

## **05 | Doing the Word of God**

### THREE STEPS TO DISCIPLE-MAKING

All right, here we are. Step five! The finale of Three Steps to Disciple Making. And this one is about doing the word of God. And this is a good one. It may be, in a sense, the most important. So let's pray and jump into it. Father, thank you for the Word of God. Thank you for the Holy Spirit. Thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ who came to become a human being, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead, and has spoken all of these precious words, powerful words that change our lives and that cause us to become solid disciples of the Lord Jesus and resistant to the chaos and the sickness and the poverty and the shame and the addiction of this world. So Lord once again change us through your word as we come and focus on Jesus and what He's teaching, in Jesus name we pray, amen.

Okay, so let's read our foundational text. These are the words of Jesus. He taught this from Luke 6:46-49. So if you have a Bible, open it up and let's read it together. Luke 6:46-49. Here's what Jesus said, He said, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like. He is like a man building a

house who dug deep and laid the foundation of his house on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them (the words of Jesus) is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell and the ruin of that house was great." Meaning, the ruin of that person's life was great. So, Jesus said, If you're going to call me Lord, Master, if you're going to call me Lord, then you need to follow what I'm saying, because I'm your master. I'm your leader. And of course, He loves us and He blesses us. But nonetheless, He does ask us to do things that we don't want to do. But the question is not whether or not we want to do it. The question is who's in charge? Who is in control? He is. When you become a follower of Jesus, when you become a believer, you commit to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and to obey Him, not to measure up to be saved. No! No one can measure up to being saved. Jesus paid the price on the cross to save us. But He paid the price to save us from sin, not to sin. And so He didn't just take away the consequence of sin, but allow us to stay in the sin and addiction and bondage and sickness and horrible life that He found us in. No, He saved us from that. And His words are redeeming us and restoring us and refreshing us, strengthening us, making us wise, making us solid, giving us solid relationships and marriages, and helping us to be effective and fruitful and successful

in every part of our lives. And so, we need to listen to him but we need to do it.

I remember when I was a kid that my dad on Saturdays, you know, he would work Monday through Friday. On Saturdays that was his day to go out and work in the yard and get things fixed and repaired. Well, my parents had three sons, no daughters, so we didn't have any sisters. It was just us three boys, and I'm in the middle. And so he would come and he'd knock on the door, maybe seven in the morning on Saturday. That's like an ungodly hour for a teenager on Saturday to have to wake up! But he'd say, "Hey, it's time to get up. We're going to go work in the yard!" But we did not want to get up, and I would just stay in bed asleep, you know. But then we'd hear Dad's footsteps coming down the hall because our rooms were upstairs, so you could kind of hear the "boom, boom, boom" and he'd come down the hall and he'd lean his head in and say "I said, Get up!" You know? And then you have to sit up, you know? "Okay, I'm getting up right now, Dad!" And then as soon as he'd walk away, oh back to sleep. Our bodies just felt like they weighed 1000 pounds. However, when we would hear Dad's footsteps coming down the hall for the third time, oh, by the time he poked his head in, we were standing next to the bed. I'm up, Dad. "I'm up, I'm up, I'm up!" Because if you're still in the bed, that's when what we used to think child abuse happened. Oh, my dad would come and he would spank us, and it would be bad, but we were just so tired. What was happening? Well, we would hear him, but

we wouldn't do it. We wouldn't do it until we had to do it. Well, that's not what God's going to do to us. God is not going to come and threaten us and force us. That's not what He's going to do. He is coming to us in love. And He's saying, "you said that you were going to exchange your sinful life and let Jesus die on the cross with that and for Him to give you His righteous life. And you were going to live that way, and this is how you do it. You come in, you hear the words of God and you follow Him. You live that life and you said you were going to do it, but you're not doing it."

So there are two categories of people that Jesus teaches us about. It's people who come to Jesus and hear his sayings, but they don't do it. And then it's people that come and hear and do it. So really, He's not even talking to the people that don't come and hear at all, to the all the nonbelievers that ignore Jesus or they've never heard about Jesus, not even talking about them. He's talking about two categories of people, those who come and hear and don't do and those who come and hear and do. And unfortunately, there are a lot of people who consider themselves believers, but they don't follow Jesus. And at the end of the age, they're going to be surprised. Jesus said that, yes, you are saved by grace, through faith. But you didn't really have faith if you didn't believe in Jesus and walk with Him. You didn't really believe that this salvation happened. And so you proved that by not obeying Jesus. It doesn't mean you have to be

perfect, but you need to follow Him. This is what being a believer is all about. So we're talking in this last step about the final third step. Whoever comes to Me, number one, hears My words, number two, and does them. We must do them.

Now, James 1:22 is where James says, and we'll read through the 25th verse. But here's what James says. He said, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." So in other words, if you come, you go to church or you read the Bible or whatever, but you're not obeying the Word of God. Then he said, you're deceiving yourselves. You're making yourself believe that you're really a follower of Jesus but you're not following Him. You're hearing Him, but you're not following Him. Following is: I obey His words. I do what He says to do.

"Whoever comes to me and hears My words and does them, I will show you who he's like."

"But be doers of the word and, not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he's like a man who observes, or observing his natural face in a mirror." You know, when you look in the mirror and you see the reflection of your face. So it's like a man observing his natural face in a mirror, "for he observes himself, goes away and immediately forgets what kind of man he was." Or it would be like this. It would be like you going to check yourself before you go to work and you're looking in the mirror and you see, "Oh my goodness, like I've got a big zit on my face" or "I've got something in my teeth from

breakfast and it's just big and black, like a pepper" or something. And you see it and you're like, Oh, that's bad! But you walk away and you forget what you saw and you don't take care of that. You don't clean your teeth or you don't take care of that zit on your face. Well then what happened? You walk out and you bear the consequence of having come and the Word of God is showing you something in your life that's not right, that you need to adjust or that it's an opportunity that you need to take. But you walk away and you act like you never read it. And this is what happens to a lot of people. They come to the word as if "I just need to check a box, like, okay, I read it now I'm done with that. Now I'll get on about my day." No, that's not the way this works. We come to read, we come to hear, to listen, to obey. These words are to be revered and respected and obeyed. This is how our lives are changed. It's in the obedience that the life is changed. It's in the doing that the change of our life really happens. And so this is why Jesus said the big distinction between these two categories of people is one of them does not do what they hear and the other one does. And you and I are called to be the ones who do. In fact, just say it out loud. Just say, "I'm called to be a doer of the Word!" Say it again. I am called to be a doer of the Word. Say this, "I am called to obey Jesus, not just believe in Him." Say that again. I am called to obey Jesus and not just believe in Him. Now, when we live like this, it changes our lives. The supernatural

happens in our lives because we're walking with God himself. Jesus is God.

And so let me show you a story from 1 Kings Chapter 17 about a prophet named Elijah. And he was going to be subject to starving to death if God didn't intervene. But let me show you how he did not starve to death, but he actually was very well taken care of, even in hard times, in 1 Kings chapter 17, it says. "And Elijah, the Tishbite of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, (that was the King) as the Lord God of Israel lived before, whom I stand there shall not be do nor reign these years accepted my word." So here's the Prophet. God is giving him a word to say, and he's saying "it's not going to rain any more until I say it's going to rain." Well, he was right. Verse two says, "Then the word of the Lord came to him." So here's God speaking. Whoever comes to me and here's my words and does, them, watch! "Then the Word of the Lord came to him saying, Get away from here, turn eastward and hide by the brook chariot which flows into the Jordan. And it shall be that you shall drink from the brook. And I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." So the Word of the Lord came to him and said, I want you to go to a particular brook of water and you're going to drink water from that brook. But I'm going to send ravens to feed you. Well, other people were literally starving to death. And we read about that in this passage! The drought became so severe that the food dried up, the crops dried up and people started starving. There were no grocery stores. There are no

drive thrus. This is this is the worst thing that can happen economically. So, God spoke to him and said, go to this particular brook. Well, what if he [Elijah] would say, "Oh, I don't like that place or I like this other river better?" Well, he could have gone to a different brook or river, but the ravens would not have brought the food there because when God speaks His words, He is speaking to us and telling us what to do because His power is going to meet us there to make life the way it's supposed to be. That's why we can't just come up with our own words or we can't argue with God or overrule Him, or we can't be wiser than Him because His words already work, because His words bring power and our words don't, unless we speak His words! So, God said, you go to this particular place and I've already commanded the ravens to feed you there. "So he went and did" Notice: he did, according to the Word of the Lord. He was in that second category. Whoever comes, hears, and does. "He did according to the Word of the Lord, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith which flows into the Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening and he drank from the brook." So what happened? What happened was, that while other people were starving, he was well provided for! He's eating twice a day, not just once a day in the middle of a drought, in a famine. Why? Because he heard God speak and he did it. He acted on it. And this is what you and I need to do. We need to hear God, come to Jesus, and hear what He's saying. And then we need to do it, and don't

listen to everybody else, listen to Jesus! And it happened, notice verse seven. "It happened that after a while the brook dried up". Well there was a drought, it hadn't rained still. So the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. "Then the Word of the Lord came to him, (here's a second word) saying Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." A widow of all people! Back in these days, there's no welfare, there's no handouts anywhere. If you don't have a son or a husband to go work and provide to hunt, or something, to bring in food, you don't eat. And this widow was on the verge of starvation. But God said, But I've commanded a widow there to provide for you. So what did he do? He arose and went to Zarephath. He acted on what God said again. "And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed, a widow was there gathering sticks, and he called to her and said, Please bring me a little water and a cup, (which, by the way, was valuable because there's a drought.) Please bring me a little water and a cup that I may drink. And as she was going to get it, (she so nice) he called to her and said, Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand. And she stopped and she said, As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread. Only a handful of flour in a bin and a little oil in a jar. And see, I'm gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die." So see she's saying, "this is our last meal and it's a small one. I have a handful of flour and a little oil in

a jar to make this last", you know, loaf of bread or cake or whatever it was. And she said, "And that's it. Then we're going to die of starvation". She said, "So I don't have enough to give to you." And here's what the prophet told her. Now it's her turn to hear and to do. He said, "Do not fear. Go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first and bring it to me and afterward make some for yourself and your son. For this says the Lord God of Israel, the bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the joy of oil run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth." So she went away and did, according to the Word of Elijah, and she and he, the prophet, and her household ate for many days the been a flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the Word of the Lord, which he spoke by Elijah. So here's the power of God going into operation. Elijah said, "You make me a small cake before you make it. Just make me a little one. Bring it to me and then you can make the rest of it for you and your son. And if you'll do that, if you'll act on this word, then the flour will continue to multiply." In other words, you think you lose the flour and you look and there's still more flour. You pour out the oil. You think you used all the oil. But look, there's still more oil. This is the power of God that's stretching the flour, that's stretching the oil. And it did it all throughout the famine, all throughout the drought. And this lady and her son never did starve.

Now, this is all over the Bible. This is what will happen with you. But you have to commit. You have to obey the Lord. And not just hear, and then do your own thing. Here's another story, 2 Kings, chapter five. It said Naaman and the commander of the army of the King of Syria was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master. So this is a man he's not a Jewish person. He's not from Israel. He's from another country, Syria, that did not have a covenant with God. But he was he was an honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him, the Lord had given a victory to Syria. So he was a great commander for the Syrian army. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. So he had a disease of leprosy and the Syrians had gone out on raids and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. Then she said to her mistress. So she said this to Naaman's wife, the lepers wife, She said, If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria, for he would heal him of his leprosy and Naaman went in and told his master the King of Syria. Thus and thus, said the girl, she said that if I would go down to the land of Israel, to the Prophet, he would heal me. And so then the king of Syria said, go now and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, 6000 shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. Then he brought the letter to the King of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may help him of his leprosy. And it happened when the king of

Israel read the letter that he tore his clothes. And that's how they showed emotion in Bible days. He tore his clothes and said, Am I God? To kill or to make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of the leprosy. Therefore, please consider and see how he seeks a quarrel with me. So the king thought, is the King trying to pick a fight with me to send this man for me to heal? And how am I supposed to heal him? So it was, of course, the little slave girl didn't say that the king could heal him. The little slave girl said the prophet could heal him. And this man instead went to the king. Well, so it was when Elijah, the man of God, the prophet, heard that the King of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king saying, Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elijah's house. And Elijah sent a message to him saying, Go and wash in the Jordan seven times and your flesh shall be restored to you and you shall be clean. But Naaman became furious and went away and said, "Indeed I said to myself, he will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord God and wave His hand over the place of the leprosy and heal the leprosy. Are not the Abanah and Pharpar the rivers in Damascus better than all these waters in Israel?" So he said, why am I going to go dip in the Jordan River? Like we've got better rivers than that in the land of Syria? "Could I not wash in them and be clean?", he said. So he turned and went away in rage.

Notice he heard what to do, but he didn't do it. And his servants came near and spoke to him and said, My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, like climb a mountain or something like that, would you not have done it? How much more then when he says to you, wash and be cleaned? So Naaman changed his mind. It says in verse 14. So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the Man of God. And his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. Now, how did that happen? How did this man get healed of this incurable disease? It happened because reluctantly, and as sort of an afterthought, he obeyed what was said by the Lord. The Lord had said, go down and dip seven times in the Jordan River, and he did. And when he did, he came up, you know, when he came up the first time, he was not healed. When he came of the second time, he was not healed. Third. Fourth. Fifth, sixth. Not healed. But when he came up the seventh time, the power of God had washed and cleansed away that leprosy. And His skin was perfect. Completely restored. Completely restored. Why? Because he obeyed. I cannot emphasize this enough! We must obey the Word of the Lord. We must obey. Jesus said, Whoever comes to me and hears my sayings and does them. See if we want to live in favor with God, if we want to believe in Jesus, be a follower of Jesus, be a believer. Then we don't only come and hear, but we also obey. We do it, we do it.

Hebrews 10:35 and 36 is a powerful passage where God says, "Therefore, do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward, for you have need of endurance so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." A lot of people want God to keep His promises and to make them happen for us, but they don't obey the Lord. So they're not in a position to receive those answers to prayer and those promises. We put ourselves in a position to receive them by believing Him and acting on what He said, by obeying the words of God. And when we do, that puts us in a position to receive. This is so simple and powerful.

Let me give you another story, John 9. It's an amazing story! It says "Now Jesus passed by. He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, say, Rabbi, who sinned? This man or his parents that he was blind from birth?" So obviously they believed him. If you're blind, you must have a problem. Somebody sinned, either you sinned or your parents or somebody. But notice Jesus answered in verse three. "He said, Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work. As long as I'm in the world, I'm the light of the world" Verse six, "And when he had said this, Jesus spat on the ground, made clay out of the saliva, and he anointed or he rubbed the clay on the eyes of the blind man." And verse seven says, "And he said to him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam

(which is translated sent)." So this blind man went to the pool of Siloam. He did what Jesus said to do. He washed and he came back seeing. Oh my goodness, this is blindness being healed! How? By coming to Jesus, hearing what He said and doing it. See, this is so simple. But many people don't do it. But you will. In Jesus name, you will obey the Lord. In Jesus name. You will come every day to the Lord. You will hear His words. You will listen to teachings, and then you'll fill yourself with the words of God. But you will also do the Word of God. You will act on the Word of God. And this is why your life will absolutely be changed. You cannot stay stuck where you are. The power of God's Word will lift you up, deliver you, heal you, restore you, and bless your life. That's how good God is.

Okay, now, listen. Proverbs 24:27 is a verse that I read when I was a young man. I was wanting to get married, I was wanting to date and such. And I read this verse one day just reading my Bible, and it says this "Prepare your outside work. Make it fit for yourself in the field and afterward build your house." I remember down inside I heard the Holy Spirit say, "Read that one again." See, I was going to go on to the next proverb. So I read it again, "Prepare your outside work, make it fit for yourself in the field, and afterward build your house." And then I was going to read it again thinking, "Well, that was just me saying read it again, because I'm not trying to build a house." And I started to read on and I heard read it again, so I read

it again. It was like the third time God read it to me and He said, Prepare your outside work, Jerry. Prepare what I've called you to do outside the home, your career, your calling, prepare that. And that would include Bible College because I was already in Bible College, He said, Make it fit for yourself. Oh, I didn't want to hear that. Oh, I wanted to get married and we'll start the ministry together, we'll do everything together, because I was lonely. But I heard the Lord say, no, make it fit for yourself in the field, in the field, and afterward build your house. Afterward, establish your home, one translation says, And I knew, oh my goodness, the Lord is telling me, "Stop trying to get married right now. Do what I've called you to do." And I did. And thank thankfully I kept serving, the Lord, working, and eventually I was hired full time on staff. And it wasn't long after that until the Lord brought the right person to me. And let me tell you, only God could have picked her. Only God, could have picked her. She's perfect for me. She's perfect for me. Now, this is how we obey the Word of God. When I was making the decision to get married, I was trying to discern, Lord, is this the right person? And God spoke to me through the Word, you know, Proverbs 18:22, "he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord." And Psalm 84:11 says "no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly" and so these are promises. These were promises to me. And so I wanted to make sure that I found the right person, that I wasn't just choosing somebody that I liked, but God didn't choose

them for me. So I thought God and made sure that God was giving me the green light. And when He did, oh, let me tell you, in faith I married her and wow! It's been well over 30 years now and an amazing relationship because of God's word. So I love my wife and I guard my heart and it makes a big, big difference. So I give myself to my wife. I give my romance to my wife, I give my love and attention to her. I don't let my heart go this way or that way or to something on the Internet. No way. Jesus taught me to love her and to lavish her with all of my romantic attention. And because I do oh, it's the most beautiful relationship. Now, some people would say, well, that can't be all that great, just one lady? Oh, no, it is. It's the way God created. It's the best. We are the best of friends. We like to do everything together. Oh, it's fun. We dream about what we're going to do on vacation, it's just the best. We talk about our kids. We talk about our grandkids. Let me tell you, God always knows what's the best. Don't you listen to the world! The world thinks I'm going to get more. I'm going to get more and get more. Well, you go ahead and watch what happens. You'll be empty inside. You cannot fake this. It doesn't work like that. It works the way Jesus said it works. And if you'll do it His way, it'll make all the difference in the world. And I've had this happen time and again where God speaks something to me, it seems counterintuitive, it's not going to work, but it does. I remember with our church back in 2004, the Lord told me to start over. Start over what you're doing, and I couldn't

believe it. We started over four years before that, but He said, Start over again. And so I canceled all the ministries that the Lord said to cancel. We retained only the ministries He said to retain. And let me tell you, it completely changed our church for the better. And we exploded after that. But I had to obey him. I had to obey him.

And let me give you one last example. In January of 2020, the Lord told me, start pushing the ministry of the church down into homes. And I knew this was down in the house churches. Oh, it seems so counterintuitive. Like, why would you do that? Well, then COVID hit and we knew, Oh man, this is God. But I also knew in my heart this is not just for COVID. This is a new way of doing ministry that God is showing us. And now that's what is thriving today. Now the discipleship that's happening off campus, the house churches that are being opened up, all the discipleship groups that are happening, all of this is happening because I obeyed the Lord when none of that was happening. But I knew God spoke to me. I knew Jesus was leading me. And now this is actually as I speak. Even today, before this recording, I was talking to people who were from other nations who are inviting us and say, "Please come and bring this, bring this, that God has shown you. Bring it to us and train all of our leaders and pastors!" How could that happen had I not obeyed the Lord and trusted Him? Jesus always knows best and He wants to bless your life. But you need to come to Him and you need to hear His sayings and you need

to do them. So I challenge you to listen to these messages, to go over and over them, and to believe God that He will bless you just as He said. God bless you. Thank you for being a part of this walk. And we'll see you in the next walk.

