

Sermon Outline for FBC Feb. 16, 2020

“Define Discipleship”

Today the message is entitled “Define Discipleship”.

Last week we looked at the “oikos initiative” – the idea of putting the “Good News of the Gospel,” into every home in the world. That is what disciples of Christ do in their daily walk here on earth.

Today, I am starting a look at Discipleship – what is it and why do we need to do it. Over the next few weeks we will discover how to be disciples in the world today.

Who is a disciple and why do we need to do discipleship? Let’s look at some answers.

Webster’s New World Dictionary gives us this definition of Disciple:

“a pupil or follower of any teacher or school; an early follower of Jesus; especially one of the Apostles.”¹

John 8: 12 NIV

When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 8: 31 NIV

To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.”

Discipleship: being a disciple, doing what a disciple is supposed to do. Jesus disciplined by walking and talking with the apostles and disciples. That is discipleship at its best. We do our best training by being “hands on” with those we are discipling.

Another word for discipleship is “follow-up.” We need to do follow-up when a person makes the decision to believe in Jesus. This is to help them grow strong in their faith so they too can become effective disciples of Jesus.

¹ Webster’s New World Dictionary, Pg. 176

Gary W. Kuhne, in his book “The Dynamics of Personal Follow-up,” gives his definition of “follow-up”.

“The spiritual work of grounding a new believer in the faith is going to be the product of both training and teaching. There are certain basic spiritual truths a new Christian must know and apply to become rooted and really begin to grow in Christ.”²

Next week we will look at those basic spiritual truths and how to share them.

Jesus very clearly wants us to have a unique relationship with Him. We are not to be just followers but actual friends with Jesus.

John 15: 15-17 NIV

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

17 This is my command: Love each other.

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary comments on these verses.

“The servant is not taken into the confidence of his lord. Proof of the status of friends, in the case of the disciples, was their admission to the counsels of Christ, including all that the Father had disclosed to the Son.

Nothing had been withheld.”³

Max Lucado, in his “Inspirational Study Bible”, gives three thoughts on being a disciple.

First we read:

“Jesus emphasized that Christians must produce fruit. By comparing believers to branches on a grape vine, Jesus explained that we do not produce fruit through our own efforts. We bear fruit only by uniting with Him and letting Him work through us.”⁴

² Gary W. Kuhne, Pg. 17

³ The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Pg. 1107

⁴ Max Lucado, Pg. 1281

Max Lucado's second thought:

“Christ expected His followers then and now to bear fruit. Notice He did not expect them to produce fruit, just bear it. And not just some fruit, but much fruit. The amount of fruit we bear correlates with how apparent it is to others that we are believers.”⁵

John 15:8 NIV Jesus states:

This is my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Max's third thought:

“The key to producing fruit is growing closer to Jesus, knowing Him more accurately, loving Him more, and obeying Him in more detail and with more joy.”⁶

Columnist Jamie Baldwin, in her article “I know whom I have believed,” gives a good description of why we are followers of Christ.

“Christianity is not what you do. Its not a set of rules. It's not a measure of the devoutness of your spirituality. Christianity is not the deep emotion you feel when your listening to praise music. It doesn't come from the church you're a member of, the communion you participate in, the baptism you experienced, or the prayers of someone else.

Real Christianity is an active two-way relationship with a living being that changes you from the inside out, strengthens you, comforts you, upholds you, emboldens you, and transforms you into the likeness of God.”⁷

Who is a disciple? What is Discipleship? Why do we need to do it?

My hope is that you have gained some understanding of the answers to these questions.

Next week we are looking at how to put this into action, with practical ideas that you can add to your knowledge base.

⁵ Max Lucado, Pg. 1281

⁶ Max Lucado, Pg. 1282

⁷ Jamie Baldwin, column in The Dawson Creek Mirror, February 6, 2020

Have a great week! Go out and experience the relationship that God has for you!

Bibliography:

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