

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – Pastor Randy

SERMON INTRO: Video of “G.O.S.P.E.L.” by Propoganda

The Gospel really is Good News. Last week I started unpacking our mission statement. On our website under the “about us” tab you will read these words,

Our Mission: Learning, Living, and Sharing the Good News of Jesus.

Last week, I focused on the object of our mission statement because it is the most critical piece. Our three key words - learn, live, and share - are meaningless unless they are directed at the proper object; the gospel, the good news of Jesus.

The good news about Jesus is what unites us as a community. The three key words in our mission statement communicate what we are committed to doing with this good news. We are committed to learning it, living it and sharing it. What does that mean?

When you read or hear these three words; Learn, live, and share, I want you to associate three other words were them that will help you understand our mission.

Learn (KNOW Jesus)

Live (FOLLOW Jesus)

Share (GO for Jesus)

There are two texts of scripture that form the basis for this three-fold mission.

Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go with him. And they came to him. Then he appointed twelve of them and called them his apostles. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach, giving them authority to cast out demons. – Mark 3:13-15

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – Pastor Randy

the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” - Matt. 28:18-20

The Mark passage describes Jesus initial selecting of his twelve disciples, The passage in Matt. 28 contains the words of Jesus to the eleven remaining disciples following Judas' suicide. At both Jesus' initial call and in his final commissioning of his key disciples, the three key aspects of discipleship are communicated:

Learning/Knowing Jesus

Living/Following Jesus

Sharing/Going on behalf of Jesus

In Mark 3:13-15 Jesus first called the disciples TO himself. The very first thing they needed was to be introduced to the One who was Himself the good news. Jesus' initial call to them was not a command to do something for him, but simply to come to him so that they could LEARN from him; so they could get to KNOW him. Disciples learn to know about God and to know God!

In John 10:14 Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and *my own know me*. Earlier, In John 10:4, Jesus described Himself as the Good Shepherd who, "goes before them (His sheep), and *the sheep follow him, for they know his voice*." The whole point of knowing Jesus is so that we follow Jesus.

Jesus called them to himself so that they would begin to *accompany him* (i.e. follow him). Jesus plan to teach his disciples about who He was and how they should live was not via a textbook, but in a laboratory; the lab of living life with him. Jesus would teach them how to have mercy and compassion by demonstrating compassion for the lepers and prostitutes. He would teach them how to trust God by taking them with him on a boat in the middle of a frightening storm. He taught them truth about the nature of God and His kingdom through stories and parables that related to their daily experiences of farming and family. Jesus did impart information to his disciples, but he also modeled transformation. He spent time with them so they could LEARN and LIVE.

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – Pastor Randy

Logically and conceptually learning comes prior to living; knowing comes prior to following. However, in practice we don't want to separate these into a nice, neat sequence. We learn not only before but as we live out what we have learned. We grow to know Jesus better as we follow Jesus. We might start with learning to know, but we must quickly INCREASE our learning and knowing by living and following.

The third purpose behind Jesus call was so that he could send these men out to be his representatives and expand his kingdom. He sent them out with His authority to preach the good news and demonstrate the good news that the kingdom had come by exercising authority over the powers of darkness. They called them "so that" – purpose clause – they would GO and SHARE the good news that they learned. We cannot learn to know Jesus and live as followers of Jesus and never share Jesus.

While going and sharing also logically and conceptually follow learning and living, do not make the mistake of separating them in practice. You will never learn to share your faith in Christ very well until you begin to do it! I know some Christians that think they can't reach out and try to encourage someone else to believe in Christ and to follow Christ until there are following perfectly. If you do that the time will never be right to share. We are not inviting people to place their trust in us, but in Christ. We are not encouraging people to follow us, but to follow Christ. Sharing helps us follow because when you are actively trying to encourage and influence someone else to follow Jesus, it motivates you to follow. If you want to see your commitment to Christ become stronger, start serving and sharing. Christianity is only boring to those who are not allowing Jesus to send them into the world!

Our second text serves as a bookend on the other end of Jesus ministry. He began by calling these men to be his disciples to learn, live and share -to know, follow, and go – and he concluded his ministry by giving the same emphasis in what has come to be called the Great Commission.

This passage it begins with "Go". However, that is because Jesus is addressing disciples who have already been learning from him and living with him.

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – Pastor Randy

"...Baptizing them..." (Share the Good News)

"...Teaching them..." (Learn the Good News)

"...to obey..." (Live the Good News)

Let's look at Matt. 28:18-20 from the perspective of the person being discipled. It begins with them having been introduced to Christ and taught the basics of salvation so that they can profess their new found faith through baptism. At this stage they have already been taught some of what they need to learn. They have already come to know who Christ is, but their learning is just beginning. After someone is baptized they need to continue to be taught. They need to continue to learn to know more about God's good news. Jesus said after you baptize them you need to teach then to obey! They need more than just to learn to know. They must learn about Jesus and His purposes in order to live for Jesus and His purposes!

Now look at this. Jesus said to teach them to obey *ALL* the commands I have given you. Am I wrong or would "***all the commands***" include this final command to go and make disciples!?!)

Here is the discipleship process:

"GO and SHARE the good news with others so they can,

1. Learn the good news about Jesus (Know Jesus).
2. Live the good news about Jesus (Follow Jesus).
3. Share the good news about Jesus (Go for Jesus).

- In order for us to really know Jesus we are going to have to spend time with Him.
- Knowing Jesus must lead to following Jesus.
- We must be learning, living, and sharing (know/follow/go) simultaneously. It is not sufficient to focus on only one or two of the three.
- The goal is for every disciple to be involved in making disciples.
- Our commitment to SHARE the good news requires a commitment to GO to others. We can't wait for others to come to us.

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – Pastor Randy

About three years ago I met a young man named Mohammed who was about 21 years old at the time. His nickname was Mojo. Mojo had recently begun to attend our church at the invitation of his former high school football coach, Joel Davis. Joel played college football at West Point where as lineman of the year, named team captain in 1995 and was invited to play in the East-West Shrine game. Joel had the opportunity to play in the NFL from 1996-2000; a couple of years with the Bengals and a couple with the Colts. Joel had a heart for young men and when he found out that Mojo was back home in Binghamton after having been kicked out of college for fighting, he began to go after him and started bringing him to church. Mojo didn't have a clue about Christianity until Joel started to reach out to him and bring him to church. Mojo didn't accept Christ right away but as he listened and learned, faith was eventually birthed in his heart and he accepted Christ. Joel connected Mojo with me so as to bring another spiritual mentor into Mojo's life. Mojo was only with us for a short while because he left Binghamton to enter the army. I will never forget a conversation I had with him over lunch before he left for the army. He asked me what has become one of my all-time favorite questions. He said, "Pastor Randy, did your wife love God more than you when she married you?" I was not expecting a question as profound as that and I struggled a little with knowing how to answer. After answering that I hope she did and I hope she always will, I quickly turned the conversation back to him, curious to know what prompted his question. He said, "I was just wondering if it is possible to find a girl that would love God more than me!" What a great question and what a great desire! Last April I received this imessage from Mo:

"Hey Pastor randy I want to know how you are doing? Also I have to ask for some advice. I know this woman who needs help and expresses her interest in following Jesus. I do not know where to begin. I was thinking you would know how I can lead her to Christ. Also if there is any women role models or support that can help her. She isn't to happy and tries to fill her voids with other things and I know only Jesus can do that."

THE CHURCH: WHO? WHAT? WHY? HOW? - Who Is Calvary? Pt. 2

Oct. 1, 2017 – *Pastor Randy*
