

9/20/2015

Lord's Day Service Message

The Key Ministries of All Christians

Matthew 4:18-25

¹⁸As 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. ¹⁹"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Going 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, ²²and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. ²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. ²⁵Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

When Jesus calls us to be saved and to be children of God, He has a great plan for our lives. He wants to bless not only us but also many people through us.

Here in this text, Jesus shows us what the great plan is and how we can accomplish this great plan. There are several essential things in the plan. They are disciple making, preaching and teaching, and healing (DPH).

Disciple making

In the beginning stage of his public ministry, Jesus chose some people to make His disciples. And during the 3 years of His public ministry, He spent most of His time making them disciples. Disciple making was the most important ministry to Jesus.

Jesus commands all believers to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). Making disciples of all nations is not an option which believers can choose to do or not to do, but it is an essential ministry for all believers to do. If we obey that command, Jesus who has all authority in heaven and on earth will be with us.

In his disciple making ministry, Jesus gave His disciples both a command and a promise when he called them: *"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men"* (verse 19). How can we obey this command and receive the blessing in this promise?

By His Grace

The first four people whom Jesus called to make disciples were fishers. In those days, fishers were uneducated people. They did not have high social status. They were neither rich nor famous. They were just ordinary people. Later Jesus added eight more people to the group of His disciples (Luke 6: 13-16). They were also ordinary people. One of them was a tax collector, who was regarded as a notorious sinner.

Jesus forgave them endlessly. Jesus patiently taught them to learn from Him and imitate Him although they were slow learners. Jesus focused more on the disciples' potential than on their weaknesses. Even though He knew each of the disciples' shortcomings, He chose them to accentuate their strengths. Jesus said to Peter, who had denied Him three times, *"Feed my sheep"* (John 21:15-17). Jesus forgave Peter and reinstated him to be a spiritual leader although he failed miserably. The Lord made Peter a disciple who would confess, *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him."* (2 Pet.1:3)

Today Jesus treats you and me with the same grace as He treated the first 12 disciples. Although you may be an ordinary person, and may not have many talents or skills, Jesus makes you a fisher of men. Even if you are one of the worst sinners, Jesus wipes your sins away and gives

you a new life. It is He who makes you a fisher of men. It is He who gives you divine power. It is He who provides everything you need to be a fisher of men. It is only by His grace for you to become a disciple.

As you become a disciple by His grace, share His grace with people whom you want to be disciples of Christ. As Jesus has done for you, keep seeing God's potential in them rather than their weakness or sinfulness.

By His discipline

By the phrase, "follow me I will make you fishers of men" Jesus means that He will make us His disciples through discipline. What discipline? How does Jesus discipline us?

Jesus said, "*If anyone would come after me, he would deny himself and take up his cross and follow me*" (Matthew 16:24).

Jesus did not force the disciples to deny themselves and take up their cross. Jesus used difficult circumstances and people to discipline them. Jesus brought them into the storm in the midst of the sea. Jesus challenged them to feed 5 thousand people without any available food. Jesus trained them for evangelism by sending them two by two to reach out to unbelievers who had no interest in spiritual matters.

Also He used people to discipline them. Look at the phrase, "I will make **you fishers** of men" Here the words "you, fishers" are plural. Jesus call them to be together always and share their lives together. Their characters were different. Being together and sharing lives together with people who are very different so closely every day was difficult or even painful. But that was what Jesus did to discipline them. Jesus encouraged them to keep forgiving each other, to take care of each other although they did not and could not like each other. What is the mark of Jesus' disciples to unbelievers? Jesus said, "*If you love one another by this all men will know that you are my disciples*" (John 13:35).

Likewise, Jesus uses difficult circumstances to discipline us. Jesus disciplines us in the context of togetherness. Some times it is really hard for us to be together. But with Jesus' love we can keep forgiving, keep loving, keep taking care of each other even if we don't like each other.

Also discipline takes lots of time and effort. Jesus invested three full years every day 24 hours a day to make them His disciples. Jesus invests His own life to make us disciples. You can't make a disciple of anyone with little time and little investment. You need to invest lots of time, not just in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. If you have a person to make Jesus' disciples, take enough time to teach the person the word of Christ. Keep praying for the person to see God's holy presence in Christ and hear God's voice through Christ's word. Keep sharing your faith with the person until the person can make another person a disciple.

In the story of the movie "War Room" : the old Christian lady teaches the young lady how to believe in God's promise and pray with the promise and win over the devil's attack on her husband and marriage.

(Video clips –

Video clip #1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jfOQ4-whSI>

Video clip #2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hk_m7HUoaUA

Teaching and Preaching

Teaching and preaching were also essential parts of Jesus' ministry. The truth of the gospel must be taught and preached constantly by all believers.

2 Timothy 4:1-2. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, , I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

For His teaching and preaching ministry, Jesus did three things and He encourages us to follow His example.

First thing He did was preparing well.

Before Jesus came out to do His teaching and preaching ministry, He had taken many years to learn and prepare Himself for teaching and preaching. He spent 3 years in His teaching and preaching ministry. But He spent 30 years to prepare for the ministry.

To teach and preach the truth of the gospel, we need to follow Jesus example. Only after we learn well and prepare well, we can be effective and influential teachers and preachers. As Jesus followers our learning will never end. Even if you've been a believer for many years, you still have to humble yourself to learn.

Secondly, to teach and preach the gospel, Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit. Before His public teaching and preaching ministry, Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit. He fasted and prayed to be anointed by the Holy Spirit. He was baptized by John the Baptist and then He was anointed by the Spirit.

Teaching and preaching the word of God can be fruitful and powerful when we believers are anointed by the Holy Spirit. When we teach and preach the gospel through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, people's spiritual eyes are open to see the things of God's kingdom, and their spiritual ears are open to hear the voice of God.

Third, Jesus teaches and preaches through His own life.

Jesus teaches and preaches not only through His words but also through the example of His living. After Jesus lived His life as He taught and preached, He encouraged His disciples to follow His example. Of course we can't be sinless or perfect as Jesus is. But Jesus helps us to be genuine and authentic by being honest and humble before God. Through the power of His blood He cleanses our sins when we repent. Through the power of His Spirit, He enables us to change and grow. Let's teach and preach the gospel with our lives in the cleansing power in Jesus' blood. Let's teach and preach with our lives in the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Healing

In His public ministry, Jesus constantly healed people who were suffering from various sicknesses and incurable diseases- *the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed.*

Healing was an essential part of Jesus' earthly ministry. Jesus encourages all believers to participate in His healing ministry.

When Jesus called his twelve disciples to Him, He gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

Matthew 10:1-He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

The apostles combined their healing ministry and their preaching, teaching and evangelism ministries (In the book of Acts – Peter, Paul)

People are wounded and hurt every day. This world has so many things that hurt people and make people sick. We can't avoid pain and sickness. There is hurting in our family, in our schools, in our work places, and even in our church.

Sometimes, we get hurt and sick because of own faults. Other times we may get hurt and sick because of other people's faults. So, some people become passive in their relationship with other people. They try to avoid people. But it does not solve the problem of sickness. Because loneliness makes people sick too.

What do we have to do then?

To bring healing to those who get hurt and sick, we need Jesus' healing power. Jesus' healing is healing for the whole being-not only physical healing but also spiritual and emotional healing. Jesus' healing is the best healing in the world.

Jesus is the healer. He wants to heal you and me every day. He wants to heal the sick through us. He has given us the authority of healing. Jesus promises that He will give the authority and power of healing to us when we obey His commandment for world evangelism in Mark 16:15-18.

¹⁵He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ...And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

Let's exercise His authority of healing in our lives every day. Let's exercise Jesus' healing power for the sick around us every day.