

08/30/26 Message

Part of FollowJourney of Discipleship

August 29, 2026

Message: Be the Fish

Series: Follow

Background

I'm approaching this series as if we are all in the same stage of our journey with Jesus, at the beginning. For some, this will be a review, but for most it will be a guide for what comes next. For all of us, if we'll let God work in and through us, we'll grow closer to Jesus and each other.

—Pastor Chad

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

19 "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

It's a circle of life with Jesus at the center. When you jump on the circle, it should be your goal to reach out and grab everyone you can and pull them on the circle with you. There's a lot more to it, but it's a great illustration. When you commit your life to Jesus and you commit to following Jesus, then you become His disciple. It's like being a student. You're only a student as long as you choose to be. That's the problem with this thing we call the spiritual journey. So many of us choose Jesus when we need Him, but when life is good, we forget all about Him. We stop being a student!

—Pastor Chad

- The spiritual journey is intended to be a LIFELONG commitment where you start and never stop.

What is a Disciple

- A disciple is a CHILD of God
 - **1 John 3:1** - See how very much our Father loves us, for He calls us His children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know Him.
- A disciple is a FOREIGNER in this world
 - **1 Peter 2:11** - Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls.
- A disciple is an AMBASSADOR for Jesus
 - **2 Corinthians 5:20** - So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"

Earlier in the 2 Corinthians passage, Paul tells us when we choose to follow Jesus, we become a new person, a new creation! The old life is gone, and a new life has begun. If that doesn't happen, I have three words for you... It didn't take! It's straight out of God's Word, when you belong to Christ, you become a new person. You become a child of God; you become a foreigner in this world; and you become His ambassador. That means you represent Him in this world. When people see you, hear you, they should see Jesus in you. It's a transformation; a change, where we become less like me and more like Jesus.

—Pastor Chad

Three things happen when you grow in your faith and grow closer to Jesus:

- Your relationships become stronger
- You have more inner peace
- You look forward to the future (as never before)

The goal in the first century wasn't simply to know what the teacher knows, the goal is to become like the teacher. Christianity isn't about simply believing in Jesus. It's about becoming a disciple of Jesus. And

discipleship is about arranging your life around following Jesus.

First Disciples

It all started when Jesus chose His first disciples. Jesus had spent about 30 years on earth, and He knew His time was coming to an end, and it would be time to go back to heaven. It was time to prepare for the future, to plant the seed of the future church that would continue to do His work on earth once He was gone.

—Pastor Chad

Luke 5:1-11 (NLT)

5 One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God.

2 He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets.

3 Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

5 "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again."

6 And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!

7 A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.

8 When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man."

9 For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

10 His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!"

11 And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.

- Before you can be a FISHER you have to be the FISH

Key verse:

Luke 5:8 (NLT)

When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, “Oh, Lord, please leave me, I’m such a sinful man.”

Caught!

That’s the response of a man who suddenly realizes he is standing in the presence of something, someone, far bigger than he understood a minute ago. In an instant he emptied himself and became nothing so Jesus could become his everything! He was caught! Jesus was the fisherman and Simon became the fish!

—Pastor Chad

That’s when Jesus gave him a mission!

“Come, follow Me, and I’ll show you how to fish for people!”

Discipleship is ultimately about doing what Jesus did the way he did it. Love the people he loves. Serve the people he serves. Doing the things he did, the way he did it, replicating his character, his ways, and his mission!

- And it starts when you’re CAUGHT
- You have to believe to FOLLOW
 - As you follow, Jesus shows you the WAY
 - To follow, you have to LET GO

Matthew 4:20 tells us Peter and Andrew left their nets at once and followed Him!

Matthew 4:22 tells us that James and John immediately followed Him!

They left behind their jobs, their communities, their friends, their families... The issue wasn’t whether those things were bad or sinful, the issue was whether or not Jesus was more important! Sometimes we ask if something is wrong or sinful, but what we should be asking is this keeping me from Jesus!

—Pastor Chad

The world might ask, "What can Jesus do for me?"

The disciple will ask, "Jesus where are you going? Because that's where I want to go."

Jesus doesn't want a single experience. He wants your life. He wants a lifelong journey with you!

—Pastor Chad

Wrap Up

Three questions for today:

- Am I just believing in Jesus or am I following Jesus?
 - Jesus said, "Come, follow me!"
- What nets am I still holding to?
 - What is Jesus asking you to release this morning?
 - What keeps pulling or holding you back?
 - Is anything more important in your life than Him?
- Who am I becoming?
 - Discipleship isn't just about going to heaven, it's about who you're becoming along the way.
 - Are you becoming more like Jesus; more loving, more forgiving, more generous, more patient, more compassionate, more obedient, more faithful?

If you've been following Jesus for 10 years, there ought to be evidence that you've spent 10 years with Jesus. Look at the disciples. There was evidence these folks had spent three years with Jesus! All it took was three years, and churches were planted, people were converted, lives were changed and people were saved, the world changed because a group of men and women spent three years with Jesus. Do our lives look like that?

—Unknown

The first question isn't who you're fishing for.

The first question is, has Jesus caught you?

The journey of a disciple begins when you fall on your

knees before Jesus and say, "I'm a sinner. I'm nothing. But I want you to be my everything." Expect Jesus to say, "Come, follow me!" Your discipleship journey begins when you say, "You caught me, I'm ready to follow you." And then, you do it!

—Pastor Chad

- Discipleship begins with SURRENDER

Let Jesus catch your heart.

Let Jesus change your life.

Let Jesus lead you!

Be the fish!

Then get ready, because once He catches you, He's going to teach you how to fish!