

**CHRIST - CULTURE - CHURCH SERIES**  
**SERMON: CALLED TO BE DISCIPLES**  
**9-8-24**

**OPENER:**

**CHRIST - CULTURE - CHURCH.....You cannot separate one without the other.**

**> CHRIST:**

**He is the head of the Church. This is His house, not mine.**

***Colossians 1:18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.***

**> CULTURE:**

**Culture defined is: the attitudes and behavior of a certain group; a way of life; lifestyle; customs and habits, values, language, ideas, beliefs**

**> CHURCH:**

**The Greek word for church is “*ekklesia*” = called out ones; an assembly of people**

**(we are a church together)**

**U.S. STATISTICS:**

- **Each year, 3,500 to 4,000 churches close their doors**
- **Churches lose an estimated 2,765,000 people each year to nominalism and secularism. That comes to 7,575 people a day leaving the Church.**
- **Each month, 1,400 pastors leave the ministry due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches.**

**In this series I want to look at Christ’s model for His Church. It is time that the church arise as a true remnant and become who were created to be. He chose His church to be a conduit. He chose His church to be a light to this world; reflecting His nature; His power and His love. Showing the world who He is.**

**In this series I want us to look at the blueprints of Jesus of the church.  
(what is the Lord’s blueprints for your life?)**

**1. THE CHURCH IS THOSE WHO HAVE ANSWERED CHRIST’S CALL TO BECOME A DISCIPLE**

***Matthew 28:18-20*** <sup>18</sup> ***And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.***

With Jesus being the head, the authority, of His church, we have been commissioned by Him to go and make disciples. The church is to be comprised of those who have answered the call to become a disciple of Jesus and grow with those who have answered the call to be a disciple of Jesus.

### **WHAT IS A TRUE DISCIPLE?**

A disciple can be defined as a learner, a pupil, an imitator, a follower, a reproducer.

So a disciple is.....

- > One who is taught by Jesus
- > One who imitates Jesus
- > One who reproduces himself

### **IF WE ARE TO GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES HOW DO WE DO IT?**

#### **HOW DID JESUS MAKE DISCIPLES?**

He gave them a call to answer.

First call: A call to come and follow Him.

Second Call: A call to a commitment to obey Him.

Third Call: A call to die to self.

### **THE FIRST CALL - TO COME AND FOLLOW**

***Mathew 4:19 Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”***

### **THIS IS JESUS' FIRST CALL - “FOLLOW ME”.**

Lyrics to “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

I have decided to follow Jesus;

I have decided to follow Jesus;

I have decided to follow Jesus;

No turning back, no turning back.

2. Tho' none go with me, I still will follow,  
Tho' none go with me I still will follow,  
Tho' none go with me, I still will follow;  
No turning back, no turning back.

3. My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus;  
My cross I'll carry till I see Jesus,  
My cross I'll carry till I see Jesus;  
No turning back, No turning back.

4. The world behind me, the cross before me,  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
No turning back, no turning back.

**DISCIPLES ARE THOSE WHO HAVE SAID YES TO  
THE CALL OF JESUS.**

## **2. DISCIPLES ARE MADE IN PROXIMITY WITH JESUS**

Jesus model was all about being near to Him. His way to making a disciple was to call the close to Him. To call the to come alongside Him. His way of making a disciple was all about proximity to Him.

### **SIDE NOTE:**

Jesus' methods of doing things were not the same. They changed constantly. Now His Word is forever settled. It never changes. But God manifests Himself in many ways. The moment you think you have God's methods figured out is the moment He will throw a huge twist in your plans.

Throughout the Bible we read how God did many miracles but He rarely did them in the same way:

### **EXAMPLES:**

> You can't follow Jesus and say you have the formula for healing blind eyes.....

*Mark 8* .....man in Bethsaida...he spit on his eyes and touched his eyes....he asked the man to open his eyes tell him what he saw...he said I

see men like trees walking.... He touched his eyes again and he could see clearly

*John 9* .....When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. <sup>7</sup> And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

*Luke 18*..... Bartimeus on the road to Jericho begging and when he heard Jesus was passing by he began to yell, "jesus have mercy on me. Jesus asked him what he wanted him to do. he said he wanted to see. Jesus spoke "be healed" and immediately his sight was given to him.

> God fed Elijah many different ways in Elijah's lifetime.....

*1 Kings 17:4-6*.....Ravens came and fed him

*1 Kings 19:1-7*..... An angel came and fed him

*1 Kings 17:8-10*..... God asked a widow to feed him

There was no set pattern. Many of us think we have God figured out and we speak in absolutes about our findings. Sometimes we preach our experiences as gospel truth and lead others to do the same formula. Then others try to imitate our formula and fail end up discouraged. It's arrogant and foolish to think we have it all figured out.

To follow Jesus gives us the secret to doing His will for the rest of our lives.

**ILLUSTRATION:** (Choose someone to be Jesus)

First: We draw near to Him on a regular basis,

This allows us to know what He wants to happen in our lives.

Next: We follow Him in loving obedience so we can see His glory proclaimed on this earth.

**DISCIPLESHIP IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP NOT FORMULAS.**

**IT'S NEVER A FORMULA BUT FELLOWSHIP THAT GIVES YOU WHAT YOU NEED FOR EACH MOMENT.**

*Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread. (he is the bread of life)*

*Exodus 16 The Israelites had to seek manna daily*

God wants us to come to Him each day for our provision and feeding.

In making disciples, it's better that with push people to proximity with Jesus rather than trying to have a human answer to God questions.

### **3. PROGRAMS DO NOT MAKE DISCIPLES - JESUS MAKES DISCIPLES**

***Mathew 4:19 Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."***

Jesus said, "You follow and I will make you into something different than who you are."

Everyone who ever met Jesus was changed. Their life took a radical turn. Jesus was the most dynamic in His ability to grab a person at the core of their being. Christ looked past the outward mask that people presented and convicted their hearts.

And when Jesus gets a hold of you at the deepest levels, you have a decision to follow Him or to reject Him.

**PROGRAMS DO NOT MAKE DISCIPLES - JESUS MAKES DISCIPLES.**

Disciples are not made from programs or a process that the church has put in place. You can't get a certificate saying you are a disciple of Jesus.

**AS CHRISTIANS WE CANNOT JUST BE EDUCATED INTO A SYSTEM OF RELIGION.**

**TO KNOW WHAT THE WORD SAYS, BUT IT STOPS THERE.**

**A BELIEF IN JESUS AND A KNOWLEDGE OF THE BIBLE ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE A DISCIPLE.**

***James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!***

Education alone never produces a disciple. Education can produce a convert who buys into the system that is taught. But if that person was never transformed at a heart level, then he simply conformed to some new way of thinking.

**conformity** = to line up with a way of doing things

**transformation** = is to be recreated, morphed into something new

**DISCIPLESHIP COMES OUT OF AN INTIMATE ABIDING RELATIONSHIP  
WITH JESUS - NO OTHER WAY.**

Education is important but sometimes we educate our minds at the expense of our hearts. With God this is backwards. A renewed mind comes after a renewed heart. A renewed mind is part of the sanctification process. The heart must be addressed first.

**SIDE NOTE:**

The reason that we read and meditate and study the Bible is to have our minds washed and renewed with the washing of the water of the Word of God. God's Spirit within you already knows the Word, but to get your soul and Spirit in agreement you read and study God's Word.

*Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish*

We must exchange our long-distant relationship with God for a close, loving relationship that has daily contact with Jesus. It's more than words on a page. Discipleship is about discovering Jesus.

The act of a disciple is to give Jesus permission to be your Lord, your Master and submit your will to Him.

It's easier to obey a set of rules, to get into a five-step program or a ten-step program, or a self help book so we can still feel in charge of the process and we can align our behavior with a certain system. But this can make us self-righteously proud of our accomplishments or condemned for our failures.

A disciple is not in control. He has relinquished His control to Christ when he says, "I will follow you."

**SIDE NOTE:**

Programs can play a part in helping us grow, mature and learn. but they do not guarantee that they will produce healthy, growing, disciples.

#### **4. DISCIPLES BEAR FRUIT**

Kingdom fruit comes from abiding in Christ. Jesus understood that for fruit to remain, He had to teach his disciples how to abide in Him.....

*John 15:4- 5 <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

*<sup>5</sup> “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

(Give illustration)

abide = stay, remain, don't leave, don't disconnect

#### **HOW DOES ABIDING (STAYING) IN JESUS TRANSLATE INTO OUR EVERY DAY LIVES?**

*Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

“Seek” in the Greek is the present imperative active form of the Greek word “zeteo” It depicts a constant attitude to actively and constantly seek for a thing.

“Zeteo” is a command. Jesus was literally commanding us to actively and constantly be seeking after the Kingdom of God. Jesus promised that if we did, everything else we needed in life would be supplied to us.

> Are you obeying Jesus' command to habitually, constantly seek the Kingdom of God?

> Are you on-again, off-again in your spiritual passion, or would Jesus say you are consistent in your seeking of Him and His Kingdom?

All those other things you need to be supplied for life will come if you'll place Jesus first and never stop seeking the purposes of His Kingdom.

#### **MEDIA: (SHOW TOWER DIAGRAM)**

Sometimes, we can look at our commitment to the Lord like this...”I put God first... I went to church this Sunday....I served....I gave of my tithe....now I can do my own thing”

**MEDIA: (SHOW CIRCLE DIAGRAM)**

**CHRIST IS TO BE CENTRAL TO YOUR LIFE, NOT JUST AT THE TOP OF YOUR AGENDA.**

**JESUS DOESN'T WANT TO JUST BECOME THE FIRST THING.  
HE BECOMES EVERYTHING.**

**CLOSING:**

**At the end of three years, Jesus did not have hundreds, but had eleven men whom he felt worthy of the term “disciple” .**

**This ragtag bunch of men was the catalyst that turned this world upside down with the gospel message.**

**And what was the gospel message they shared? Their story of what they had seen Jesus do. This was the gospel message: So, their call to others is what they had experienced in following Jesus.**

**And this was their call of the gospel: Get close to Christ and allow Him to transform you through repentance.**

**THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL:**

**Very simple.**

**Come to Jesus.**

**Follow Jesus and stay with Jesus.**

**Commit to obey Jesus.**

**A disciples allows God to author his faith and through abiding in Christ gives Him permission to finish His faith.**

***Hebrews 12:2 says He (Jesus alone) is the author and the “finisher” of our faith.***