

# Sermon - Maturing disciples

Disciple is: **“A person centered on Christ by Christ, through his word, with his people, and on his mission.”**

## OUTLINE:

1. What is maturity?
  2. How do we become mature disciples?
  3. How do we often miss this?
  4. How do we begin?
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1. What is maturity?
    - Maturity involves gospel driven growth in Christ-likeness and Christ's nearness! : **Walking with Christ towards His likeness with greater nearness.**
    - Colossians 1: 3-14
    - William Romaine, who was one of the leaders of the eighteenth-century revival in England, wrote, "No sin can be crucified either in heart or life unless it first be pardoned in conscience.... If it be not mortified in its guilt, it cannot be subdued in its power."
  2. How do we become mature disciples?
    - *Colossians 1: 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (ESV)*
    - Discipleship: What it is not?
      - TOO Narrow: one on one discipleship ONLY / group based / content based
        1. A program curriculum to go through
        2. A person to follow / group to belong to that shares and holds each other accountable.
        3. Problem that it can be man centered / performance driven
      - TOO Broad: everything is discipleship / all of church is discipleship.
        1. Everything is discipleship... when everything is discipleship nothing is discipleship
        2. Me and Jesus are good - I don't need to be in a group to grow!!
      - BOTH definitions tend to buy into this lie:
        1. more information leads to transformation

- 2. Both tend to put man at the center.
  - Discipleship: What it IS?
    - A relational process that God does through fellow disciples, to center all of life, on all of Christ, till the end.
      - 3. A relational process - from Colossians you can tell Paul loves these people... prayer / intentionality / he sees himself like a spiritual parent
        - 2 Tim 2:1,2
        - 1 Thes 2:8
      - 2. God does through his church! Individuals and the body of Christ are on display!
        - “POINT leadership / team discipleship”
        - v.29
      - 3. Center all of life on all of Christ: “ALL WISDOM”
      - 4. Till the end... fighting the inertia in our day and day against discipleship being this subtle yet sophisticated form of self-help
3. How do we often miss this?
  - *Colossians 2:1-6*
  - *Both discipleship in us and through us?*
    - Honorable mentions:
      - 1. Replace gospel driven nearness and likeness with performance driven nearness and likeness!
      - 2. Comparison is a killer!
      - 3. People aren't responsive?!
        - Often think that struggle means we are failing in maturity or in discipleship
  - IF you are struggling you are failing / attribute struggle with failure! Struggle is success!
    - “Fighting Well” Maturity in the Christian life is exactly this - to be a mature believer doesn't mean you don't struggle!
    - If we believed this (struggling is success), you and I would far more honest about our struggles. We would HIDE LESS and CONFESS MORE!!!
    - Part of this is because our ID is still built NOT on Jesus and what he says about you / but on spiritual standards set by your community and your own self!
      - 1. For you moms in the room - your id isn't in being a mom it's being a daughter!
      - 2. For you in business - this doesn't work!
      - 3. In sports...

- If you aren't struggling in your pursuit of God..., its highly like that one of these two things have happened
  1. (1) you have thrown in the towel
  2. (2) you have adopted lower standards that aren't Christ itself...
- 4. How do we begin?
  - *6Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*
    - *Fruit / root*
      1. Maturity is gospel driven nearness and likeness to Christ...
      2. LAST WEEK: how did you become a Christian?
        - fruit is praying a prayer / putting off / baptism!!
        - Root: 3 things happened
          - God showed up! You didn't seek God but he came after you!
            1. We love because he FIRST loved us!
          - God showed up through His servants that proclaimed the gospel to you!
          - Holy Spirit did two things!
            1. Convicted you of sin AND
            2. Carried you to Christ!
        - That's How you walk in the gospel JUST AS YOU HAVE RECEIVED HIM!!
  - You have a part to play! Paul had a part, Timothy, Epaphras!
    - When you were saved, you were called!!
    - Just like God works to bring people
  - Go and know and be known as loved (struggling sons / daughters)!