

**August 25, 2019 – Elmont Baptist Church**

**Text: Matthew 4:19**

**Message Series: Church: A Disciple-Making Community**

**Week 4: What is a Disciple?**

**Introduction:**

1. We're in the middle of looking at the church as a disciple-making community.
  - a. That as a community of Christ-followers, we have one job – to glorify God by making disciples.
  - b. For two weeks we talked about heart issues and said that as Christ-followers not only has our eternity has been changed, but the very desires of our heart have been changed.
  - c. And that we would do well to ask ourselves what do we desire most and is it to know, love, and follow Jesus?
  - d. After all, it is our desires that drive our devotions. We are devoted to the things we desire the most.
2. Last week we continued down the path of looking at the church as a disciple-making community.
  - a. We said that the fire to grow your desire for God through Christ is knowledge. To know God. We must become more and more a people that are devoted to knowing God.
  - b. And it's not academic. It's a relationship so it is never static. You're either moving closer to Him or farther away. God is not a subject you learn about, but a Person you get to know.
3. Today we are going to define what we mean by the word Christ-follower or disciple.
  - a. It's a word you hear a lot in church, but may be defined many different ways within the same faith family and none of them be wrong.
  - b. Our text last week from 2 Peter 1:1-11 helped us see the attributes that should be growing and increasing in our lives, and we will come back to reference that text over the next few weeks.

- c. But today, I want to be clear and concise about what we mean when we say the term Christ-follower or disciple, and Matthew 4:19 is a great verse to reference for a well-rounded definition.

**Illus:** This Friday night most high schools in Texas will play their first official football game.

Scrimmages are over and it's time for the real thing. Up until now coaches have been working hard to get each player to understand each play in the playbook, execute their role in each play, and improve their skills that help them do their job better and better.

If the team got in the huddle and the quarterback called the play and each player thought the play was something different, that team would never accomplish their goal to score points and win games. All the players would be moving and it would look like a flurry of activity, but they would fail to accomplish their purpose. It's difficult enough for a team to accomplish their goal of scoring points and winning games even with players that know the plays and their role in each one – just look at the Dallas Cowboys for the last 23 years.

- d. If we don't all understand what a disciple is according to Scripture (which is not a playbook or life map – it is the written revelation of the character, nature, and desire of Holy God), then we will run around doing what each of think is best, but not move together to accomplish the Kingdom goal of glorifying God by making disciples of all nations. We look busy and there's a lot of activity, but no Kingdom advancement.
- e. We often say our mission, and not just ours, but any church that seeks to be biblical, is to make disciples and so that leads us back to word that demands clarity so that we all know what is meant by it. That word is "disciple", and when you hear "Christ-follower", we're talking about the same thing.

Let's look at Matthew 4:19 to give us a definition of "Christ-follower" or "Disciple".

## **A Disciple is someone that...**

### **1. Has a Relationship with God through Christ: *"Follow Me"***

- a. A disciple is someone who has a relationship with Jesus through belief and repentance.
  - i. A person hears the Gospel and responds by trusting the person and work of Jesus to forgive their sin and changes their heart to know and love God.
  - ii. This is what we talked about a couple of weeks ago. Your eternity is changed through Jesus to be with Him forever and your heart is changed through Jesus to love Him supremely.
  - iii. His death, burial, and resurrection changes everything.
- b. Even in Jesus' call to these first disciples tells us it's a relationship that's on the move.  
"Follow me" – we're going somewhere. Things are not going to stay the same.
- c. That can be scary. Where are we going? Where are you taking me? Why do things have to change?
- d. But the next words from Jesus are comforting and empowering, "...and I will make you..."

### **2. Is being Transformed by Jesus: *"And I will make you"***

- a. A disciple is experiencing transformation to be more like Jesus.
- b. The message of the Gospel isn't...
  - i. ...to get your life together and then Jesus wants and can use you
  - ii. Or that you're really good and just need little grace to get you over the top
- c. The message of the Gospel is...

- i. ...that you cannot get your life together, you cannot be good enough on your own, so come to Jesus and let Him rescue you from sin and yourself, and bring you into God's family
  - ii. Let Him transform you to be more like Him by the work of the Spirit in you.
- d. Transformation is so difficult for us to understand though. It's easiest just to make it about a few things we do and mostly don't do and think that's what a good Christian is.
- e. But not doing a few things and keeping a new Sunday schedule are not in the realm of supernatural transformation.
- f. What has changed about you since knowing Jesus that only He could have done?
- g. And we keep being transformed. We don't get to a place and then stop like we have arrived.
- h. Like we said last week, disciples are growing in their love and knowledge of Jesus by...
  - i. Spending time with Him personally
  - ii. Learning from great men and women of the faith, and
  - iii. From other believers in their faith family
- i. God uses each of these to transform us.
- j. And it's not change for change's sake. We are transformed to experience the best and sweetest in relationship with God through Christ.
- k. John Piper says it this way, "This sweetest experience is conditional on our transformation into the kind of people whose emotions and choices and actions please God."

**Illus:** There's a transformation that happens between being a parent and being a grandparent. Parents love to say good things about their kids. Parents also get frustrated and impatient with their kids. You can be talking to a parent and ask, "Hey, how's little Rufus doing?" and depending on how things are going, they may say, "Don't get me started. I don't want to even

talk about it.” Grandparents, on the other hand, only say good things about their grandkids. It doesn’t matter what that little darling has done, they will talk about him all day and have nothing bad to say. Their whole perspective on life is different. That’s life-changing transformation. They’ve been changed.

**I.** We celebrate the things we love the most. We tell others about the things most important to us or the things we are most excited about.

**i.** This is why you don’t have to even open the door for a conversation about grandkids with a grandparent. It’s going to happen anyway. Why? That is the most important thing in their world and what they are most excited about.

**ii.** College football fans will talk passionately about their team and “why this is their year”. You don’t even have to bring it up. They’ll work it into the conversation somehow.

**iii.** And none of that is bad. Our happiness and enjoyment of something we love isn’t full unless we can share it with others. C.S. Lewis said, “Just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: ‘Isn’t she lovely? Wasn’t it glorious? Don’t you think that magnificent?’”

**m.** The transformation that Jesus brings has a purpose and plan to it.

**n.** Because there’s a mission to accomplish and a disciple is someone that...

### **3. Is Living out the Mission of Jesus: “*Fishers of men*”**

**a.** The goal isn’t to make you a better version of you and then that’s it.

**b.** Jesus transforms us to be worshippers. Worshippers who are satisfied or happy in Him.

- c. As you come to treasure Christ more, you become more and more like Him and as you become more like Jesus, you will love Him more and love what He loves, and love like He loves; and go where He went; and do what He did
- d. Because when Jesus is our ultimate enjoyment we want to share that with others. We want to bring them into what has given us ultimate hope for eternity and joy in life now.
- e. We've become worshippers – people that desire to reflect glory to God in our words, thoughts, actions, and emotions – and we want others to join us in worship.
- f. Our life with Christ instantly goes public. It involves others from the very start. It mostly likely began because someone shared Christ with you in the first place.
- g. A disciple understands there is mission to accomplish and lives on mission with Jesus by sharing their faith, and loving and serving others. Your relationship with Jesus is meant to be shared, not kept secret. Shared with your life and your lips.
- h. But you're not alone. Jesus gave you the gift of a faith family.
- i. Loving, serving, and sharing are all biblical expectations for Christ-followers, and none of those can be done without involving other people.
- j. We need others to help us in this journey and we need be a help to others. My desire is to see everyone that calls Elmont home deeply connected to people that intentionally help them grow in their faith.

**Illus:**

Too often we approach church like we do Friday nights in Texas. That as church members our job is to sit in the stands and watch what's happening on the field. We will voice our pleasure or displeasure depending on the performance of those "in the game". There should no spectators in the church.

- k. It's not that you have to serve on an official ministry team or time slot, but are you deeply connected to others, or willing to be, in order to grow in Jesus, help them grow in Jesus, and advance the Kingdom together?
- l. We are becoming more serious and strategic about making disciples. Through much prayer, study, counsel, and training, we are restarting our Small Groups on September 8<sup>th</sup> with a more focused plan to help people grow in knowing, loving, and following Jesus.
- m. Through a relational community we will help you grow in the most essential beliefs, or doctrines, and application of those beliefs, or disciplines.
- n. We can't make you grow in Jesus and carry out Kingdom advancing mission with your life, but we can give you the Truth, the tools, and the support system to help make it happen.

## **Closing**

1. Weeks ago we talked about having changed desires as a result of trusting Jesus for salvation.
  - a. Maybe you're still struggling with little or no desire to know, love, and follow Jesus.
    - i. Please come talk to one of our leaders up here in just a moment.
    - ii. Ask the Father to give you a desire to want to know, love, and follow Jesus
  - b. Is your struggle that you do want to know Him more deeply, but you're not connected in relationships that help you grow in Jesus?
    - i. The God that created you and the Father that adopted you wants you to know Him, and find joy in Him. When we leave in just a few minutes go sign up for a Small Group.
    - ii. Take a chance ask for God's help.
  - c. Who is helping you grow in Jesus and who are you helping grow in Jesus?
    - i. Don't just feel bad and then leave.

- ii. Transformation is not an immediate process and God is patiently getting your attention and letting you know that He still has a plan for your heart to love and adore Him more.
- iii. Be encouraged that we have so many people here that want to help you grow and so many people that need your help. You have something to offer. You have a role in helping make disciples.

Let's pray and then you stand and sing and reflect on what God has said to you.