

Discipleship

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[0:00] In the Great Commission we see that it's to go and do what? Make disciples. Well, that's nice as long as we all agree what a disciple is. Does that make sense? I mean, if we've got this! we've got this word that hangs out there, but we all have this different understanding of what disciple means, then we can get into trouble. Not a lot of trouble at first, but if we disagree, then in the long run we can really be far apart when we're done at the end of the day. So if we want to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that he's commanded us to do, we need to understand what it means to make disciples. Now, one of the reasons it's so dear to my heart is because I didn't have vacation Bible school in my life when I was little, right? And I didn't have those things. They probably existed in my little town in Wisconsin, but I just didn't cross paths with people for whom discipleship was important or being a disciple was important. It just didn't happen in my life. It didn't happen until I was 21, but now I have three kids of my own, and I want them to cross paths with it early and often and with the authentic thing, right? What it really means and what it looks like. So how do I teach that to them, right? I want to try to figure that out. So part of what I need your help with tonight, it's, it's, I, I need you to be a little interactive with me because as I, as I've processed through this and I've got kind of boiled down to some things in my head, I need your help with, with, with part of it. So, so just be ready. So be listening because I'm going to ask you some questions. That's like a little teacher trick I learned. My, my background isn't, I used to be a math teacher and, and now I still work at a high school and all our staff at Open Bible is bivocational.

So we all have day jobs and then, and we minister after hours, I guess. I don't know how you put that, in between hours? I'm not really sure where, but we, we minister and that's what God's called us to do at our church. So, um, I, I like the interaction. So, so, um, hopefully you'll be ready to, to kind of interact with me. The, the first question I have to ask is this, and, and, and forgive me if, let me say this. I'm not a Facebook person. I have a Facebook account. I check it like once every three months or so. I don't know. My wife signed me up. I'm just not, I don't know. I'm, I, I, I just can't get into it.

But there's a space on Facebook where you'd identify yourself, right? A religious affiliation or something. So my question to you is, what do you put there? If you were going to identify your religious affiliation, whether it's Facebook or not, you've got to fill that blank in. What, what are some things you could fill in that blank that you'd be comfortable with saying? Say it again?

Christian, okay. What's some, what are some other things? Follower of Jesus, okay. Follower and someone else say, what else? Again? Believer, good. Okay, see there's all, we've got a lot of labels for these things.

And, uh, what, what I want to, to us to think about starting off tonight is this. Um, maybe draw this continuum and, and on one side, this side over here, think of it as, uh, a convert.

[3:29] Okay? To Christianity, a convert. Now on this end of the spectrum, maybe think of a disciple of Christianity. First of all, do you, do you think it's possible to draw a distinction between the two?

At least at some level? Okay. And, and, and if we can, then what is that distinction? You know, uh, Paul talks about there'll be some who escape as, as though through the flames, right? And, and the, the works they do, they'll get, they'll get, they'll get into heaven. And that's what I think of when I think of a convert. And then I think of someone who's a disciple. What, what is that person? What is the contrast there? And I think we see that, well, if we're going to define what a disciple is, who's the best person to ask what that means? The person you're a disciple of. Does that make sense? We're going to look at the word disciple. By the way, disciple isn't this fancy word. There, there, I did grow up watching, like, lots of kung fu movies and stuff like that. There were, like, there are martial arts

disciples. There, there are disciples of philosophers, right? There are, there are lots of disciples out there. People who follow, right, a master or someone like that. So we know that at its heart, this word disciple is not just a Christian word, is it? It's a word that means a follower of somebody, a follower of somebody. In fact, that's how, that's how Jesus introduces, that's how we're introduced to Jesus in almost all the Gospels. I've just got one example there in Matthew 4. This is what it says, Matthew 4, 18 to 22. Again, if it's too small for you, I apologize. It's good. I'm 42 now. I've started the arm reach thing. That, my, I have. It's sad, but I've started it. So if it's too small, I'm in the camp too. As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. Come, follow me, Jesus said, and I will send you out to fish for people. At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them. And what did they do? Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him, right? So we see that at the heart of what it means to be a Christian, I would say, is this, is followership a word? I don't know. This following thing, right? There's this piece of what it means to follow. And if we understand, I think what I would put in that blanket in my life right now is a follower of Jesus. That's a good description of what I want to be. Am I that perfectly at all times in my life? No, but for Christian, for me, it means that. It means a follower of Jesus. But for a lot of people, Christian can mean a lot of different things, can't it? Bad experiences they've had. We had the waiter tonight at the restaurant we ate at. His name is Solomon. I don't know how he put it. He put it something like, I'm intentional about not going to church. You know, so I imagine he's had some bad experience with church in his background. That's my gut feeling on it, and Christians. Now, we can't control what other people can do, but how do we present what it means to be a follower of Jesus ourselves, right? And so following Jesus is at the heart of things. Now, back in Jesus's day, what we see is that there were other people who had disciples besides Jesus, right? Even John the [6:52] Baptist had his own disciples. So disciple is, again, it's not a specifically Christian word, but what you found is that those teachers, those rabbis of the time who had followers, their own followers, they all got to decide what it meant to be their follower, right? Okay, if you're going to be a disciple of me, here's what the requirements are. And we see that same pattern in Jesus, and we look in the Gospels, and he defines for us pretty clearly what it means to be his follower, right? His disciple. And we need to take a clue from him. Now, I love this picture. I tried to make some pictures here as I'm working through this, but if you look on that back side with the pictures, you see at the center is disciple. And you all know what that is a picture of behind the word disciple? It's a yoke. And we see that this is a common terminology of the first century, that to be yoked to someone, right, was to be their disciple. And Jesus even uses those words we see in Matthew 11, 28 to 30. And that does the next set of verses on the back of your sheet. So he says, You know, we know this vision. I think we kind of, we know what a yoke does, and we know that the one who controls the yoke, right, gets to decide where the animals go, right? And they're yoked together. And it's this picture of, I love, what's the name of the men's group that meets certain times of the year on Sunday night? It's the Fat Boys, right? Faithful, available, and teachable. Man, if our core identity as a Christian isn't as a disciple, which, by the way, I'm, since disciple is one of those words that can get confusing, I put his apprentice at the top. What's a, what's a, anyone else who speaks Spanish, what's Spanish for to learn? Aprender, right? That's where apprentice comes from. It's a learner. If at our core we're not a disciple, a learner, then we've got something wrong with our identity as a Christian, right? No matter where we are in the spectrum, we're learners. We're disciples. We better be learners. And apprentice, I think, is a word that kind of makes us think about that differently than maybe if we're, if, if for some reason disciples been too often repeated to get us excited anymore, right? But apprentice is this idea. It's the same idea. The, the Greek word has the same meaning. Student, pupil, learner, right, that we have for disciples. So we have at our core this idea of being yoked to Jesus, being his learner, his apprentice. And that's our core identity. And then, then we say, okay, well, I'm, I'm yoked to him, you know, I'm yoked to Jesus with Jesus. It's his yoke I have on.

[9:56] What is, where has he taken me, right? What does he say it means to be his disciple? And when I look through the Gospels, I see, I see it boils down to these four overlapping things. Don't think of these as independent of each other, but, but think of these things as, as I think a good summary of, of Jesus, Jesus's core teaching on what it means to be a disciple. And I'm going to start in the bottom right corner, and we're going to look at the next set of verses there. By the way, the, the core of, of, of, I'll put it this way. If I could, like, if I could take a, you know, if, if all of, all of my Bible were in a fire, and the, the, the parts that I hope didn't burn, right, that taught on discipleship, they'd be in, in Luke's Gospel. And Luke 9 and 14 are probably the two most succinct areas. He teaches all over the place what it means to be his follower. But those are the two most succinct areas, I think, that he talks about what it means to be his follower. So read with me, if you would, in Luke 9, 23 to 26. Luke chapter 9, 23 to 26.

Then he, Jesus, said to them all, whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

What good is it for someone to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

And go on down in Luke 9 to verse 57, if you would. Still in Luke 9, down in verse 57. As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, I will follow you wherever you go.

Jesus replied, Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head. He said to another man, Follow me. But he replied, Lord, first let me go bury my father.

[11:55] And Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury their own dead. But you go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Still another said, I will follow you, Lord. But first, let me go back and say goodbye to my family.

Jesus replied, No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God. Jesus says a lot there.

A lot of overlapping, I think, ideas. And I don't know how your brain works. I'm not sure how my brain works. I'm not sure how your brain works either. But it helps for me to kind of summarize some of these things, right?

To think about it, what's the big picture here? What's he saying in all these ways? And I think the first thing we see here is that he's saying, My disciples, my followers, need to understand that I'm priority one.

I'm the first priority. My disciples know that they must prioritize and I must be at the top of the list.

[12:59] If you want to be my follower, I'm the first priority. And we see that in different places. We see that in the scripture we read here down at the end of Luke 9.

That he said, It's pretty harsh things. And I think if we were first century Jew, they'd be even harsher maybe. The first one at least. Let the dead bury their own dead. I just want to go, you know, I just want to go do what's right by my culture's eyes and bury my father.

Jesus says, Let the dead bury their own dead. There's something more important here that you're missing. Now, we know that Jesus knows the hearts of individuals and what their hangups are, right?

So there's some things we see in scripture. Jesus is speaking to individuals. And again, he knows he's God. He knows what their issues are, right? And so we'll talk about in a little bit with the rich young ruler.

We know that he probably knew something about this guy that got to the heart of what's keeping him from being a better disciple, a better follower. He said, Let the dead bury their own dead.

[14:04] You know, we almost read in there Jesus saying, You're making an excuse. I can hear it in your voice. I don't think you'll come back if you leave. You know, maybe he's thinking, You might not come back.

Let the dead bury their dead. You stay here and you be about God's kingdom. And then also in the verses we read, We see the idea of, Did I go that far?

I think I did. Putting your hand to the plow, right? And looking back. And, you know, I've never put my hand to a plow and tried to plow a straight line, But I have ridden my bicycle And tried to look. But, right? I mean, you just, you know that, You've had the experience. Maybe you've been driving the car, Trying to find something in the back seat. You know what happens when you take your eye

off the main thing, right? Your priority has to be your priority.

You have to keep the main thing the main thing. And Jesus encourages us. That's crucial. And what about this hating father, brother, mother, sister? Actually, that one, I think, in the first century, Would have made a little more sense to us.

[15:07] Maybe it would have been a little less harsh than it sounds. Because scholars tell us it's kind of a first century idiom. A figure of speech. And it means exactly what we're talking about. Like, to hate something for the first century Jew Would have meant to make, To love this other thing so much That that other thing would kind of pale in comparison.

Does that make sense? It was a first century figure of speech. So, to hate, he didn't mean, I mean, he taught to love people, right? Jesus taught to love people. So, when he's saying to hate, It's just a figure of speech saying, Compared to me, It's going to look like, It's going to look like hate, right? It's compared to me making me priority. These other things are just lower On the totem pole of your prioritization. So, we see Jesus saying, I am the number one priority.

And that, by the way, The hate father, mother, brother, sister Is in the Luke 14 passage That's also on your sheets there. We see him talking all the time About prioritization.

And I think that's a foundational understanding for us. If we're going to be, If we have a desire, If we have an understanding, We, we, we want to see, We want to see God glorified maximally.

[16:23] Right? That's what I want as a follower. And what I see is that The way that happens is when his people Choose him. Right? I'm his. Converts are his. They, they, they've been sealed With the Holy Spirit.

They're his. Right? But when they, When their lives reflect that ownership, When my life reflects That I'm a follower. Right? It glorifies him all the more.

Right? It glorifies him all the more. And that's what we want. And that's what I want in my life Is to, to, For him to be a priority. And that's what he wants. Because he gets to call the shots. Right? He wants, he says, You're my disciples.

My disciples make me number one. It's a priority. And the second thing I think we see here In a couple places Is that he, Oh by the way, This, Wait, wait, wait.

I can't go on. This is where I need some interaction. Because this is what I'm trying to figure out In my walk, In my understanding of this is, Okay, If he's priority, Right? What are some practical implications of that?

[17:23] As you think of him being priority one In your life, Or in someone's life, Tell me, I want to hear, I want to hear What comes to your mind. What's the practical implication of that?

What does that imply to your life? And even if you're not willing to go there, I don't know where you all are at spiritually, But you can imagine the implications. Maybe that's why you don't choose not to go there.

I don't know. But what are the implications for you If he's going to be priority one? Give me some examples. Daily Bible study. Priority one. Make that a priority one.

Okay? Russ? Yeah? Just how you spend your time in general. Right? Where does that priority fit in there? What else? Your checkbook will look different.

You see the implications that this has. This one piece. What else? Yeah, If he's priority one, Right? Man, If I say my marriage is, Is, Is, Is, Important to me, But I don't spend any time with my wife.

[18:24] Right? What, What, What does that communicate? Exactly. What else is, Just, Does prioritization make? Say that again? Love for each other.

Talk to me a little bit more about that. If I can't love the person that just, That I want you to do with the law. That's not. Interesting. So, Again, These are overlapping ideas that Jesus teaches us.

As we go through these, You'll see that they kind of overlap. But I think, Man, Prior, If I can hang my head on priority, I can check my priorities. It's pretty easy to do. Right? I can check my priorities.

The second thing I think we see in the Gospels, Is this idea, That we see, Oh, We see it a little bit, I think, In Luke 9, 25 that we read. It says, What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, And yet lose or forfeit their very selves?

I think we see it in 9, 57, And 58. It says, I'll follow you wherever you go, Jesus said, Well, Did you know that the foxes have dens and birds have nests, But I've got no place to lay my head?

[19:28] He says that to them. And then we see, Down in 14, Let me read that passage, That Luke 14 passage now. Starting in verse 25. Large crowds were traveling with Jesus.

And turning to them, He said, If anyone comes to me, Does not hate father and mother, Wife and children, Brothers and sisters, Yes, Even their own life, Such a person cannot be my disciple. We've talked about that already.

And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me, Cannot be my disciple. We'll talk about that later. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost, To see if you have enough money to complete it?

For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, Everyone who sees it will ridicule you, Saying, This person began to build, And wasn't able to finish. Or, Suppose a king is about to go to war against another king.

Won't he first sit down and consider, Whether he is able with 10,000 men, To oppose the one coming against him with 20,000. If he's not able, He'll send a delegation, While the others are still a long way off, And will ask for terms of peace.

[20 : 26] In the same way, Those of you who do not give up everything you have, Cannot be by disciples. There's a principle here, Of cost. And since I needed a P, I chose price.

Because you've got to have all the same letters. Right? But, There's a price, There's a principle we see here, That it's one of cost, One of price. And we count, We count the cost.

Jesus encouraged us to count the cost. One of my mentors in the Lord, Sometimes when I was with him, And he was sharing the gospel, He would, And people would be, Yeah, I think, I think I want to accept Jesus.

He'd go, No, you don't. Do you understand what that's going to cost you? And he would count the cost up front. He would make sure he communicated clearly. Because his hope was that they would be a disciple, Not, Hear my heart in this.

And when I say just a convert, I understand, I mean, It's amazing to be a convert, Right? The blood of Christ. It's an amazing thing, To even get into heaven in the first place. I understand that. But, Man, If we can, We're supposed to make disciples, Though.

[21 : 30] Right? We're supposed to make disciples. Is our, Is our, Those are our marching orders. Right? And so, We want to see people, Understand that there's a price.

And so, Jesus says, My disciples, And he summarizes, Says it really well at the end of these two examples. You've got to be willing to give up everything you have. Now, I told, I said we talk about the rich young ruler.

Maybe you've heard that story. Jesus is talking to somebody who wants to know what it, What it's going to cost him, Basically, To enter the kingdom of heaven. And Jesus says, Well, You've got to give up everything you own.

And this is a wealthy, Came from a wealthy family. Right? And, And the guy basically said, Ah, It's too expensive. Right? He said, That's too much. And, You know, Who, Again, Jesus knows our individual issues.

I think that was the issue of this one, This one guy. But, Are you willing to? If he asked you to, Give up everything you have, Would you be willing to?

[22 : 33] I think that's the core heart. He doesn't ask us all to do that. Right? You look in scripture, He did not ask everybody, To give up everything they had. All of his disciples. But, There's a, There's a core principle of being his disciple.

Jesus says, Are you, Are you willing to give up everything you have? You know what? And, And Russ and I were talking about this, This afternoon. There comes a place, And, And I've had glimpses of this in my life, Where, I, I understand that it's not mine anyway.

Right? And so, I'm not really giving up anything. Jim, Jim, There's a quote by Jim Elliott, The, The, The martyred missionary to the Alka Indians, This is the last century. Right? It says, He is no fool, Who gives what he cannot keep, To gain what he cannot lose.

Right? We can't take it with us. It's not our stuff. There's, There's this surrender of, Of our ownership of things. And that's the price. That, That's, There's a cost to being his disciple. And, And I think, If we understand priority and price, That's, That's a foundation to build our discipleship on.

Right? We're not, None of us are going to be perfect disciples. No matter how much we grow in this life, We'll never get there. Right? But, That's the foundation to build on.

[23 : 46] Is, Is it my priority? And is, Do I understand the price? That it's not mine. I'm willing to give it all up. That it's Jesus's anyway. So, If, If, If you think about that price thing, What are some practical, Um, Implications, If there, If Jesus says, You know, Being my disciple requires you to understand that, That, Um, You gotta be willing to give up everything you have.

There's a price. So, So, So talk to me. What are some implications of that principle? Comfort. More or less? What's that?

Either way. You hold it, What? Kind of with an open hand. Right? Comfort is not something, You work, You, You, You worry about. Worry might be the wrong word. Am I putting words in your mouth?

Okay. Long term goals. Talk to me about that. Okay. So, The long, He said long term goals.

It's, It's in His hands. Financial, Otherwise, Um, You surrender some, Some things. Some control, Maybe, Is what I hear, What else? If, If we understand that, The price, There's a price.

[25:00] And that, That it's, It's, We, We, Jesus asks us pretty clearly. He says, You can't be a disciple unless you're willing to give up everything you have. What, What other implications does that have for us?

Your rights. Your rights. And that comes back to, I think, BJ mentioned, With the relationships even, Right? Right. I mean, you can just take it from there.

Yeah. That's pretty un-American of you. I don't think you should say that. Okay, that's right. Right, give up your rights, right?

There's things that we claim that we hold on to that we've got to be willing to give up. What's another implication of this idea that there's a price, a cost to count?

Hmm. Yeah. Okay, so there's a, Russ said, the things of this earth, we understand maybe an eternal perspective on things, right?

[26:38] That, you know, moth and rust will destroy the things on earth, right? We get this perspective of things. Yeah. Good.

That makes me think of the sermon this morning, right? That we, look, we obey not knowing what the outcome is going to be, right? There's a price, you know, we're willing to pay there. It's like whether we get what we want or not, this is what we're going to do.

We're going to follow Jesus, right? Y'all move on. So we've got priority and price, and I think of those kind of as a foundation. And then what I see is this, this one maybe is the more complicated one for me.

We see this, what is the process then? If we understand these things, that there's a price to pay, there's a priority, prioritization that has to go on for me to be a disciple, a follower, a learner, right? Then we see this other piece that we see in Scripture, and I'm going to move actually into Luke 6, Luke 6, 40.

[27:42] And it's down there. It says, The student's not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher. There's this idea of process, right?

We don't become amazing disciples the instant that we're converted. I mean, maybe you did. I'm, right? I don't know where I am on the continuum, but I'm not there.

And I think that's the example we see in Scripture. Nobody's perfect, right? Nobody, but we're moving. There's a process to this whole thing. I think the process that we see is twofold. I think it's two sides of the same coin.

And one side of the process we see in verses we've already read. Luke 9, 23 said what? Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves.

By the way, there's that price there again. And then do what? Take up their cross daily and follow me. Take up their cross daily and follow me. And in Luke 14, 27, we see pretty much the same words.

[28:44] Whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be by disciple. We see that part of the process, the first side of the process, is daily death. Take up your cross daily and follow me.

And we see, like we see in the Lord's Prayer, not, you know, it's thy will be done, right? We say, not my will be done, God. Your will be done. When I die to my will, right, there's a daily death part of the process.

And we say, you know, we wake up like, you know, Brother Lawrence used to wake up in one of the old monks and used to say, you know, he just, God, you know, what do you want me to do today?

Now, he was in a position where that's kind of his job, maybe, right? What do you want me to do today, right? Now, we got to go to jobs. We know some of the things he wants you to do, right? Be faithful at your jobs, things like that. But there's still that principle in our hearts, right?

We die daily to ourselves. The process says, die daily to your stuff. Your old self, you need to die to that. And the new stuff, it's rooted and grounded in me anyway, right? And so if you do, if you act

according to your new self, you're going to be doing what I want you to do.

[29 : 51] And we say, part of the process is die daily. We wake up and say, I surrender all and mean it, right? I think that's one side of the coin that we see, the process of discipleship, of what it means to grow as a disciple.

Now, the other side of the coin is this, and it was alluded to in that Luke 640 verse, but there's this idea that I think the first century disciples would have understood because they had, there were disciples all over the place.

They knew what it meant to be a disciple, and it's this. There's some training involved. If I'm going to follow a master, a teacher, if I'm going to say I'm their disciple, then I'm going to have to train myself, right?

There's just this understanding I think they would have had. And we see, we see, if I can leave the Gospels for a couple verses from Paul, right? In Corinthians, we see he loses this. 1 Corinthians 9, he says, you know, he says, I, I, you know, I, I'm trying to find the words.

1 Corinthians 9, 24 to 27. It says that we, we beat ourselves daily, right? We fight as men not fighting in the air. We, we, we, we, we, you know, that's worth looking up.

[31 : 03] Now, I told, I stole this from the, the hospital, the hospital, the, what's it called? The hotel. It's a Gideon's Bible. Thank you, Gideon's, or any Gideon's? 1 Corinthians 9, 24 to 27 says, Do you not know that those who run in a race all run?

But one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now, they do it to, to obtain a perishable crown. But we, for an imperishable crown.

Therefore, I run thus, not with uncertainty. Thus I fight, not as one who beats the air, but I discipline my body. And bring it into subjection. Lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should come, become disqualified.

And that St. Paul, when he writes his letter to, to, to Timothy, his son in the faith, he says, look, physical training is of some value, right? But godliness holds value for all things.

Train yourself to be godly. So while we, we surrender ourselves, we die daily to our own will, the other side of the coin is, um, look, if I just say, let go and let God, that is an amazing truth.

[32 : 15] And some of us need to be able to let go. That's our, that's our weakness. We can't let go. But if all we do is let go, um, there's another side of the coin. And that's to train ourselves, to discipline ourselves for godliness.

And I think that, uh, that if, if we just look on the one side, and man, if, if we can even get to a point of surrender, that's some, that's, that's some, uh, you've gained something, right?

But the other fact is to, to grow in discipleship, it means training also. It means we've got to train ourselves. So, so, um, we also, well, let me, let me just ask this.

I think it's pretty clear what I'm saying, right? One side of the coin is daily death. The other side, I think, is a disciplined life, right? And that's the process that God has ordained, that Jesus taught, to grow as a disciple.

Daily death, disciplined life. What are some implications? What are some practical implications then? Remember, some of these things over, these things all overlap each other, by the way. And it's not some linear process.

[33 : 15] But if we, as disciples, as those who have been converted, who want to grow, uh, in Christ, who, who say, I'm a follower of Jesus, what implications does it, does this daily death idea and this disciplined life idea have for our, for our lives, for our everyday lives?

What practical things? Service-minded. Okay. Hmm.

Okay. Okay. So it's not all gloom and doom, suffering for the sake of the cause.

There's a, there's a silver lining, right? That's good to be reminded of that. I think that's right. What, what other implications does, do daily death and disciplined life have for us? Practically. Worship regularly.

What do you mean by worship? Because celebrate corporately, celebrate privately. Adoration.

[34 : 26] Just have a life of, that, that reflects an adoration toward God. Good. What are all some practical implications of, uh, daily death and disciplined life? It takes discipline to simply yourself.

Yeah. It's a discipline. If you, if you really did that, if you woke up every morning and said, uh, God, not my will, but your will be done today. That's a, that's discipline in itself, right?

That's a discipline to even do that each day. But what things, Bill? Yeah. You see all these other loved scriptures just fold into the process?

That's right. Um, we sacrifice ourselves daily. We, we discipline ourselves. What things count as daily? The one, the one I struggle with personally the most is the disciplined life side, to be honest with you.

Right? So what are some things, but I don't, so I don't want to beat you down thinking you've got to, uh, live, I don't know, I don't know what you think of when you hear disciplined life. So let's talk about maybe, what, what are some things that count as a disciplined life?

[35 : 32] Yeah, Bible study. Priorities. Okay, so you just, maybe you have, maybe you've never made a, maybe you've never tried to prioritize your life.

If to discipline yourself to make a list like that, you might discover some things, right? There's a, there's a, there's a discipline there. What else? What counts as a disciplined life? Putting God first. Too vague. Be more specific. What else counts as a disciplined life? Good. Good.

Good. Examining your choices. Making sure it's the right, from God's perspective, choice. Right? Not, not the easy one, but the right one. Which, thank God, sometimes the easy ones are the right ones.

Right? That's not a measure of God's will. Which one's harder? That's the one, that must be what God wants me to do, right? That's not the measure. The measure is his word, right? What's the right choice? What are some other things that count as disciplined life?

[36 : 32] Prayer, fasting. This counts. Yeah, putting others first. That's right.

And this, this counts. Being here. Going, going to church on Sundays. That counts, right? That's a, this part of the disciplined life, making that a priority in your life. That counts.

There are, there are simple things we can do to lead a disciplined life. It's not all, you know, 40 days of, of fasting. Right? It's not always this complicated thing. But it's this priority.

It's this way to grow. Right? And some things that were mentioned earlier. Just being in the word. I mean, been really convicted by that, this, this lately, of how, if we don't devote, you know, the early church, Acts 2, 42, right?

They devoted themselves to what? The apostles' teaching, fellowship, and prayer. You want to start somewhere. Right? Devote yourselves, the apostles' teaching, to fellowship. They also broke bread.

[37 : 32] I think, I think scholars are divided whether that meant they ate together a lot or whether they took the Lord's Supper a lot. So I think we should just do both. Right? Let's, let's eat, let's eat together a lot and let's, let's take communion, make sure we take communion regularly.

Right? Why split it? Might as well do them both. Right? So, but those are four places to start with. Right? Devote yourself to the apostles' teaching. Right?

The word. Devote yourself to prayer. Devote yourself to fellowship. Not real fellowship. Right? Like, I think, I was listening to Alistair Begg talk about koinonia the other day and he just said, you know, that koinonia, that word we use, fellowship, was like this contractual thing that people had entered into at the day.

Like, it wasn't this small thing, let's go have some ice cream together. Right? Fellowship. But it was like this, oh, we're joining together to do something bigger than ourselves. Right? So that's, that's real, which by the way, could include ice cream.

I don't want to, I mean, I don't want to say that you can't. But, um, we, we have a disciplined life. Right? We die daily to ourselves. And don't you love how, how realistic it is daily?

[38 : 42] Right? Conversion, what happened to conversion is a once for all kind of thing. Right? But then this, this, this disciple, life of discipleship is a daily death kind of thing.

Right? It's a, it's a, man, life's going to beat me down and I want, I want my life, you know, well, I think, I taught math. So I think in terms, I think like in graphs and numbers a lot.

So I think, I don't want you to take a snapshot of my life in the last month, really, to describe if I'm growing. But I, what I want is to snapshot, snapshot over the last decade.

Am I more mature now than I was then? Right? And I think that's the daily death piece. Right? I have my ups and downs, but at the end, the balance, right? At the end, I'm going to be closer to that, to that line.

I'm growing. Right? I'm growing toward it. And I think, if we die daily to ourself and lead a disciplined life, that's, that's the process he's got in place for us to do that.

[39 : 38] The last piece is a pretty easy piece, really, because maybe you can notice by the fact that the picture is the same between disciple and purpose.

And we've already talked about our purpose, right? We talked about the Great Commission. Right? He says, go and do what? Make disciples. Make people who, who understand that I should be number one priority.

Make people that understand the price that, that, they must be willing to pay to be my disciple. Understand what the process looks like to actually grow in that. Right? Teach them to, not just teach them everything I commanded you, teach them to obey everything I commanded you. To live it out. To live that disciplined life out. And, and, and I think that's, that's kind of the full circle of, of discipleship. We understand there's a, there's a priority, a priority that Jesus calls for. A price he calls for. A process he's put into place that, that'll help us grow in that. And the ultimate purpose is to make more people who glorify him. Right? And so, and not only that, but I think we, I think we can make disciples of people who are already converts.

[40 : 51] The reason I, I think that is because there's a growth process. Right? I'm a, I'm, over the last 10 years, the 10 year ago me, I think, I'm, I'm more mature than that person was.

Right? And so, we can make disciples within the body, too. We help each other grow. We help each other make good decisions. That, that requires that we do more than sit shoulder to shoulder with someone on Sunday morning, though, right?

I'm not going to grow a whole lot if, if, if that's all I do. If that's what church means to me. Is sitting, sitting next to somebody, hearing a good sermon, singing good music.

Which, by the way, what a blessing to be able to do that. Right? But if that's all it is to me, my discipleship, I saw, again, Russ and I had a great conversation this afternoon. One of the benefits of mission trips, by the way.

When, when else do you get extended times to just really talk about significant things unconnected from the, the daily, your daily life? But, um, I've got to believe, I believe in my heart that it's possible, let me put it this way, if, if, if, all you are able to do, your work schedule, your whatever, your life, just the way it is, the situation God has you in, if you're able to make a Sunday service, you will grow as a disciple of a good church.

[42 : 11] Like this one, right? Where you're fed the word, you're singing praises to God, you'll grow. You'll grow. But I've got to believe in my heart that it's possible to, to, to increase the curve on, the, the slope of that line of growth.

Right? That it's possible to grow faster. Now, we all grow at different rates. We all grow, you know, there's lots this involves as we understand his word. But the fact is, I want to accelerate that growth as much as is in my power to do so.

Right? And to understand that piece of it. And so, I can do that. I can, I can, that's part of the discipline life too, isn't it? I can, I can listen to a sermon on the radio.

I can listen to a podcast. You know, it doesn't have to happen in these, in this building. Right? It can happen in so many different ways. And I can help that process grow. And God has designed the church to do that for us as well.

Right? He's gave, he's given us some to be teachers and preachers and apostles and, and evangelists. You know, he's, he's put us, he's knit us together as a body for the mutual edification.

[43 : 20] Right? The building up of one another. Okay? And so, that's growth as a disciple. And so, when I think about how I want to identify myself on Facebook, really, how I want, how I want people to identify me.

Right? What does my life line up with? Is, I want to be a disciple. I want to be Jesus' follower. I want to be his apprentice. Think of the power, has anyone here done any work that is involved where it's, where the way to learn it is through apprenticeship rather than maybe college or education?

Right? Such a more effective way to learn something, isn't it? To sit under someone and to have them show you hands-on and to see you, to watch, you watch them do it and then they let you do it and apprenticeship is such a better way to learn things.

It's not very cost effective sometimes, right? So that's why sometimes, that's why we get classrooms of 500 people and get their tuition. It's easier, but is it more effective?

You know, probably not. It's when you get your job and you get actually hands-on, right? That's when you really learn what you need to learn. You take one thing away from tonight, and I'll wrap up here.

[44:42] It's this. Maybe think of yourself as Jesus' apprentice for a while, right? You know, it just kind of helps to shake things up. What does that mean to you?

Are you a learner? Is that your positionally before God? Are you a learner? Because that will affect all of your relationships, right?

And I think that's, that's, that's our, if we can have that posture before God as a learner and before others as a learner, then we'll grow as his disciples.

Thank you.