

Following Jesus: What Real Men Do NOTES

Introduction

- Greetings!
- My focus for this morning: What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

A Framework for Being a Disciple

- Frameworks are important. Why is this story in Scripture? Why is it important?
- Facts without a framework are information without a context!
- Share some insights I learned about discipleship.
- I am going to assume you are all followers of Jesus – or if not, you want to check out what this means.
- Read John 15 (NKJV) – explain the context of chapters 13 – 17 – “Jesus’ Upper Room Discourses:”
 - *(1) I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. (2) Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (3) You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (4) Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me.*
 - *(5) I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing. (6) If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. (7) If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. (8) By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciples.*
 - *(9) As the Father loved me, I also have loved you; abide in my love. (10) If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.*
 - *(11) These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (12) This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (13) Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. (14) You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. (15) No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his*

master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. (16) You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give to you. (17) These things I command you, that you love one another.

- *(18) If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*
- Jesus summarizes core priorities for his disciples:
 1. Abiding – ten times in verses 1 – 11.
 - Meaning? Being rooted in, connected to Jesus
 - Everything starts here: a close personal relationship with Jesus
 - Daily or every few days of devotional reading.
 2. Loving each other (verse 12) – dramatic shift
 - A vital body life – being a part of a community of faith – as Jesus did with the Twelve and especially the Three (Peter, James & John).
 3. Then verse 18, shifts to core priority #3: engaging the world as a witness.

Balanced Discipleship

- These core priorities are laid out by Jesus and their sequence is important. It all begins with our relationship with Jesus and then requires discipline.
- **ABIDING**
 - I'm a jock – I love baseball, basketball, racquetball, tennis, etc. – and now I am taking golf lessons (after embarrassing myself on the golf course). Golf is a tough sport and other sports also require practice and a commitment of time.
 - Are you willing to make the same commitment of time to learning more about Jesus? Not passive learning – just listening to good sermons, but investing time in Biblical study and prayer?
- **FRIENDSHIPS/BODY LIFE**
 - Why are so many of us guys Lone Rangers/Iron Johns, with no close friends.
 - Research: 6 out of 10 women in the church are in small groups, but only 2 out of 10 guys.

- Jesus modeled friendship with his Twelve and especially with the Three. Are you in the kind of relationship?
- Bob Hamrin and I: 30 years plus of close friendship – one of the joys of my life!
- WORLD/WITNESS
 - Are we witnesses of our faith in the marketplace?
 - Forget the “Laity Myth” – I’m just a lay person. I have no responsibility to be a witness – no training!
 - Do you know what God’s plan is for this time in history? What is God doing and what is your calling?
- The challenge is to keep these three priorities in balance
 - Monk-aholics (separate. Isolated, but oh so holy!)
 - Serve-aholics (people who love “holy huddles”) – burn out.
 - Save-aholics (often Lone Ranger campaigners, who collapse over time without the nourishment of the word.
- Framework: A Diagnostic Tool for Balanced Living as Disciples
 - Great way to keep close friends accountable – it helps our friends, deepens our friendship, and gives substance to our relationships.
- DISCUSSION