

SERMON SERIES: *Commissioned*

SERMON TITLE: *The What and Why of Making Disciples*

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:16-20, John 8:31-32

#1 What is a disciple?

- A. A disciple is a learner of another person's teaching.
- B. The term "disciple" is used in the Bible to describe both casual learners of Jesus as well as committed learners of Jesus.
- C. Jesus made a distinction between true and false disciples. (John 8:31)
 - a. A true disciple is a **baptized** disciple. (Matthew 20:19)
 - i. Baptism is a ceremony in which a believer publicly declares that their ultimate allegiance is to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. God is their Master, **Lord**.
 - ii. Baptism is also a ceremony in which a believer publicly declares that Jesus is their **Savior**.
 - The moment a person becomes a true disciple of Jesus through repentance and faith as a response to God's grace in Christ, their sinful nature that opposed God and was enslaved to sin along with the punishment that their sinful nature and actions earned is killed and buried with Christ. (Romans 6)
 - The moment a person becomes a true disciple, they are also given a new nature that loves God, desires to please him, thirsts for righteousness, and hates sin and is given a new power to actually say "no" to sin.
 - b. A true disciple is **learning to obey** all that Christ commanded.
 - i. Baptism is a prerequisite to obedience.
 - You can't serve two masters because eventually the agenda of one master will conflict with the agenda of the other master.

- If we are going to learn to obey all that Jesus commanded, we must first settle in our hearts and minds that he is God and that he knows best regarding every single aspect of life.
 - We need Jesus to dwell inside of us by the Holy Spirit so that we can have an ongoing interaction with Jesus that empowers our new nature to translate itself into new patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that are obedient to all the commands of Christ. That is why Jesus's statement in Matthew 28:20, "I'm with you always even to the very end of the age" is absolutely critical for obedience, for it is a continual abiding in the One who abides in us that leads to lasting change.
- ii. The Sermon on the Mount contains a good summary of the commands of Christ.
- a. In it, Jesus commands his disciples to:
- Forgive those who have hurt them.
 - Extend mercy and compassion to the hurting that moves them to action.
 - Make peace where there is conflict.
 - Humbly love others with the same intensity by which they love themselves.
 - Do good to those that oppose them.
 - Be faithful to their commitments
 - Engage in good works in order to bring glory to God and not oneself
 - Be Generous
 - Totally depend on God through prayer
 - Enjoy an intimate relationship with God
 - Live a joyful, non-anxious life
 - Have righteous anger that is controlled
 - Have an accurate view of one's shortcomings and flaws
 - Have immense gratitude for the grace that Christ has shown them
 - Be patient with the failings of others
- b. The Sermon on the Mount details how to obey what Jesus identified as the two greatest commandments.

D. Defining a **disciple**:

- a. **Long def:** A disciple of Christ is one that has, through repentance and faith, responded to Christ's gracious offer to be their Lord and Savior, resulting in their reception of a new nature and the Holy Spirit, both of which enable them to have

an ongoing, interactive relationship with Jesus that empowers them to grow in obedience to all that Jesus commanded, namely to love God with all of their heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love their neighbor as themselves.

- b. **Short def:** A disciple is a person who has received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and is learning from and being empowered by Jesus to obey all that Jesus commanded.
- c. **Discipleship** is simply the process of being with Jesus, to learn from Jesus, how to live like Jesus.
- d. **Disciple making** is helping another person receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and learn from and be empowered by Jesus to obey all that Jesus commanded.

#2 Why Is disciple making important?

- A. Learning to obey the commands of Christ leads to knowing and living the truth and knowing and living the truth leads to freedom. (John 8:32)
 - a. True freedom is the ability to live as you were designed to live.
 - b. Every command Christ has given us is not to shrink and confine our life, but rather to liberate it.
 - c. The cost of non-discipleship to Jesus is always more than the cost of discipleship to Jesus.
- B. If we want to see the world changed...if we want to see individuals thriving and flourishing now and in eternity, we must take Jesus's command to make disciples seriously.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. A true disciple is a person who has received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and is learning from and being empowered by Jesus to obey all that Jesus commanded. Would you consider yourself a true disciple? If not, what barriers are keeping you from the commitment of discipleship to Jesus? If you consider yourself a true disciple, what evidence in your life supports your claim?
2. We cannot serve two masters. If you are a disciple of Christ, what other master are you most tempted to worship? If you are not a disciple of Christ, who or what is your master? We are all slaves to something. It is either Christ or something else.
3. If you are a disciple of Christ, share your baptism experience with the group.

4. The moment a person becomes a true disciple of Jesus through repentance and faith as a response to God's grace in Christ, their sinful nature that opposed God and was enslaved to sin along with the punishment that their sinful nature and actions earned is killed and buried with Christ. But there's more! The moment a person becomes a true disciple, they are also given a new nature that loves God, desires to please him, thirsts for righteousness, and hates sin and is given a new power to actually say "no" to sin. If you are a disciple of Jesus, do you routinely live with the awareness that you have the power to say no to every single sin that you are tempted with? What habitual sin in your life do you especially need to remember that you are no longer a slave to sin but a slave to righteousness? How can your group be praying for you in this area?
5. Which commands of Christ do you find most beautiful? Which ones do you find most difficult?
6. Do you have the attitude that Christ commands are not meant to restrict our freedom but rather to liberate us to experience true freedom? Why or why not? If yes, has this always been the case for you?
7. Compare and contrast the cost of non-discipleship vs. discipleship.
8. If you believe you are a true disciple of Jesus, are you actively engaged in helping another person know Jesus as Lord and Savior and to learn to obey all that he has commanded? If not, why are you walking in disobedience?