

Sermon Notes

August 27, 2020

Sermon Topic: Making Disciples: How We Do What We Do Part 2

Well, good morning, and welcome to Bridge Fellowship Church. It is so good to have you here today. My name is Douglas, and I get to serve as the Lead Pastor. To all of our guests, joining us whether you are online or in the building; good morning. It's good to see all of you. I want to say a good morning to everyone else.

For the past two Sundays, we've been talking about our mission, what God wants us to do until Jesus returns or He calls us home. Our mission is to bridge people back to God through the Gospel and grow healthy disciples. This mission is two-fold and it comes directly from Matthew 28:19-20, where Jesus commanded His disciples to "make disciples.

Like Jesus in (Matthew 9:35-38) we see the need, and have been moved to do something about it. The number of people who are godless, who don't have anyone to guide them spiritually is great. As a church, we want to do our part, and for the foreseeable future we're working to reach 1% of South Raleigh with the Gospel.

We desire to help our community know Jesus as Lord and establish a healthy relationship with Him. We want the community to constantly grow and share their faith with others. We already have two key elements essential for the Job: God's Spirit is in us, empowering us to do good works and directing our lives.

We have the key to salvation. We have the Gospel, which is the only thing able to bring people who are spiritually dead to life. Only the Gospel has the power to save people from Satan's grasp, and to connect them back to God. God has given everything that we need.

□That's what we're about. The bulk of our time, energy, and finances will be given to evangelizing the lost and growing healthy disciples. People who continue to grow in godliness.

In order to make our vision a reality, we've got to have a process. A way to effectively pursue our vision. So last week I introduced our *Disciple Making Process* to you. In all, there are four primary steps, which come directly from scripture. (Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 2:42-47)

1. WITNESS JESUS TO NON BELIEVERS. We take the Gospel to people who don't know Jesus and tell them about Him. We share with them our salvation story and invite them to put their faith in Jesus.

We do this as a church through outreach events where we go out into our community and we evangelize on a personal level. We leverage existing relationships to share Jesus. We start new friendships with non believers so that we can earn a chance to share Jesus with them. We have to be intentional.

After a person professes faith, they need to be baptized. Baptism is an outward profession of inward changes. It identifies you with the entire body of Christ. It symbolizes a person's death to who they used to be before Jesus and their new life in Jesus where they no longer live for sin, but rather they live for Jesus.

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At our baptism service next week, I'll go into greater detail, before the candidates get baptized. I want you to understand from a Biblical standpoint why we baptize new believers'

□ After a person gets saved, the next step is for them to join our Worship Gathering. Christianity is a team sport; you can't do it alone. You need a set time and place to come together with other believers.

Our second step and this is where we left off last week is Worship Jesus. Worship is the act of coming together with other believers to celebrate Jesus. After a person gets saved, they need to join a local church. They need to gather together with other believers.

So that they can partake of community – thus getting the support and love they need. A place to Praise Jesus for who he is and what he's done for them. A place to learn how to live for Jesus in this sin tainted world.

This is exactly what we see happening in Acts 2:42-47 amongst the assembled believers. Turn with me to Acts 2, its first book after the Gospels in the NT; Matt, Mark, Luke, & John)

Let's read Acts 2:42:

"They **devoted** themselves to the **apostles' teaching**,...
46 Every day they devoted themselves to **meeting together in the temple**, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, **praising God** and **enjoying the favor of all the people**. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." (Acts 2:42a, 46–47, CSB)

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These were brand new Christians. They needed an environment that was conducive for growth. A place to be disciplined, where they could learn how to live for Christ. So, the Apostles (*early church leaders that were hand-picked and disciplined by Jesus to continue his Gospel ministry*) meet together with them.

In fact, the word "devoted" tells us that going to "temple" or in our case gathering as a church was vitally important. Both the veteran and new saints prioritized meeting together.

They Gathered together in a loving environment where: the scriptures were taught, Jesus was praised, and the members encouraged one another.

It's our duty as a church in our community to welcome new believers into the family. To welcome our guest. There should be an atmosphere of love in this place. People should come here and leave feeling loved. They might not like where the building is located or my preaching style, but at the very least they should feel cared for while they're with us.

Whenever a person professes faith in Jesus during one of our services, like when a guest joins us, or people come back after being gone for a while, they should feel loved by us. Our arms and hearts should be opened wide to them. They should feel loved.

The same way you welcome a new baby into your family. Newborns make us smile, it's impossible to look at an infant and not feel affection for them. I love holding babies. I love being around babies. It warms my heart to be with them. When you look in their eyes all you see is potential and you wonder how God is going to use them. You wonder who they'll become. I'm amazed that God trusts us with such a great responsibility.

New believers come gleaming with potential. It's our job to welcome them into this family, to teach them how to worship God, to disciple them, and care for them.

I'm proud to be a part of a church that is known for being a compassionate, safe environment to worship in. A place where all are welcome, regardless of your sin issues, your skin color, gender, education, or how much money you have. We've worked hard to create a welcoming environment, and we do what's necessary to keep it that way.

Having established the importance of being a welcoming church, we can discuss the activities we engage as a gathered church to make disciples. Beginning with celebrating Jesus.

1. CELEBRATE JESUS . We use our voices to celebrate Jesus. Everything you see happening during the singing portion of our service is used to direct your heart vertically and give you words to praise Jesus with. This means from the slides, lightings, instruments, band members. They're all here to direct us in praising Jesus.

We sing to Jesus. Jesus is God, He's our savior! Each week Taylor, our Worship Leader, selects music that is themed to the sermon series. He makes sure that the lyrics are biblically accurate and that our praise is being pointed vertically to God.

The singing portion of our service is all about Jesus. This is our time to thank Him. To tell Him how much we love him and what He means to us. It is our time to be reminded that God is sovereign over heaven and earth and that He's got everything under control.

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It's our time to stand in awe of Him, as we recall His wondrous works. It's our time to be reminded of what He did to save us. Worship keeps us humble and it glorifies God.

Praising Jesus is a big deal, we're devoted to doing it every time we gather. However, as you join us in doing it, make sure that your praise is real. Be authentic with your praise. This is a word of warning to all believers.

God alone is worthy to be worshiped. He is looking for true worshippers, people who love Him more than they love themselves. People who are committed to Him wholeheartedly.

Listen to what Jesus says in John 4:23 & 24 **"But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth."**

God wants us to worship Him, but He doesn't want us to do it any old kind of way. True worship starts in your heart and in order to worship God sincerely, He has to be in your heart. He has to be in you. In other words, you've got to have a relationship with Him, where He is your Lord.

God doesn't want heartless worshippers, wannabe Christians who are all talk and no relationship. Just like you don't want a passionless love letter from your spouse or someone you care about deeply. What makes getting a love letter so special is the shared relationship you have with that person.

I remember when my mom used to put encouragement notes in my lunch box. I would find them and lunch and read them over and over again. I could be having a bad day, but her note would turn my frown

into a smile. Those notes were precious to me because of the relationship I had with my mom.

God wants us to worship Him wholeheartedly. He wants it to be like, "Come into my house and worship me. Worship me with a sincere heart. Don't front. Don't draw attention to yourself. Just praise me!"

"Sunday should be a continuation of what you've been doing all week. Praising God should be a soundtrack for your life, not a hot single or a one hit wonder. You should have a worship anthology, a collection, a history of praising God."

Our Worship Gatherings should be an atmosphere of love, where we Celebrate Jesus. Whether through song, reading scripture, Spoken word or poems. We just want to praise Jesus.

In addition, as we Gather there's always a teaching component. We teach from the Bible.

2. TEACH THE BIBLE. When we open the scriptures, whether it be from the stage or in a class, our chief goal is to help you see Jesus more clearly.

The Bible isn't a self-help book. God didn't go through all the work of creating and handing it down to us, for us to use it as a self-help book. As a tool to make better versions of ourselves. No, God gave us the Bible to reveal himself to us, so that we could know Him, we could learn about Him, and thrive in a relationship with Him.

From day-one, God created us to have a personal relationship with Him and to glorify Him. In Genesis 2 pre-fall, we had a perfect relationship with God. Everything was working the way it was supposed to.

However, then we broke God's trust. We sinned against Him. Genesis 3 and on is all about God's pursuit of us, to restore us back into relationship with himself.

As you walk through the scriptures you get a fuller picture of God's love and patience for us. God has spared no expense pursuing us. He gave the most precious thing he had to give to acquire us. He sacrificed Jesus for us. God gave himself to save us.

All the teaching at Bridge Fellowship Church coincides with the redemptive work God did on our behalf. When I preach, it's so that people who are unsaved get saved. It is for them to get connected back to God, and begin to live the life they were created for.

For the saved, when I preach it's for you to know and experience God more intimately. I want to inspire you to pursue godliness. I want you to see who God wants you to become, and how to become that person. I want you to be on guard against Satan.

Only the Word of God has the power to do all that plus more. Only it has the power to exact lasting change in your heart. The Bible feeds our soul. It builds us up. We can't make it without it, that's why we teach it and only it.

Look at what the Apostle Paul tells Timothy, a young pastor, about God's Word and the Christians under his care in (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17, CSB)

Real, quick let me share with three things the scriptures do for us:

Teach us Biblical Doctrine: God gave us His word and it's just as profitable today as when He first inspired it to be recorded. The Bible is an indispensable instrument for teaching sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is Biblically accurate instructions that direct and influence every aspect of a Christians life. Doctrine is the lens by which you view the world. And it influences your decisions.

For example, the Bible teaches that all humans are made in God's image and are precious to Him. Therefore, we love all people and treat one another with respect.

Rebuke and expose our sin to us: The Bible not only teaches God's truth, but it also teaches us the truth about ourselves. It shows us who we really are on the inside. It shows us the way God sees us, and that can be painful. IT can hurt when we learn that God isn't pleased with us because of the way we've been behaving.

We may get away with our dirt for a while. But sooner or later we'll read a passage of scripture or hear a sermon that exposes us. Until we confess our wrong doing to the Lord and repent, we won't have peace.

It will be like trying to sleep with sand on your sheets, you won't be able to get comfortable. You'll toss and turn. Your guilt will irritate you to no end.

Corrects and trains in righteousness: God's Word not only rebukes us when we sin, but it also corrects and trains in righteousness. It shows us the pathway to take so that we can keep growing in godliness. So that we can keep maturing spiritually.

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The Bible provides us with principles to navigate life with. Principles for: how we spend our time, how we care for our family life, how we use our money, how we raise our children, how we conduct ourselves in marriage, sexual relations, personal discipleship, and much more.

Truly, the Bible is profitable, it trains us in righteousness and helps us navigate this life. And so, every time we meet as a church. We're going to open our Bibles and learn from God. We're going to hear what he has to say on a given issue and respond accordingly.

We invite God's Word to shape us into who God wants us to be. We will teach through the entire Bible, Book-by-book. Paragraph-by-Paragraph. We want you to understand what the Bible actually says and how it applies to your life.

□ Our Worship Gatherings are a welcoming environment where we Celebrate Jesus, Teach the Bible, and last, but not least encourage one another.

3. ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER . This is the third component to Worshiping Jesus. As we come together for our Sunday Gatherings we encourage each other. Just like the First century Church in Acts 2:47, we help each other when we come together.

All of us need to be encouraged. And when believers come together, we inspire one another. Believers thrive on fellowship; we need to be with like-minded brothers and sisters.

Coming to church is more than just a good suggestion, it's what God desires for us. Check out what He says about the church coming together in (Hebrews 10:25)

"...not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25, CSB)

We shouldn't give up meeting together, like others do. We should come together and encourage one another, especially as you see the end drawing near. The dark times we live in, and the difficulty of life should prompt you to be even more devoted to your church family.

Church is a place where you can give love and receive it. You can get spurred on to keep living for Jesus. You get to experience the joy that comes from using your skills to help others. It's a place where we share our struggles and get Godly advice regarding how to proceed.

Church is the place where you get reminded of who you used to be and how God has matured you. Church is the place where you get inspired, as you watch New Christians being born. The assembled body gives us hope that's too amazing to put into words.

We're better together, and we need each other. So, let's take advantage of our opportunities to worship together.

I pray that you see that the gathered church is more than a building, people, and Bibles. As we gather for worship the Lord uses our time together to shape us into the men and women He wants us to be.

He does that by directing our praises up to Him through songs, teaching us more about himself and what he expects of us through his Word. We get inspired to keep living for Jesus through our relationships with one another.

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After a new believer gets saved, the next step is to belong to a local church. The next time we gather, we'll further discuss our disciple making process.

□ *Let's pray.*

- 1% reached is huge... you can do it Lord
- help us to focus... & encouraged

O God, give us

Serenity to accept what cannot be changed,

Courage to change what should be changed, and

Wisdom to distinguish one from the other.

Key			
(SL) = Slide	(SL-T) = Text Slide	(SL-M) = Map Slide	(SL-P) = Picture Slide
(SL-BI) = Big Idea slide	(SL-L) = List or Table Slide	(SL-MX) = Multiple click slide (nested slide)	Green = transition/movement
BTT = Back to the text	IOW = In Other Words		