



Bethel Sunrise Sermon Notes- *The Love of the Father*

Speaker: Pastor May

Date: September 7, 2025

Scriptures: 1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:18, Luke 7:36-50, Ephesians 3:15-21, Romans 13:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:6, John 10:10, Matthew 24:11-13, John 13:35, Lamentations 3:22

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A disciple is a devoted follower of Jesus, continually being transformed by the Holy Spirit to reflect God's love and character, actively engaged in His mission, making disciples of all nations through the power of the gospel. —Bethel Church

Main Theme

A disciple is a devoted follower of Jesus, continually transformed by the Holy Spirit, reflecting God's love and character, and actively engaged in His mission.

Today's Focus: Reflecting the **Love of the Father**

Key Points

1. Discipleship is an Ongoing Process

- Not a one-time decision but a daily choice to follow Jesus.
- Christianity = transformation + obedience.
- We yield to the Spirit, not our flesh.
- Goal: look more like Jesus, year after year (1 John 4:8).

2. God's Love Must First Be Received Before It Can Be Reflected

- We cannot give what we have not received.
- **1 John 4:9-11** – God's love shown through sending His Son.
- To reflect love, we must encounter it personally.

Illustration: The sinful woman in Luke 7:36–50.

- Her sins were many, but she was forgiven much.
- Forgiveness produced overwhelming love and devotion.
- Jesus welcomes us with mercy and compassion, not condemnation.

3. Receiving God's Love is a Daily Experience

- Not “one and done.” We need daily bread (Lamentations 3:22-23).
- Daily ask God to deepen our capacity to receive His love.
- Barriers: shame, guilt, offense, fear, jealousy, bitterness, anxiety.
- The Spirit points out issues not to condemn but to heal.

4. God’s Love Transforms Us and Awakens Us

- Spiritual slumber keeps us blind and ineffective.
- Romans 13:11 – “Wake up from your slumber; our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.”
- Signs of slumber: distracted by personal stuff, desensitized to evil, blind to God’s move.
- We must remain awake, alert, rooted in love (1 Thess. 5:6).

5. A Disciple is Recognized by Love

- John 13:35 – “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- Love is not just feelings—it’s forgiveness, service, and sacrifice.
- Reflecting the Father’s love means:
 - Receiving forgiveness → extending forgiveness.
 - Receiving mercy → showing mercy.
 - Receiving love → pouring out love.

Discussion Questions

1. The sermon highlighted that we *cannot give what we have not received*. Do you feel you’ve truly received the love of the Father? Why or why not?
2. Like the woman in Luke 7, awareness of our forgiveness produces love. How aware are you of how much you’ve been forgiven? How does that awareness shape how you treat others?
3. The pastor shared personal barriers (jealousy, fear) that the Holy Spirit revealed. What are some barriers in your life that may keep you from fully receiving God’s love?
4. We learned that spiritual slumber dulls us to God’s voice and mission. In what ways might you be spiritually “asleep”? What helps you stay spiritually awake and alert?
5. Jesus said His disciples are recognized by love (John 13:35). If someone observed your life this past week, what evidence of God’s love would they see?