

DISCIPLE MAKING
Messy Discipleship
Luke 5:1-11

I will never forget one mid-afternoon in the year 1996. I had a conversation with a man that I only knew from a work-place context. He asked to meet with me, so we went out in a field and sat down together to talk. He was direct: "I need help." With those simple words, he unfolded to me a story of failure, frustration, and pain. That day, we set up a rhythm of conversations and meetings that changed not only his life and mine, but also the lives of many others in the years to come. This series – and this message - is what that conversation was about. My friend did not need a religion or a program or a series of directives. He needed what I had been given by others during my lifetime. He needed a friend that would DISCIPLE him. And I needed to know that the relationship that I was going to have with him over the next 10 years would be wonderful and challenging and rewarding. And it was MESSY!

The fact that discipleship is messy demands that we need to learn how to disciple others without ILLUSIONS! **In fact, DISILLUSIONMENT happens when we enter a new relationship with unrealistic expectations.** I once preached a message entitled "The Discipline of Disillusionment." [Dis = to be stripped of. Illusion = False impression]

QUOTE: *Disillusionment means that there are no more false judgments in life . . . Many of the cruel things in life spring from the fact that we suffer from illusions. We are not true to one another as facts; we are true only to our ideas of one another. Everything is either delightful and fine, or mean and dastardly, according to our idea!"*

3 COMMON CHRISTIAN ILLUSIONS:

*I am doing pretty well. I am actually no longer apt to commit any really BAD SINS. In fact, I would never knowingly hurt or betray someone that I love; especially God.

*God is fairly predictable. Now that I have a good grasp of Scripture, I know pretty much exactly how God is going to act in most given situations. All I have to do is pray enough, believe enough, and act good enough, and God will keep me safe from all danger!

*My close friends that are believers are not really capable of any serious evil. So, my friendships within the four walls of this sanctuary are all safe and secure!

*I am not an IDIOT! [Just kidding!]

Jesus is our MODEL for discipleship. The difference between him and us is that he did it PERFECTLY. We will not. However, the COMMON GROUND that we have with Jesus in discipleship is that both of us will be working with people that are FLAWED! No story illustrates this better than the story of Jesus and Simon Peter. Today, I would like to begin at the point when Jesus CALLS Peter to become his disciple.

Luke 5:8-11 NIV

1 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. **8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"** 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Messy discipleship means . . .

You have to get in someone else's BOAT!

- *Sometimes you have to GO to someone in their own comfortable setting.
 - This is more NATURAL.
- *You can turn almost ANY SETTING into a context for spiritual growth.
 - Stop the HABIT of quarantining spiritual truth to the CHURCH SETTING.
 - After Jesus finished teaching . . . He did not QUIZ SIMON about his lessons!
 - He did ask him to GO FISHING! [[Sometimes discipleship means having fun!](#)]
- *You must have quiet times ALONE with someone in order to really talk.

After they caught the great number of fish . . .

-“Depart from me Lord, for I am a SINNER!”

Jesus's RESPONSE to Peter's declaration?

NOT – “Oh man, I got in the WRONG BOAT!”

“Don't be afraid! From now on you will fish for men!”

-It is important to REMIND those that you disciple what we have been called to!

*Help them see beyond their own spiritual growth to the growth of others.

***You can disciple 2 or 3 people in a discipleship circle. [Joe's Gym]**

-Jesus did this with Peter, James, and John!

*Jesus's confidence in calling sinners is seen just a few sentences later in LUKE:

LUKE 5:27-31 NIV [Tell the story of Jesus at a MATTHEW PARTY!]

“Why does your master EAT WITH tax collectors and sinners?”

“I have not come to call the righteous, but SINNERS, to repentance!”

*You've gotta get CLOSE to catch em!

***It's MESSY in the bottom of the BOAT!**

**Messy discipleship means . . .
You have to speak the TRUTH!**

Matthew 16:22-25 NIV

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. 21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

*Jesus used QUESTIONS as a COMMON TOOL to encourage thinking and growth!
[Questions were a common rabbinical tool: What is 10-3? What is 5+2?]
 -Discipleship is about SEEKING ANSWERS TOGETHER.

*Jesus gave Peter opportunity to REALIZE and VERBALIZE just who he actually was!
 -He AFFIRMED the TRUTH that God had shown to Peter.
 -He APPOINTED Peter to become a PRIMARY LEADER in his Kingdom.
 "I will give you the keys to the Kingdom . . ."

Don't be afraid to give CHALLENGES to those that you disciple.

*Immediately after this, Jesus REBUKED Peter for his refusal to accept Jesus's prophecy that he was going to suffer and die at the hands of the spiritual elite in Israel! "Get thee behind me, Satan . . ."

*He EXPOSED Peter's fleshly mindset that was opposed to a spiritual mindset.
 -He used this opportunity to teach the disciples to DENY THEMSELVES . . .
 -He reminded them that God's Kingdom comes in God's time and God's way!

**Messy discipleship means . . .
You have to help others see BEYOND their FAILURE.
Luke 22:31-62 NIV**

Jesus INFORMED Simon Peter that Satan was ACTIVELY SEEKING to SIFT him.

-Satan was on the prowl and asking permission to TEST/SQUEEZE Simon Peter.

-Satan was actually after ALL of the disciples in this way. Peter was the bull's eye.

***We must REMEMBER that we have an ENEMY who HATES DISCIPLES!**

-Jesus DID NOT STOP SATAN from carrying out his attack.

*We CANNOT STOP Satan [OR Simon Peter!] from doing what they do.

*Failure is NOT the end! God still accomplishes his purposes in the pain!

Jesus WARNED Simon Peter about his CAPACITY to betray his Lord.

-Warnings like this are a difficult but necessary part of true discipleship.

Jesus PROCLAIMED Simon Peter's RESTORATION even before he had betrayed him!

-Jesus had actually DECLARED that the disciples would sit on thrones in the Kingdom just before he announced that they would all desert him!

Discipleship sometimes involves the ministry of RESTORATION.

-Jesus declared that Simon's work was to RESTORE the others once he has been restored himself. HEALING with a divine PURPOSE!

Galatians 6:1-3 NIV

1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.

Discipleship is messy because it is broken people who are being healed walking with broken people who are doing the same thing. We have no right to look down on or condemn those that stumble, but neither do we need to put ourselves at risk with their sin by not taking necessary precautions.

KEY PRINCIPLES for DISCIPLESHIP:

*Discipleship must be APPROPRIATE and ACCOUNTABLE!

-Men with men; Women with women!

-Don't open doors that make STUMBLING certain!

*Discipleship must be CONSISTENT!

-You have to establish a steady rhythm. **[Daily, Weekly, or Monthly]**

-You have to be willing to SHARE LIFE; not just INFORMATION!

*Discipleship is a LONG-TERM COMMITMENT.

*Discipleship requires heartfelt PRAYER.

*Discipleship CHANGES YOU!

Even though it is MESSY, are YOU willing to disciple others starting today?

Let's pray.