

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message

October 25, 2026 ***"What Can I Do? Multiply yourself"***

I Intro.

Hope you're enjoying October and thank you for staying connected with us. There's a lot going on at NCC and you'll want to keep up with everything that's happening. Stay connected through our social media to keep up with everything that's going on. This is our companion devotional to Sunday's message. It's just a part of all we have to offer to you. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey. We don't want you to miss out on anything. We consider you part of our community. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are fully committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family. If there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know.

II Recap.

We're in the final Sunday of our series: ***"What can I do?"*** I want it to connect with what you may be feeling and thinking about our world and just life in general. I know when you see and hear everything that's going on around you, it's so easy to lose heart and just give up. It feels like the world's problems are too big, there are so many, and there seems to be new and different problems and issues everyday.

We watch the news, hear stuff, read stuff, and ask the question; ***"What can I do?"*** This question isn't always only the vastness of the problems. It often is how tiny, powerless we feel against everything going on in the world. Not only do we feel small and insignificant, and overwhelmed. We don't have any leverage, control, power, or authority to even make a dent in all of the problems we see around us. **Do you often feel like this?**

So, the title of this series: ***"What can I do?"*** is for when you feel powerless. Like you can't make any difference in your little world, let alone the whole world. You want to have hope. You believe in the power of action. But you don't know what those things you can do are. And even if you have a few ideas, you don't know where to begin. Let us help you discover a few things you can do. The first week, we talked about; ***"Being willing to get dirty"***. Meeting people where they are. The second week it was: ***"Grow compassion."*** How to expand our ability to enter into other people's suffering without judgment. Last week was: ***"Take care of our soul"***. How to make sure we do the things that allow us to change the world. Today: ***"Multiply Yourself"***.

III Sunday.

Do you want to hear a really bad minister's joke? *"What was Jesus' greatest miracle? Being a guy in his 30's, having 12 close friends."* Okay, ministers aren't good with jokes. But we're decent with helping us grow. And it leads into our message today. The final emphasis in our series question; ***"What Can I Do?"***. It's the importance of doing life in community. Attending worship is important. We love seeing all of you in person and online. But there is something that just can't happen in this space. That can only happen in more intentional smaller group spaces. By plugging in. That's when we do the work; iron sharpening iron. Deepening people's faith walk through personal interaction.

On Sunday morning, our volunteers are spending quality interactive listening and teaching time with our children and our youth. We have an intergenerational group that meets after the service called After Party, that wrestles with how to apply the message in our day to day lives. We have two women's groups that meet during the week. We have a men's group that meets monthly. A Friday morning prayer group that meets to pray for our church, community, state and country. We just completed an intensive two week course called *"Place"* to help people find their giftedness. We will be starting back our GriefShare, grief support group at the beginning of next year, to help those who've gone through a significant loss. And there will be a new women's group that begins in January. It's in these groups you see the work of being shaped and formed into people who are living more intentionally focused lives becoming who Jesus is calling us to be. It's also where we do the work of multiplying ourselves. I could give you several testimonies of people who would share very specific struggles in their lives they feel they've been able to grow some control over because of small group participation. And many of our baptisms have come from just these smaller groups too. There is something that happens in smaller and volunteer groups that shapes, forms, prepares us in a much deeper way to be agents of change that just attending on Sundays cannot do. Gathering to worship is important and essential. We're so glad you join with us. But when you're ready to level up, deepen relationships, it's plugging in that makes that happen.

Set the scene for the scripture. Context matters. Jesus had just celebrated Passover, introduced a new covenant through communion, washed his disciples feet. And had a 'final conversation' with his disciples. It's what teachers say before the final exam, or parents when they send their kid out into the world after high school. *"If you haven't heard anything I've said, remember this."* Jesus said this.

John 15:9-17 ***"I've loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you'll remain intimately at home in my love. That's what I've done—kept my Father's commands and made myself at home in his love.***

"I've told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends. You are my friends when you do the things I command you. I'm no longer calling you servants because servants don't understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I've named you friends because I've let you in on everything I've heard from the Father.

"You didn't choose me, remember; I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won't spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask the Father in relation to me, he gives you."

"But remember the root command: Love one another.

There ought to be three intentional and significant relationships in your life. There aren't steps, stages in this last message in the ***"What can I do?"*** series. This is specifically designing your life to grow how God intended. And it will be the best way to make a difference in your world.

1. Find others older than you who are pouring into you. Jesus said he loved his disciples the way that he was loved by his father. And he had chosen them to pour that love and wisdom into. Last week we talked about ***"Taking care of your soul"***. Getting away to refill. Part of this getting away to refill is having someone older and wiser to pour into you. Wisdom is basically life truths we acquire through experiences...ours and from others. Something happens we've never dealt with before. And because we want to navigate new things as smoothly, successfully as possible, we hold onto what

we've learned. So, when it happens again, we don't have to start fresh. Life things like; parenting, interviewing for a job, learning some new task or skill. REAL wisdom is watching, learning from others who have gone through what you're going through. And getting some insight, help, tips from an older wiser person. This truth is really important to us at NCC, and we want you to benefit from it. If you want to have an impact on the world around you. Find others older, wiser, who have done what you want to do and learn from them.

2. Find others your age you can share experiences with. This was difficult for Jesus. I mean seriously...who was his equal in ministry? But there are two accounts that support this. First, Jesus went to the temple at 12 years old. We've kind of mythologized this account saying he was teaching them. However, the Luke 2 account says Jesus listened and asked questions. And people there were amazed at his questions and his level of understanding. Jesus was right along with them, seeking out others to learn with. They were all committed to knowing more about their faith. We all need to be with people who aren't afraid to pursue truth through questions and new discovery. This is the heart of our small groups and volunteer teams. They're safe places to lay long held beliefs on the table, and then everyone wrestles with how they understand and practice those truths. That's what having peers, people the same age and on a journey following Jesus, having open honest frank conversations about what that looks like for them. But also without having to force everyone to hold to only one particular view of practice of what it looks like to follow Jesus. Second, we have the account of Jesus being baptized by his cousin John, and stating later; *"I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist."* Those are powerful words of the type of person John was. And Jesus grew up with him. This points to seeking out others who are on the same journey, not necessarily path, as you. Have people in your life, who are curious, open-minded, eager to wrestle with serious real-life things. If you want to have an impact on the world around you. Find others doing the same thing, at the same point you are. Can support each other on this journey.

3. Find others younger than you that you're pouring into. Most Bible scholars say the disciples were between 15-30. Most of them were probably in their early 20's. Jesus found others who had certain qualities Jesus knew he could form into being followers. As powerful as Jesus was, he couldn't do it all by himself. He knew he had to train and teach others what his work was all about. An old saying: *"If you want to go fast...go alone. If you want to go far...go with others"*. Simple truth. No matter how old you are, we say 'seasoned'. Or how young you are, you know things, have acquired wisdom and experiences, others would benefit from. It's said: *every time a person dies, it's like a fully stocked library burns down*. If you want the world to look a certain way, hold important values and principles, it's on you to pass them on. You will not be able to have the impact you want, make the difference to hope to, by yourself. You're not powerful enough by yourself. There will be a point in time when the difference you will make is making sure there are others who follow behind you continuing the work you did. This is why we have Promiseland, a student ministry, and small groups. Because we want to keep this work of NCC helping build the kingdom going. And you will get to see all the things you've experienced and learned, help others who are figuring out how to live. During the last two years of Paul's life, he ministered and taught while under house arrest. If you want to have an impact on the world around you. Find others who are just starting out at a place you've already traveled through. The best way to show compassion and love is to 'be with' them. Helping in ways that you can to make their journey through life easier.

IV Challenge.

Let me close with the first truth Jesus gives his disciples earlier in this passage. This John 15 passage begins with; ***“Remain in my love.”*** Us oldheads call this *“abiding”*. To set up residence, to move into the neighborhood. This is where we began this series. An incarnational practice. To ‘be with’. Remember when you were a kid listening to older relatives talk about their past, relatives who passed on before you met them. And you just picked up little bits and pieces of what it meant to carry on the values of your family and important life truths. That’s what this work is. Multiplication begins with depth not breadth. Jesus narrowed down his followers from thousands, to a 70-72 inner circle, from that 12 core apostles, and then Jesus those 3-4 primary ones from them. And that’s who he poured all of his wisdom and truths into.

Let me remind you why we did this series.

Jesus captures the entire heart of this series with the last verses of this passage.

“I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won’t spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask the Father in relation to me, he gives you. “But remember the root command: Love one another.”

Remember- multiplication comes from and through love. The fruit that love produces remains forever. This is how we make an impact and change the world.

No matter how bad things feel or seem.

You are not powerless. You are not too small or insignificant. You CAN make a difference.

Making a difference, having an impact is hard work. It’s exhausting and draining. ***“Getting dirty”***. ***“Growing compassion”***. ***“Taking care of your soul”***. And ***“Multiplying yourself”*** is never-ending work.

But it’s work we all are called to do. It’s how we can change the world. And know this: **You have everything you need to make a difference!** You can do things that matter, things that are important, and things that can have a meaningful impact. And the work you do now will be carried on by people who follow you. We need you to help us do this work. There will be a cost. But it will be an investment that will return 100 fold. Come join us in this work.