**Vision Sunday**

**Jesus’ Message, His Mission and His Method**

**Matt 4:17-22**

**January 27, 2019**

Today is our annual vision Sunday celebrating what God has accomplished through our church over the last year and look ahead to what God is calling us to this next year (Mat 16:18). Then after our service, we will have a short family/business meeting. In the very last words of Jesus recorded in Matthews gospel, Jesus gives the disciples their mission that he ties to his power and authority as the resurrected Christ. It is to make disciples of all nations. But that is not the first time Jesus gave them this mission. When he called the disciples to follow him, he gave them this mission in seed form. Jesus’ plan to change the world was not to give all of his time and attention to big crowds but to a few men. In light of this, I would like to consider the account when Jesus started called his first disciples to follow him in Matthew 4:17-22. It is here we find Jesus’ Message to the world, His Mission for the church, and His Method making disciples.

**Jesus’ Message**

We find a summary of Jesus’ message in 4:17, repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. This was also John the Baptist’s message, and what we find in the preaching of the early church. Repent is always linked with faith. Together they describe turning away from sin and turning toward Christ by faith for salvation. All of us look to or trust something to save us, to find meaning or significance in life. It may be moralism, religion, science, activism, a relationship, or a substance. For instance, some believe that moralism is the guiding principle in life. So they strive to be a good person. If they believe in some form of God, then being moral is what gets you to heaven. The problem is that all of us fall short of our own moral standard. No matter how hard we try, we fail. The bible tells us that is because we are sinful. Jesus is the only answer to our sinful condition. So, his message is to turn from whatever you are trusting and trust in Him.

**Jesus’ Mission**

The mission of Jesus, the task he has given the church worldwide is to make disciples (Mat 28:19). Making disciples is intentionally equipping believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to duplicate/multiply faithful followers of Christ. Simply put, a disciple learns what Jesus said and lives out what Jesus did. Jesus preached to the masses but invested somewhere between 75 to 90% of his time with his disciples. Looking at the gospels, a disciple can be described by three characteristics.

First, a disciple is someone who has come to Jesus by faith for salvation (Mt 19:21-22; Lk 9:59; Mk 8:34) and follows Jesus (Mat 4:19; Jn 1:43; Mk 1:17-18) as part of the community of disciples. They have responded positively to his message. But believing in Jesus is a lifestyle of repenting of your unbelief and trusting in Jesus following. Faith is a commitment to follow Jesus by learning what Jesus said and living out what Jesus did. When Jesus called these men to follow him, it was not out of the blue. They were already familiar with Jesus’ message and were probably following him at some level. The twelve disciples are unique because they followed Jesus around physically but the principle is the same for all disciples. Following Jesus means coming to him for salvation and learning what he taught and living out what he did as part of a community of disciples.

Second, a disciple is formed by Jesus. Jesus said, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Following Jesus comes with the promise to be spiritually transformed so we become like Jesus (Rom 8:28). But we do not follow Jesus alone, disciples are formed by Jesus in the company of others disciples. Being formed by Jesus is not making bad people good. It is making dead people alive.

Third, a disciple is faithful to the mission of Jesus, making disciples. Jesus said follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Speaking to fishermen, he promised them that they will catch others, not with a net, but with the good news of the gospel. Following Jesus is not just about you and Jesus nor is it just about Jesus transforming you but you embrace the mission of Jesus to change the world by multiplying yourself in the lives of others. Following Jesus is bound up with the mission of Jesus, making disciples to make disciples.

**Jesus’ Method**

Jesus’ method was simple, he invested in a few. He invested in twelve for three years and changed the world. And even within the twelve, he gave more time and attention to three, Peter, James, and John. Second, Jesus encouraged his disciples to obey God by being formed by Jesus. He taught them to live out what he taught. This is why the great commission is to make disciples by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Mat 28:19). Third, Jesus equipped the disciples to make disciples by reproducing themselves. When he commissioned the twelve, he didn’t to have to lay out a plan because he had spent three years with them; they knew what he expected.

Questions for Life Groups:

1. Why do you think this passage is often called the great omission?
2. What are the three characteristics of a disciple? How are you doing in each?
3. Have you ever been discipled? Have you ever discipled someone else?
4. How would your life be difference if someone have spent a year investing in you and teacging your to follow Jesus and make disciples of others?
5. Does the prospect of making disciples excite your or intimidate you? Why?
6. What is teaching for obedience? Why is teaching for obedience necessary?
7. What is God saying to you this week from this text?
8. Have you ever been in a relationship where you held others accountable?