

Discipleship with a Purpose Pt 1

Romans 8:28-30

- **Rom 8:28** > says “**God is working all things for good to those who love Him, to those who are called according to His purpose**”. It may not always seem to sometimes when we are suffering heartbreak, tragedy, disappointment, frustration, loss, we wonder what good can come out of it. **Rom 8:29** gives us the answer > that whatever God permits to come into our lives is designed to conform us to the image of His Son.
- When we read this it should take the question mark out of our prayers, for our lives are not controlled by impersonal forces such as **chance, luck or fate**, but by our Wonderful personal Lord, Who is too **loving** to be **unkind**, and too **wise** to **err**. So God in His wisdom foreknew us in eternity past, this was not just intellectual knowledge because God knew everyone who would ever be born, but His foreknowledge embraced only those whom He foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son.
- Therefore everything that’s happened to you and everyone in your life was used by God to fulfill that very purpose. At the end of **Rom 8:29** the goal of all of this is for Jesus to be **first in rank** and **honor** among many brethren, not one among equals, but the One who has the supreme place among His children. **Rom 8:30** > everyone who was predestined in **eternity past** is also called for **service in present time**, meaning we not only hear the gospel but we also respond to its call to service as well.
- Remember all are called, as everyone has some kind of encounter with God, but only a few genuinely respond to the conversion producing call of God that changes people’s lives forever. Which is what we are going to study in the next few weeks > what does it mean to have your life changed forever, what does that look like, how can I tell if it’s a move of the Spirit or the flesh.
- This series is meant to take some of the mystery out of our walk with Christ, too many times people act like they don’t know what to do when it comes to following Jesus, and truth be told we’ve made it far more confusing than it has to be. I would like to show through scripture “**what God does when we follow**” how He’ll reveal to us what He wants and expects > **1Cor 2:7-16**- here for all to see is “**Knowledge with a purpose**” God has made available wisdom previously hidden, as not everyone is going to get it, for it escapes the wise but is found by the humble.
- **V9-10** is where our confidence should come from concerning hearing and knowing God’s plan for our lives, often people equate **V9** as speaking only to when we are in heaven, but **V10** lets us know this applies to our present life as the Spirit which currently lives within us is revealing to us the deep things of God.

- **V11-12** human intellect alone cannot receive this, which is why higher education is so against scripture, to them it's inconceivable that they exist to please someone other than themselves, and that they will be judged based on their obedience to Him. **V13-16** so the unsaved will not accept these truths only the saved, those who have the mind of Christ.
- So **knowledge** with **purpose** should produce **wisdom** that leads to **discipleship**, as the **1st** thing scripture tells us about being a believer is being a disciple. You've heard it's been said that "every disciple is a believer but not every believer is a disciple", because being a disciple means giving up our rights and independent thinking in order to achieve a higher purpose of serving the Lord, this causes many to reject the discipleship process right then and continue serving self.
- An example of this is found in **Math 4:23-25**, **Jn 6:2-** the people saw the signs and experienced the healings and that's what motivated them to follow the Lord. Others came not just for the healings but for the food > **Jn 6:26-27**. Then Jesus gives an enlightening message about total surrender to Him and what that will take and what that looks like > **Jn 6:54-55**. **Jn 6:60,66-** gives the people's response > it's too hard, but **Jn 6:67-69-** tells us the disciples answer, notice it wasn't the healings, signs and wonder, nor the food but His Word that convinced them to follow
- The **1st** part of being a disciple is to **love** and **follow** God's Word, that's where the wisdom comes from, for in order to receive knowledge with purpose one must desire the scripture that shares it. **Jer 15:16**, **Ezek 3:1-3-** both were told to speak an unpopular message in a very difficult time, as Judah was on the doorsteps of being conquered by the Babylonians, to prepare them for this daunting task God commands them to consume the Word in order to minister to the themselves and the people, and although the message and task was hard the Word was joyous and sweet.
- But it's not always like that > **Rev 10:8-11-** John is told to take the Word and eat it as well, it was sweet in his mouth, and bitter to his stomach. How many meals have we had like that, it tasted good but it didn't agree with your constitution, same here, it tasted good to John but what he had to say to the people and what was going to happen to the world upset his tummy. Yet that didn't stop him from doing what the Lord commanded, just because I don't feel like doing something or it makes me uncomfortable or fearful if it's God's will I must still do it.
- This is what separates someone who only wants to be associated with Christ from someone who is truly following Christ; it's the difference between a **casual acquaintance** who knows of Jesus and a **devout disciple** who's given their life to Jesus. One that when they hear his command will be willing to leave it all and get up and follow Christ > **Jn 1:38-49-** each one who met Jesus went and told someone else, they couldn't adequately describe Him but they could open their mouths and invite others to find out for themselves.

- A true disciple can't keep God's life changing grace to themselves they have to go and tell others of the goodness they've found > **Lk 5:27-32**- after leaving his job, family, and mindset, Mathew is seen inviting his former coworkers to meet Jesus