



DISCIPLE

With Jesus | In Community | On Mission

SERMON TITLE: On Mission: In Your Sphere of Influence

DATE: July 26, 2020

SCRIPTURE: Selected Scriptures

PASTOR: Charlie Boyd

The earliest followers of Jesus didn't call themselves Christians. They didn't think of themselves as members of a religion. They considered themselves disciples – students and apprentices of Rabbi Jesus. So if this is who we're supposed to be, how do we begin to define 'disciple'? Is being a disciple about knowing certain things? Doing certain things? Saying, believing, or rejecting certain things? If so, what? Is there a manual for this? How long does it take? And what's the point of it all? Or simply, what does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

Here are the main points from today's message and the call-outs that were on the screen.

We are continuing in our series that we've entitled "Disciple." Here's Dallas Willard's definition of a disciple—"A disciple is a person who has decided that the most important thing in their life is to *learn how to do what Jesus said to do*. A disciple is not a person who has things under control or knows a lot of things. Disciples simply are people who are constantly revising their affairs to carry through on their decision to follow Jesus." In these troubling times, the most important thing you and I can be focusing on is learning how to do what Jesus said to do by constantly revising what we're doing in order to follow through on our decision to follow Jesus. Last week, Jim looked at the "why" of mission from Habakkuk 2:14—The "why" of mission is the glory of God. But God is the "who" of missions. God is a missionary God. Mission starts with who God is. It flows out of the very nature of God's going—out of God's very life. In fact, mission is participation in the life of God. Mission is when we participate in who God is and what he's up to in the world. But, what is God up to in the world?

We're going to look at four pictures of life on mission and two responses to these pictures.

Picture #1 — God's plan has always been to have a people through whom he would bless the world (Gen12:1-3).

Picture #2 — All through the OT Scriptures, the people of God lose sight of their mission to be a blessing to the world (Isa42:5-7).

Picture #3 — Jesus brought us the blessing that Israel failed to bring (Matt5). Jesus has blessed us so that we would be a blessing to others.

Picture #4 — The primary way you live out God's mission of bringing blessing to the world is in your sphere of influence (Matt28:19-20; 1Thess4:11-12; 1Tim2:1-3). Different disciples are called to do different things. Some disciples traveled beyond their borders to take the Gospel to other nations. Some disciples live out the Gospel in the local churches in those nations. So—when Paul gives instructions to local churches and local church pastors—he describes the mission of the local church in the most simple, non-flashy way possible. No banners waving—no souped-up mission statements—he says—"Let your love for others excel even more. Make it your life goal to lead peaceable, quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. Don't get wrapped up with other people's affairs. Drill down on the work God has given you to do—your job, raising your kids—so that—you may win the respect of outsiders, and so they might come to see God's glory and grace in you. God is pleased to use that kind of lifestyle to draw people to the knowledge of the truth that's in Jesus.

Two Responses:

Response #1 — Figure out the answer to this question: What would Jesus do if he were me? Or said another way—"How would Jesus live my life if he were me?"

Response #2 — Talk about Jesus in your daily conversations.

All this to say—Don't underestimate the power of loving others. Don't underestimate the power of making it your ambition to live a peaceable, quiet life, to mind your own business, to work hard at whatever it is that God has given you to do. Don't underestimate the power of living as a disciple of Jesus and bringing the blessing of God to the people who live in your sphere of influence here in Greenville and in the Upstate.

Discussion Starters

- What really stood out to you in this message on living on mission? What "ahas" did you have? What questions do you have? Don't move away from this too quickly. Allow each person to process out loud with the group their answer(s) to these questions.
- What is the hardest thing to put into practice from this message? Let everyone have a chance to answer this as well. Pause after each person gives their answer and ask if others find that difficult as well.
- Discuss how the four pictures set up the two responses above.
- How would Jesus live your life if he were you? If you are a teacher, a parent, a construction workers, a small business owner, a banker—whatever—how does this question help you flesh out what living as a disciple of Jesus looks like in your sphere of influence?
- Charlie asked some very pointed questions under response #2—talk about Jesus in your daily conversations. Questions like— *How much do you talk about Jesus vs how much do you talk about your problems? How much do you talk about Jesus vs how much you talk about politics ...or all the chaos going on in our country right now? How much do you talk about Jesus vs how much do you talk about movies, Netflix, FB posts—YouTube videos? what else?* These questions were not asked to make you feel guilty, but to make you think? How could you see yourself "revising" your conversations so that talking about Jesus is as natural to you as talking about anyone or anything else?