

Intro:

We are kicking off our Discipleship series. The heart behind this series is to understand the core of BEING a disciple and MAKING disciples. This is such an important aspect of our following the WAY. Jesus empowers us and calls us all into this principle because it is a huge purpose of why we are still here and not with Him. His heart of love is that as many people as possible come to the knowledge of Him. We see this in Revelation that His heart is to cause all man to come to know Him. So His first resort is to have those who love Him encounter people. Obviously this means evangelism has to be present like we talked a few weeks ago.

Discipleship is bringing believers into a deeper relationship with Jesus through watching our lives. This is not the act of salvation but instead the act of assisting in maturity. As we walk in maturity ourselves, our call is to pour it out, but we need a solid foundation of how to do this biblically. We will be walking through these topics partnered with our series last year on the Spiritual Disciplines:

- Walking through the bible
- How to be a disciple
- Purity
- Sonship and Fatherhood
- Organic discipleship
- Discipleship from your gifting
- Church vs. Marketplace discipleship
- Prayer
- How to read your bible
- Hermeneutics
- Holiness
- Relational accountability
- Fear of the lord

1) The Call:

- a) Matthew 28:16-20 talks about Jesus commissioning HIS disciples. ALL authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me (Jesus). "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, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- b) Out of the power and authority of what we have received from Jesus we are to encounter the lost. DO NOT DO THIS BY YOUR OWN STRENGTH. Jesus set an example for us in the form of the spiritual discipline of solitude that he escaped away to LOOK at the Father and be so close that He looked like him.

See John 14:7-11 that when you look to Jesus you see the Father. Also later in John 17:20-26 of us being in and with Jesus and the Father.

- c) 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1 Paul is encouraging the church of Corinth in understanding how to walk in this life in holiness without being legalistic. He says look at me and imitate me because I imitate Christ!
- d) He has given us all authority to encounter people with the POWER OF THE SPIRIT. Our goal is not to make disciples of ourselves but disciples of Christ. That means we are not trying to make disciples that look like us with our calling. Our goal is to help people look like Jesus with their own calling from Him. To learn the elementary doctrine and move to the deeper things of the spirit. Hebrews 5:12-6:8.

2) Discipling:

- a) There is not a time where we can pause to take a break from being a follower of the Way of Jesus. There comes a time in our maturity that Jesus will call us to disciple. How do we know when that time comes? People will ask you.
- b) We will address this more in a couple of weeks but there is a principle that Fathers attract sons. So you normally would not approach someone saying you need to be disciplined by me. Now, obviously Jesus in his perfection did this. But in my experience this has not been good.
 - i) Because if I am not ready to be a disciple (immature) or the person is not mature enough to disciple it feels wrong. But when we are called into this well when we come to know Christ it leads us to realize our need for the Body and mature believers. When someone realizes their need to be a disciple they should seek out mature believers.
- c) So for those of us on the journey to be mature believers seek counsel and discipleship, be grounded in the Spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, the Word, fellowship, solitude, conflict resolution, generosity, worship, service, etc.) at a certain point in our journey those around you will see the growth in you. As you position yourself around other believers they will seek you out to help them grow.

3) Preparing His bride

- a) I realized recently that the Disciples were called to go make disciples of nations and several of them are still doing that through the scriptures. We are called through the life of Jesus and the scriptures to call us into relationship with Jesus, so that we look at the Father. That's the whole point of it all is to gaze upon God's Beauty.

- b) Jesus is coming back for a bride made ready, and we are that bride if we choose. Being ready is being called into holiness and righteousness. That we look to the Father to be like Him. BUT God has called us to submit to one another because we miss it! We only prophecy in part! The accuser is alive and present to disrupt our lives and when we have others around us and when we are present in community we can receive perspective and give perspective. If we can realize our need for that we will take that step closer to being the body of Christ.
- i) *Ephesians 5:21: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."*
 - ii) *1 Peter 5:5: "In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.'*
 - iii) *Romans 12:10: "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."*
 - iv) *Philippians 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*
- c) A great example of this, and what I believe is using the name of God in vain is summarized in Jude 8-11 (NLT):
- i) *In the same way, these people—who claim authority from their dreams—live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at supernatural beings. But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels, did not dare accuse the devil of blasphemy, but simply said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (This took place when Michael was arguing with the devil about Moses' body.) But these people scoff at things they do not understand. Like unthinking animals, they do whatever their instincts tell them, and so they bring about their own destruction. What sorrow awaits them! For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion.*

Conclusion: Our job is to disciple nations and His job is to build the church! When we align with Jesus and focus more about building disciples then the church will grow naturally because that is His heart.

Our hope in going into this series on Discipleship is that we are the laborers to reap the harvest. But we need to be prepared and disciplined. We need to be more like Jesus so that people around us look and see a difference from the old man we were. We are new creations, but its a journey and a walk to be made to look more like Him.

Hebrews 12:1-2 - Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Lifegroup questions:

1. Our goal is to help people look like Jesus, not us. How do we make sure we are pointing people to Christ rather than just our own ways or preferences?
2. As we grow in spiritual disciplines, others will naturally notice and ask us for help. What is one spiritual discipline (like prayer, Bible reading, or solitude) you want to focus on this week?
3. The sermon reminded us that we need community because "we only see in part." Why do we need other believers around us to stay on the right track, and how can we practically support each other in this group and Restoration?