

Discipleship According to Jesus

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[0 : 0 0] Well, grace and peace from all the saints at Grace Church on 99 to you all. It's hard for me to really communicate the depth of love and appreciation for this church and for your leadership.

We love you. We love your leaders. And really only long to do more ministry with you all. This is a smaller town, and there's lots of ministry to be done together.

And so I am just overwhelmed with the gratefulness of this privilege. I see many faces I recognize, I know, and have been a part of your lives. And the more time that the Lord gives us as churches and as people in Squamish, may the Lord be honored by the Great Commission work together.

And the opportunity that we have, that we desire to start, we have called it Grace Kids on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8.30, an opportunity for our church.

And really, it is for other churches to participate. We just wanted to get off the ground to see what the Lord would do ultimately. And so to be honest, we don't know all of the needs that are going to come up with the Lord may bless it in such a way where we need all the churches together.

[1 : 1 4] We don't know. But what we do know is that we know that this church and the others are ready and willing to serve. On September 8th, we have a registration and information evening.

So if you are willing just to learn more about it or want to interact with it, I'll be there with the rest of the leaders. We're going to kind of go through what it's going to look like for the evening on Wednesday evenings.

And then we'll have a registration sign up if you wish to volunteer. Then you can put it down. We'll take your names and numbers. And we'll be able to interact with what all of the needs on the Wednesday evenings are. As we would desire for your ministries as well, we pray that it does really well so that there's more gospel ministry going out.

And we know in this community, the ministry to families is not just to the kids. It's to the parents as well. And I grew up in southwestern Ontario where going to church was normal.

It was very normal to run into anybody who had some religious background. And we know the difference of living in this town and how different it is. So we're really excited for it. And so if you want to know more about it, September 8th, come on over to Grace Church 99.

[2 : 2 0] And we'll interact with you. And can't wait to participate in this ministry and all that the Lord will do for us. So let me pray before we go into God's word this morning. Father, we can never pray enough.

We can never come to you and depend enough on you and your word. So we thank you for all that you have done even this morning. We thank you for the praises of your people.

We thank you for the word that has already been shared in our hearts. Lord, we pray that this word from this pulpit for your glory goes forth. In your son's precious and holy name we ask.

Amen. We'll open up your Bibles this morning to Mark chapter 8. We're going to be in a couple chapters of Mark learning about some principles that I know this church knows well.

I understand that this church and the leadership of this church desires to place this word deep into the heart of this church and all that it does. And that word is discipleship.

[3 : 24] Discipleship is something that I know you desire to do. Something that we know we are commanded to do. And so what I wanted to do this morning is continue to foster that desire.

When BK called and asked about the privilege to interact with you this morning and preach God's word this morning, he let me know that you're going to be going through a series about the life of Christ. And so to complement that, to interact with all that God teaches his disciples and prepares his disciples to learn about him and the truths of his word.

And to some degree, I know that my heart, even in this next season, as we get back into life and ministry, the busyness of ministry, we've had a little bit of a break, haven't we, from the busyness of ministry?

And it's been good to some degree, but now as fall and winter comes into the opportunity for us to engage more with each other and with the community, what are we going to show them?

What are we going to show each other? Because the simple definition of discipleship is learning from Jesus to be more like Jesus so others can know Jesus. It's that the truths that Christ taught, that we would be more like Christ, so that when we go out into the world, the world would see, what is it to follow Christ?

[4 : 52] And that we would give them an accurate picture and portrayal of what that means. So to set a little bit of the context here for Mark, Mark is a victory march, a victorious savior who will redeem souls and restore the world.

Mark is writing to a Roman crowd. So you can understand that the Roman crowd understands victorious marches. They understand battle. They understand war.

They understand the effects of all of those things. Much of Mark is written in this Roman vernacular to understand that Christ is the true king. He wages war, but also brings peace and hope through triumphant victory.

Mark 1.1, the gospel, the good news of victory. Even the beginning of Mark, it stands like a letter that would be brought from the battlefield, coming home to understand that victory is won.

The troops are coming home. In his first coming, he's not bringing it upon the people, but he is saving them. In his first coming, he is coming to wage war against the cursed earth, sin, and Satan.

[6 : 09] In the way that Mark is written, it begins much in the northern part, in Galilee, and he marches triumphantly down to Jerusalem. We know from the other gospels that he goes down to Jerusalem, comes back up to Galilee.

But the way Mark is written is a victory march down to Jerusalem, to his father's house, and then eventually to Gogoltha and to the grave. He conquers what only God can conquer.

He conquers darkness by his authoritative teaching, bringing light. He conquers disease like leprosy, blindness, the paralytic, the woman with blood, people merely touching his cloak, and he brought hope to them.

He conquers disasters like storm and hunger, bringing peace. He conquers demons, the cave-dwelling demoniac in the Gerizines, and multiple exorcisms, bringing transformation.

And he conquers death. He conquered physical death by Jairus' daughter, by bringing life. And he conquers spiritual death by forgiving sins, by bringing redemption.

[7 : 20] He brings the ultimate victory in his own death, burial, and resurrection. So in chapters 1 through 8 in the book of Mark, it reveals his divine nature and his kingdom power, leading a triumphant march as the beloved Son of God, Son of Man.

And then in chapters 8 through 10, the section that's a little more unique to Mark, he concentrates on the teaching of his disciples. He's preparing them with specific principles that they need.

These would be the leaders of the next generation of Christ followers in the church age where Jew and Gentile would be called into fellowship together in Christ, in the church, and then they would go out with the task to proclaim the gospel and live holy lives.

They would be responsible to build upon the cornerstone, to raise others into maturity, and leading the charge for subsequent generations. But first, these leaders needed these lessons.

These future faithful leaders were not above anybody else. They needed to learn these lessons first. And Jesus, through these chapters, is teaching and testing and training about the virtue of discipleship and the vital lessons necessary within discipleship.

[8 : 48] And this morning, we're going to go through three lessons. And you're going to notice a theme, even as you go through the epistles, how much these disciples truly learned them.

The Apostle John in 1 John 2 says, Do not love the world nor the things of the world. Even Peter, in much of his epistles, learned these lessons and then wrote to the churches to learn the same lessons.

So these faithful leaders first have the foundation of a faithful disciple. And then they go out and they teach and they test and they train those under their care.

Because since the resurrection, the principle of discipleship is our mandate. It is our commission as well to make disciples and then teaching to obey everything that Christ commanded.

So we have a shared passion, a shared drive. But we need to learn the principles of discipleship so that we can be faithful to this mission together. What's interesting to note, and we're not going to be able to get into it fully, but as each of these principles are laid out, Christ gives that prophetic reality of his death.

[10 : 11] He taught these lessons with the prophetic anticipation of his own victory and the gospel of his death and resurrection. So each of these lessons are under the umbrella of that reality.

That Christ came to die for sinners. And all who place their faith in him and his death, burial, and resurrection will be saved. A disciple, first and foremost, has a clear understanding of the gospel to know what is required of them to be faithful in Christ.

They know what was accomplished at Golgotha. They know the emptiness of the tomb. And they know, even in a small way, what it means to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

What happens for one to become a disciple continues these lessons. We don't graduate from gospel truths. We don't graduate out of the lessons that we are learning.

The disciples didn't graduate out of them. They wrote from their experience of learning these lessons to the church. And we have those now in inspired scripture. So the quality of your own discipleship will depend upon the care of your own soul and devotion to the gospel.

[11 : 34] And your desire to know more about the gospel, to know more about Christ. So why is this on my heart this morning? Why do I need these truths?

Why do we continue to need these truths? Because these truths, these principles, are what influenced the world the same way that Christ influenced the world.

Christ taught these principles to his disciples so that they would go out, but they are directly connected to how Christ ministered to the world. Therefore, it is how we minister to the world.

These principles are how we are faithful to that great commission because this is the command. We don't get to make up how we get to minister to the world and how we are faithful to the world.

Christ has given us his commands. These principles are also how we show that Christ is Lord over his church and how he is building his church.

[12 : 33] These lessons we continue to need to hear as we press on towards the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. We didn't even talk necessarily about the details, but you heard in the Puritan prayer that BK said that we would know more about Christ.

We sang it together. That daily, I'm still constrained to be the sinner and oh, that my heart would be sealed in thy courts above that I would know more about Christ.

So what is composed of being a faithful disciple according to the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, we have three principles vital to faithful discipleship according to Christ this morning. The first we're going to find in Mark chapter 8, verses 34 through 38.

Mark chapter 34, sorry, Mark chapter 8. If you go to Mark 34, you're just going to be there a long time because it's not there. Mark chapter 8, verse 34. And this first principle is death concerning self and the world.

Death concerning self and the world. Mark chapter 8, verse 34. And he summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, if anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

[13 : 53] For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the son of man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his father with his holy angels.

Death concerning self and the world. And the main principle here is that a crucified Messiah demands crucified disciples. We must be willing to walk the same road as Christ walked himself.

A student is not above his master. Christ paved the way for us to understand what it would be to be obedient to him and to follow after his father.

Crucified Messiah demands crucified disciples. And so as you see from this text, in verse 34, he summoned the crowd with his disciples. So this wasn't just a message for his 12 disciples.

[15 : 05] This is for all of them. This is for everyone around. So it's not just for his 12, but it is for everyone. There's no special treatment here for spiritual leaders. There's no ranking due to position.

Although that's something that we'll see in the next principles that had to come out of them. Jesus brings all of them together and says, this is the path for all of us. The path for all of you.

And he begins with a condition. If you wish, if anyone wishes to come after me. Wish in our English connotation kind of has that like fleeting hope.

You know, I wish to get something, but I'm not exactly sure that it's going to happen. I wish that my Amazon package comes by next week, but I don't know if it's going to happen. Here, it's a much deeper reality than that.

It's a desire. It's a function of the will. If you truly desire and want to follow after Christ. If you have that deep-seated desire.

[16 : 07] Not just a mere wishing. But it's something that is to accomplish something. Inclined to do something. An internal resolve to fulfill a task. And what is that? To follow after me.

Because Jesus kind of had to start here. Because he had people following him all of the time, right? In that physical sense. His teaching. They've never heard about it before.

You know, in Mark chapter 1. We've never heard anyone so authoritative in their teaching. They've never seen a person raised back to life. No one has ever heard him say, your sins are forgiven.

Get up and walk. So people were following after him all of the time. He even had to get into a boat. Go off the shore because the crowds were pushing him into the sand.

And then back into the water. So they had to get a boat. People were following him. But were they truly following him? Were they wanting to be discipled by Christ?

[17 : 11] And be a disciple of Christ? So he is the focus here. Do you wish to follow me? He is the beloved son. He is the plan of salvation.

He is the gift from the father. So we focus on Christ. So it is not necessarily us. Even though these are principles of following after Christ. But we are focusing on Jesus Christ.

He is leading the way. He is the model disciple. He is the one that humbled himself. Coming down from glory. From the father. To us. Obeying his father. And we follow after him.

And even Peter earlier in this section. Kind of got that backwards didn't he? He said. No.

You are not going to die. Jesus. You are not going to follow the way of your father. You are not going to follow the path of salvation. That was laid out by your father. And he was rebuked.

[18 : 09] In the way that only Jesus could. By calling him Satan. Get behind me. Satan. And so you have a picture there of even Peter wanting to go in front and lead Jesus.

That is not a place that we want to be. We clearly want to be behind him. Following after him. My pastor told a story. He is very familiar.

He grew up in California. But his wife was from Montana. So they got to ski. And they got to do all of the wonderful things that we get to do in this area. And there was snow around. And they got to a point that was pretty difficult.

And he made his boot tracks as big as he could make them. So that his children would follow after him. Because, you know, there's danger on the side. And so he said, step exactly where my boot holes are in the snow.

Don't go to the left. Don't go to the right. Just follow these boot steps. That's what Jesus wants us to do. Follow after his steps.

[19 : 10] So what does it take? Here's our obligations. Look at verse 34. If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself. Take up his cross. And follow me.

So he has three verbs here. Which are three commands. These are three imperatives. These are non-negotiable. Non-transferable. These are immutable and undisputable commands of Jesus Christ.

To be a disciple, this must take place in your heart first. But also, they're personal. He must. Himself.

He must take up his cross. So nobody can do this for you. Because you're a part of a faithful, gospel-rich, Bible-preaching church. Just because you're a part of a community like that.

Or maybe you grew up in a family that knows the gospel, loves the gospel. And you heard gospel truths. You must be an individual, personal disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[20 : 10] It just doesn't happen by external osmosis coming into you. You must stand before your God one day. You must make that decision to follow Christ.

And this is what it costs. And these are holistic, meaning they're all or nothing. They're decisive. The first two are something that is done.

You deny yourself and you take up your cross. And the next verb here, follow after me, is just that continual pattern. It's always in your life.

So let's walk through these. Deny. This is your new identity. To be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be a faithful disciple, you must deny yourself. Which means you now have a new identity.

You've dethroned your own right to rule over your life. You now have a change of allegiance. Remember, there's this kingdom reality within Mark as well.

[21 : 11] This conquering kingdom. And so that you now have changed the allegiance, as Paul writes, from the kingdom of darkness to now the kingdom of his beloved son.

New kingdom principles. New kingdom citizenships. New king. New laws. That you bring yourself under. And you are voluntarily stripping yourself of those rights personally.

And you are now submitting yourself and saying, I'm following Christ. Your new identity is the denial to desire any autonomy.

Self-rule. Self-sufficiency. And you say, now I'm under Christ. Under the new king. Under the new citizenship of the kingdom of Christ.

And there's this disowning that's going on. And why do I say disowning or dissociation? Because this word deny here is the same word that when Peter around the fire gets called out about knowing Christ says, I do not know the man.

[22 : 16] I don't know him. That's the same word. So you deny yourself. I don't know the man that you're talking about. And so if someone were to come to you and says, man, you've changed.

You say you're a Christian and you've changed. You can say, yeah, because that previous person, I don't know him. I don't know them. It's the same reality. Even when we are in Christ, we continue to disown ourselves in such a way where you separate yourself from your own personal desires that come against Christ.

Your ambitions that are not kingdom worthy. So you have a new identity. And you're in Christ.

You must deny yourself. He must deny himself. Your new identity is now totally wrapped up in the person of Jesus Christ. Remember what Paul said in Colossians 3?

You died and your life is now hidden in Christ with God? Galatians chapter 2, I've been crucified with Christ.

[23 : 27] And it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives within me. It is Christ that is now coming out of you. That is not to say that we don't have wonderful desires given by the Lord.

It is not to say that as many people as in this room that God has created uniquely to glorify him with certain desires and traits and abilities. But all of those things still come under Christ.

And God's used you for his glory. So you must deny yourself. Disassociate yourself with any earthly reality that comes against Christ.

Secondly, we take up our cross. And even Luke adds daily. So if denying yourself is a new identity, then taking up our cross is a new agenda. This means to pick up the burden that the cross brings.

Remember going through crucifix in history, what the cross was meant to do was to connect you with your crime. As you were walking through the streets or as you're hung up in front of the road so that people could see you, they were to make that connection.

[24 : 37] Oh, this person did that and this is their consequence. And so for Christ to say that you take upon your cross, take up your cross, it is now connecting you with Christ.

Christ is now making that connection that you're going to bear the burden in the same way that Christ bore your burden in any way that Christ sees fit.

Tradition is much like the record in the gospels where they would put your name on a piece of wood and state your crime. And so in the denying of yourself and the taking up of the cross, if you were to just walk around Squamish here, it would just be, I'll use me, David Quarreni, follower of Christ.

That's how people would know us. Discipleship then is picking up the cross as a daily reminder of your surrender to Christ.

And now you bear that same identity of denying yourself and you bear the same reproach that the cross will bring to you. The student, like we said, is not above his master.

[25 : 50] To be a disciple of Christ is to bear what Christ did in the world. Christ came down willingly to bear upon himself even the name of criminal so that he would save us.

And so whatever it cost for us, it was what Christ had already walked through. So your connection with Christ.

You have a new identity. You deny yourself. You have a new agenda by taking up your cross. And you have a new master. Look down at our text. If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

This is the exact same word as earlier. So is he just being redundant? Or he's just wanting us to get drilled into our minds that we actually have to follow after him.

That you are actively, verifiably following after him. There is evidence in your life so that if there is a paper trail, or if you had the privilege of somebody walking with you in your daily life, going into your home, going into your workplace, going into your conversations with your neighbors, interacting with your fellowship groups, that there would be a true example of discipleship.

[27 : 08] That you follow him, meaning you mimic him, you imitate him. It's the pattern of watch what I do and then follow.

Many of you have children. As parents, we know all too well that some principles are caught more than they're taught. We may say one thing, and then maybe a couple days later, your children does something, and then they say to their mom, again, I'll use myself as an example, many of you know my wife Chelsea, and they say, well, dad did that.

Maybe that's only happened in my home, and that's something unique to my house. And I have to backtrack quickly to understand what actually happened.

But the reality of them looking and seeing and being intentional to go, in this scenario, dad did that. When he had an opportunity to take this, he did this.

This is what it is. That you are mimicking Christ, following after Christ. The anthem of the world is saying, live how you want to live. Have your own truth.

[28 : 15] Follow your heart. And Christ says, no, that's not the option here. You are in my footsteps. You are following after me. You are looking intentionally to see, how did I handle this situation?

And then you handle that situation the same way. A disciple willingly fellowships and participates in the life and suffering of Christ, and humbles themselves.

Isn't it far too often in our hearts, beloved, that we just, we want the convenience and the comfort without the cost? But unfortunately, that sounds more like the broad road, doesn't it?

Than the narrow road? Jesus is warning, he does not want casual observers looking at his miracles, seeing his teaching, and just marvel at that and walk away, like the 10,000 did after they ate.

And they came back to him and they just said, we just, where's the food? Jesus says, I'm the food. And they respond and say, well, it's kind of too hard right now, actually.

[29 : 19] I don't really like that saying, so we're just going to go away. And Jesus even has to press his disciples, are you going to leave too? It's an absorption.

Willing to associate that the resolve of your life is to filter everything through the grid of Christ and his commands. This first principle, to be a faithful disciple, death to self and to the world, is that you are losing your identity and becoming more like Christ.

That you're willing to exchange your identity in the world for that of Christ. You're willing to exchange your agenda for that of Christ. And you're willingly, personally enslaving yourself in following after Christ.

As you battle your own heart, in your own mind, in your own will. And then as the world comes up against you, you're willingly and actively making these decisions. Am I following after Christ with this thought, with this word, with this activity, with this desire?

We don't have a whole lot of time to go through verses 35 to 36, but just very quickly, he weighs out these options here. And here's the options. Verse 35, is it Christ's life or your life?

[30 : 31] Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel will save it. So you think to yourself, you ask yourself, do I want Christ's life or am I going to value my own life?

In verses 36 to 37, it's heaven or earth. For whoever wishes, I'm sorry, 36, for what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Are you wanting the things that the world provides? Are you wanting what Christ provides? Even though it's not going to be as tangible in your hands right away.

You're looking for power, prestige, prosperity. Are you trying to make a deal with God? If I can just do this, then I'll follow you. And then lastly, in verse 38, it's Christ's word or your word.

For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the son of man will also be ashamed of him when he comes into the glory of his father with his holy angels. Do we shrink back at what God says?

[31 : 39] Do we shrink back about what he calls us to do? When we're given a principle of discipleship, when you're interacting with your growth groups, when you're interacting with your leaders, when you're interacting with one another and there's a principle that just kind of convicts you and hits hard and you know that you're going to have to change your mind and heart to follow after Christ and it's going to cost you something, what happens in that moment, beloved?

Are we ashamed of Christ? Are we ashamed of his word? Are we ashamed of the gospel as we go out into the world? These are the decisions that a disciple has to make every single day.

How we live, how we love, how we give. So this first principle of faithful, this first vital principle is death to self and to the world.

Let's turn now to Mark chapter 9. Mark chapter 9, the second principle, vital to faithful discipleship is rejection of personal significance. Mark chapter 9, verses 33 to 37.

Rejection of personal significance. Look at verse 33. They came to Capernaum and when he was in the house, he began to question them.

[32 : 49] What were you discussing on the way? But they kept silent. For on the way they had discussed with one another which one of them was the greatest. Sitting down, he called the twelve and said to them, if anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.

Taking a child, he set before them and taking him in his arms, he said to them, whoever receives one child like this in my name receives me. And whoever receives me does not receive me, the one who sent me.

And the principle here is that faithful discipleship after the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't seek significance among others, but warmly receives and cares for those around them that require a humbling amount of time and sacrifice.

Here's that humbling reminder. He just told them in verse 31, Son of man is going to be delivered into his hands, into the hands of men. They will kill him and he will rise again.

But what really happens in the midst of all of this is interesting because there's a humiliating exposure that happens that you'd think that they would deal with before this. But Jesus has to use this object lesson with a child because of what happened previously in the chapter.

[34 : 10] The beginning of Mark chapter 9, Peter, John, and James were given the privilege of going up to the Mount of Transfiguration. They got to see the unveiled, unzipped glory of Christ on the earth.

They've got that privilege. The others? They came home with their head between their legs because they were faithless and unable to carry out the task that God had given them, that Christ had given them.

They weren't able to cast out the demons. So you'd think in either case there might be a little bit of humility. I actually got to see the glory of Christ unveiled on a mountain and I blew it.

I didn't do the task that God desired me to do. So in either case, there ought to be, I can't believe that I was able to experience that and I can't believe that I didn't have the power internally and I need to come back and learn.

So what happens along the way? They get into a little argument. The three against the nine. Who was better? Who was greater?

[35 : 19] Who was more significant? The one who got to see Christ even though they didn't really have anything to do with it. They just stood there on the mountain. Or the nine who tried their best but was unable to accomplish the task that they were given.

That quickly faded and now what happened was their desire among the 12 there to elevate themselves. To gain some sort of prestige, some sort of status among the 12.

Their experience had them jockeying for position in the 12. We're just coming off the summer months and you know, by God's grace, we've been able to have children at the house and what happens when you just say, hey, does anyone want a popsicle?

I want to be first. I want to be first. I want to be there. Hey, you cut. You buttoned line and all of a sudden, you wanted to give them a popsicle and now there's a bunch of hearts you have to train and it takes 10 to 15 minutes before they even get their first popsicle.

These were grown men that Christ chose. These were disciples. These would be the men that would go turn the world upside down. They wanted to be first in line. So what does he do?

- [36 : 34] He brings this humbling lesson. Verse 35, he called the 12 and said to them, if anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.

Taking a child, he set him before them and taking him into his arms, he said to them, whoever receives one child like this in my name receives me.

Children were seen in a little bit different light in the first century. They were kind of low on the social potem scale, totem pole scale. They were seen kind of unworthy of time and effort.

They didn't really contribute to society. They weren't really seen in the way that we see children now in our homes and our families, unfortunately. But children are unassuming.

They live in this freedom that as if nothing else exists around them. They're unsophisticated. There's really nothing fancy about kids. They just kind of do what pops into their mind. They're unpretentious.

- [37 : 33] Kids really have nothing to hide and maybe until you get older and to the teenage years. There's no immediate gratification raising children. You know, there's no like instant reward of, thank you so much.

I can't believe you spent all night preparing that breakfast for me. It's exhausting labor. It brings out all of the areas of this principle that we need.

These disciples were arguing which one should have a higher status and he says, no, no, no. Let's bring someone in who's unassuming, unsophisticated, unpretentious.

There's not a whole lot of immediate gratification. It's exhausting. Someone who's going to bring out your own sinfulness. You actually bring yourself under them and you serve them.

You receive them. Receiving is a warm welcome. It's kind of like a glad reception as if a family member comes.

- [38 : 39] We had the privilege of us going home to Ontario and, you know, we haven't been there in a couple years and it's like there's this, ah, you know, I get to see family and friends and the reception that you have and the warm welcome.

They want you in there. They want you to associate in their home. There's a willingness to associate. What would be the difference that if I would have went home and it was like, all right, come on in.

Oh, you again? This begrudging nature, you wouldn't feel welcome at all. Would you really even want to be there? And would you think that if that was how you were received, that they really had your best in mind?

That they really cared for you and wanted you to learn the eternal truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ? It's a warm welcome. Come on in.

I get the privilege of being with you and associating with you. Someone unassuming. Maybe even a cast off of society in my name.

- [39 : 49] The way that I would. The way that Christ represented his father and came down to earth. Remember what Isaiah 53 said? There's no stately form or majesty.

There's no appearance to the earthly walking of Christ that now everyone is suddenly attracted to him. He was a normal guy, just like you and I. He would walk down the streets if he didn't teach or exercise some demon or raise somebody from the dead.

He wouldn't even really know anything about him. No appearance. He was despised, forsaken of men, one that would hide their face.

Christ's brilliant glory earlier in chapter nine was unveiled. And yet when he came to his creation here to save us, he veiled that glory. He became unsophisticated.

He became unassuming, unpretentious. He walked among us like you and I walk among each other. And yet he associated with us and all of his glory and all of his perfections and all of his heavenly worship that he was receiving before he came down and got none of that except the cross.

[41 : 12] How much time does Christ willingly spend with us even now as our chief shepherd? How much does he have to sometimes? He goes like sheep, you know, kind of wander to the left, to the right, stray sometimes from his word.

Need a good spiritual two by four? He knows. He knows. Hebrews chapter 12, as a father disciplines the children.

Why? So that you might share in his holiness. Christ came down. So as we minister towards one another, as we fellowship with one another, as we go into the world, James says, where selfish ambition exists, there's disorder in every evil thing.

So if we go out there wanting our own personal significance, elevating ourselves above everybody else, what's the world going to see? They're going to see diatrophies. Remember diatrophies in John 3?

What did John say? He loved to be first. Some translations say he loved to be the preeminent one. He wanted to be the theological high tower.

[42 : 24] And what was the result of that? He rejected the apostles' teaching, and he did not receive the brethren.

And he forbade that who desired to. So he rejected truth, he didn't receive the brethren, and he forbid those, and he put them out of the church.

So diatrophies was a very divisive man. Why? Selfish ambition. He loved preeminent. He loved significance.

He didn't warmly, welcomingly receive others. Association with Jesus does not exalt our personal status. It brings us a little bit lower.

It doesn't exalt our personal status in the world, and certainly it can't in the church. It can't. Faithful disciple will not be seeking the significance and then distancing themselves from others.

[43 : 29] They won't see others as some sort of hindrance in their lives. They won't prop themselves up to purposely be seen by others to gain some sort of earthly reward, some sort of pat on the back.

Remember the Pharisees would just pray in public and Jesus says, that's all the reward you get, that hand clap you got. that wow, look how spiritual he is. That's it. That's all he got. But there's a warmth, a tenderness, a caring heart towards whatever soul, whether believer or unbeliever, in the world or in the church that just comes and you are not elevating yourself, making yourself significant above anyone else regardless of your position in the world or in the church.

you reject personal significance among anyone around you. So that first principle is vital discipleship.

The faithful discipleship is death concerning self and the world, the rejection of personal significance. Third, turn to Mark chapter 10. Mark chapter 10 verses 34 to 45.

We won't read the entire portion since time is eluding us. You know this passage well. Something that we need to continue to bring ourselves to.

[44 : 56] Let's just read verses 34. I'm sorry, 43 to 45. But it is not this way among you. Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant.

Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.

So this principle here is the pursuit of redemptive servitude or redemptive service. And you can see how these kind of align, right? You have the first principle of following after Christ and what that looks like.

So what that's going to do is going to bring down your personal significance to others around you. And now this third principle is okay, now what do I do with that? And you serve in a redemptive way.

Faithful discipleship is lowering yourself, lowering and serving others, especially experiencing them in their sin, amidst their sin, and providing some sort of redemptive quality in giving yourself and helping them redeem that situation.

[46 : 03] Again, context is important here. You have verses 35 and 37, you have this. James and John, the sons of thunder, they hadn't really learned their lesson, they come and they demand, actually.

They demand, can we come and sit? Grant that we may sit, one on your right and one on your left.

So, Peter demanded that Christ not walk the path. These guys, a couple, a chapter ago, were arguing out who's the greatest. And then now, you have demands of Christ.

They want to have the same accomplishment as Jesus. Let us sit on your left and on your right, they want the honor, they want the glory of Christ, give us place among you.

He wanted, they wanted honor. What they wanted was some sort of assurance that they would have the reward of what the cost that they would go through. Isn't that what our hearts do sometimes?

[47 : 04] If I'm actually gonna have to do this task for Christ, can I have some sort of initial benefit? Some sort of tangible reality that it's gonna be worth it?

And that's kind of what we gauge it on. We may not ask it out loud, but our hearts are reasoning this. Will this trial, will this difficulty, will this struggle, will this pain be worth the amount of effort, lack of personal significance, bearing up of the cross, and giving of myself to somebody?

Following after Christ and the suffering of his glory, what we must understand is the blessing. Because we get to serve in the same way that Christ served us.

Christ served us most specifically in our sin. Romans 5, while we were yet sinners, while we were hostile to him, while we were at odds with Christ, he came down.

Romans chapter 2, it was the patience of God that led to repentance. repentance. And so he asks them, are you going to be able to drink the same cup?

[48 : 24] Just speaking of walking to the cross, walking through the judgment of God. Are you going to be baptized with the same baptism that I'm baptized in?

Talking about that reality. Immersing himself in the judgment that his father would place upon him for sinners. sinners. Is that how far you're willing to go, James and John?

Because that's what the reality is. And he calls him to himself and says, the Gentiles, the ones who have the earthly privilege of leading, they, according to verse 42, they exercise authority and they want to lord over others and he says, it's not to be this way with you.

You are to bring yourself into a situation where you're serving somebody with the truth to provide whatever redemptive qualities. Of course, we can never save somebody eternally, but we're not to use any kind of opportunity to govern any authority over the same way that Gentiles lord it over their own subjects.

Earthly kings use their authority to exert power, to extend power, and to bring charge over their subjects. And those who are going to bring in kingdom principles to the next generation needed this out of their system, needed this filtered out.

[49 : 58] I know sometimes I fall trapped to this in my parenting, thinking that I have some sort of personal right and authority over my children and reminding myself, no, these are gods. These are Christ. These are a blessing.

These are a privilege to me and I can't exert some sort of authority that God has not given me to exert over. We sometimes come into this boastful pride of life and our hearts deceive ourselves because we think that we have a position of authority when we think about Christ and the position that he had and he humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Because that's what happens in verse 45. even the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

The son of man terminology, remember, go back to the prophetic book of Daniel where the son of man was going to inherit the kingdom of power and authority. Jesus is that son of man.

That man. He didn't use the authority that he had to lord over subjects but in John chapter 13 lord himself and washed their feet taking a lowly position, walked to Golgotha with the beam on the cross, paid the sin debt on our behalf.

[51 : 25] The son of man gave up that authority to save our souls. The use of that authority I should maybe clarify.

He came and he served to redeem. He turned the situation for our eternal good to give hope where there was not. Many times when we get the job done, we just want to move on, pat ourselves on the back.

Again, we weigh out that time. Is this person worth it? Is this sacrifice worth it? What am I going to get in return? Jesus gave himself.

He served those 12. He served us. And he gave his life as a ransom in exchange for. Hardly will a man sometimes die for a good man, right?

Paul says, but someone who sins against you, someone who annoys you, someone who may not have all the qualities that you would love to have in them or you want them to have, that's what the Lord has given us.

[52 : 41] He's put a bunch of sinners in a room like this and says, be more like Christ. Job says, as sparks fly upward, man was born to sin. There's going to be interactions in our relationships and in our families that is going to make it hard to serve because sin splashes all over us sometimes.

But the process of discipleship, we come under Christ. So even now, you can probably think of some of the ways that the chief shepherd is shepherding your heart and guiding your soul in these three principles that the disciples needed, the 12 needed, that they wrote to the church about.

In some form or fashion, whether your family life, your work life, here in ministry, and it begins with you. Let's take the log out of our own eye first.

Let's stop concentrating on specks in others because usually we can see a lot of specks and have trouble seeing that log, right? It begins with our own hearts, our devotion to Christ, the humility in our own heart, our desire to love him.

Because when Peter was restored back to Christ in John 21, what was the question he asked? Do you love me? All this comes back to, do you love Christ? Three vital principles, faithful in discipleship, death concerning self into the world, a rejection of personal significance, and the pursuit of redemptive servitude.

[54 : 13] And by the power of the gospel and by the power of the spirit and his word, let us strive in these things together. Let's pray. Father, thank you for saving us.

And thank you for giving us these principles through your chosen disciples. And Lord, I pray that we would drink deeply from these principles in that this flock and this body would be the beneficiaries and see the fruit from that.

And as they go into a series where they get to learn more about Christ, may they become more like Christ. May they see the glory of Christ. And may we just spend some time in our own minds and hearts thinking about these this week and the areas that you are teaching us.

And let us help one another. Let us serve one another within these principles so that we, each other, could be more like the Lord Jesus Christ. So we thank you for this ministry.

Lord, I just pray that you would bless Squamish Baptists. I pray that more souls would be saved, more servants would be raised, more disciples would be more like Christ in this ministry.

[55 : 28] And help us as Grace Church of 99, Squamish Baptists, and other churches as we see the needs in this community. May we be these disciples that the world sees. And may we follow after Christ the way that you desire us.

Empower us and strengthen us to that end. In your son's precious and holy name we ask. Amen.