

The Story: Chapter 23

How to be Like Jesus

Ephesians 5:1-2

5 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

So, in order to imitate Christ, let's look at how His ministry begins and then see how that can relate to us after we surrender our lives to Him.

KEY: When you meet Jesus and surrender your life to Him, this should be a picture of your next steps.

- **HUGE PART: If you met Jesus years ago, and have still not taken these steps, this is a great way to start.**

How do we see Jesus' ministry beginning?

We actually see the beginning of Jesus' ministry when He was 30 years old.

- John the Baptist had been telling people he was coming.
- Now, remember, he was the cousin of Jesus. (That's gonna matter)

So, the first thing we see Jesus do as His ministry begins...

1. He was **Baptized**.

Matthew 3:13-17

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. ¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Why?

- To give an example of **obedience** to His followers.

- It also helped Him be more **relatable** to the people of God.
- He humbled Himself and came in human form... (Phil. 2:5-8)

Here is the **result** of His baptism:

Matthew 3:16-17

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

This is Jesus' coming out party!!

- They **didn't know Who He was** until He was baptized.

John's Statement:

John 1:26

²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know."

He was **already with them** and they didn't recognize Who He really was!

Then he says this...

John 1:32-34

³² Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³ I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit." ³⁴ I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

It was after His baptism that God showed the world Who Jesus was and that He approved of Him as His Son.

Key: We have been told that **baptism** is an "outward sign of an inward change."

- Here's what that means: Jesus was the Son of God before He got baptized.

- We don't know ALL of what it means that the Spirit came to rest on Him that day??

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We DO KNOW... His baptism was a **symbol** for the people around Him to know who He was and that He was filled with the Spirit.

Listen: That's the same purpose for **baptism** for us today.

- To show others the outward evidence of an inward change.
- We don't get baptized so that Jesus will save us. We get baptized because He has saved us!
- We don't get baptized to become filled with the Spirit. We get baptized because we **ARE** filled with the Spirit!!!

Baptism is a perfect step, and should be your first step as a Believer, to show those around you that you are a child of God.

If you are a Believer today, and you have never been baptized, it is time to take that step of obedience and follow the example of Jesus.

2. He Prepared for the **Battle**

Jesus **didn't** go directly from baptism to preaching to thousands.

- He went directly to the desert to fast and pray for 40 days.

There was a ton of trouble that He was going to go through, starting with the attacks of the enemy.

- See, Jesus coming here was a straight-forward attack on the devil.
- So, we see the devil try to destroy Jesus' ministry before it even gets started.

Max Lucado said this about Jesus' temptation from the devil:

Satan attacked His **weakness**. He knew Jesus was hungry so he brought up the bread.

He tried to make Jesus **doubt His identity**. "If You are the Son of God..."

Tempted Him with **pride** and **possessions**. “If You’ll just worship me... I’ll give you all of this...”

How did Jesus handle the temptation? Dealt with it with **God’s Word**.

- Scripture makes it clear that, part of Jesus being fully human, was that He would **learn and grow**.
- He **learned and grew** in His knowledge of God’s Word in His human nature.

He PREPARED Himself for the battles to come.

FOR US:

When we give our lives to Christ, we must **prepare for the battles** ahead.

Satan will do the exact same thing to you and me!

HUGE:

- His first goal is to get us to worship him.
- He will settle for getting us to worship anything other than our God!
- And if we’re not ready, he’ll beat us every time.

How should we prepare for battle?

EX: How awesome would it be if every person that gave their life to Christ went away for **40 days** to fast and seek the Lord?????!!!!

- Instead we go straight to teaching anyone who will listen.

How do we plan on handling the attacks of the enemy if we don’t have God’s Word hidden in our hearts??

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY: This is a great time to push for a Mentor Ministry!

Because, if we don’t prepare for battle after we come to know Christ, we won’t be ready when the attack hits.

3. He Started Preaching

Matthew 4:17

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

He went to the synagogue in Nazareth and began reading the scroll of Isaiah:

Luke 4:18-19

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

As soon as He was prepared for the battle, He started telling the people the Good News.

This is our role as well!

Matthew 28:19-20

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Definition of a Disciple: A person with a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, who lives like Christ, and is actively helping other people start a relationship with Christ.

We must live in a constant mindset of “who am I helping start a relationship with Jesus?”

- **Easter idea:** Who is sitting with you?

Jesus’ next step...

4. He Chose Community

In all FOUR Gospels we see where Jesus chose His Disciples.

Jesus knew the benefit of working together with others.

- Even though He was obviously the Leader of the group, He still made it a point to involve other people.
Many of us come to know Christ and decide upfront we can do it all on our own.

LISTEN: You will not be all that God calls you to be if you are not willing to walk with others on this journey!

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

I understand... Jesus put together His group because of what He had to offer them.

- But, He also knew that the ultimate spread of the Good News would not be done by Him on this earth.
- It would require more people.

You may think you have nothing to offer, but you do.

You may think no one has anything to offer you, but they do.

You may just think you can handle it all on your own, but you can't!

So, as a new Believer, or as a long-time Believer that has never bought into this stuff, now's the time to find a group of people with which you can walk and learn.

And, here's the ultimate statement of how Jesus spent the rest of His years of ministry on this earth:

5. He Lived Out the Great Commandment

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Boy, how different would we be if we would start like Jesus AND finish like Him.

The world would be a different place!