

Sermon Study Guide

Pastor: Pastor Kent Priebe

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THE MAIN THING: 'A Life Worth Imitating'

The Mission Statement of Centre Street Church challenges each of us to become fully devoted followers of Jesus. This invitation calls us to live our lives intentionally as His disciples.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group (Choose 1 or 2 questions)*

1. When you were growing up, whom did you try to imitate? Why?
2. What reasons do people today have for using others as a role model? (e.g. neighbours, co-workers)
3. Who has been a spiritual father or mother to you?

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. In Acts 19:9-10, reference is made to Paul's disciples. How would this relationship fit the Jewish model of discipleship?
2. Paul knew that the Greek culture would not understand the picture of a 'rabbi and disciples.' He presents a different metaphor to the Corinthian church. What words does he use to describe this relationship (1 Cor 4:14-17)? (see also 1 Cor 11:1; 1 Thess 1:5-6)
3. Compare and contrast the two processes. When did Jesus display both models?
4. How does Ephesians 4:13 reflect the mission statement of Centre Street Church? In what ways does a 'life worth imitating' support this goal?

PURSUE MISSION: *Seek to be the community of God's people in your community*

1. In your groups, affirm and encourage one another by what you admire and what you see in them to imitate.
2. Who is like a spiritual father or mother to you currently? In whom are you investing? Be challenged to take steps either to find a person to mentor you, or pursue relationship with someone you can disciple. (e.g. at school, university campus, business, home)

Resources and opportunities to explore:

<http://www.cschurch.ca/volunteer/>

<http://www.cschurch.ca/resources/classes-workshop/>

THE WORD (NIV)

Acts 19:9-10

⁹But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:13

¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:14-17

¹⁴I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. ¹⁵Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶Therefore I urge you to imitate me. ¹⁷For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

1 Corinthians 11:1

¹Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-6

⁵because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

Sermon Study Summary

“What is our purpose in raising our children . . . what are we aiming for . . . what could be more important than helping our children follow Jesus with their whole hearts . . . this is the ultimate goal we have in parenting . . . to make disciples of our children.” These were the questions Pastor Kent and his wife pondered upon which convinced them that our mandate from Jesus is to make disciples of our children.

The word ‘disciple’ simply means pupil, student, and apprentice. In ancient Jewish culture a Jewish Rabbi/teacher would invite a young Jewish boy to be his disciple. Jesus functioned along the lines of this tradition. We know that Jesus had many disciples (at least 72) out of which He invited 12 young men to be much closer in relationship to Him and it was these 12 men that He invested most of His time in, and He asked them to develop others the same way. Paul (Acts 19:9-10) is shown to have disciples he invested in every day. Paul met with disciples every day for 2 years to invest in their lives. This passion demonstrated by Paul to help others spiritually is Jesus’ way of making disciples by being imitators in the body of Christ. The challenge to all of us in Ephesians 4:13 is that all of us would grow up and become mature in Christ. The series on “Christianity 101” led by Pastor Henry helps us to grow in our faith through sermons and worship, community small groups, various ministry areas that are designed to support us in knowing and obeying Jesus alongside our mission statement that we all become fully devoted followers/disciples of Jesus. This is our mandate and the life that Jesus invites us to live.

The word ‘disciple’ is seldom used after Acts 21 with no mention of it in Paul’s, Peter’s or John’s letters though all three of them clearly had disciples of their own that they were investing in spiritually. Pastor Kent acknowledges the influence of thoughts of author Mike Breen** and others on the disappearance of the word ‘disciple’ by referring to 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 in which Paul gives us a new picture of disciple making. Paul illustrates by using Greco Roman picture of a family (exemplified by guardians - *pedagogues in Greek* and rite of passage ceremony) as the new metaphor that would describe the spiritual formation process of believers. With the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria to ends of the earth, vast majority of cities like Corinth, Ephesus and Rome had no understanding of what the word ‘disciple’ meant because that word was used always in reference to a Jewish rabbi. And so instead of the ‘rabbi and disciple’ relationship the metaphor he uses is that of the ‘parent and child’ relationship.

Discipleship is about healthy submission. Pastor Kent makes a significant note on ‘common themes’ in his sermon such as faith of individualism, lack of time and feeling of superiority that keeps people from developing a discipling relationship with someone further along in their spiritual journey. Paul probably gives us the clearest articulation of what was involved in a discipling relationship. In 1 Corinthians 4:15-16 Paul uses the metaphor of a ‘father and son’ where he refers to himself as a father to the Christians in Corinth and calls Timothy as his son to get right to the heart of what spiritual growth is all about, which is imitation.

Pastor Kent encapsulates by saying “nothing would preclude us from investing into the lives of a few others who want to follow Jesus . . . our lives will never be perfect examples of following Jesus – AND our world needs a greater number of real, honest and living examples of what it looks like to be a fully devoted disciple of Jesus.”

**www.3dmovements.com