

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"DISCIPLE MAKING DISCIPLES" | ACTS 18:18-28 | PASTOR ANDREW PAULSEN

WARM-UP QUESTION:

If you could be mentored by any celebrity or famous person in history, who would it be and why?

"Being Discipled Doesn't Require certain experiences, knowledge or background" Acts 18: 18-24

Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos all had different experiences, training and backgrounds as they were discipled by others. **Why do people use their background or education as excuses to avoid being discipled? How can Jesus followers overcome that?**

"Being Discipled Requires humility and practice" Acts 18: 18-24

Aquila, Priscilla and Apollo were humble learners and put into practice what they saw and learned. **Why is humility so important for someone to be discipled/mentored? Why is demonstrating and applying faith hard but necessary?**

"Making Disciples Is Helped by a Holistic Lifestyle with Hospitality" Acts 18: 26

Aquila and Priscilla practiced their faith and experienced discipleship at work, the synagogue and especially in the home. **What prevents people from having a holistic lifestyle with their faith and practicing hospitality? Why is that so effective?**

Application

What is one way you can intentionally create an opportunity to be discipled or to disciple someone this year?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

God calls us to be disciple making disciples. The example Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos set for Jesus followers show anyone can be discipled and disciple others when they have a strong belief in God's love and goodness. **What keeps you from being discipled or discipling others? Have you asked God to show you more of His love and goodness? Ask God to give you a vision of Him that leads to passion and courage to have a lifestyle of discipleship.**

Sunday Message 1.7.24: Disciple Making Disciples

Intro

A guru was asking his disciples what was something good that they did recently to bless others.

The first said "I gave money to a homeless man"

The second said "I helped my neighbor with the chores"

The third said "I helped an old lady cross the street"

The teacher was very impressed and had high hopes for the next.

The fourth then said "I prevented a murder"

The guru amazed, asked the him how

He replied with "I practiced Self Control"

Good morning Calvary Murrieta! Pastor Brian is on a trip to Nepal with Jen and Dan as they move things along for our Rohingya friends we've committed to. Brian asked me to share today and I thought we'd look at an important part of why he is in Nepal, one part of our mission at Calvary Murrieta: Make Disciples Globally. That comes from the famous Great Commission Jesus gave after he rose from the dead, recorded in Matthew 28:19-20: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Making disciples, that's the main part, that's the action. Unfortunately, too often we all stop short of this. We think a disciple is someone who believes in Jesus, and tries to live a good, responsible life. But to truly be a disciple is to follow Christ in everything, to live our lives as if he was in our position. And what he did and expects us to do is to make disciples. And discipling someone isn't just evangelizing, that's just the start, that's winning a convert. It's walking with them, sharing with them and helping them discover more about who God is and how to better follow Him in all things, "to observe all that he commanded." The apostle Paul summed it up well in 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" Disciple making disciples are students of Jesus looking to pass on what they learned. But what does that look like? We can get a view of this in Acts 18: 18-28. This is a story of the early church and involves 3 lesser-known people who were so impactful because of taking this idea of making disciples to heart. This is a short story on Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos.

Let's Pray

Acts 18: 18-28

¹⁸ After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. ¹⁹ And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. ²¹ But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus.

22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. 23 After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. 27 And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing “ the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

What do we learn about

Being Discipled...

Doesn't require a certain background- Apollos is a Greek name, a Greek god, and he was from Alexandria, a city in Egypt famous for its library and learning. So we can assume he comes from a family who may have been Jewish but wanted to fit into Greek and Roman culture outside of Israel. So he's an interesting mix of background and family culture.. So for those of you who worry about the gender neutral name your grandson just got or the public high school or university your granddaughter is attending, remember, they'll be ok, God isn't thinking, well, can't use that one now!

Doesn't require experience or knowledge- It says he was an eloquent man or can be translated learned, but he only knew baptism of John, not Jesus resurrected. Apollos was well educated, but that can make it harder to be discipled... you already know a lot so why would you learn from someone else? Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers, so craftspeople, not necessarily educated. Many of Jesus' disciples were famously fisherman. All kinds of experience and knowledge can be discipled.

Requires humility- Apollos, despite his obvious talents, knowledge, and charisma, was willing to listen and learn from these tentmakers. He was open to their instruction. Aquila and Priscilla did the same with Paul, letting him lead them as they worked together and traveled together. C.S. Lewis once said “True humility is not about being perfect, but about being willing to keep growing and learning.” This is why one of our values here at Calvary Murrieta is Learning. It shows humility and leads to deeper relationship with God and others.

Requires practice- The word disciple could be translated as apprentice because back in ancient times, students were expected to imitate their teachers, to demonstrate they had gained knowledge and skill in the real world. Aquila and Priscilla take the model they got from Paul, the lessons and stories, and pass them on to Apollos. Apollos takes what they teach him and applies it as he teaches in Ephesus and later in Corinth. Any apprentice in any trade or field, including one to Jesus, should know they are a disciple and it should be pretty obvious to others, because they are practicing it. One of Brian's sayings I've heard him use many times is that if doctors can

practice medicine, Christians can practice their faith. In both cases, the word practice means demonstrate and apply. Unfortunately, because of sports, we think practice isn't real or authentic. But in this sense, it is real and authentic; it is being doers of the word and not just hearers. It's faith in action.

Making Disciples...

Like being one, it **doesn't require a certain background or special knowledge or experience**. Paul had a violent, criminal record as a Pharisee before he converted to Christianity. Aquila and Priscilla were exiles, kicked out of Rome for being Jewish by the emperor. They had Latin names, coming originally from Turkey area, so they were immigrants and blue-collar workers in the tentmaking craft. Matthew was a tax collector before he joined Jesus, a white-collar worker good with numbers. All disciples others. God can use all kinds of people to make disciples.

Is Rarely Done by One Person- Pastor Brian will continue to teach in Corinthians when he gets back, but he already went through the first four chapters where Paul says he and Apollos were working together to teach and disciple the Corinthians, so there was no need for them to choose sides. God uses multiply people in our lives to grow us. Families, small groups, a community of believers is so impactful. A study by Fuller Seminary showed that young people were more likely to hold on to their faith if they had 5 Christian adults outside their parents involved in their lives: 5:1, not 1:1, not just their families. Apollos obviously had learned from others before Aquila and Priscilla helped him in his faith formation. In fact, this relationship became reciprocal because Apollos would teach in their church in Ephesus, so they learned from him too. That's been my experience most of the time, mutual discipleship that leads to growth for both. Growth for Both, that's a good slogan for a pregnant mom.... with twins... or discipleship.

Is Helped by a Holistic Lifestyle- When you look at Aquila and Priscilla's life, they didn't keep their faith and other parts of their life separate. They learned about Jesus on the job from Paul, they used their finances to support Paul and the local church, they used their job skills to travel with Paul to help spread God's word, their marriage was a ministry partnership and they used their home to minister to others: Paul stayed with them and later Apollos learned in their home, and their home was used as a house church too. This is what practicing faith genuinely looks like, or what some scholars called "lived theology", which is so much better than just academic theology.

So your workplace is part of your discipleship opportunity, God goes with you to your job, don't have the split personality of Christian on Sundays at church and fill the blank at work. Hobbies can be pathways to be disciplined or to disciple others.

And another thing for families, especially parents. As you raise your kids and develop rhythms for your family, do you see them as part of your ministry to others? Here is a photo of my baby boy being held by an orphan from the Philippines with my wife's adoption agency. Why did we take them there, letting him be held? It breaks down barriers with others, being vulnerable in powerful ways. Kids can be powerful assets in ministry. I know a woman whose boys were friends with a kid here at Calvary. They went to the same public school (yes, God can work in public schools!) They would hang out after school and then started coming to Calvary Kids and

VBS and then the mom started coming as her marriage was falling apart. She took part in our Operation Unity a couple of years ago. She ended up having to move, but she joined a church in her new town and got baptized, growing in her faith in part because of kids making connections. Her path to being discipled was through her kids. So parents, are you allowing God to use your kids? Are you raising them to be flexible and modeling an openness to others, or is your current lifestyle closed off in the name of safety and schedules? Grandparents, I saw this meme the other day: retire from your job, not your life. Are you looking for ways to still serve and disciple others, or feel you've been there done that, or are you hiding behind your grandkids and only serving them? I know, I'm being harsh, but anything, even a good thing, can become an idol, including family or jobs or hobbies, and gets in the way of following God's call. Remember the parable of the talents. The one servant who was called evil was the one who hid his talent out of fear and did nothing. Be like Joshua who said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Is Helped by Hospitality. Aquila and Priscilla's lived theology naturally leads to hospitality, something our culture struggles with more and more with our Ring doorbells, security cameras, emergency alert texts and fear of predators. We have taken stranger danger to a new level. So when it says in Hebrews 13:1-2 "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some have entertained angels", we Americans say, no way, that's stupid, God can't be serious. One of my highlights of 2023 was leading a small team to Kosovo to serve with Urim and Teuta Zogaj. We saw hospitality in ways we never experience in America that impacted all of us: from Teuta's colleagues closing their office for a couple of hours in the middle of the workday just to have coffee with us and share stories, to a poor family feeding us a traditional Albanian meal to Urim and Teuta having us stay in their home while they stayed with his parents. It hit the heart. That's what hospitality does. One of the things I teach my Community Group Leaders in my leader training is that hospitality is simple: it only takes giving the gift of time and a smile. So many of us in Southern California believe the lie that you have to have a nice house or a special talent with food or storytelling to be hospitable. But as I saw in Kosovo and have experienced in so many other ways, that's just not true. So what if you have a small apartment, so what if you can't cook, so what if you aren't good at telling jokes, you can still give the gift of time and be generous. One of my community groups meets here at the church even though some of the leaders have a nice house. But getting to their neighborhood is really complicated, so they meet here and are creative with desserts and games and they have beautiful discipleship opportunities. It just takes being intentional with some flexibility and creativity. Speaking of intentional, you've heard Brian share about the book "The Gospel Comes with a House Key" about the conversion of a liberal lesbian through a Christian family's courageous invitation to have her over to dinner, again and again. Their intentionality and vulnerability led to her coming to the Lord and marrying a pastor. What you may have missed is the subtitle of that book, because it's super long: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in a Post-Christian World" Again, in our stranger danger society, what used to be ordinary hospitality is very radical; and it's very impactful to a world that is lonely, isolated, and unfamiliar with the intimacy and vulnerability that comes with it. We can be radically ordinary Calvary Murrieta, we can make an impact.

Ideas

You may have noticed the word practice has shown up a few times, and I want to give you some ideas to put this into practice in your life; how to have opportunities to be discipled or disciple others, or at least to make a connection that will lead to that. I do this not that I'm the expert, but more to get your own creativity flowing and hopefully to inspire you to move from hearers to doers, to show our church value of participation. Truly being discipled and discipling others both involve vulnerable humility that takes courage. So yes, I'm challenging you and it will stretch you, but it can lead you to deeper walk with Jesus. All of these ideas involve connecting with others, because discipleship is not something we experience by ourselves. God intended us for community.

An easy one is to share your testimony with a Christian friend or relative and listen to theirs or share with each other what God has been showing you lately. We can always learn from each other and practicing sharing our story of following Jesus is always good.

Do a family devotion or bible reading plan for a period of time. My family uses Advent and Lent each year to take a little more time in the word and for my wife and I to disciple our boys. Lent will start in just a month, so pick a gospel or look for a resource that could work for you and your family.

Join one of our small group ministries, whether it's the One Another series in Women's, or a Men's Group, or be part of our Young Adult Ministry, or join a co-ed Community Group. Small groups automatically create a space and place for deeper connections that lead to discipleship opportunities.

Fill out a ministry application and gain the opportunity to disciple kids in Calvary Kids, or middle schoolers in 678, or high schoolers in Rise High. Youth haven't learned how to hide or fake their way through things as well as us adults, so discipleship happens in cool ways.

Join the Biblical Counseling Class Pastor Dan is starting soon, or one of the classes Andrew Lacasse will be teaching this year; learning and growing under them.

And here's one that goes really well with our focus on Fellowship for the year. Invite a ministry leader or volunteer that you benefit from to lunch or coffee or even better, over to your house for a meal. How many of you have kids or grandkids in Calvary Kids? 678? Rise High? Don't you want to get to know those teachers, mentors, volunteers? This month, or even today, as you pick up your kids or eating your donut... or both, ask if there's a Sunday you can take them out to lunch or come over after church to eat. Listen to their story, share some wisdom as God leads. For example, one of my former youth kids, Jared Whitney, is serving in Rise High with the junior boys. He's great, fun to talk to, and is also skinny, he could use a meal.

One other thing, being discipled and discipling someone increases accountability. As you are humble and vulnerable and receive and give wisdom, you now have someone who knows more about you and is involved in your life. This makes you think about your own walk with God and how you are living it out. That kind of awareness improves your lived theology. That is so good, but at first it is scary. Don't shrink from it.

Charlotte and I are starting pre-marital counseling next week... not for us, we're married, don't start a scandalous rumor. But one of my former youth kids and her fiancé asked us to meet with them regularly for the next few months before they get married. This is the 7th time we've done this in my 10 years of being on staff. Each time we do this, we have them over to our house, we have meals with them and they see us with our kids for part of the time and then we talk about really personal stuff, sharing our stories and listening to theirs. My wife and I grow each time, we're challenged to be less hypocritical and actually practice what we're saying for our marriage. It's some of the best help for our marriage we've ever done. My point is we are not perfect in our marriage for sure, but God allows us still to have those opportunities and discipling others helps us grow in powerful ways. Please, you guys don't have to be a pastor to do discipleship. So many of you have wisdom and life experiences from God that you can share with others.

And that's the key, this has to be from God, coming from authentic faith which starts with believing Him and loving Him. If it's not focused on Jesus and just trading life hacks, than it's not discipleship to Him. Look back at verse 25, it says Apollos was fervent in spirit, passionately teaching others. And look at verse 26, it says Priscilla and Aquila explained to Him the way of God more accurately, courageously sharing about Jesus' death and resurrection. Where does that passion and courage come from? A strong belief in God's love and goodness. The reason so many Christians aren't disciple making disciples is because they don't really believe all the things Jesus said and did and are willing to apply them to their lives. There's fear and doubt which lead to a lack of trust because we don't see God as the loving Father and Creator He is. But God so loved the world He gave his one and only son that whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. Getting to know Jesus intimately, spending time with Him will lead to such joy that doing what He says, including making disciples, will be a pleasure, because we know he has good for those who love Him. So pursue God, fall deeper in love with Him, and you'll naturally become a disciple making disciple.

Let's Pray

We are going to take communion right now. This is another one of Jesus' commands, to remember His death until He comes again It's symbolizes that we need His sacrifice, that He died for us. So please during this next song, if that is what you believe, please go to one of the nearby tables and take a cup with bread and juice. You don't have to be perfect, in fact, you could believing this for the first time right now. This is for the imperfect who confess their need for Jesus as Savior.

1 Song

On the night Jesus was betrayed he took the bread and broke it, saying this is my body, broken for you, do this is remembrance of me. And in the same way he took the cup and said this is my blood, poured out for many, drink in remembrance of me.

Pray

Last Song

Disciple Making Disciples have a love of Jesus full of awe and wonder. Next week, Andrew Lacasse will be looking at just 1 aspect of who Jesus is that will open our eyes a little more to His greatness. If you have questions or need prayer, please come to our team up front. Enjoy the rest of your day!