

A Charge to Discipleship - Week 4

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[0 : 00] So this will be our last Sunday taking a break from our normal pattern of verse-by-verse exposition through the Gospel of Mark. We've come in Mark to Jesus' arrest and we're going to pick back up next week with his trial and his crucifixion and his resurrection that follows that.

I'm thankful by no great effort of my own in the scheduling of this that we'll actually be able to, Lord willing, things don't change on us, to preach on the resurrection on Easter Sunday. Not as a break from the text, but as part of the natural flow and telling of it by Mark. But we've found this need to take a little break, a little stop, a little step away from Mark's Gospel.

Really not as a complete diversion from it, but really as kind of an outworking of some of the things that I believe are happening in our church as a result of our study of Mark.

Two verses in particular that have really been resonating with me. This axiomatic statement that Jesus makes in Mark 8, 34 and 35, where he says, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

[1 : 13] For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospels will save it. So we see that Jesus is saying that you must give up those things that are of value in the world.

You must give up your self-determination. You must give up your plans and take up mine. And that's what it's going to mean to follow Jesus, that we're going to deny ourselves.

We're going to die to ourselves and we're going to follow him. And I think that unfortunately in the American church, there's so many mouths that claim to know Christ.

And there's so few people that actually follow him, that are truly his disciples. Now hear me, we don't do activity so that we will become his disciples, but the activity itself becomes the result of who we are in him.

That God, through the work of Christ, has changed our hearts. He's made us new. And new people live different than old people. New creations working out the great mission of the Gospel in this world.

[2 : 21] So we started three weeks ago, kind of just gave a general charge to discipleship. We talked about some of the challenges in our very culture. The three-county area that we live in, 232,000 people.

It's estimated, I think, quite generously that 80% of them are unchurched. And so we're looking at a massive number, 186,500 people who, in a generous estimation, don't know Christ, are eternally separated from God, will be damned forever, rightly, justly punished for their sin.

And they won't respond in faith in large part because Christians aren't telling them the good news of Jesus Christ. If we're to follow Jesus, we're going to care about what he cares about.

We're going to have to be disciples who are about the work of making disciples. Two weeks ago, we talked about how the ongoing way this activity is to be encouraged, which is by the life of a local congregation, by the life of the church.

And in our setting, we talked more specifically about how that will happen in our community outreach groups. Last week, we addressed some particular, some biblical pattern for evangelism, for the sharing of the gospel, for the making of converts.

[3 : 42] And this week, we're going to talk about discipleship, the ongoing work of maturing converts. So once a convert is made, and if you guys are hearing, and if God is working in your lives, and you're seeing the point, if I'm to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, I'm going to be about the work of making disciples.

This begins with the act of conversion, the Spirit working by our words to change people's hearts. What do we do after that? Is there a responsibility beyond?

And yes, there is. And we tend to call this responsibility discipleship. But let's build a bit together toward this idea. So if you will, let me turn to Matthew chapter 28, starting in verse 18.

The mission that God has given His church to, we very often, most often call it the Great Commission.

You probably have a subtitle in your copy of God's Word that says the Great Commission. It's repeated in the synoptics. It's restated in a little bit of a different way in the first chapter of Acts.

[4 : 49] One of my favorite statements of it is recorded here by Matthew. And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

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.

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. And we see in these verses, these three verses, a commandment first of all. And that commandment is in verse 19 in the first part of 20.

Go and make disciples. Conversion is certainly part of that process, but not merely converts. Don't just preach the gospel. Have people respond in faith and leave them.

We've talked about scattering seed. The way in which we're meant to sow in the parable of the sowers. And the way that we find the good soil is by sowing seed. This is the way you see the evidence of this.

[5 : 49] But there's a follow-up that must take place. The field must still be tended when we find good soil. And part of the way we weed out some things is that we recognize, as we're working in people's lives, once they have been made converts to Christ, the fruit and the things that are happening to them in that regard.

We're meant to baptize them in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. And we're meant to teach them to observe all that Jesus Christ has commanded us. So this is what he leaves us with. Here are the things that I have given to you.

Now go and make disciples. So we should ask the question, what is a disciple? If we are disciples and we're meant to make disciples, what is a disciple?

And just simply, probably even in too simple of a term, I'm going to say that a disciple is a follower and propagator of Jesus, his teaching and his ways.

A follower and propagator of Jesus, his teaching and his ways. So a disciple makes disciples, necessarily. This is part of what a disciple does.

[6 : 52] They make others disciples. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, which I would strongly encourage anyone here to read. He defines what discipleship is and what it is not.

He writes this, Discipleship means adherence to Christ. And because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship.

We must follow because it's Christ. He's a man. We must follow. An abstract Christology or understanding of who Christ is, a doctrinal system, a general religious knowledge on the subject of grace or on the forgiveness of sins, render discipleship superfluous.

And in fact, they positively exclude any idea of discipleship whatever and are essentially inimical or contrary to the whole conception of following Christ.

With an abstract idea, it is possible to enter into a relation of formal knowledge, to become enthusiastic about it, and perhaps even to put it into practice. But it can never be followed in personal obedience.

[8 : 01] Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship. And Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. Let me rephrase that in my own terms.

I hope you appreciate Bonhoeffer's writing. We, and I think particularly us, tend to be very heady Christians. We know a lot.

This congregation could stand toe-to-toe with many people and defend the faith. And this is good. It's good for us to have a depth in that regard.

It's good for us to know a lot. Theology is precious. God has revealed Himself to us in the Scriptures, and we ought not neglect anything that He has taught us to be true. But in many ways, we're very, very immature as Christians because we know so much and we practice so little.

And this is what He's saying. Some abstract idea, some formation of a philosophy of who Jesus Christ is, is of no value if it's not practiced in our lives.

[9:06] We must be obedient to the things that we know. And a disciple necessarily works out and is obedient to the call of Christ. The great mark of Christian maturity is obedience.

Why are we to make disciples? Again, from this text. Verse 18. Jesus says, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

And then He says what in verse 19? Go, therefore. Because this is the case, go and make disciples. Jesus Christ has been set on His throne to reign over His kingdom.

This has been accomplished. He Himself says it there. All authority in heaven and on earth. It has been given. In Mark 1, 14 and 15, Mark records that now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God, the good news of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. This was the message that He brought as well. The kingdom is here. My reign has begun.

[10:19] And the way in which God, through Christ, reigns in the world is by bearing Himself, bringing people into new life, restored relationship with Him in their hearts, here and now.

And this is why we're meant to make disciples. This is why the major activity of the Christian church is to advance the kingdom of God by the grace of God in this world.

We're bringing to bear the things that Christ Himself is reigning over. And in the last half of verse 20, we're given a promise.

A precious promise. A promise that without this task would be entirely overwhelming. I would shut down if it were not for the promise in the last half of verse 20.

Which is, And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Behold, the one to whom all authority over heaven and earth has been given is with you as you go about this work of making disciples.

[11:27] So we are granted power by Jesus Christ, who possesses all the power to bring others to follow Him. To the end that He will be exalted in all things to all peoples.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? I'm always afraid I'm going to point at that and it's not up there. So this wonderful promise that He will be with us in this.

Praise God for the sending of His Spirit. That when Jesus left, the nature by which the Spirit operated in the world changed. Prior to Jesus coming onto the earth, the Spirit came and visited people in particular times and in particular ways.

This has changed entirely. It's a promise that He gave to us. And let me encourage you to turn to John 14. And just follow quickly with me through three chapters. A couple verses from each one. And let me tell you what I mean.

It is better that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father. It's better.

[12:40] And in my mind, sometimes that's hard to understand because it seems to me that the days, the most precious days in history are the days in which He walked on the earth. And the disciples just got to follow Him around and watch Him work and do and go.

He was the disciple maker. They were tasked a couple of times to go out and preach the gospel. But primarily, they were a witness to what He was doing. But He said it's far better that He's gone. We have the helper now. John 14, verses 16 and 17. He says, So this is right before Jesus' crucifixion.

The Spirit dwells with you and will be in you. It's promised that the Spirit of God will actually come and reside in those of us who place our faith in Jesus Christ.

Turn to the next chapter, John 15. 4 and 5. This is going to have great implication for those of us who have placed our faith in Jesus Christ, who are in fact new creations, converted, who have the Spirit of God within us.

[13:58] Jesus says, Verse 4, Abide in Me, and I in you. This is the walking by the Spirit that Paul talks about in Romans. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me.

I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from Me, you can do nothing. This is on the heels of Him telling them He's going to send to them a helper.

The very power of God to live within them. That they might abide so that they will bear fruit. John 16. 7. There's some sorrow on behalf of the disciples.

What you're leaving, He's promising, and there's great things that are going to happen when He does depart. They're leaving. And He says, I tell you the truth, 16. 7. It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you.

But if I go, I will send Him to you. So as we talk about this process of making disciples and what that looks like, we must, we absolutely must, stop and recognize that it is by the power of God that people are converted and that people are ultimately made perfect.

[15:11] That they are sanctified. They are moved along in holiness. This is a work of God. However, God does use graces. One of those is the church.

One of those is the people sitting to your right and to your left and before you and behind you. That we are saved to a community of believers by which we disciple one another.

But it's ultimately and finally the work of God through those people on our behalf. I found this, some of the crosses quote by Charles Spurgeon. He said, If I had any human master, he would have been out of patience with me long ago.

I would agree with him on that. But the Lord Jesus Christ never gives up a scholar. Having once commenced to teach, he continues his divine lessons till they are fully learned. And the more difficult it is for him to teach, the more honor it will be when he gets all his scholars educated for the skies.

So, praise God that it's ultimately Jesus' work. Because he doesn't give up on us even though in our human relationships we often grow tired of the work ahead for the work of sanctification.

[16:23] So, what is then discipleship? What is this grace given to us by which we work in this way? And here's my definition.

Discipleship is the God-given, God-empowered process by which the church brings about obedience to the commands of God. Discipleship is the God-given, God-empowered process by which the church brings about obedience to the commands of God.

Now, sometimes as the church, when we think about discipleship or when we practice discipleship, our definition is too narrow. We think of it as one particular thing, but in a broad sense, it's so many things.

It's everything that one Christian does in service to another Christian, at least rightly does, in service to another Christian. In a broad sense, discipleship is most everything we're doing together. Me preaching to you this morning is a form of discipleship, opening the Word of God before you and telling you what it means and the implications for your life. Discipleship is Wes and Liz picking out God-honoring, Gospel-saturated songs and leading us in the singing of them.

[17:39] If you even kind of tune your brain in to the words that you're singing, you will be taught by those songs. It's the prayers that you're led in when we meet together in this way.

Prayers based in the promises of God. It's the activity of our community outreach groups, the way in which they fellowship with one another around the Scriptures and encourage each other to love in good works.

It's the encouraging words that you speak to one another in the hallways. It's the late-night phone conversations when you're having a struggle and you need a good Christian friend.

It's the modeling of a healthy home around a meal. Young people, those of you who are not in college, the few of you in the room, many of these young people don't know what healthy homes look like.

The more and more we get to know our congregation and the people who are coming in and out of our congregation, healthy home is more of a rarity than I'd like to admit.

[18:36] It's a sad thing. They need to see healthy home just coming over and having a meal with you and just seeing the way in which you love on your wife and on your children. Discipleship in the broad sense is the life of the church.

It's all the things we do together, both within our set programs and without. And as such, no one is exempt from this activity for any reason whatsoever.

That's what we have been saying about the body a couple of weeks ago. Talking about the activity of the church. We're all part of the body. Necessary parts of the body. You all have a part to play in service to one another.

That we will be pressing at each other gospel truth to follow Christ in all that we do. These things are of immense importance.

Now, a way of kind of framing this idea which has been helpful to me in thinking about the life of our church, both the things that we ought to be doing together, the programs we should have in place, and the things that we ought not, the things that shouldn't be programmed, the things that shouldn't be organic, that should be happening as a result of the work of the Spirit in your lives.

[19 : 52] There's a book called *The Trellis and the Vine*, which is written by, co-written two guys, Colin Marshall and Tony Payne. And there's a wonderful analogy which the title of the book is based off of, and I'm going to read it to you and give a little bit of explanation to it.

I hope this will help get your head going in the right direction as well. What does, in a general sense, discipleship look like? How should it be played out in our day-to-day living with one another? I think it's Tony Payne. I think it's Tony Payne that's writing in chapter one. We have two trellises in our backyard. Do you guys all know what a trellis is? It's a thing that's on the side of your house that supports a vine?

We have two trellises in our backyard. The one attached to the back wall of the garage is a very fine piece of latticework. I wish I could claim it as my own creation, but I cannot.

It is sturdy and dependable and neatly designed, and the Federation green paintwork has been kept fresh. It lacks only one thing, a vine. Tony Payne is Australian, so Federation green is a color that they would understand there.

[20 : 55] Kelly green would be our version of it. Imagine there once was a vine, unless, oh, I'm sorry, I imagine there once was a vine, unless the construction of the trellis was one of those handyman tasks that took so long that in the end, no one got around to planting something to grow on it.

Someone certainly put a lot of time and care into building it. It's almost a work of art, but if there was ever a vine that laced itself around this beautiful trellis, there is now no trace of it.

The other trellis leans up against the side fence and is barely visible beneath a flourishing jasmine vine. With some fertilizer and an occasional watering, the jasmine keeps thrusting out new shoots, winding its way across, up, and over the fence, putting out its delicate white flowers as the warmth of spring approaches.

Some pruning is needed every now and then, and some weeding around the base. I've also had to spray it once or twice to stop caterpillars from feasting on the juicy green leaves, but the jasmine just keeps growing.

It's hard to tell what condition the trellis is under the jasmine, but at the few points where it is still visible, I can see that it hasn't been painted in a long time. At one end, it has been pried off the fence by the insistent fingers of the jasmine, and although I have tried to reattach it more than once, it is useless.

[22 : 09] The jasmine has taken over. I know I'll have to do something about this in the long term, because eventually the weight of the jasmine will pull the trellis off the fence altogether, and the whole thing will collapse.

I've often thought of taking a cutting from the jasmine and seeing if it will grow on the beautiful but vacant trellis on the garage, although it almost seems a shame to cover it up. And in the book, they go on to talk about how the church is so often very distracted with what they call trellis work, which is important and necessary to support the vine, the programs, the administrative things that we do, but we get so captivated by those things that we lose track of the vine work, the people work, the heart work.

And the way that we do this is we simply apply the gospel to one another in so many situations, in all the various ways that we ought to be doing that's given to us in the scriptures, rather than creating program after program after program after program after program.

There's a little need. We must have a ministry to meet that need. Our lives are ministry. There's a ministry, right? And that is discipleship.

So begin to see things. Start to think about things in terms of trellis and vine, and I hope in your life there's much more weight given to the vine work that is so, so very necessary. Now certainly in a more specific sense, discipleship can mean something, and this is where we tend to have this narrow idea of it, but it is valuable as a narrow idea, and that takes place in more planned, more organized, one-to-one discipleship, or one-to-two, or three, or four, or five.

[23 : 48] Many of you who have been involved in campus ministries here are very familiar with this type of discipleship, and this is a type of discipleship that takes place in our church as well. There are many, many people in our church that are involved in some form of discipleship group that meet

in various ways.

I've got a couple of guys, we meet together, and we just finished reading a biography together, and now we're going to study the book of Acts together. I know there are a lot of people who are gathering. It's so encouraging to me that you're coming up here on Sunday afternoons and using the building.

The other Sunday, I couldn't find a space to go because there are little groups meeting all over the place. They hadn't even talked to me about being here, but I didn't care. Like, come on, use the building. Meet around the scriptures and encourage one another to love and good works.

These activities are taking place. And what I'd like to say to you is that it should be happening in a higher degree. There should be more of this going on. Spurring one another on. Encouraging one another. Loving each other with the gospel.

So turn with me a little to Titus chapter 2. If you can believe it, this is our main text for today.

Although, I'm just going to glean some things out of it.

[24 : 55] We're not going to look at every bit of it. There's much to be said about this chapter that I just won't have time for today. But there are a few things, some characteristics of discipleship, five in fact, that I want to pull out of this text to show you how is it that we're meant to be going about this work.

It's a short chapter. We're going to read all of Titus chapter 2 together. This is Paul's letter to Titus. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

I just want to remind you that Titus is a man. So he's going to give some instruction to men. Titus is a man in this environment. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in behavior, not slanders or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good. And so train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

[26 : 20] Slaves are to be submissive to their own masters and everything. They are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. So in this, we see this charge to life together.

In fact, many people will refer to this chapter as Titus 2 ministry, the way in which the generation before is meant to invest in the generation that's coming along.

Firstly, discipleship is personal. Discipleship is personal. It necessitates relationship. Relationship in which there is transparency and honesty.

[27 : 36] So many people are parts of churches and the people in that church really don't know them. No one in that church really knows them. In fact, I think this is one of the great reasons that the mega church is on the rise because people don't like to be made uncomfortable.

People want to melt into the back and melt back out. No one knows if they're there or not. Sam and I went to a new hamburger place, a place called Burger 21 down by the Mall of Georgia.

My brother-in-law's brother owns it, so if you're in the area, go support him. He's a good guy. We're sitting there and we ended up with a table really close to the soda fountain and people are going and coming and going and we ran into a lot of people that we knew that we hadn't seen in a long time like my middle school health teacher.

An interesting night and Sam ran into a lot of people that she had grown up in church with and in their conversation, many of them told her where they were now fellowshiping, where they were attending to church and it was all the same place.

Every single person, every single one of them was the same place and I didn't but as a sociological experiment I really wanted to get up on the table and just get them all to raise their hands, anybody who fellowshiped, attended this place and then see how many of them actually knew each other because as I watched them they didn't seem to have a clue.

[29 : 00] They didn't have a clue that they all actually were part participating in the life of a local fellowship. It's easier that way. But discipleship, growing, practicing, employing this grace that's given to us by God, the church is going to require relationship.

It's going to be personal. It's going to hurt at times. It's going to cause you to have to drop the facade. Take off the front stage makeup and let people into the backstage of your life.

Show them the mess. It's important. It's the best thing that can happen in the pursuit of Christ. Tell people how much you need His grace. Encourage them to preach the gospel to you.

Look at verse 7 of chapter 2 of Titus. See, his exhortation to Titus is to show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works.

To have people walk along with you to model for them what good works look like. And to show in the teaching integrity, dignity, sound speech that can't be condemned.

[30 : 13] So that an opponent can just be put to shame. They have nothing evil to say about you or about us. There's other personal language in the text as well like train and urge.

Verse 15, exhort and rebuke. We are meant to be in relationship with one another and discipleship must be personal. Ecclesiastes 4, 9 and 10 says, Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil.

For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up. Personal. A person who is there who witnesses the fall, who catches you in the process of it and lifts you back up.

Galatians 6, 2 says, Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. And I believe what Paul is referring to there is when Jesus says that he's giving to them a new law and that is that you love one another.

Of great importance. Discipleship is personal. Secondly, discipleship is theological. Discipleship is theological. Don't be misled.

[31 : 27] Instead, just getting together and talking about your problems does not mean you're part of a discipleship process. Getting together and venting out the issues of your life, giving trite pop psychology answers to those things isn't really helpful or good for anybody.

Discipleship is centered around the Word of God. The Word of God is centered around the Gospel of God. This is the treatment for all of our ills. This is the encouragement to love and to good works. Discipleship must be theological. Again, look at our text. Titus chapter 2 verse 1 But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

An exhortation to older women. Last half of verse 3. They are to teach what is good. Verse 5 The activity that the younger women are supposed to be about.

The older women are supposed to be teaching them. This activity that they're supposed to be about. Paul says that the Word of God may not be reviled. There's a practice that is in line with the things that God is teaching.

[32 : 33] Verse 15 Paul says Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. And back into verse 10 the activity of the bondservant is meant to be a display so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

This is the activity of discipleship. It is theological. Growing people with the truth. This is the expression given to us in Ephesians 4 of the activity of the church beginning in verse 11.

And He being Jesus gave the apostles the prophets the evangelists the shepherds and teachers. I think these are things that are still active. So apostles little A not apostles big A and prophets not vision seers but those who are calling people back to the truth of God.

Evangelists those who are particularly gifted in the sharing of their faith. Shepherds and teachers which I believe is one thing but those who are called to pastor people these gifts given to the church. Verse 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry for the building of the body of Christ.

So the work is then given to the church this work that's multifaceted that involves everybody the body building itself. Right? So you're giving and equipping that you might minister to one another.

[33 : 48] Verse 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God. It's very doctrinal is it not? To mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so

that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine.

We'll be able to stand firm because we have been taught because our discipleship is theological. By human cunning by craftiness and deceitful schemes rather speaking the truth in love.

We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head into Christ from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped when each part is working properly makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Do you see the expression given there of the way in which we're meant to be ministering the word of God to one another? Discipleship is theological. 2 Timothy 3.16 Familiar?

Children? You ready? All scriptures breed that by God and profitable for teaching for reproof for correction and for training in righteousness and for their sake we didn't go on to verse 17 but I would encourage you to know that the man of God may be complete equipped for every good work. [35 : 06] So it is the tool put in our hands by which we grow one another in faith. The Holy Bible is our guide and our rule for holiness so it must be employed in the making of disciples.

So discipleship is theological. But not just that discipleship is also practical. It's also practical which means it takes an investment of time.

It's important beloved that we are saying to one another not simply do as I say but also do as I do. Look at the instruction for the way in which people are meant to live in Titus chapter 2 verse 2 older men we get this list of things sober minded dignified self-controlled sound in faith and love and instead facets it's meant to be a display it's meant to be a thing that's being modeled older women likewise reverent in behavior not slanders or slaves to much wine there to teach what is good so train the young women to love their husbands and children to be self-controlled pure working at home kind and submissive to their own husbands likewise urge the younger men to be self-controlled bond servants are given some instruction here servants will be submissive to their own masters well-pleasing not argumentative not pilfering but showing all good faith so that everything that may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior and here's a great tragedy in our culture we become such high-minded

Christians that we either think only those who have such great depth of theological education have any business teaching anybody anything we have a tragedy in that or that we think because we don't we have nothing to offer anybody else and talking with some of the non-college adults in our church many of you are intimidated by the knowledge of the students that are in our church but they need to see your faithfulness to the word of God modeled out right again like I mentioned before the way in which you love your wife and your children vice versa wives the way you love your husbands and lead your children this is an important thing see the faithfulness in working a job holding down the nine to five they need to hear about how you've learned to glorify God in the mundane things of life college students have no idea how much time is going to be spent in a home washing dishes and clothes and cleaning floors just clueless for the most part and it's shocking to them when they get to this point how do

I worship God in these things it's amazing to hear the stories of young people who have gone off to be foreign missionaries they've romanticized it they think it's going to be such a fantastic it's going to be so radical and they realize when they get there they have to wash dishes and do laundry but it just takes twice as long all of the mundane things of life go along with them and you have such opportunity to show them how to walk these things out together there's got to be a practical side to discipleship not just teaching things but modeling it out as well so discipleship is practical discipleship is humble fourthly discipleship is humble both for the disciple e and the disciple and i'm really pretty sure i just made both those words up verse 11 says for the grace of god has appeared bringing salvation for all people verse 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in the present age for the grace of god being christ and now by his spirit with the primary use of the word we are being trained in the way that we should live as i said before this is a mighty work of god so to grow in faith in the activity of discipleship either as the recipient of it or the leader of it is a humbling thing because we need him we need him to work in us and through us you ought to feel the weight of being a discipler you ought to go god i'm not sufficient for this task but praise you i am in christ this is the thing i shared with you as i got up here this morning i tremble to preach god's word and it doesn't matter if this room is filled or if there's only five people to speak of the word of god and to say this is what it means just causes me to shudder the weight of that type of thing i need god's intervention to help

me do it rightly it is my prayer that when i err you just forget about what i said what a blessing that is that's actually happened i've actually said i'm really sorry that i said this and people have gone you didn't say that i'm like i'll show you the note i did i did in fact say it but people just forget it altogether it's a very humbling experience to walk into these types of situations and to share in this way because god's power is at work in it i want us to as disciples have the mind of paul he says in first corinthians three five through seven what then is apollo's what is paul's servants through whom you believe as the lord assigned to each i planted apollo's watered but god gave the growth so neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything but only god who gives the growth that's massively humbling to see people grow in faith by the work that i do it causes me to give all praise in honor to him because i'm an idiot but he uses me to accomplish his will in many ways in many cases you may not think that you have anything to offer anyone else you may doubt your ability!

[41 : 06] you in many ways you must check the condition of your heart because what you're really doing is denying that god is powerful to work in you to accomplish anything in anyone else's life you're saying that he can't possibly use you to do his work i'll tell you this god can do whatever he wants to it is good to be humble it is good to walk into that desiring you will rely on his grace there's much promise in our church i in earthly terms in human terms am intimidated by some of the people in our church charles spurgeon once said a wet stone though it cannot cut a wet stone is a stone made for sharpening knives a wet stone though it cannot cut may sharpen a knife that will god uses us in all of our various ways and all of our various giftings even in our inability to disciple people so as a discipler it's incredibly humbling proverbs 1 5 says let the wise hear and increase in learning and the one who understands obtain guidance proverbs 3 7 be not wise in your own eyes fear the

Lord and turn away from evil some people may think themselves above discipleship i'm not you guys have designated me the pastor of this church i am not above discipleship it's why we have elders in our church i need a peer group men who i can share my struggles with and who can admonish me and exhort me and encourage me it's why i seek discipleship even outside of our church as well with other pastors there's some things that our elders don't fully understand about the way i walk out my life and the things that i do in the day to day and so i try to fellowship with other pastors as well that can invest in me if you think that you're above discipleship it's at this very point that you need discipleship you need someone to speak to you about your pride and your self righteousness we're so often blind to these types of things we need someone else to look into peer into our hearts and tell us how horribly deceptive that they are all of us need to be in some process of discipling another or being disciplined ourselves this great complex network that we are as a congregation we need to be doing this in this large general sense but i would also encourage it to happen in that more small programmatic one to one or a couple sense to be getting together and pressing at each other in the truth and fifthly and finally discipleship is for the glory of God in all of these things

Paul says in Titus verse 13 that we are waiting for our blessed hope the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works the gospel is not firstly about you the gospel is firstly about God and his glory Jesus Christ came we are the recipients of his perfect life he lived the life that we could not he did not transgress the law spotless perfect sacrifice and he went a step beyond and he paid the price for our sin he took all of the condemnation that was due to us rightly do us and he bore it in himself God being perfectly just could not just simply dismiss sin he had to punish it he punished it in the person redeem us to deliver us from the punishment that was due us but he brought us along beyond that to redeem us from lawlessness to purify a people for his possession who are zealous for good works a people who are about his exaltation this is why we exist all of that everything that we've mentioned today all the things we've mentioned over the last three weeks all of this is about the glory of God in similar language Peter writes in 1st Peter 2 9 but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession why that you may proclaim the excellencies! of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light he has made us who we are so that we can tell this world about him right some will respond he is the one that plows the field he is the one that makes the soil causes the seed to grow we are just meant to scatter it right to exalt him in the way in which we live and the way in which we speak to go far and wide we are to be disciples who make disciples who make disciples who make disciples hastening the day to the ends of we have completed the number of the church he will come back and judge the world and he will reign

forever and ever and ever I hope this morning that with confidence you can say that you're part of that kingdom you know without a doubt that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ is all of this bearing down on you with massive!

[47 : 19] conviction It may be that you're not or that you just simply need to repent of your own self sinneress and turn back to following Christ either way the call is the same repent and believe repent and believe repent and believe let's pray together