

MAKE DISCIPLES 2
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John 15:5-20

1. Last week we began looking at how the Apostles would have interpreted Jesus' command to, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." Matthew 28:19
2. I think that the Holy Spirit helped them by bringing to their remembrance the characteristic of a true disciple that had been enunciated by Jesus during His earthly teaching ministry.
3. Jesus taught that His disciples would: Luke 14:25-33
 - a. Love Him supremely.
 - b. Follow Him fully.
 - c. Trust Him totally.
4. This morning I want to pick up where I left off previously.
5. We will talk about three additional characteristics of a true disciple or follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. They will glorify God the Father by bearing much fruit thus proving (bearing witness to the fact) that they are in fact Jesus' disciples. 8

- A. Commentators differ on what Jesus was referring to by "much fruit."
- B. Some suggest that He was talking about making converts. 15
- C. Others believe that He was referring to the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23
- D. I would suggest that those whose lives are characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control will positively impact the lives of others and turn at least some to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- E. Jesus made the point that our oneness with Him will be observable and evident.
 1. Those who abide in Him will bear much fruit. 5
 2. Those who do not abide in Him (even through they may think they do) will, in the end, be cast into the fire and burned. 6
- F. A tree's fruit reveals two important things.
 1. Fruit or the absence of fruit reveals whether or not a branch is receiving what it needs from the tree--whether or not it is abiding in the tree.
NOTE: As a boy working in my grandfather's apple orchard I learned that a healthy tree can sometimes have branches that have lost their connection to the tree and therefore their ability to produce anything.
 2. The fruit also reveals what sort of tree it is.
NOTE: A person who walked through my grandfather's orchard in January may not have been able to tell an apple tree from a pear tree. Nor would they be able to tell which branches were healthy and which were not. But, come spring they would soon be able to tell which branches were abiding in the tree because those that were would leaf out and blossom. Shortly thereafter the fruit would appear and they would know which trees were apple trees and which were pear trees.
- G. I believe that Jesus was saying that His disciples would be obvious because His life and likeness would be clearly manifested in them.
- H. They will abide in (rest in) His love just as He abided in the Father's love. 9
- I. They will keep Jesus' commandments just as He kept the Father's commandments. 10
- K. They will know and manifest the joy that characterized the life of Christ. 11

II. They will love others with the same love with which Christ loves them.

John 13:34-35

- A. Back in John 15:12-13 we read that Jesus said, “This is My commandment that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”
- B. John expanded on this truth in 1 John 3:13-16.
 - 13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. 14 **We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.** He who does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates (does not love) his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 16 We know love (define love) by this, that He laid down His life for us; and **we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**
- C. Anyone who is truly abiding in Christ will know that they are because they will possess and manifest His love for their brothers and sisters in Christ.
- D. On the other hand the absence of love means the absence of life.
- E. One of the things that causes me concern is the way that many Christians relate to and treat their brothers and sisters in Christ-their behavior calls their Christianity into question.
- F. It has been my experience that a lot of so-called church growth is nothing more than dissatisfied Christians moving their membership from one church to another.

III. They will continue in (habitually abide in) the words of Christ. John 8:31-32

- A. John MacArthur wrote, “A genuine believer holds fast, obeys, and practices Jesus’ teaching.”

NOTE: We need to remember that Jesus is the author of all the Bible. 1 Peter 1:10-12

- As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the **Spirit of Christ within them** was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.
- B. Those who continue in His word demonstrate that they are truly His disciples.
- C. To them He reveals truth.
- D. A proper understanding and application of the truth will lead to the freedom that is available to us in Christ.

APPLICATION

1. Many have the mistaken notion that they are connected to Christ because they have responded positively to an invitation to pray the “Sinner’s Prayer.”
2. The Sinner’s Prayer has meaning only if it is the outward expression of a genuine, inward work of God upon a person’s mind and heart leading to an act of the will.
3. The grace that saves also sanctifies (sets apart and transforms the life of the person who is the object of God’s grace).
 - “If your faith has not changed your life, then your faith hasn’t saved your soul. The faith that saves your soul also changes your life.” Chris James, from “Open Windows,” July 24, 2015
4. All true believers are grafted into Christ the true vine.
5. Christ is one with the Father, we are one with Christ, and all of God’s provision comes to us through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
6. Not only are we in Christ, but He in us through the person of the Holy Spirit.
7. That reality will be evident in the life of every genuine follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.