



Men's Discipleship Class  
September 06, 2018

**Scripture:**

*Matthew 28:18-20*

*2 Timothy 2:1-2*

*John 6:53-58, 60, 66-69*

*Acts 9:15-16*

*2 Corinthians 11:23-28*

*Mark 6:43-52*

*Colossians 1:15-20*

Gentleman, it is six thirty on the dot. We are ready to roll. Let me just share one thing okay? Do not ever wear LSU colors in here. Gordon says that whatever colors he wears, they lose. We are going to let him wear the colors of whoever the Aggies play because that is probably the only way the Aggies can win. Now, you Aggies have to get a sense of humor.

Matthew 28:18-20. This is where we are going to start. This is the basis of what we are doing. When you come in, I want you to bring a Bible. If you do not have a Bible, there is no point in being here. Every week we are going to roll through a ton of scripture. You are going to have to dig. You are going to have to find where we are going. We are going to look at a number of scriptures today. I am going to read. We are going to be in the Old and New Testament throughout every section. I am going to be reading from the English Standard Version. There are two types of Bible translations. There is literal and dynamic. Dynamic means they get the idea across, but it is not very literal. For example, Living Bible, New International, and really this new goofy thing from the Southern Baptist the Christian Standard Bible are all dynamic. They are not literal. The only two real literal versions are New American Standard and English Standard. I am going to be reading from the English Standard.

Matthew 28:18-20. This is an old Southern Baptist deal but listen to what he says.

*<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Jesus' concept and the thing for the church is that we make disciples. Whenever we hire new staff members, I inevitably have somebody come in and ask me what my vision is for the church. I tell them that I do not have a right to a vision, because Jesus has already laid that out. The vision for the church is to produce disciples that is why I have asked you to come in here. I need to explain something, so I want you to walk with me here. If this is not in your bag, then probably this study is not going to be for you. We are going to meet for a year. Matter of fact, I have a book in my office about this thick of what I took

the women through. It is a curriculum I have written. Every Bible study I have ever seen is either really good for a brand new Christian or for those who have been a Christian for a long time. There is a lot of work to do. We are not going to do either one of those. This is my own curriculum. I have written it with what I have come up with having every principle that you can utilize to make yourself mature in Christ. That is one goal I have. The second goal is for you for this year to ask God to give you three to five names of people you know in your life for you to take through this. I have no interest in you just coming. I want us to become people who disciple other people. There are two ways generally to do this.

I want you to turn to 2 Timothy 2:1-2. There are always big events. We do a big event every year here. We have a Men's Steak Out. We have four to five hundred guys there. When Mike Russell and I did the seminar on pornography, we had about four hundred men there. You can have big events, and that is great. Those big events can impact. I grew up in Southern Baptist life where we had two-week revivals. I mean they literally went on two weeks. There was a lot of crying. There was a lot of really good decisions made. The problem is out of large events nothing lasts. I never saw a two-week revival that lasted. It was always episodic. I want you to listen to what Paul writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:1-2 is what we are going to base this year on. Now listen to what he says.

<sup>1</sup> You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup> 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.

The Biblical solution to discipleship is one on one. It is men meeting with other men and women meeting with other women. That is the position of Biblical discipleship. It is not big crowds. As a matter of fact, we are going to see that particularly in a minute. It is not large meetings. It is people getting together who know what Jesus wants. They share that with others who then share it with others who then share it with others. That is the Biblical position of discipleship. When you read the Old Testament, how many times does Israel get it right? Twice. They get it right in the days David. They get it right in the days of Joshua. There is not a single other time that they get it right. The reason they fail, if you read the book of Judges, it will say the generation of those who did not serve the Lord. They do not transfer their faith. So, when they do not transfer their faith, it fails and you have all of these generations that do not make it. That is precisely the failure in the Old Testament. We are not going to do that at Central. We are going to do this. We are going to transfer our faith to people below us in particular. We are going to make sure we are involved man on man. Now, here is the reason. Go to 1 Timothy 4:7. I am going to share with you what I do not want. Listen to what he says.

Now, the purpose of being a disciple is so that you may become godly. It is not so that you can gain truth. I have no interest in you gaining truth. A few years ago, we were talking in staff meeting. We were struggling finding certain people to do a certain position in the church. It dawned on us, and I do not remember who it was who said it, that what we have discovered is that the people most involved in Bible study we cannot get them to do anything. That is really kind of oxymoronic to me. I am not interested in you going through this study so that you gain some knowledge of scripture. If it does not change who you are in your life, then there is no point in this.

There is an interesting point in the Bible where Jesus alludes to when talking to the Pharisees who really knew the Bible well. He talks to them about their practice of korban. He condemns it. It was a brilliant move. It was actually a great fundraiser if you were building a children's building back then. They had a thing called korban. If you go to Israel, you discover that everyone lives with each other. Families live together. Obviously, if your parents get old and they come home, it is going to cost some money. It will cost a lot of money if they live a long time. So what the Jews did, they would look at their people and

say, "Now look. If you will give a gift to the temple, we will call it korban, and you do not have to take care of your parents anymore. You can just let them go." It would save a ton of money for the people and a ton of mess. So, these Pharisees who had a great knowledge of scripture were the antithesis of godly. So, I am not interested in you learning scripture. You are going to work toward being godly. If you are not different in the way you live when we finish a year of this, you have failed in understanding what the scripture is supposed to do in your life.

We are going to look at godliness. Now, how does that occur? I want you to look at a couple of things with me. Go to John 6 which is the fourth gospel. I want to show you what Jesus did and why he was not into big events. We are going to start in verse 53. Now the Bible says in this passage that he feeds five thousand people. It actually says he feeds five thousand men which is probably closer to fifteen thousand people. You have wives and kids there. So, there are fifteen thousand people following Jesus. Now, listen to what he says. You need to remember something before we look at this text. Jesus was a Jew. He grew up in a Jewish home. He knew what offended Jews. The Jews were deeply offended by one particular practice. Now, remember in Acts 15 they had a big church council to decide whether or not the Gentiles had to be circumcised. They came out and told the Gentiles that they did not have to be circumcised which I am sure if you were older than two years old was a great moment of glory for you. They did leave a couple of rules on him. One of the rules they left was that you may not eat meat with the blood in it. So, it was a big thing in the Jewish household. If you were a little guy and you went to spend the night with a friend and they cut the meat and blood came out as a little Jewish guy, you pushed it aside. You did not eat it, because it was offensive to you. It would wound your spirit. Listen to this passage. Jesus is talking to fifteen thousand people. Look in John 6:53-58.

<sup>53</sup>So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Is that going to be offensive to a bunch of Jews? He goes on.

<sup>54</sup>Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. <sup>55</sup>For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup>Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. <sup>57</sup>As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died.

Jesus is not stupid. He has to know that when he couches it in this form that it is going to be offensive to these fifteen thousand people. As a matter of fact, I will bet you my golf clubs, deer rifle, pistol, and one grandchild that there is not a single church plant anywhere in America that in the first twenty years of that plant they would even read the verse I just read to you. It is offensive to us. You can imagine what it is to them. Sure enough, look at verse 60.

<sup>60</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"

Now look in verse 66.

<sup>66</sup>After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

Now, how many are left? He had fifteen thousand people following him. He knew what he was saying. He knew it would offend them. He knew they would leave. He still did it. He literally intentionally ran off fifteen thousand people. Look at the twelve. I love these guys.

<sup>67</sup>So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?”

Now listen to Simon Peter’s answer.

<sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go?”

In other words, “If there was somebody else out there, we would give it a thought. Because you have lost your mind.” Now listen to what he said, because this is a disciple.

You have the words of eternal life, <sup>69</sup>and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

This is what a disciple is. It is not how many Bible verses you know. It is not how many Bible studies you go to. It is not how nice you are to your wife. A disciple is somebody who comes to a place where it does not matter what Jesus says. It does not matter how he says it. You are in. If that is not you, then you are not a disciple. Do not tell me about how you can quote the Greek and read the Hebrew. Do not tell me about your knowledge of New Testament history. I do not care. Jesus made sure that he made it as hard as he could make it so it would be understood that if you were offended by what he said, it would not matter. No matter what he asks you to do, no matter what he asks you to believe, you are in. If that is not the case with you, then you are not a disciple. Let me show you. Go to Acts 9:15-16. This is after Paul is saved. He goes from Saul to Paul. He gets saved. He is on the Damacus road. He hears the voice of God. He sees Jesus. He falls down blind for three day. God sends Ananias to restore his sight. Now listen to what is said in verse 15 of Acts 9.

<sup>15</sup>But the Lord said to him (Ananias), “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

If you stop it there, that is a really cool thing. I am going to preach to the hottest people in the world.

<sup>16</sup>For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

Does he do that? Go to 2 Corinthians 11. One thing that will happen once we are finished with the year is that you will know the books of the Bible. Here is what Paul says about his life. Matter of fact, we are going to start in verse 23. Listen to this.

<sup>23</sup>Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup>Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup>on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; <sup>27</sup>in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup>And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

Now, how do you do that? This guy lived through hell and was good with it. He was totally okay with it. It is what he told him in Acts. He told him he was going to preach for some cool places, but you are going to get massively messed up. That is exactly true. The reason Luke begins to travel with him as a physician is because he spends the rest of his life trying to help Paul through the physical ailments of all of these things he went through. We quit if we do not like the Sunday school teacher. We quit going to church if the preacher says something we do not like. I have people that say to me that they are not coming back to church because it was hot. How do you compare, seriously, our little begging junk with

this? If you do not care what Jesus put you through because you are sure of who he is, you can do this. So, discipleship is rooted in an understanding of who Jesus is. Go to Mark. The gospel of Mark 6:45-52. How many miracles are in the New Testament were done in the Old Testament? Every single one of them. There were lepers healed in the Old Testament. There were people raised from the dead in the Old Testament. There were people healed. There were people fed. There is one though that you do not find in the Old Testament. You only find it done one time. It has never been repeated. I have tried it, and it does not work. Listen to what he says.

<sup>45</sup>Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup>And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>47</sup>And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. <sup>48</sup>And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night, he came to them walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them,

Why? He hoped some would know who he is.

<sup>49</sup>but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out,

The Greek there actually means to cry like a junior high girl in a movie theater. So, there are just freaking out.

<sup>50</sup>for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” <sup>51</sup>And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, <sup>52</sup>for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Now if you go back up to verse 43, he fed another group of five thousand people.

<sup>43</sup>And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup>And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

So again, about fifteen thousand people. He performs this great miracle of feeding fifteen thousand people. They know he did it. It has no impact on them. What he does is walk on the water which is a very odd thing hoping they will know who he is. They do not. They are terrified. He gets into the boat. No apology. He steps into the boat and tells them, “Hey, it is I. Quit being afraid.” The wind stops. The waves stop. Everything is calm. If you go to Israel, they pull up a boat they found from two thousand years ago called the Jesus boat. I am sure it was the one he was in. (Laughter) They have got this two thousand year old boat. It is basically just a big canoe. If this thing goes over, you have got to remember there is no Coast Guard. They do not have any little floaties. If they turn over, they die. He steps into the boat and tells them to quit being afraid. It says that are amazed at him beyond wonder. He purposely walked on the water. This is the only time we find that miracle. He does this so he can awaken them as to he really was.

So, the purpose of discipleship and the purpose of what God will do in your life is that he will do everything he can to awaken you to who Jesus Christ is. Because if you do not understand who he is, you are not sure of it, you do not believe it, and you have not come to know it, then you will not ever live out the call of God on your life. So for the next year, we are going to do two things. We are going to see what the Bible says about who Jesus is, and we are going to see what that means in your life. Those are the two things we are going to do for one year. My prayer is that when we finish in a year, you will find three to five men who you have prayed about and who God has given you the names of. You will take

those three to five guys and walk them through who Jesus is and what that means in their life. I want us to make sure that if we are going to build a men's ministry in this church that we do it networking person to person. We will not try to do it off big events. We are going to spend one year learning who he is and what that means in your life.

Let me show you one example. Go to Colossians 1:15-20. When I was taking my last comprehensive exam for PhD. It was two hours and forty-five minutes of great joy. They pounded me with all sorts of questions. The last question they asked me was, "If you have one last sermon to preach, what is your text?" This is my answer. Colossians 1:15, talking about Christ.

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

There is no greater text in the entire Word of God than this right here. I want us by the end of the year to understand the depth of what this means. Then as we understand it, I want us to be so sure of it and so committed to it that even if we had to live the life of Paul, we would be able to do it.

Gentlemen, that is what we are going to do for a year. I am going to lecture every week for about thirty minutes. I will then open it up for questions. You can ask me anything. I am not worried about it in here. There was something about having seventy-five women in here last year that was terrifying. I did not know what the questions were going to be. You cannot be as humorous in there as we can be in here. So, I did learn about shiplap with the women. There is some meaning to that, and I still actually do not know what that means. I do not care. I think it is Greek for Gehenna. At any rate, I did finally one Thursday after I had had it, came in and said, "Let me give you a male shiplap example". Browning, 300 wind mag, A bolt, 60 degree throw, muzzle brake with a 165 grain bullet traveling 3200 feet per second. I walked them through my deer rifle. They have to same look we have when I say shiplap. I did at least return the favor somewhat although women do not quite have a sense of humor totally. We will address in one of the sessions the difference between men and women which is quite entertaining but true.