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Matthew 28:16-20

The Cornerstone Core: Discipleship

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Discipleship - We learn to love and obey Jesus and help others do the same.

Introduction:

1. What's it take to be a real New-Englander?
2. I moved here from Colorado five years ago and have taken some legitimate steps.
3. The first week I was here I tried New-England clam chowder.
4. I've gone down to the North End to eat pasta and purchase cannoli's at Mike's Pastry.
5. I've vacationed on Cape Cod, traveled to Nantucket, and eaten buttery lobster.
6. I've gone to Red-Sox games, a New England revolution game, and the TD Garden.
7. When the stoplight shows a green arrow, I've raced in front of oncoming traffic ("Boston left").
8. I graduated from a local Academic Institution and even married a Massachusetts girl.
9. To be a true New Englander, you need to be born here, and your parents, and grandparents.
10. What's it take to be a real Christian?
11. Do you have to be born into it? Is it as hard as becoming a New Englander? What's required?
12. The early believers weren't called Christians until after Jesus left (Acts 11:26).
13. Jesus' called his first students and believers his disciples.

I. A disciple is a follower of Jesus. (**read v. 16**)

A. A disciple is a follower of Jesus.

- a. Jesus' disciples weren't very good followers (Judas betrays, Peter disowns, the rest flee).
- b. In chapter 28 we see two good examples, Mary Magdalene and another woman.
- c. They go to the guarded tomb and an angel comes down from heaven to tell them Jesus is alive.
- d. The angel and then Jesus tells them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee.
- e. Maybe because of fear, the disciples stay put, so Jesus himself shows up in John 20.
- f. When they do get to Galilee, in John 21, they go fishing till Jesus shows up to forgive Peter.
- g. Finally, we see in v. 16 the disciples catch on and go where Jesus wants them to go.
- h. A disciple goes where Jesus goes and does what Jesus wants.

B. I know some of you like to follow the Red-Sox.

- a. You follow the Red-Sox by going to their games, rooting for players, and learning their stats.
- b. If you knew the Red-Sox were playing their rivals, the Yankees, you'd go extra prepared.
- c. Are you still a fan if you leave in the 8th inning when the Red-Sox are losing?
- d. Have you ever abandoned Jesus because it didn't look like he would win?
- e. What if a Yankees fan offered to pay you to root for the Yankees?
- f. The soldiers who saw an angel descend from heaven took a payout instead of believing.
- g. We don't hide our belief because it's convenient.

(A disciple is a follower of Jesus.)

(A disciple of Jesus is more than a fan.)

II. We follow Jesus by loving and obeying him. (read v. 17, 20a)

- A. We follow Jesus by loving and obeying him. (v. 17, 20a)
 - a. It says when the disciples saw Jesus, they worshipped him.
 - b. We worship what we love most—**The Great Commandment** says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Matt 22:37 NIV)
 - c. You can love without worshipping but you can’t truly worship without love.
 - d. “Worship” means “to kneel before”—without love we bow everything but our heart.
 - e. We show our love for Jesus by obeying him—v. 20a says, “teaching them to obey...”
 - f. Have you ever had your parents or spouse ask you to do something for them?
 - g. And instead of doing it, you say, “I love you!” (try that next time)
 - h. We follow Jesus by loving and obeying him. (explain gospel & motivation)

- B. Anyone can follow Jesus—even the doubters. (v. 17)
 - a. Some of the disciples “doubted” or “hesitated” to believe.
 - b. This is comforting because it means we don’t have to follow Jesus perfectly.
 - c. The disciples died martyr’s deaths, but in the beginning they struggled with doubt.
 - d. The women are also likely with the eleven and probably another 500, who may have doubted too
 - e. 1 Cor 15:6 says after Jesus appeared to Peter (fishing in Galilee) he appeared to 500 at once.
 - f. 1 Cor 15:6 also tells us these 500 later acted as witnesses to Jesus’ resurrection.
 - g. If you’re waiting to become a Christian until all your doubt is gone, you don’t need to.
 - h. If you struggle with doubt as a longtime believer, God still wants to use you (you’re not alone).

(We follow Jesus by loving and obeying him.)

(Anyone can follow Jesus—even the doubters.)

III. Jesus assures us he’s worth following. (read v. 18)

- A. Jesus assures us he’s worth following. (v. 18)
 - a. Notice how Jesus responds to the doubt, “Then Jesus came to them...”
 - b. If only a tiny part of you believes in Jesus, Jesus can meet you there.
 - c. You think of all sorts of reasons not to believe, but a part of you wants to believe.
 - d. In the face of doubt, Jesus not only wants your belief, he wants your whole life.
 - e. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus sends his disciples out on mission.
 - f. Before sending them out, he reminds them that he rules heaven and earth.
 - g. Jesus doesn’t want us to trust in our own intellect or ability, but in him.

(Jesus assures us he's worth following.)

(What does Jesus call us to do?)

IV. Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus. (read v. 19-20)

- A. Our mission as a church is “To make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus”.
 - a. Our mission comes right from **The Great Commission (GC)**.
 - b. In the military, commissioned officers are appointed by the government.
 - c. They are the most senior portion of an armed force as they have the state's authority.

- d. Jesus claims the authority of heaven and then grants that authority to us.
- e. There is no higher commission, which means this calling supersedes all others.
- f. If the state tries to stop us from obeying, we appeal to our higher commission.
- g. If we disobey this commission, we commit treason against heaven and earth.

(What does Jesus commission us to do?)

(Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.)

A. First, Jesus calls us to make new followers.

- a. Jesus commands his disciples to “make disciples of all nations.”
- b. "Nations" is the Greek word "ethnos" which means Gentiles or non-Jews (missions).
- c. Jesus' disciples didn't like the non-religious Gentiles who were different than them.
- d. They were the type of people who didn't go to church or prioritize the right things.
- e. But Jesus says to go and make new disciples out of them.
- f. I think Jesus has his disciples climb the mountain so they can see their mission field.
- g. The mission field isn't in a foreign land, it's in their own back yard, "Galilee of the Gentiles".
- h. When you go skiing at Nashoba Valley Ski Area, do you see a mission field?
- i. When you drive to the top of the hill to the Westford Town Center, what do you see?

B. As far as I know, our baptismal has never been used so the seals are dried out.

- a. Baptism is the first step in following Jesus, it's the "make" of "make disciples."
- b. Baptism symbolizes a non-Christian putting their faith in Jesus for the first time.
- c. Notice that we can't force anyone to believe or come to faith in Christ.
- d. We baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit because he's the one who saves people.
- e. All officers in the U.S. military take an oath of office when they're commissioned.
- f. Baptism is also a little like being commissioned as Christ's representative to the world.
- g. Baptism doesn't save you, but it does symbolically recognize you as a follower of Jesus.
- h. If you want to show the world you're a follower of Jesus, baptism is a great place to start.
- i. If you're willing to say "I want to love and obey him, even in doubt", come talk to me (Jan class).

(Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.)

C. Second, Jesus calls us to mature his followers.

- a. The “mature” part of the GC is “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- b. The word “obey” also means “guard”—We obey and guard the teachings of Jesus.
- c. Jesus orders us to safeguard the doctrines or beliefs of Christianity (aka. grace, Jesus, etc.).
- d. Maybe sitting on the mountain reminds the disciples of the Sermon on Mount.
- e. If you want to learn what Jesus taught, we're launching “Meeting Jesus in Matthew” Dec 19th.

(Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.)

D. Third, Jesus calls us to multiply more followers.

- 1. “Make disciples” is the only command in the text; go, baptize, and teach all modify it.
- 2. Another way of saying this is, “Make disciples... as you're going, baptizing, and teaching.”
- 3. Multiplication is when you and I take personal responsibility for reproducing another follower.
- 4. Who are you praying for?... Who are you seeking to introduce to Jesus?

5. Who are you pouring into?.... Who are you trying to help mature as his follower?
6. This week I want you to create a "**Top Ten Most Wanted**" list of people to pray for.
7. I won't make you share it, but I want you to bring your "Top Ten" back with you next week.
8. Small groups are our number one place for pouring into each other at Cornerstone.
9. If you're not pouring into someone, join a small group in January so you can learn how.

(Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.)

Conclusion:

1. The disciples had to travel about 70 miles from Jerusalem to Galilee.
2. I think once they got there they were probably pretty tired.
3. And what does Jesus do, he says it's time to go on another journey.
4. We've also traveled a long way to launch Cornerstone.
5. The mission is not accomplished now that we worship weekly.
6. Jesus is calling us, no commanding us, to keep going.
7. At the very end of Matthew he says, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
8. That means Jesus is here, in Cornerstone Congregational Church.
9. That means Jesus is with you as you share Jesus with your coworkers and friends.
10. The power that rules heaven and earth, the great "I am" is with us.
11. Make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.

Benediction: Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) Foundation Verse