

B2B - Being a Disciple of Jesus (Luke 9:57-62; Luke 14:25-33 and John 15:1-8, 16)

18-Mar-2018

G'Day everyone!

Just a reminder that there is an outline in the bulletin for you to take down notes if that helps you.

There are Bibles in front of you.

Let me pray for God's help and understanding. Let's pray...

Recap

[PowerPoint 1-B2B]

This is 8th part of our 9 week B2B series

Where we have been looking at the basics of our faith

In the last few weeks we've been looking at the WHEEL - which represents the obedient Christian in action

[PowerPoint 2-Wheel]

[PowerPoint 2a-Hub]

The obedient Christian - has Jesus Christ as the HUB

[PowerPoint 2b-Power and direction]

And the Hub transmits *power and direction* from the HUB (Jesus) to the RIM (that's us)

[PowerPoint 3-vertical spokes]

Then the vertical spokes of *God's Word and Prayer* help us stay connected to Jesus and glorify God

God's Word and Prayer - are our means of getting God's petrol in our tank so we can do God's Work

Once we have God's petrol - we can do work for God

Which is done by the horizontal spokes - of Fellowship and Witnessing

[PowerPoint 4-horizontal spokes]

Fellowshipping with other Christians - which can take many different forms - and then witnessing to non-Christians - by developing a friendship and sharing our faith - which again can take many different forms.

[And notice we have the hands on the wall over there - the hands of God's Word, Prayer, Fellowship and Witnessing - to remind us what's involved. We'll leave them there for a couple more weeks]

Then last week we said that Jesus promised us some help with doing God's work of fellowship and witnessing

That help is the Holy Spirit

So let's remind ourselves of 2 memory verses from last week to do with the Holy Spirit

John 16:7

[PowerPoint 5-Heading]

[PowerPoint 5a-John 16:7]

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the **Advocate** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to

you

And Ephesians 5:18

[PowerPoint 6-Heading]

[PowerPoint 6a-Ephesians 5:18]

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the **Spirit**,

Intro/A Disciple

It's the Holy Spirit that's going to help us be a disciple of Jesus - which is our topic today - *Being a Disciple of Jesus*

So what is a Disciple?

[PowerPoint 7-Disciple Definition]

Someone who follows the teaching of another – accepts that teaching and assists in spreading that teaching to others

So a disciple of Jesus follows His teaching, accepts His teaching and spreads His teaching to others

What a Disciple of Jesus looks like

So what does a disciple of Jesus look like?

Well - hopefully I can give us a handful of answers - and we can write them on our sermon outline...

[PowerPoint 8-Disciple Hand]

Firstly it looks like loving others

[PowerPoint 8a-Love]

(pause)

[PowerPoint 9-John 13:34-35]

In John 13:34-35 - Jesus commands people (including us) to love others in the same way that He loves people - and then it will be obvious to everyone that we are His disciples

How did Jesus love us?

Jesus' love for us is the highest form of love - it is the love of God in not wanting people to be separated from Him - so God was prepared to allow His son to die on a cruel Roman cross - for the sin of the world to be fixed once and for all

So Jesus' love is a sacrificial love - other-person centred love

In His life on Earth - Jesus loved those in society that others saw as outcasts:

The lepers, the prostitutes and adulterers, the poor and the beggars, the sick and disabled, and the tax collectors

We must be the same - everyone needs to hear and see the love of Jesus - we shouldn't want anyone to miss out on Jesus -

In fact - our hearts should be saddened that people don't know Jesus

Remember our Vision here at St. David's - is to transform our community with the love of Jesus - so much so that it will be obvious that we are a beacon of light in the community - where all are welcome - and all we hear the love of Jesus and see the love of Jesus in us

(pause)

Next

A disciple of Jesus looks like someone who keeps to Jesus' teaching

[PowerPoint 10-Disciple's Hand-2]

(pause)

Jesus told those who believed in Him, in John 8:31

[PowerPoint 11-hold to teaching]

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples

The Greek word for hold here means abide which has the idea of living or dwelling.

So what Jesus means is: are we welcoming His words into our lives, being at home with them - letting His words live continuously with us - so His words are an integral part of our lives - and so His words are a permanent influence in every aspect of our lives.

Do His words and teaching affect every thought we have?

Do they affect every word we say?

Do they stimulate and guide every action we take?

Jesus' teaching is not just about head knowledge

But heart knowledge - letting His teaching enter our hearts

And letting His teaching - operate our hands and feet - as we go out into the world and love people and teach them the Good News of Jesus' saving us from sin - and offering people forgiveness and eternal life

Which leads to our next finger of what a disciple of Jesus looks like

If we're loving others and holding to Jesus' teaching

As disciples we will be bearing fruit

[PowerPoint 12-Disciple's Hand-3]

(pause)

Our reading from John 15:1-8, 16

Explains what bearing fruit looks like

[PowerPoint 13-John 15]

Bearing fruit is doing God's work of sharing the message of Jesus - as disciples of Jesus - we pass on the message of Jesus

But to do that

Jesus says it's like we're branches connected to a vine - and Jesus is the vine

And God the Father is the gardener

God cuts off fruitless branches - that's people not interested in doing God's work

And God prunes fruitful branches so they are even more fruitful - so we must expect God to prune our lives - and trim off the bits of our lives that are ungodly and sinful - so we are more fruitful servants of God

Unless we stay attached to Jesus, the Vine, we can't produce spiritual fruit for God - we might achieve many successful things in life - but if we're not connected to Jesus - we won't produce kingdom work for God

In fact, Jesus promises in v7 and v16 - that we can ask Jesus anything to do with kingdom work - and He will answer - v7 and v16

And the reason that He will answer is that bearing fruit brings glory to God and proves we are Jesus' disciples

See verse 8 - which is one of our memory verses this week

This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

And Jesus promises that the fruit we bear - will be fruit that lasts...see V16

Some of you may know that when I met Heather - I wasn't a Christian

Heather told me about Jesus - she bore fruit for the Lord

Here we 24 years later - the fruit she bore has lasted - hasn't it?

(pause)

So for us to bear fruit that lasts

It will mean us doing 2 things

Living lives modelled on Jesus - showing the fruit of the Spirit that we mentioned

last week: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness and self-control

And it will mean fishing for people - to be hooked on Jesus

Jesus wants us to do vine work - not trellis work

He wants us to be fisher of people - not keepers of the aquarium!

(pause)

Now I've deliberately left the 2 hardest fingers of a disciple's hand until last!

So the next finger of what a disciple of Jesus looks like is Total Commitment

[PowerPoint 14-Disciple's Hand 4]

Which brings us to our NT passage from Luke 9:57-62

[PowerPoint 15 - Luke 9:57-62]

In this passage Jesus says there is a cost in being His disciple

Jesus warns in v58 - that following Him might mean we don't ever have our own home or even a permanent residence.

Security of house and home have to take 2nd place to our commitment to Jesus

We might not have any luxurious living

Are we okay with that?

(pause)

To the who wants to follow Jesus but first wants to bury his father in v59 - Jesus says let the dead bury the dead. Is Jesus being harsh here?

We have to understand the culture of the day

- The culture was to look after parents until they die - that could take some time. Jesus is saying there's God work to be done - don't hang around waiting for your parents to die - don't use that as an excuse
- If on the other hand the father in the story is actually dead - it's right and proper to bury him - but the culture of the time - was that the grieving process could take several weeks or months. In some cultures even longer. Jesus has living work to be done - so rather than spending a long time grieving and living in the past - Jesus wants people to get on with the important job of saving the souls of the living!
- We can also take Jesus' words here - as let the spiritually dead - bury the dead - and let the spiritually alive - get on with the job of bearing spiritual fruit - and spreading the good news that Jesus gives life - eternal life
- The man - wanting to follow Jesus - in the story had an opportunity to get out of his spiritually dead surroundings; if he missed that moment he would

never get out - there is a crucial moment for sharing the good news of Jesus - are we missing that crucial moment - Jesus urges to act at once whilst our hearts are stirred - and not to delay on His heavenly calling

To the man who wants to follow Jesus but first wants to say goodbye to his family in v61.

Jesus makes a stunning reply to keep our hands to the plow - and don't look back. His point is that he wants people who are prepared to give up everything to follow Him - family, friends and/or job - Jesus doesn't want excuses

Jesus says - don't look back when we're called to look forward - instead keep our eyes on Jesus

V62 - has personal significance to me going through Bible College

[Illustrate]

Suppose Jesus is leading us towards work where our income is lower, or where our prospects are more uncertain, or where our standard of living is lower?

Will we commit to Him and follow Him?

(pause)

Suppose Jesus is leading us to serve Him in an area that our family might not fully understand or our family are left without a proper explanation - will we commit to Him and follow Him?

(pause)

Jesus wants full commitment - not half-hearted disciples

(pause)

Which brings us to our final finger of what a disciple of Jesus looks like

And it's counting the cost of following Him

[PowerPoint 16-Disciple's Hand 5]

And it's from our NT passage - from Luke 14:25-33

This is a very difficult teaching that Jesus gives

[PowerPoint 17-Luke 14:25-27]

Especially v26

How can Jesus tell us to love each other in one breath and then here in v26 tell us we must hate our father and mother, wife and children, and even our own life?

Loving our father and mother is one of the commandments

Well - we need to understand that the Bible never contradicts itself

So what Jesus is saying to us is:

Our love for Jesus must be so supreme that in comparison to how much we love Jesus - all other relationships we have with family will seem like hatred. There will be such a difference in how much we love Jesus as to how much we love anyone else - that it will be so obvious.

Loving anyone more than Jesus is idolatry

The greatest danger of idolatry comes not from what is bad, but from what is good - such as love in family relationships. The greatest threat to the best - Jesus - often comes from the second best - family relationships

For example - when I first met Heather - she made it clear to me that Jesus is first in her life - and that I would not be - and that we couldn't have a lasting

relationship leading to marriage unless I too followed Jesus and made Jesus first in my life.

(pause)

Jesus is not done with the cost of discipleship yet though

He goes on to say in v27:

That we need to carry our cross and follow Him or we're not His disciples

As soon as Jesus' mentioned carrying a cross

His listeners would think of the Roman punishment of the day

Someone convicted of a crime that meant crucifixion - had to carry their own wooden cross that they would be crucified on - to the place of their execution

So when Jesus mentioned carrying a cross - His listeners would be thinking death

He was saying His disciples might have to die if they follow Him

Jesus wants His disciples to count the cost before following Him

In the rest of the passage - Jesus gives 2 examples of counting the cost

Example 1 - no one starts building without working how much it's going to cost to build - to make sure they have enough money to finish the building - they don't want to look silly when they can't finish the project

Example 2 - no leader of a country picks a fight with another country who's got twice as many soldiers - instead they'll ask for peace talks

In the same way Jesus wants us to count the cost of following Him

It might cost us:

Relationships - family or friends disown us

Time - we have to invest time in our relationship with Jesus at the expense of using that time on things we like to do

Money - we may give up full time work to serve Jesus in ministry or we may support various ministries financially leaving less for ourselves

Hardship - we may experience more trials as we follow Jesus

Persecution - we may have people disliking us or hating us for following Jesus

Sickness - we may experience illness - following Jesus - especially if we go to remote areas where medical facilities aren't available

Even death - if we follow Jesus - in countries where it's dangerous to be a Christian

As we follow Jesus - it will cost us

Jesus wants us to be prepared to give up everything - He says in v33 -

Are we prepared to do that?

(pause)

Jesus doesn't want His disciples to rush in and follow Him without thinking what's involved

Is there something in our lives - that Jesus is asking us to let go of ?

Are we prepared to do that?

Conclusion

So being a disciple of Jesus means:

[PowerPoint 18-Hand]

Loving others

Keeping to Jesus' teaching

Bearing fruit

Being total committed to Jesus

And counting the cost of following Him

As disciples of Jesus it's not going to be a Teddy Bear's picnic - Jesus tells us straight

So to finish up then

How are we going to get through the tough times as a disciple of Jesus?

Well the Apostle Paul knew all about the cost of discipleship

He was hated, beaten, flogged, left for dead, shipwrecked and imprisoned...

And in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 - He talks about a thorn in his side that wouldn't go away - not literally a thorn - but something in His life - that tormented him -

whether that was a physical condition or a mental condition - we don't know

But this is how Paul handled being a disciple of Jesus

[PowerPoint 19-2 Corinthians 12:7-10]

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a **thorn in my flesh**, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸ **Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.** ⁹ But he said to me, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ **That is why, for**

Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

That's how we get through

In our weakness - we accept that the Lord's grace is sufficient for us - and we rely on the Lord's strength to get us through...

Let's pray