

FOLLOW: The Disciple's Calling

Mark 1:14-20 (ESV)

2023 Theme - Focus On What Matters

Sermon Series - God's Plan for His Church

Sermon Title - Follow: The Disciple's Calling

Sermon Text - Mark 1:14-20

Sermon Presenter - Dallas Guidry

M.P.T: Jesus showed intentionality and purpose in his call to the disciples, and they recognized Jesus as someone worth abandoning everything to follow.

M.P.S: Jesus brings the kingdom of God near through intentional and purposeful discipleship relationships, and disciples are to follow Jesus with radical abandonment of their old self into the mission of God.

Introduction:

Good Morning church! I want to welcome you, as you can see, we may be looking a little younger today. That's because we are celebrating the end of an amazing D-now weekend that we hosted here at our church. D-Now was a collaborative event with 7 different churches and over 200 students! We worshiped God, spent time in intentional discipleship groups and also had a lot of fun. Our Theme for D-now and over the last month for our group specifically has been FOLLOW. We have looked at what God's word teaches about what it means to be a true follower of Christ, and not just a consumer of "church." We have prayed deeply for a move of God through the next generation that starts here in Slidell, and makes its way through the world, and I truly believe God will do it. What I want to do this morning church, is to give you a glimpse into what we have studied over this weekend and help you to see that this is not only what God wants for the church of the future, but it is what he wants for the church today is always what He has wanted for His church.

If you have your bibles and I hope you do, please turn to Mark chapter 1, we'll be looking at verses 14-20.

Read Mark 1:14-20

Mark 1:14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Mark 1:16 Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

Mark 1:17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

Mark 1:18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Mark 1:19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets.

Mark 1:20 And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

What I would like us to hone in on today is this idea of Discipleship and what is the calling on our lives if we believe God has intended for us to be his disciples much like he did these disciples!

We have two main objectives today! First, we will create a working definition for the question "**What is a disciple?**", and second we will look at **5 Biblical Principles That Help Shape Our Lives as Disciples**.

Before we divide the text this morning, I want to provide a working definition of what a disciple is, and then we will see how our text supports that.

A disciple is someone who is called out from their old life into a new relationship with Jesus, where they follow him and lead others to follow him.

Now this is a very simple definition, and there could be a lot more nuance put into it, but I believe, from scripture, that this is the very core of what a disciple is!

You do not have to be a vocational minister to be a disciple, or make disciples, it is the innate calling upon all believers to be a disciple and make disciples!

As we look at our passage here in Mark 1, we are looking at the very beginning of Jesus's ministry. John the Baptist has been arrested, the time of the forerunner has passed and now it is time for Jesus to start his public ministry.

Jesus starts by walking around the sea of Galilee preaching the Gospel. We know he is preaching the gospel, because it says that he was..

The word used here for gospel is Euangelion. It's a Greek word that literally means good news.

This may not be new information for some of us, but I think it's important to see where these terms that we use come from. Jesus himself started off his ministry by preaching the gospel! The Gospel of what? The gospel of the kingdom of God!

So, what is the said good news about the kingdom of God? Jesus makes it very clear in **vs 15**. He says,

Mark 1:15 ... “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand...

The good news Jesus came to preach was that the Kingdom of God has come and it is manifested in the person of Christ himself! We know this to be true, because God's word teaches that we become heirs to the kingdom of God through a faith relationship with Christ Jesus!

So this is where we get our **1st biblical principle: Jesus is the very presence of the Kingdom of God!**

This principle sets the foundation for all the other principles we will look at and also gives the validation to the call that you and I have on our lives as disciples!

If we want to be found in the Kingdom of God, we must be found IN Jesus!

John 14:6, Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.”

This is why the Gospel we preach is such good news! It's not dependent on you and I!

Not ONLY is it dependent upon Christ, but he is also the one who initiates the relationship! Take a look at vs. 16-17.

Mark 1:16 Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

Mark 1:17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”

Jesus while preaching his gospel, sees two brothers and initiates this call on them to follow him! They weren't in the church pew looking for Jesus, they were in their workplace, and Jesus intentionally sought them out!

This is our **2nd biblical principle: Jesus intentionally seeks and calls the outcasts to follow him.**

Now there is no specific language here telling us that Peter and Andrew are outcasts, but based on what we know of ancient Jewish culture, and the consistency of this principle throughout the ministry of Jesus, we can come to this conclusion!

In the Jewish culture, children would spend their young years learning and memorizing the Torah and the books of the law and the prophets, basically what we know as the Old Testament! Think of it as their catechism. After they would finish their schooling, the best and brightest would be selected to be a disciple of a rabbi. If you didn't make the cut, you would return to work in the family business!

Being that we find our characters working in the family business, we know a little something about them. They were looked at as “not good enough.” Have you ever felt not good enough? I have, and I still do.

Jesus meets these guys where they are and welcomes them and calls them to him for a purpose and says, I will make you good enough!

One more observation on this I want to make that I think shapes our lives as disciples, is Jesus went where the fishermen were! If he wanted to turn fishermen into fishers of men, he had to go where the fishermen hang out!

Where do fishermen hang out? By the water! If God has called us to evangelize the lost and make disciples, we need to go where the lost people are and stop banking on them stumbling into the synagogue. That's not what Jesus did and neither should we.

Aren't you glad that Jesus met you where you are and didn't wait for you to find him?

We are going to come back to the part where Jesus says “I will make you become fishers of men”, but I want us to look deeper into this calling of Jesus on his disciples.

What exactly is he calling them to? Is it a worship service? Is it a summer camp? Is it just a tent revival and we are gonna see some people healed and sing some worship songs and go home all hopped up on mountain dew? No! It's so much deeper than that! It's a real relationship! This is our **3rd biblical principle: Jesus calls his people into a discipleship relationship with him.**

This relationship that Jesus called his disciples to was not just merely a short excursion, but a life committed to the way of Christ. See disciples of rabbi's would spend a significant portion of their lives following their teacher, learning from him. Memorizing his teachings, serving them, etc. This was an abandonment of their previous way of life to be taught by Jesus and trained to do the things Jesus did, all while being in a familial like relationship with him!

Jesus loved his disciples, and his disciples loved him! This went beyond the teacher-student, and master-servant type of relationship. It was the model of God and his creation as it was intended, type of relationship!

Also believe we can look at how Jesus taught his disciples and learn from that on how we are to disciple and train others

*Disclaimer, this is not an original thought to me, but I do not remember my source.

This is the discipleship pathway that Jesus models throughout the new testament:

- 1. Jesus did ministry, and the disciples watched**
- 2. Jesus did ministry and the disciples helped**
- 3. The disciples did ministry and Jesus helped**
- 4. The disciples did ministry and Jesus watched**

***All of this happened in the context of a real relationship with Jesus.**

I am not going to spend very long on this thought, but what we see modeled by Jesus in discipleship is the invitation into a relationship. The doing of life with one another, the teaching and equipping of ministry, and the sending out to replicate and multiply.

“Discipleship and christology are inseparable”-New American Commentary

You can consider our next two principles the application of our sermon

4th biblical principle: Jesus calls his disciples to a mission.

Remember we said we would come back to **vs. 17.**

Mark 1:17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

Jesus told his disciples that he would make them become fishers of men? What does that even mean?

Something I want to see here is that Jesus is trying to use something they know to teach them a lesson, and I think part of that lesson is **“Use how God made you to reach people for the Kingdom.”**

Look at who Jesus is talking to. Its fishermen, what do fishermen do? They fish. I want you to put yourself on the shores of the sea of galilee for a moment. Picture seeing boats and people as far as you can see. Men casting their nets from the boats and the shores, some diving and wading in the water dragging their nets in hopes to catch something.

Jesus is saying, this is what I want you to do with the gospel, and he isn't afraid to use something that was ingrained into their god given personality to get that point across.

God has equipped each and every one of us in different ways, and he wants you to know that your gifts have a God-given purpose, and that is to reach people for the Kingdom of God and train them to do the same.

So let's revisit our definition of What is a disciple: **A disciple is someone who is called out from their old life into a new relationship with Jesus, where they follow him and lead others to follow him.**

Do we see how we come to this conclusion? Does this define you? What has to change for this to be true of your life?

Our last biblical principle is,
5th biblical principle: Jesus is worth the follow and worth the cost.

This principle, like all of the other ones, hinges on the very first one we looked at. If Jesus is the very presence of the kingdom of God, and he is our eternal hope, then he is worth listening to and obeying, not only that, but he is also worth whatever it costs us to follow him. Look with me in vs. 17-20

Mark 1:17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

Mark 1:18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Mark 1:19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets.

Mark 1:20 And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

I want us to see how the disciples responded to Jesus' calling.

There wasn't a question of "how long lord?" or "Where to bro?" In fact, there wasn't a question at all! In Peter and Andrew, we see an immediate response to the calling of Jesus. There isn't any hesitation.

Now, this isn't saying that God won't wait on you if you're struggling. His grace is endless, but what I think we see here is that God wants us to have this level of trust and faith. That we leap at his calling because we know and trust him to keep us safe and provide all we need!

God may be calling some of you here today to follow him! I urge you, do not push it down the road! Repent and believe the gospel! Respond in faith today, and trust he is God and he is good!

R.C. Sproul in a sermon on this very passage said, “You cannot hear the Gospel and walk away indifferent.”

You either hear and accept and respond to the gospel by faith and repentance or you reject it.

The last thing I want us to see is the model of a complete response to Christ by James and John.

We see here, two brothers, fishing with their dad and hired servants, helping run what is probably a very lucrative fishing company, abandoning everything to follow Jesus. They left their dad in the boat!

This cost them something! Maybe they had broken relationships because of this decision. They definitely missed out on some serious income because of this decision. Who knows what else it could have cost them, but we do know that it wasn't a cheap decision.

I don't know where we as a society have gotten this Jesus is easy to follow mentality and he wants me to be healthy, wealthy, and wise, but I can assure you it was not from God!

The grace of God is a free gift to all who believe, but it has never been cheap!

Jesus himself modeled the cost that it would take to follow him, and that was the complete offering of himself for you and I! He did that so you and I could receive his life, but Jesus does ask for something in return.

To receive the life of Christ, we MUST give up ourselves. It's deeper than saying a prayer or walking down an aisle. It is the complete surrender to Christ as King.

The apostle Paul captures it best in his book to the Philippians.

Philippians 2:5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, Philippians 2:6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Philippians 2:7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Philippians 3:7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Philippians 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ
Philippians 3:9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—
Philippians 3:10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
Philippians 3:11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

As we close, I want to invite you to respond to the gospel preached today. Maybe you need to respond in repentance and faith for the very first time. Jesus welcomes you with open arms today! Maybe you need to respond in some obedience, whether that is baptism, or discipleship, we want to help you walk with Jesus and follow him! Please see one of our counselors at the back doors.

Church, let's pray.