

Untitled (50)

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[0:00] The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

! Glory to you, Lord Christ! They went on from there and passed through Galilee, and he did not want anyone to know. For he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him.

And when he is killed, after three days he will rise. But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him. And they came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house he asked them, What were you discussing on the way?

But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve, and he said to them, If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.

And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, And taking him in his arms, he said to them, Whoever receives one such child in my name, receives me.

[1:18] And whoever receives me, receives not me, but him who sent me. The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Lord, open our hearts and minds to your holy word as we crack it open. Share your love for us. In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, please be seated.

Do you remember the great Carmack? Yeah, from Johnny Carson. Okay. Well, I'm not the great Carmack. I like to call myself the great Carmacks.

Okay. Same deal, though. All right. So, here we go. Dewey Decimal System. Dewey Decimal System.

What do you get when you leave your decimal system out overnight? Dewey Decimal System. All right. All right. Well, okay. All right. Let's try another one. Gatorade.

[2:24] Gatorade. What does an alligator get on welfare? Gatorade. Polynesia.

Polynesia. May your camel spit in your face, Sahib. Polynesia. What do you call memory loss in parrots?

What do you call Polynesia? All right. One last one. Okay. Chicken Teriyaki. Chicken Teriyaki.

What's the name of the only kamikaze pilot to survive the war?

Oh. I think I'm going to be sick. All right. If we could pass out these little outlines, sermon outlines. I'll give you some.

I'll give four some. Okay. Notes.

[3:38] Any of you see that movie, Wall Street? Wall Street. Wall Street.

Old movie. 1987. Wall Street. Wall Street. There was the antihero whose name was Gordon Gekko. What a great name. What a great name.

Gordon Gekko. This is what he said. Greed is good. Greed works. Greed captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit.

Greed in all its forms. Greed for life, for money, for love, for knowledge. Greed has marked the upward surge of mankind. Thus saith the disciple maker of Wall Street.

Let me give you some words of another disciple maker. If anyone wants to be the greatest, let him become the servant of all. Which one do you choose?

[4:44] That's the life for us. How do we choose? So let's talk about that today. The sermon title is, Our Church. Are we making disciples?

Or are we making a mess? Which is it? Or is it a combination of both? It's based on today's lesson. Mark chapter 9, verses 30 through 37.

We have been systematically going through the gospel of Mark. And we're at a place where Jesus has some important things to say to his disciples.

So first of all, what was it that he said? What happened on that hot, dusty day in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee?

Well, first of all, how did they get to Capernaum? As we recall, as we've been going through the gospel of Mark, Jesus has at this point been traveling with his disciples, privately teaching them. [5:47] They've been coming down from the north, and they finally got to Capernaum. On the way, he's been teaching them some important things. He's been really telling them the truth about himself.

He said, the son of man, which he gets from Daniel himself, the son of man will be betrayed into the hands of man.

That involved both the Jewish leaders and the Roman leaders. And he will be killed. And three days later, he'll rise again.

That's what he taught them. And did it say that they received this enthusiastically? No. They were silent because they didn't understand it.

How many of you have ever sat in a math class and had the teacher explain a problem? And about three words into it, you lost track of the conversation.

[6:48] Yeah. I used to regularly wash my car mentally while math problems were being described. Well, these disciples were going through the same thing.

They didn't have cars to wash, but they didn't understand what Jesus was saying at that point. How would you react if someone said, I'm going to be killed, but I'm going to rise again?

What would you think? Well, so this was just put in their brain hoppers because it was going to make sense eventually. A lot of times with math problems, we don't get it the first time or the second time or the third time, but eventually we get it.

We've been up in Alaska with our son, his wife, and their three kids. And their ninth grade son is in algebra. He brought home algebra.

And he worked on it and worked on it. He couldn't get it. And so finally, our son, Chris, who's an airline pilot who should know this stuff, said, well, let me help you. And he messed with that and he couldn't get it either.

[7:54] I was so happy to see that. You know, we've got to hear it again and again. We've got to get into it. And that, you don't, it doesn't happen just like that.

It was the same with the disciples. Okay, so, continuing on, my computer is failing me. So he had to explain it to them.

Now, the next thing was, they got to Capernaum. And they went into a house. We believe that was Simon Peter's house. And that's where his headquarters was while he was in Galilee.

And so he's kind of milling around. They've come back from their trip. They're probably having, you know, some food and drink. And now he says to them, by the way, what were you talking about while we were walking?

Well, he knew what they were talking about. You see, their concept, they hadn't quite got the math yet. They knew he was the Messiah, but they thought he would be a political, military Messiah.

[9:05] And therefore, they were arguing about who would be the greatest in this new government. Who's going to be Secretary of State? I think I'd like to be Secretary of the Treasury.

They were just, they were kind of nailing down their positions. And so then Jesus sat down. Every time Jesus sits down, that's characteristic of the disciple maker teaching.

That's what, every time you see Jesus sat down, it means, get ready, he's going to teach. And he said, okay, here's what I want to tell you. To be, oh, they didn't tell him what they were arguing about, by the way.

It said that they were silent. They knew that probably they weren't supposed to be doing that. And he said, all right, let me tell you something. If you want to be greatest, you got to be least.

You got to be the servant of all. Now, that was really an important thing to teach them. Because they would be in a position to be leaders of the new church.

[10:13] They had to know about servant leadership. Let me tell you about discipleship. Back in those days, you became, you went through synagogue training and you finished maybe like 12 or 14.

And then you went out and got your job. A few people were picked to become disciples of the rabbi. And the period of discipleship was about 15 years.

So when you were like 30, you became a disciple maker. And you gathered disciples around you. How old was Jesus when he started his mission?

30. He had been 15 years under instruction by his father. And now he was gathering a group of people.

They were his disciples, his students. He was both telling them and showing them what it means to be a disciple. So that's what happened on that day in hot, dusty Capernaum.

[11 : 22] It can get hot there. Mary Ellen and I were there in 2009 for the great Gafcon conference in Jerusalem. It was in June.

We went up to Capernaum. I do not exaggerate when I tell you the temperature was probably 120. And it was dusty. The sweat took on a color on your face.

Can you imagine people living that way? But that's the way they lived. They were hot people. And Jesus spoke to people in the heat.

And it got heated, didn't it? As they tried to figure out what in the world he expected of them as disciples. So we move from that dusty day to Syracuse where it's not very hot today.

Have you noticed? It's a little cooler. Yeah. So we don't need to have a heated discussion. What we need to do is talk about the theology that's being portrayed in this passage. Jesus at disciples.org.

[12 : 34] That's what he was about. His primary mission? To die. And to rise again. That was his primary mission.

In the Apostles' Creed we say, Born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost, suffered under Pontius Pilate. What happened to those 30 years? His primary purpose was to die.

And then to rise. His secondary purpose was to heal. That's what he did more than anything else was heal people. And his third purpose was to make disciples.

To get them ready so that when the Holy Spirit smacked them, they would go out and plant the church. That's what he did. And he did it well. The theology was, You're going to build a church based on my life and my teaching.

That's the way God works in our lives. That's why we say the Nicene Creed every single Sunday, don't we?

[13 : 48] Have you ever noticed that? And we say the Lord's Prayer every Sunday. And I stand up here and read the Eucharistic Prayer every Sunday. It's telling once again over and over what we need to know.

It's going over the math problems until we understand them. It's a lifetime learning. Jesus had to tell his people.

Then he had to show them. And then he had to tell them again. He told them, The Son of Man will be put into the hands of men and he will die.

They will kill him and he'll rise from the dead. He told them. He told them a number of times. They didn't fully get it. Then he showed them. He did it. And then he told them again what had happened. They got it. We are the recipients of it. We don't do a holla, holla, holla, boom, boom, boom worship. We recite once again God's truth in our lives.

[14 : 56] We are the disciples. And not only that, but Jesus taught his disciples how to make disciples.

He gave a road map. We see that road map when Paul writes to his disciple Timothy. What did he say in chapter 2, verse 2, verse, chapter 2 Timothy 2, 2 is what I'm trying to get at.

It's perfect. 2 Timothy 2, 2. He said, And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Three generations. Paul taught. Timothy listened. Timothy taught. His students listened. His students taught.

And we listened. And now we're to teach. It's the way it works. Somebody picked up on that. In the 1700s, his name was John Wesley.

[16 : 02] He preached in the fields. He preached anywhere he could. But he realized there was more to it than just preaching the gospel. You had to make disciples. He started what we call today the Sunday school movement.

We didn't have that before. He believed that in the Methodist meeting house, he was an Anglican priest, but he started these meeting houses for people who were more devout.

The Anglican church at that point was probably worse than it is today. So he started a movement of people that really wanted to mean business for Jesus. And he had them meeting every week together in groups.

And he used what we call today the RIDE formula. R-I-D-E For producing, reproducing disciples. Get that?

For producing, reproducing disciples. That's what we're called to be. The RIDE formula was R, relational. I, inspirational. D, doctrinal.

[17:05] E, experiential. Every class is supposed to be that way. Every church is supposed to be that way. Relational. Okay. Now, I once was in a church where you sort of slid into the parking lot, probably late.

You slid into a pew. You quietly watched the action. You left right after communion so you wouldn't get into a traffic jam in the parking lot. And you were done.

Relational. Zero. Goose egg. Okay. That's not what God's plan is for discipleship. It's relational. We know each other as brothers and sisters.

We welcome the stranger. We ask them to come into our fellowship. We want them to be part of our family. We care. When someone's hurt, we all pray for that person. When someone's obnoxious, we gently say, cut it out.

But we care for each other. Also, inspirational. You know, I read a lot of stuff. One of the great areas that I read, if you're on internet, you should do this.

[18:12] Every day I go to this blog spot called transfigurations.blogspot.com. There's a lady who runs that.

Oh, she's over there. Okay. You should check that every day. Because she tells the truth the way Jesus tells the truth. She picks articles. She has little things on the side where you can click into news things.

It tells the truth. All right. Now, if I only relied on transfigurations.blogspot.com, I would not be inspired.

Because most of the news is bad for the church. I read it because it's really important for me to read. And it's really important for you to read so you're not walking around not knowing what's happening in our church today.

But on the other hand, I need inspiration. Inspiration means inspired in the spirit. I need positive from God. And we'll get to that in a minute.

[19:18] But the class, the church, is supposed to be inspirational to be a disciple. Third, doctrinal. Yes, it really does matter what you believe.

Remember those statements back in the 70s? It really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're serious about it. And I thought back in those days, well, I'll just go worship a tree.

Because trees don't offer any opposition. They make no demands. They just sort of stand there. If it doesn't matter what I believe, I'll believe in a tree. We know that's not true.

We know that there's proper teaching. So in Sunday school class or in church, we need to have proper godly biblical teaching. And finally, experiential.

I need a heart knowledge of God. Not just a brain knowledge of God. And it takes a long time.

[20:19] That six inches from brain to heart takes a long time to get that going. I need to experience God. And I experience God in your lives. And you experience God in each other's lives.

That's the way we become disciples. The ride principle from John Wesley. Which brings us to the final point. How do we apply disciple making to the Church of the Holy Trinity?

I've got a question for you. Is our process of making disciples producing, reproducing disciples? Are we believing what Jesus said?

The Son of Man will be forced into the hands of men and will be killed and three days arise. Do we really believe that? Can we handle the truth?

Somebody said that in a movie one time. Can we handle the truth? Can we handle the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus?

[21:28] He went to the cross in your place. In my place. Because we were too puny to do it. We can't handle the truth.

Much less teach the truth. In baseball they have something called a sacrifice fly. Let's suppose there's a person on third base. The batter gets up and he hits a long, long fly.

Which he knows is going to be caught way out in center field. Because he knows once that fly is caught, the runner on third base can scurry to home and get a run.

Some of you said, what is he talking about? Well, that's a sacrifice fly. The batter sacrificed himself to get a run in. That's what Jesus did for us. He did that for us.

That's the truth. So the question is, have we somewhere along the line hit the delete button for discipleship? If we did, we need to reset discipleship in all of our churches.

[22 : 42] In America, we have pretty much zilch when it comes to discipleship or disciple making. We are moving, if you haven't noticed, from armchair Christianity to sword and shield Christianity.

A lot of us grew up in the armchair version of Christianity. Come to church, be given assurance, no demands, except maybe during stewardship campaign.

And life goes on. That life is dying. We're moving into a post-Christian environment where we need the sword of the spirit and the shield of faith.

Or we'll get chewed up. We will compromise our values. We will compromise our values unless we're filled with the Holy Spirit. That's what's happening in the nation today.

Step by step, we're compromising Christian values. Discipleship is what is needed. We need to hit the reset button. Okay, so here are four steps for us to hit the reset button to get back into discipleship.

[23 : 52] Number one, daily Bible reading and prayer. Not just prayer, but intense prayer. Back in the Marine Corps, we said we existed for three things.

For God, country, and core. Same applies to Christians. We live for God, our church, our nation, our families.

We need to be in intense prayer every day as we read our Bibles. That's the first one, to reset the discipleship button. And I can tell you, you have a million reasons why you don't have time to do that.

And only one reason why you should do that. Because God's calling you to it. Discipleship. Two, Sunday school or small groups.

We started Sunday school this morning. And as I mentioned in the newsletter, I hope that we don't have seven godly women and a teacher. Well, guess what?

[24 : 54] We had seven godly women, two godly men, and a teacher. Praise the Lord. You know what? All of us ought to be in Sunday school or in some kind of a small group.

The day of the hermit Christian is gone. We need to be continually stoking up on God's word for us. Three. That was one, two. Now three. The annual parish retreat. It's coming. October 23rd through 25th. There's a good tradition in this parish to have an annual parish retreat.

Why is that important? Because we need times to get pumped up. And we've got a great guy coming, Tom Riley. It's also a time to bring family and friends.

To let them just taste what's happening here. They will love Tom Riley. You need to come and bring friends and family. Now, Maria suddenly got apoplectic because she said, Wait a minute.

[25 : 59] I don't know how many people are going to come. What if a million people come? No. Oh. So we're going to have a sign-up list in the next couple of weeks. So we know how many people to expect.

Bring family and friends. It would be good to fill up this room. Okay. We need that. We need times to get pumped up. And then the last, rendering service.

Rendering service. Jesus said, if you're going to be first, you need to be last. And you need to be the servant of all. Servant leadership. Let me show you a couple of ways that worked really well.

There was a guy named C.T. Studd. Wouldn't you like to have a name like that? C.T. Studd. Well, Studd was a rich English kid.

And before he knew it, his parents died. And he received this immense fortune. Would you love that to happen to you? About the same time he fell in love with Jesus.

[27 : 04] And he said, what am I going to do with all this money? He thought and he prayed about it. He said, you know what? I think the people in China need to hear the word of God.

Karen, can you say thank you in Mandarin? Yes, yes. Yes, yes. People are saying that in China because of C.T. Studd. He brought the missionary efforts to China.

He got married, brought his wife. They became missionaries. And one day his wife said, C.T., I notice you've got some money that you've held back. And C.T. said, yeah, that's our little nest egg. And she said, didn't you tell me that Jesus said to give it all? And C.T. said, he didn't really say this. Sometimes I'm really glad you're my wife and sometimes I hate it. He gave it all.

He helped bring China to Christ. And today there are more active Christians in China than there are active Christians in America.

[28:10] And they're being persecuted. The other man I want to mention, and there are many women, but I want to mention another man.

We don't even know his name. He was a forklift operator. He died 20 years ago. Lived in Detroit. Nice guy.

Went to church. Befriended people. Never got married. Live in an apartment. Life ended. Done, right? He left a will. All through these years he had been investing money.

And the will said, I never had a chance to go to college. I'm giving these millions of dollars to X college for a scholarship fund.

He gave that in the name of Jesus Christ. So we don't need to be C.T. stud. We don't need to be a forklift operator in Detroit.

[29:10] We can just be people hanging around Syracuse. We give our all. We make disciples. Conclusion.

How are we doing? Are we making disciples or making a mess? How are you doing? Are you making disciples or making a mess? God calls us to make disciples with joy and peace.

Listen to this last statement from the epistle of James, which Raymond read. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

And a harvest of righteousness is shown. Let us pray. Blessed Lord God, thank you for teaching us, for making us your disciples.

[30:16] So be in our lives. So fill us with your Holy Spirit that we can, in our own ways, make disciples. Help us to produce reproducing disciples.

We praise you, Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.