation to come and see, and then place their faith in Jesus Christ. When someone puts their faith in Jesus Christ, they moved to chair two.

So a lot of the world is sitting in that last chair because they don't yet know Jesus and they don't yet believe in him. But, a lot of the world is also sitting in that second chair where they do believe in Jesus. So this believer chair Jesus invites those people in scripture to follow me. Not follow the person, discipling them, but to follow Jesus. Right? So the invitation to follow me is for chair to a believer and as someone is following Jesus there's actually a further call cause there's a chair three and then a chair four. So the invitation to follow me comes in chair two. And as you're following Jesus, you're growing up in your faith in your relationship with God and also growing out in your relationship with others and that leads to a growth and a third call.

So the call to a person in chair three would be to follow me and fish for people. So do the work of fishing for people. Fishing for people in chair one, lost people, inviting them to come and see and fishing for people and share to inviting them to follow me as I follow Christ, as Paul says.

So that's chair three, tier three is the worker chair or the, the fishing chair. You know, someone who's actually doing the work of fishing for people. That as you do that, the natural progression what's going to happen is you're going to see disciples being made. Cause that's the work that the Holy spirit is going to be doing in and through you as you're obedient to his calling your life.

And then chair four is the disciple-making chair. And as you're making disciples, the call is to bear much fruit. So again, chair one lost, come and see chair two believer. Follow me chair three worker follow me in fish for people and then chair four disciple maker bear much fruit. So that's kind of the process.

And the reason we look at that or kind of use that process is because that's what Jesus did. That's how Jesus made disciples. And we want to follow his example. So nothing magical about the four chairs itself, but definitely something divine on the on the way that disciples are made, because that's how Jesus made disciples.

And so just a good visual way. And that's what we mean when we talk about it four chairs.

Josh Yates: Yeah. I, I love, I love that we're picture because I think how you set that up. As some, every person sitting in one of these chairs. And it kind of gives you a grid to think through, okay. What's chair of the sitting in it. How I help them move to that next, the next chair. I think, I think the aha moment I remember when I was first introduced to this was the idea that the actual was a third chair and a fourth chair.

I thought there was only chair one and chair two, basically the lost people and then people who were saved. And actually when you look at the life of Jesus, you, you see something actually in his ministry. We did actually that, that, that third share. So w what

would be maybe for you kind of the aha moment when you look at this, the Fort share process, was there ever for you a kind of aha, like, Oh yeah, I guess now that I see that this really helps me see the disciple-making process for you.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I think, I think what was really helpful to me is that I was in ministry read at a college, I went to Moody. And like you said, I'm back there now. Love love Moody and, and how they're. Building that next generation disciple makers and ministry leaders. But I think coming out of college, I, I had a similar thought.

And I think that regardless, even if people are, were in chair one, chair two, chair or three or four, wherever they were, I was kind of approaching ministry to them in the same way. And I think I was approaching them as people in the same way. So sometimes I think I would. Be sharing the gospel with people, people who already believed the gospel, you know, people who already believe the good news of Jesus Christ, they were already believers.

And yet I was, I was continuing again, it wasn't bad that I was reminding them of that truth, but I wasn't giving them kind of next steps of the follow me pieces or people who were following Jesus, not calling them to follow me in fish for people the way that Jesus did. And, and I think the simplicity of it has always grabbed me, you know I'm a, I'm a very literal, very simple minded person things that are simple and easy and straightforward. I get, and, and then I can reproduce.

And that too is, is something that's pretty awesome about this that Jesus calls us to make disciples. Right. And that's something that we are to be doing as followers of Jesus Christ. Not to make believers, but to make disciples. And so what does Jesus mean by that?

It doesn't just mean that they come to faith in Christ, but the objective, the the mission is to make disciples. So people who are also reproducing in their own lives. And so lots of aha moments, I think as, as I, I studied Jesus, look at Jesus and think through this grid.

Josh Yates: yeah. Yeah. Seeing that analysis method of your disciple-making kind of that grid. How, how have you seen that then kind of get down to the everyday, just, you know, how does this help you really make disciples? You kind of alluded to that, but maybe this, this kind of camp on this, maybe a little bit more and kind of flush it out a little bit more for your ministry context now that you say, Hey, I used to just kind of communicate the gospel and maybe I was communicating to people who are already believers, but now I understand, I maybe need to help them know how to be trained, to move them to that, that chair three the book, helping them become kingdom workers. So just maybe unpack a little bit more. How does this help you in your disciple-making efforts?

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I would say just as a personal disciple maker, the people in my life that are lost I think. I think sometimes I've gotten into the habit of even treating lost, people like believers. So I, I kind of expect them to act a certain way, expect them to

believe certain things, expect them to be held to the same standard as someone who's following Jesus.

But those lost people. Jesus, doesn't do that. Jesus invites them to come and see who he is. That's his focus is his focus is, come and see who I am. And when you come and see who I am, then there's there's transformation. There's life change. There's there's an indwelling of the Holy spirit at that moment when they do place their faith in Christ. And so seeing people in that same light and seeing people the way God sees them, the way Jesus sees them and the love that he has, I think the, the beauty of these four chairs and the reminder that God loves those lost people, right? God loves those believers and God loves the workers. And that's why he gives them a greater call because he wants them in that relationship to take those next steps with him and in their disciple-making journey.

So I think practically for me, Seeing that in my relationships that I build with lost people, I don't need to be discouraged if they reject Christ, I can be encouraged that I'm being obedient to do what God's called me to do, to continue to invite them to come and see. And the work that God's doing in their life is, is something that's above my pay grade, let's say.

But, but I can keep doing what is within within my realm and what, what God's calling me to do as a disciple maker. Again, with lost people on the same thing with believers, right? One of the most frustrating things being in ministry is people not responding to those calls people not taking those next steps or not taking them as fast as I would like. And, and when, when that happens, I think I come back to this and come back to Jesus model. And how he made disciples and how he was patient with his disciples how he called them at specific times to do things and how he continued to stay focused on what the father had for him. And I continue to, to keep my, my focus in that same place, I think in practicality with the four chairs.

Josh Yates: Yeah, it's gotta be so life-giving Josh, when you realize you're your responsibility, what's our role. And actually, what is God's role? What's his task. I think sometimes we beat ourselves up and their sense of whether it be kind of guilt or a sense of, oh, I'm not, I'm not an evangelist. So therefore I don't know what to do with that, or I'm not really good at XYZ.

So we kind of stay in our own. I dunno, maybe in our own comfort zone. But I think what this does, what I'm hearing you say, and I think it does this as well for me, so it's very interesting is that it actually frees me up to actually say, I want to be more involved Jesus. I want to follow Jesus. If Jesus was, was inviting people to come and see, how do I do that in my spheres of influence with my neighbors and my context of ministry how do I do that in terms of helping my disciples, not just stay where they're at, but helping them see their God-given potential and realizing that actually it's it's the Holy Spirit's work.

And, and I get to join him in that. And there's freedom in that. And actually that's, life-giving, it's a different way of approaching. I think ministry when sometimes we don't see all the fruit that we long for and being patient in that. So I love that perspective. That's very helpful.

Joshua Edwards: And I think too, Josh, it's, it's almost like we get this, this feeling of, if I don't do more. People are going to die and go to hell. We put the, we put the pressure of people's eternity on us instead of where it should be on the cross and on Christ. And again, that's not that I should be disobedient, but my motivation needs to be Coming from a place of love, not a place of guilt, right?

That, that my motivation to make disciples needs to be come from a place of love, because if it comes from a place of guilt, I tell you, I will really quickly get deceptive. So I could like be telling another pastor and I want to look good. Right. And so, so I may, I may say I had more kids at my youth group than I did, or I may want to say that more kids came to faith in Christ than they did.

And, and what, what am I even doing at that point? Right. We're talking about eternity. We're talking about people's souls and, and yet all of a sudden this pressure that I've put on myself has put me, put me in a position where I'm being deceptive about what I'm even doing. So again, I think the more I look at Jesus, the more I look at how he, even as the son of God, right, stayed in his lane and did what the father tasked him to do how much I need to do that same thing.

And so wherever I'm sitting and that was the encouragement to, I think when I first saw four chairs, I realized I'm like, I'm in a chair two, you know, I'm, I need, I need to do some more following Jesus.

And, and then maybe take that step of moving to chair three where I can start fishing for people and actually doing the work of fishing for people in chair one and chair two. So yeah, just a, a burden lifted.

Josh Yates: Yeah. Let's talk about what what have you seen in terms of evangelism that chair one the, the imitation of come and see and repent and believe. What have you seen in terms of working with students that, conversations are having ways you've seen people coming to Christ. What, what are some things that in the last, maybe this last year that you've seen people coming to Christ through, through your ministry efforts.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I think that the biggest thing that I see when I stay focused on come and see, is I, I tell students in my youth group who I'm inviting to become fishers of people to become workers in the harvest field. What I invite them to do is to be the ones themselves who are sharing the gospel instead of inviting friends to come here their youth pastor share the gospel.

I want to equip and train them to be fishers of people themselves. And so what I've seen this past year, what's been really cool. Again, for me personally, it's been much more

much more a neighbors relationship, and people in my sphere of influence then rather than youth group youth group has been a bit of a struggle during COVID, you know, to, to see kids actually sharing the gospel with friends because they are feeling so isolated. And so one of the things that I encourage my students to do is, again, just keep at that same simple question of inviting people into relationship. To come and see not you, not your life, but Jesus. How do you continue to direct that conversation to Jesus? And we had a, a junior higher actually come to faith in Christ who had been in a Christian family and just never actually made kind of a personal decision. But we saw her when that, that question and was presented and then someone was able to have a conversation with her. And what was really cool is she was attending the church, but didn't come to our youth group and didn't kind of see what those next steps were as far as following Jesus, because she had never actually made a decision to believe in him. So I think that staying focused on that invitation and I, I tell my students all the time to not to focus on specific sin issues in that person's life. When someone is lost they may not even think that certain things are wrong that they're doing in their life. But as they come to faith in Christ, that's when the Holy spirit can do that work the same as we were talking about earlier.

But the, the difficulty, I think the challenge oftentimes is we want to tell them they need to change and then come to Jesus. As opposed to coming and seeing who Jesus is. And then allowing him to change them. He's going to do a far better job than we are at convicting and, and really making life change.

Josh Yates: That's so that's so good. He said a number of things there. I think at times we want the fish to be cleaned up before we get them in the boat. Right. Well, you got to get them, get the fish in the boat, then you worry about cleaning them later. So we're going to fish for people. You got to realize that, you know what, they're going to come to you with all sorts of challenges and let the Holy spirit do his job rather than us trying to do that.

And, but as well, as you said, the kind of love, I love the idea. You kind of started off with. Rather than you doing the work of the evangelist, so to speak, whether it be the invitation, whether communicating the gospel, you know, doing the classic, I think youth ministry, we kind of put all the event and the youth pastor gets up and gives the invitation, but actually training your students to have the, the, the gospel fluency, be able to communicate the gospel within their networks, within their friends.

And that's really moving your students from chair to. To chair three. So what are some practical ways maybe you can help leaders implement really some training of their, of their disciples. How do you help people move from chair to, to chair three?

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I think a huge way that Jesus did this was was using trips using his, his retreats using missions trips, those kinds of things. And I my experience has been,

I've definitely been on missions trips where that equipping did not happen. You know, we, we went on a missions trip and it was maybe service oriented and which was great. Cause we, we taught a valuable piece of who Jesus was. But I think when, when Jesus took the disciples places, he did it intentionally so that he could teach them something about making disciples, about reaching people about reaching lost about growing the believer. And I think. That in those moments have been, yeah, those have been key times for me to be able to do that.

And I find when I get my students out of the norm the routine of. I have soccer practice and then I have to practice guitar and then I have all my homework and that, you know, everything that a student has to do in a given week in I'm in the suburbs of Chicago and I, youth pastors, I talked to, it seems like this is the norm across the country.

The kids are really busy. You know, they have a lot of things going on and when, when you can take them out of that, busy-ness and, and really speak into their lives and where they're at. And also I think, I think me personally, staying focused on that I think is key as well. Again, it's easier for me because this is I think church culture and what I grew up with.

But I think it's easier for me to be upfront share the gospel or if a student has questions after youth group to be the one who answers the questions to to be the spiritual parent, to everyone in the youth group. But even in a small youth group, that's a lot of responsibility and that's a lot for me to do, do as opposed to growing up they're leaders to be those spiritual parents and essentially being a spiritual grandparent and helping those spiritual parents disciple and and lead those other students in the ministry or even my adult leaders in the group as well. So.

Josh Yates: Yeah. That's great. Josh, what are some of the, maybe the challenges or obstacles you've you found in trying to adjust that intentional equipping the investing into a few. Really trying to build out that framework of a ministry that is winning a lost bill and unbeliever, you know, training the workers.

And then, you know, the fourth chair really Multisim movement of multiplication and seeing fruit, being a result of your disciple. Who's made a disciple. Yeah. What are some of the, what are some of the challenges and obstacles you've faced over that? Yes.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I think the first one that comes to mind is the, the let down of investing in people. Because over time when you invest in people they're going to let you down. And that's not to say that they're letting God down. Maybe they're being obedient to what God is calling them to, but it, it wasn't my plan.

Right. It wasn't what I had envisioned for them which could be staying involved in our ministry. And, being an integral part of, you know, next steps, but they moved on to another ministry or they've walked away from the church or they've walked away from

Jesus. You know, these, these very difficult things that I think anyone in ministry faces, I think that.

Making disciples the way Jesus did. And we see that in Jesus' life, obviously, right? People that, that he even called and, and walked away, or obviously Judas being an example of a really, a difficult thing for Jesus had to deal with. But I think that that is one of the the biggest things.

And the other thing goes right in line with that, I think the staying focused on what God has for me in a, in a season or in a moment, and staying committed to Jesus style disciple-making because Jesus style disciple-making requires us to call some people deeper call some people closer and not, not call all of them at once. So the, the purpose of this is as we call some closer, we're going to equip them to be leaders and disciple makers, and they are going to go reach the others.

But if I try to do it all on my own then it becomes very difficult. But again, in the, in the structure of a church and me being the youth pastor. If I'm not reaching out to every single kid individually then the ones I'm not reaching out to feel left behind there could be hurt feelings and those kinds of things.

So I think those are a couple of the things that I really see as, as challenges.

Josh Yates: Right. And ideally as you're investing into your, your ministry volunteers and hopefully they are be able to reach those students that you're not able to reach. So maybe through their own connections or maybe the opportunities. So you realize that maybe every student can be invested into just may not be.

You and as a ministry leader, as a youth pastor, something that that's, I think that's hard because we want every student to be connected to us. We want to feel like we're shepherding the whole entire group. But you realize, Hey, if we're really going to actually impart our lives, we can only be paralyzed with a handful of people.

I mean, we only do that. Well, and so that's, for me, it's always a learning curve. It's I always feel convicted by that and seeing man, if I really want to do Jesus style ministry, have to do it his way because his model is, it, it stood the test of time and it was the model to which we need to implement.

And I think that's always, the other thing is coming back for me is like, okay. Is Jesus my model now, or am I being pulled in a different kind of whether it be cultural trends or other things, his personality styles, or just my own my own selfishness, my own kind of my own desires that are overstepping, what, what Christ is trying to do in and through me.

And so Josh, what are. Yeah. At the end of this, just as you look at the four chair discipling, how have you seen maybe this, the fruit of that? If you give me some, maybe four chair stories or maybe sitting in the fourth chair, maybe a disciple you've invested into give us some of the picture of how you've seen this you know, work in your ministry.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I think I think one of the beauties that I've seen I've, I've seen quite a few students like Bible college students come through and help out in our ministry. And obviously they were already kind of on a path of going into ministry and it's exciting to see them I continue on in ministry.

But I'll be honest, I think the ones I'm most excited about are the kids who just came through our youth group, went on to college or other things in life, so just straight to work or whatever, but I see are still making disciples in their life are still following Jesus and committed to being disciple makers. And that is a beautiful thing because I think that shows that they clearly got it.

You know, they, they understood the process and it, it was what you were saying earlier, you know that. I'm not the best person to reach a high school student. I'm 34 years old. And I, can't relate to a lot of things that they're going through. But if there is a 20 something who is a leader in my youth group, they're that much closer, right.

To a high school student, they were in high school more recently. And so I think those are, those are the things that I love to see when. When leaders in my group not only Bible school students, but other students as well, just decide to commit their lives to making disciples like Jesus and continuing to hear those stories even now I think is, had been the most encouraging things to me.

Josh Yates: This has been, this has been very good and insightful for, even for me to even know, I know this stuff, but just hearing you process and talk about it as always, it's always good.

I intentionally kind of skipped over chair two because you shared in your own just journey that you, you realize that you yourself were stuck kind of in chair too. And, you know, I'm sure it was that, that, that was the aha moment realizing, Oh man. I've I have been sitting in chair too. So what, what gets us stuck there and how do we get out?

Joshua Edwards: Yeah. Josh, I think that. This is, you mentioned your aha moment that there even was a chair three, right? Like that was a revelation to you that there was more to this call to be disciple makers and not just be followers. And again, that I think is, is what gets people because they're invited to come and see Jesus.

They see who he is. They believe who he is. And then they're happy they're content because they are going to heaven. They are, are. In a community a church that they feel welcome and they feel a part of they probably decide to serve in some capacity. So they, they become Sunday school teachers or deacons or elders, or these different things in a church that we've that we've created.

And that takes the place in their mind of doing the work of making disciples. And so I think a lot of times it's a mental block because church leadership oftentimes doesn't know how to help people, help people get to chair three help people take that next step and actually begin making disciples in their own life.

We, I think there are many different facets to this issue, but one I think is kind of the, the one day a week, Christianity, you know if you're, if you're a relationship with Jesus is all about sitting in a pew on Sunday mornings. Then you're probably in chair two you probably believe in Jesus, but it just kinda ends after the sermon's done.

And you go back to your regular life and maybe you're even taking steps there, but knowing that there is a call knowing that Jesus called his disciples and he's calling you to follow him and fish for people is I think a huge next step. There's plenty of people I've met who I tell this to.

And they're like, how did, how did I never see that in the life of Jesus? How did I not know or understand that that call was not just for those people, but also for me. That that called to make not only be a disciple, but make disciples as well. So as we grow up and grow out it's so important that we take that next step.

I, I love the example of the idea of feeding. As we as baby believers need to be fed the word of God because we don't know what it means. We can't understand it, we'll read something from the old test and it will be we'll, we'll get really confused. You know, I'm think we have to go make blood sacrifices or something like that.

But as we grow up and grow out and we understand more then we need to start feeding ourselves. So an interesting thing I've been asking people is you know, who's feeding you, you know, are you only being fed on Sunday mornings? And, and have you left a church because you aren't being fed.

That's something. I hear a lot from people I'm not being fed. And so they leave the church. That's probably someone sitting in chair two. And so the invitation. To follow me in fish for people is, is one that they need to hear. And they need to hear from leaders in their church and leaders in the church needed to be taking that call seriously as well. And make sure that they are making disciples, being obedient to at least calling people to come and see and to follow me the way Jesus did.

Josh Yates: Yeah, I think that there's a lot of things there, Josh, in terms of, you know, who, who is it for? So when you think of chair two, who is it for? And while it's for believers to, to mature and to grow their, their infants learning, how to feed themselves, learning how to put their roots down.

But chair three, who is chair, three four, who are they going after? Oftentimes we think of the worker is then a worker focuses on share too well. That's an element of it, but actually the focus is fishing for people who are sitting in chair one.

And so we often put the, the worker, Oh yeah. What I'm gonna do, I'm gonna become a deacon. I'm going to serve in the church. I'm going to work in the church. And so therefore we're just staying within share too. And we think that's where it stops. And realizing that actually there was an invitation Jesus gives and says, actually, I'm going to prepare you to work in part of that preparing could be within the church.

Yes. It's learning the skills of, of serving Jesus fishing trips. He took his disciples on, was actually to, to their own people. To begin with, and then he takes them out further than that. So you're learning those beginning of those skills, learning to learn how to work. But the, the worker chair as your eyes are not open to the harvest field, that your eyes are open to the people around us.

And now our ministry is effectively thinking about who, who needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. And so easily that that chair two a lot of our people, time, resources, budgets, all go towards typically chair two to making sure that we're just, like you said, we're just fed. And that becomes our community becomes everything we do. Our programs becomes, and those are all bad per se. But when the focus is is just to kind of keep Christians. You know, if you will kind of fed and more programs offer for families or for children or for young adults, then if we're asking, well, who is this ultimately for then I think it reveals kind of the issue of the heart, of the model of Jesus.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah. And that, and that gets us even more inward focused. Right. And then we, and then we have no, if we're all sitting in chair two, there's no desire. Even if it's being preached from the pulpit, even if the gospel is being preached every single week, there's no desire to actually reach the people in our spheres of influence like community. Unless more people are moving to chair three and inviting people to come along with them and join them in fishing for people.

Josh Yates: Yeah. So where does someone start? Where, what would be the next next steps? What would you encourage someone to begin?

Joshua Edwards: I would say if you're listening to this podcast and this is a new concept to you I would say, start looking at Jesus start looking at his life and, and say, where am I in this process? Evaluate your own life and be honest, you know, you may be in ministry and be like, wow, I've never made a disciple.

And that, that question of have I made a disciple the easy answer to that question is to look behind you and say, is anyone following me? Have I made a disciple who is making disciples? Has anyone who I've helped grow spiritually making disciples themselves? And if the answer is no, then you probably need to look some at Jesus and say, how did he make disciples again? Here's some great first steps. And four chairs, again, we have a book, we have a seminar we have some great resources on the Sonlife website and through our team to help you in that area. But, but yeah, that, that would be a next step that I would give to someone.

Josh Yates: So we have the four chair discipling book. That's a good place to kind of read as something, when you take your team, it's a very approachable, you can spend some time reading through that. I think as well as you kind of mentioned we offer training as well as coaching to help you implement this and then mentoring along the pathway of

actually knowing how to build a ministry like Jesus, Josh, thank you for your time, your wisdom, your friendship.

And how will people get ahold of you? Follow you? Stay in touch.

Joshua Edwards: Yeah, I'm a youth pastor adjunct, I wouldn't call myself a professor, Josh, but a teacher of sorts at Moody, and then also a local youth pastor. So if, if any of that would be helpful, a conversation around four chairs or other Sonlife stuff, I'd love to. Have you reached out to me? My email address will be below and you can follow me and my Sonlife goings on Instagram. That'll be down in the show notes as well.