

“Discipleship”

Special Presentation

Various Scriptures

Mike Davis

August 12, 2022

Mike: Brothers, good morning.

Brave Men: Good morning.

Mike: Why don't we take a few minutes to come before the Lord in prayer and we'll start right there? So Lord, we thank You so much for the great morning that You've given to us. Lord, what a joy it is to walk outside in Your creation in the morning. Even as we get into our cars and go places like here, Lord, just to be able to sense Your presence as we are in Your creation is an amazing thing. And so Lord, we thank You for Your hand upon us. We thank You that You are the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

And this morning as we come before You, we lift Don's brother Gregg up to You. Lord, we pray for him, that You would speak healing into his life, Lord, that You would bring healing to bear through whatever means You deem necessary, whatever ways that You have in mind for Gregg, whether through doctors or through Your miraculous healing hand. Lord, we ask for Your hand upon him, that he would be drawn close to You as well, that he would have a desire in his heart to really grow close to You. Thank You for Don, that he is doing better with his healing from COVID. And Lord, we ask Your hand upon him, that he would continue to strengthen and move forward.

Thank You for Kevin Cohn, and Lord, we lift him up to You. I pray for him, Lord, as he is working through bone cancer which is just a terrible, painful situation for him. Lord, we lift him up to You, that You would sustain him in the midst of this, that You would walk with him through this, that he would sense Your presence in a powerful way. And Lord, again we ask that You would speak healing into his life and that Your hand would be upon him and upon his wife Sandy as they walk together through this. O Lord, may You strengthen them both.

We lift up Bruce and Becky to You as they are walking through difficulties as well—Bruce with Parkinson's and Becky with recovery from surgery. We pray for them both, Lord, that You would strengthen them as well and bring healing there. Lord, we thank You for Bruce and all the Bible studies that he has taught. He is a man who has spoken to thousands upon thousands of people concerning Your word and about You, and we thank You for him.

Thank You for Sig. Lord, we ask that You would cause him to heal up quickly from the tumor surgery, and that he would be back here with us soon.

Lord, we thank You for your hand upon Luke. We praise You for the report of the non-cancerous situation there; we just want to thank You for that. O Lord, may You keep Your hand upon him. May he be drawn closer and closer to You. And Lord, may he realize even from this young age that life is frail and that we need to be about the business of being focused on You and walking with You even from a young age.

Lord, we thank You for Charlie. And as he is going Wednesday to have his lungs looked at we ask, Lord, that You would give the doctors wisdom there, that they would be able to look inside his lung for whatever they need to cut out of there, whatever is going on inside his lung. And we give You praise and thanks for all these, and Lord for the

“Discipleship”

others that are even yet unspoken; in different situations we give You thanks and praise, Lord.

Today as we look into Your word, as we go through what we’re going to be talking about today, may You stir our hearts to align with Your heart, O God. And may You stir our hearts to be passionate about our Lord Jesus Christ and being followers of Him. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Mike: Guys, as we get started here this morning, (good morning, Chris; nothing like being called out in the middle of a crowd, right?) (*Laughter*) Anyway, guys, as we get started here this morning we’re probably not going to be doing something new. But we’re going to be looking at something old. And so as we begin to look at this and dig in a little bit we’re going to go through some Scripture. You have some note pages on your tables there. We’re going to go through some Scriptures this morning. And these are Scriptures that you probably even know off by heart. But we’re going to look at them anyway and just think about what they’re saying. So Don Bishop, would you mind reading Matthew 28:18-20? And let’s see. Would somebody else look up 2 Timothy 2:1-4? And somebody else in Mark and somebody else in 2 Corinthians, and we’ll get to you in a minute. So Don, go ahead with Matthew 28.

Don Bishop: *“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”*

Mike: Okay. So on your note page beside Matthew 28 let’s write some words down there that come to your mind as you’ve heard that. Maybe “all authority belongs to Jesus,” or “make disciples,” or both; or whatever words come to mind after hearing that. We’re going to do this with each one. So whatever words come to mind for each one, just write them down on your page. Okay, does somebody have 2 Timothy 2:1-4? Does anybody have that?

Brave Man: *“you then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Bear with suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets tangled in civilian pursuits, that he may please the one who enlisted him.”*

Mike: Okay, please read verse 2 one more time.

Brave Man: *“And whatever you heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men.”*

Mike: Okay. “What you have heard from me entrust to others”; that’s being said there. Again, whatever you want to write on your page, just write down some thoughts about what you’ve heard there. Okay, the Mark passage. Does somebody have that?

Jim Hamilton: *“After John was arrested Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news of God. ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is now here. Repent and believe the good news.’”*

Mike: Okay; the kingdom of God is come. *“Repent and believe the good news.”* All right; there’s another one there.

“Discipleship”

Jim: Yes, 16-20. *“As He passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon’s brother casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ‘Follow Me,’ Jesus told them, ‘and I will make you fishers of people.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.*

“And going a little farther He saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat where their nets were. And immediately He called them. And they left their father Zebedee in the boat and followed Him.”

Mike: Okay. Again, just write a couple words there that come to your mind on your page. Okay, 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. Does somebody have that? 2 Corinthians 5:17-20.

Don Rimbey: I’ll read that, Mike.

Mike: Okay.

Don: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old has gone; the new has come. All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. He has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: be reconciled to God.”*

Mike: All right; thank you. So again, just think about a couple words to maybe write down on your paper that come to mind there. I think of “new creation” and “be reconciled to God.” Whatever thoughts that come to your mind are good.

You know, one of the things that we face doing church in our day—and maybe every other generation as well; I’m not sure—is that we have a lot of men and women sitting in churches. Maybe they’ve been Christians for ten years, twenty years, forty years. And in church on Sunday morning once in a while the thought that runs through their minds is, is this all there is? I’m doing the right things, check. I’ve gone to church, check. I read my Bible once in a while, check. I try to be a nice guy, check. I show up at Bible study and do some different things. But sometimes there’s kind of a gut feeling—not all the time, but from time to time,—is this all there is to Christianity? And I read the Bible and I see what’s going on there. And yet is this all there is?

And so this morning we’re going to talk about that a little bit. And we’re going to talk a little bit about what that looks like. But they’re still purposeless after all those years of being Christians; they still have a lack of a sense of purpose. And so we’re going to talk about that some.

What is the mission of the church? We’ve got a room here with a bunch of different guys, and we’re going to get different answers here. And that’s okay. What would you say the mission of the church is? You’re not going to have a wrong answer. I’m not going to call you up and say, “That’s no good.” But what’s the mission of the church? What do you think about these things?

Don Rimbey: Spread the gospel.

Mike: Spread the gospel; excellent.

Brave Man: Praise God.

Mike: Praise God, has—to worship the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Yes, other things?

Don Bishop: Make disciples.

Mike: Make disciples; yes. Excellent; what else? Jerry?

“Discipleship”

Jerry: Love one another.

Mike: Love one another; all right. Yes, love God and love one another, right? Love God, love your neighbor. Good things. So we could keep digging in here more and more and more and find some more answers. And the Scripture talks about all those things that you described.

Today we’re going to focus on discipleship and making disciples, what that looks like. And we’re going to begin to talk about that, beginning that conversation.

So thinking about what Jesus said in Matthew 28, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples.*” And then of course He goes on with the rest of that statement. Just thinking about that, certainly that is one of the big missions of the church. And I think that includes what you said, Don—evangelism and sharing the gospel, getting the word out.

You know, when we think about making disciples, that’s where it starts. Somebody is getting saved, okay? Somebody is turning his or her life to Christ and it begins there.

So when you think about the term *disciple*, what is a disciple? And again, whatever you say here, just get it out there. There’s going to be a variety of different answers. When everybody speaks there is going to be a variety of different answers; just listen, all right? So what does it mean to be a disciple? And in order to clarify, what is a disciple and then what is a Christian disciple? So the first question is, what’s a disciple?

Don Maurer: A student.

Mike: A student; good.

Brave Man: A follower.

Mike: A follower. Is that what you said, a follower? Okay, a follower, yes.

Brave Man: I would also say a personal follower; I thought that was a good word.

Mike: A personal follower. All right; good.

Brave Man: Somebody who adheres to the views of the one he follows.

Mike: Somebody who adheres to the views of somebody he follows. So a student or a learner; again these are all directed very well. So let’s jump up to what a Christian disciple is.

Don Bishop: A follower of Christ.

Mike: Yes, all those same things, but Christ is the focus. All right, Christ is the focus. And so we think about what a Christian disciple is. First of all in Mark 1:15 Jesus says, “*Repent and believe the good news.*” That’s where it begins, right? To be a follower of Christ, repent and believe the good news. And we move forward from there. But it’s a student who willingly learns and follows, and who even submits himself to the person he’s following, to the one he’s following. And so I like that “personal follower.” I think that was a good line.

What I want to do here is to take a moment. Well first of all, think about your own life; I have it written on your page here. Think about your own life. What makes you a disciple. As we think about this term we can talk about it out there, but we bring it back to me and you—the proper language you and I—and so we bring it back to you and I. And we think about what it is about you. If somebody was looking at you, or as you look at you, what makes you a disciple? And so think of the things that we just talked about—a personal follower, a student, all those things. One who repents and believes the good news is where it starts; those who willingly learn and submit themselves. Is that you?

“Discipleship”

Because if that’s not you then we need to stop right there and think about that and rectify that situation, all right? And so it’s a willing follower of Jesus Christ. So think about that.

We’re going to talk about discipleship as well. But first I want to give you a handout. Matt, would you mind passing out some of these? And Don, you pass out some. How about if I move over here, and the sun won’t be directly in you guys’ eyes. I’m just going to kind of move around today. I like Harvey better, so—*(Laughter)*

Harvey Hinch: You picked the perfect spot there. *(Laughter)*

Mike: I’m moving over here so you’re looking in this direction. It’s the perfect spot for you but not the other guys. So as you look at definitions, I’ve given you a definition there of a Christian disciple: one who repents and believes the good news, putting his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; a student who willingly learns and submits himself to following a pathway, a course, a route, under the Lordship of Christ, and the teachings of those who have gone before him in Christ, who takes responsibility for his own spiritual journey, as the Holy Spirit enables him.

I have some comments down below there. Jesus said, *“Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”* In Acts we see that they were *“devoted to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread together and prayer”*, putting oneself under the authority of the Bible—and there’s a bunch of different Scriptural references there.

A new creation in Christ. As a disciple grows in his or her faith and knowledge they will begin to grasp their call and good theology. No one comes knowing. We all start out and go from death to life by the Holy Spirit of God, to maturity by the Holy Spirit of God. But again the basic definition is at the top there.

So before you look at your paper for the definition of discipleship, don’t look at your paper for a moment. So we think about what discipleship is. So a disciple is somebody who is a follower, a student, a learner, submitting himself.

So what is discipleship? Don’t look at your paper yet. Just let your mind think; I want you to dig in here; I want you to be mentally engaged. What would you say discipleship is?

Brave Man: Obedience.

Mike: Obedience, okay. Explain that just a little bit more. Obedience to what or who?

Brave Man: Well Jesus said, “Leave your nets and follow Me. Then they had to decide to leave their nets and follow Him. He didn’t make them do it.

Mike: That’s right.

Brave Man: He didn’t do it for them. They had to obey the command. It was a command; it wasn’t a suggestion.

Mike: Okay.

Brave Man: We don’t get suggestions either. *(Laughter)*

Mike: All right, thank you. Somebody else: making disciples, discipleship; what does that look like? What is that? Don?

Don Rimbey: Along with being obedient, it’s making yourself available, looking at opportunities when they come around—not just walking past someone but addressing him when he comes. You talk to your neighbor, you talk to your kids, whenever He sends them.

Mike: Yes; thank you. Somebody else. What is discipleship?

“Discipleship”

Jim: Efforts to influence others.

Mike: Efforts to influence others. Yes, efforts to influence others; good. Don?

Don Bishop: I would say that a Christian disciple is probably different from a general disciple. Back in the ancient days when they were more of a closed group, and they were special in their own—

Mike: What Don is saying here is that disciples back in the old days would have been a closed group. Think of following a rabbi or a specific teacher. It would be more of a closed group. And you would feel really special being a part of that closed group. But we’re talking about expanding this, right?

Don: Yes.

Mike: We’re talking about going out and bringing in more. Is there anything else you want to say there?

Don: Yes, that’s fine.

Mike: Okay.

Don: A Christian disciple is different because he’s supposed to go out and spread the word to more and more people.

Mike: Yeah. Thank you. A Christian disciple, yes?

Brave Man: Being a disciple is being a student, learning the precepts and the teachings of Christianity and Christ, and learning how to imitate Christ in all things.

Mike: Imitating Christ; yes. Thank you. Rich?

Rich Clark: As someone may possibly have poured himself into your life, since you’re a disciple you in turn learn to pour yourself into other people’s lives. It helps you to learn and grow in faith.

Mike: Yes; excellent. So people have poured into your life. We all come in learning and none of us come in knowing, right? Somebody has poured into your life. And obviously the Spirit of God draws people and pulls them in. But as we look at the people, the individuals who have had influence in your life, there have been many. I know that in my case there have been many different ones, from different scenarios and different people. My parents was where it started with me, and then my church of course, and my youth pastor, and different ones with me. And so I think about other people pouring into me. And discipleship is all about pouring into somebody, right?—helping somebody else to learn, maybe leading them to Christ and then pouring into their lives. So think about that.

Look down at your page. Okay, now I give you permission. *(Laughter)* What is discipleship? It’s the process of helping an individual move from relying on himself or others to a deepening relationship with God, including prayer, including Scripture study and example—taking what you have learned in following Jesus and passing it to others who will teach others, which is what our 2 Timothy passage talks about: pouring into others who will teach others.

How many generations are we removed from when Jesus stood here and walked the earth? And yet we’re here, aren’t we? It’s because others have poured into others who pour into others. And that’s why we are here, or we wouldn’t be sitting here talking about Jesus this morning and all this.

And then just some statements down below there: Presenting others fully mature in Christ—intentionally, strategically and consistently fulfilling #1., which was making

“Discipleship”

disciples. Win, build, equip, send. You think that’s somebody else’s job. That’s your job; that’s my job, okay? Win, build, equip, send—making disciples that will make disciples.

All right, so if we get on the same page with definitions, in today’s world terms are changing; even in the evangelical church terms are changing. But when we talk about making disciples, that’s why I’m putting definitions on paper, so that we understand and get onto the same page with what this looks like, making disciples.

When you think about making disciples, it’s me and you being intentional about pouring into other people’s lives. And for me for a lot of years I have three children. I can’t call them children anymore; they’re in their late 30s and 40s. So for me though, when my adult children were little, I poured into them; I disciple them for eighteen years. I literally had eighteen years until they were gone out of my house. And I needed to pour into them everything I had in me to pour into them the Christian faith, teaching them to learn to walk with Jesus. And so my wife and I were very intentional as we did that.

But as soon as they are grown up and gone, now I have eight grandchildren that I’m very intentional with at this point, doing the same thing. But that doesn’t mean that’s all that I’m involved in, or that it’s all you’re involved in. It needs to be very intentional as we see the Christian faith going forward, and to follow what we’ve been asked to do.

Jesus was pretty clear about that. He was pretty clear about *“Follow Me.”* And they followed Him. And He was pretty clear about *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me; therefore go.”* And so as we look at this whole discipleship picture, we think about what it involves.

What does discipleship involve? If you’re going to disciple somebody else, what I’m going to say here is that first of all you need to be a disciple in a relationship. I need to be in relationship with others, being held accountable. I need to be in relationship with a few people who are holding me accountable, making sure that I don’t get sidetracked. And we think about what it takes to be intentional, to be involved in discipleship.

So we see what Jesus did. If we look through the Gospel of Mark, I really like the Gospel of Mark for looking through how Jesus did this discipleship. And we see Him being really intentional throughout the Gospel of Mark.

I started with chapter 1:14-15 as we read, where He says, *“Repent and believe.”* And then right after that is *“Follow Me.”* And then we begin to see the pattern of the things he did in the Gospel of Mark. It’s a great study if you ever want to look at that, and really think about what He did.

He didn’t teach them in sterile classrooms. We’re a pretty sterile classroom here this morning. He didn’t teach His disciples in sterile classrooms. Once in a while they were at the temple and did things there. But most of what He did He did out in the streets, out in the fields, in crowds amongst sinners, amongst the world. He was out walking around and they were with Him. And that’s where He taught most of what He did with them.

And so we think that when I meet with somebody I have to go to the church to meet with him. No; wrong. We know that when we study the Gospel of Mark, and other places in Scripture, we can see what Jesus did to disciple His followers.

What does discipleship look like in 2022? Here we are; it’s 2022 and we’re more than halfway through it. What does discipleship look like in 2022? I’d like to actually talk about that for a moment and have feedback; I’d like to have you talk about that for a moment.

“Discipleship”

If we were doing it in a perfect world—and I’m not asking you what you are doing; (and maybe it is what you’re doing)—but what does discipleship look like, or what should it look like? Let’s talk about the perfect world scenario—not what we’re doing or what the church is doing. I’m not here to bad-mouth any churches or trash anybody. But I’m looking and saying what does it look like to move forward? So what would you say discipleship would look like in 2022? Think of how that would play out in your life or somebody else’s life. This is all hypothetical because I’m not saying that we have to be doing it at this moment. Anyway, what would it look like? What do you think?

Matt Garvic: I hate to say this, but almost at a base level it’s not denying or staying silent about who you are as a Christian, and that you believe in Jesus as the way. And it is too easy to do this in this world where Christians are looked upon almost as an antiquated concept. The opposition is strong, and it’s too easy to be silent rather than to announce your faith so others know what you believe.

Mike: Yes. It’s too easy to stay silent; it’s too easy to pull back and to just kind of live as a closet Christian. It’s pretty darn easy in today’s world because we are looked at like we’re nuts—antiquated, from the old days. So Yes, Harvey?

Harvey: I think it’s a time when everybody is identifying themselves by pronouns. We should be equally available to identify ourselves as believers in the one true God.

Mike: Yes. We are believers in the one true God. And it’s not about being a he, a she or an it, or a whatever; it’s about who we are. And I remember Bruce Bickel used to say that I’m a Christian in today’s world has lost its meaning. But to talk about being in Christ, to talk about being anchored in Christ, he talked about that kind of thing before, because the word Christian has even lost its meaning and has bad connotations in so many ways today. Somebody else: to be a disciple today, to think about you or me or any of us being disciples today, what would that involve in 2022? What does that look like?

Don Bishop: First of all you have to bring people to the knowledge of Christ. To make disciples they’ve got to become Christians.

Mike: Right.

Don: So evangelism is the first step. Unfortunately many see evangelism as having a meeting and having an evangelism day, and so forth. Evangelism should be a personal act—engaging the person, finding out what they’re about, and then teaching what the Bible says about them, and then from there teaching them about the precepts of Jesus Christ, and then having them grow up into Christ.

Mike: So I’m going to throw a wrench in the monkey works here. So when you’re saying evangelism is bringing people to Christ, that’s a job for all of us, right? It’s not just taking them to a meeting and saying, “Here, get saved.” And there’s nothing wrong with that, taking them to a good meeting; nothing wrong with that. That’s a means where some people come at last to Christ. But then you said to begin teaching them God’s word. What would that look like in your mind?—I’m just throwing it out there. Are you talking about bringing them to a Bible study? Are you talking about taking them to church on Sunday mornings to go ahead and learn? What are you thinking?

Don: Well that would be part of it. But being personally involved with them would be teaching them what a Christian looks like, not to point necessarily to yourself because we’re all sinners, but pointing to Christ, constantly teaching them the word of God—setting examples for them, teaching them to live as Christians in the world today.

“Discipleship”

Mike: So are you talking about—

Don: We don’t teach people how to live as Christians. That’s part of our society’s downfall. We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Evangelism today is more like “Believe in Christ and die”; that’s it. We have to learn how to be Christians. We have to learn how to live a righteous life in the sense of apologetics. We’re living in a very nasty world that’s an enemy of Christ. We need to learn how to answer them.

Mike: Yeah.

Don: With the right answers, to be sure.

Mike: Helping them to learn the answers, which is by studying the truth.

Don: There are so many people who call themselves Christians today who just believe what’s going on.

Mike: Hey, Don Maurer, you had your hand up.

Don Maurer: Don kind of stole my thunder.

Don Bishop: I’m sorry.

Don Maurer: That’s okay.

Mike: No, you’re not. (*Laughter*)

Don Maurer: It’s very easy, as Don said, (and sometimes it isn’t easy), to bring someone to a Bible study or a church service. By the grace of God maybe that person is saved. But afterwards Jesus said that the whole job is to make disciples. Sometimes it’s very hard to stick with a person, to keep with them day in and day out.

Mike: Why do you think it’s hard to keep with a person day in and day out, Don?

Don: I can speak for myself; a lot of times I’m selfish. I have other things to do; I have my own agenda. Sometimes with certain people it’s hard because of their personalities to really get along with them, or whatever. Let’s face it: it’s hard work. It’s hard work to engage with someone with a Bible study or apologetics or praying with someone on a regular basis.

Mike: Okay, good. Thank you very much. Anybody else? What does discipleship look like in 2022? Don? The third Don in a row here; okay. (*Laughter*) Don, Don, my brother Don, yeah!

Don Rimbey: My purpose is to live a life that is worthy as an example. God says they should see the light that we are. So we should live our lives that way to be a witness—not just sharing the gospel but in day-to-day living—not cheating on your taxes, not talking about your neighbors, all those little subtleties. We as Christians claim to be righteous. Not that I cheat on my taxes.

Mike: Did you hear that? (*Laughter*) Yes, living the life as an example. All right, somebody else. Harvey?

Harvey: Along those lines, we’re now in the age where the news is 24/7 on dozens of channels. And everybody is focused on that to some extent. There are a lot of people who are companions in thinking the country has gone down, and all this. And there’s an opportunity for us to be that hope, to share that hope, in season and out of season. So these times look dark, but we have a hope that extends well beyond this time. And we can share that hope and get people to think about it. In fact the stock market goes up and it goes down. It goes down and it picks up. And in the end it doesn’t matter because you can’t take it with you. We focus on eternity and show them the hope that we have, and like Don says, being an example of how to do that. And that comes from not complaining

“Discipleship”

as much, sharing the lives we see happening with others, the ones who have struggles and joys on a daily basis with everybody.

Mike: Yes. Good, thank you. Yes?

Brave Man: I think it’s much harder to take seriously, unless we get to know with relationships, because, for instance, a lot of people just turn on their computers, or something like that. I work for a company where until just recently one guy hadn’t been to work for two years; he’s been working from home without people there. And without a personal connection it’s very hard to do anything. The medium might put you into a sound bite or a short tweet or something like that. And you know, we definitely don’t want to be a bad example. But unfortunately you hear of good examples a lot of people don’t see, but you don’t fit. And that’s not very visible; they assume that you do something else. When they don’t see you, it’s less than praiseworthy. So it takes an intimate relationship. And it’s not something that really comes naturally; you have to work at it.

Mike: So I’m hearing you say that it’s kind of cultural. In our culture we’re not geared towards those relationships. People are working from home and separated in all sorts of ways. We’re separated even culturally, and we’re taught to be tough and to be on your own and independent. We’re taught all kinds of things that are counter to what we’re talking about here.

Brave Man: Yes. You can go to the grocery store and talk to the cashier and say, “May I check out?”, and it’s over.

Mike: Yeah. Chris?

Chris: Mike, you said earlier that it’s intentional. And along those same lines we have to be intentional about getting things accomplished. I think for me that a lot of times when I think personally about my personal discipline and how my walk is going, I rarely think about my discipling others. And I think that’s something, at my house at least, that has to be intentional. It’s not just going to suddenly happen; we have to be intentional about it.

Mike: Yes, intentionality. And so going back to what somebody said a long time ago:

“*Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation.*” Somebody said that a long time ago; I think his name was Paul. We read that a little bit ago. But we think about being a new creation, new creatures in Christ Jesus. “*The old is gone; the new has come.*” The old man is dead and the new man has life. We pass from death to life. We see all these terms in Scripture all over the place. We’re new; we’re made new. We’re redeemed; we’ve been bought; we’ve been set apart; we’re ambassadors for Christ. I could keep going with things like that.

But as we look at that, that means that when we say that the old man has gone and the new man has come, those are priorities. That’s intentionality; being followers of Christ is our new priority. All of a sudden, when Jesus says, “Come follow me,” that’s what we’re doing; that’s the direction where we’re headed—and what all of that entails—not just kind of one foot here and one foot over here. But what does that intentionality look like in 2022?

I keep saying that because we immediately read the Scriptures and we think, well, that was back then and this is now. We have a disconnect, especially if we’ve been Christians

“Discipleship”

for a while. We begin to have a disconnect. I’ve done this; I’ve done that; and I’m good—that kind of an idea. Yes; go ahead.

Brave Man: From a really practical standpoint, what does it look like whenever we leave this building today?

Mike: Yeah.

Brave Man: With everything we said—opportunity, intentionality, so Moses went into the presence of God. And what happened was that he had to put a veil over his face because he shone. I suspect that Jesus had a smile on His face more often than He didn’t. You know, it would have been hard living with the disciples all day long, every day. I don’t think they would have wanted to be with me that long.

Mike: He probably shook His head and thought, “Oh!” *(Laughter)*

Brave Man: But He probably smiled at the same time, knowing “I’m not one of these guys.” And the world, especially seeing our actions at the grocery store—looking up and talking to the cashier—I think our default position is a new creation. I don’t mean our default position is goofy, but it may be even goofy to the point of the guy is always smiling. What does he have to smile about? The world is going to hell’ the country is going to hell.

Yes, it actually is. But my citizenship and yours is in heaven. We are the ones who win. What do we have to not be smiling about? We have good news to share. “What are you so happy about?” Well I can tell you. And there’s the intentionality; it’s almost annoying that you’re so positive. “What do you have to be positive about?”

“Well, my God can overcome anything.”

“How can you smile?”

“Because we have good news.” I think that should be our actual physical reflection of what’s going on in us spiritually, such that it does make the world wonder. It does open doors for opportunities to say, “I know what the hope is that lives in me. It happens when I’m in Christ Jesus.” *(Unclear)* That’s what it’s all about.

Mike: Yes. Go ahead, Matt.

Matt Kail: I’ve been thinking about this and I’ve held off to this point. But you know, our identity is anchored in Christ. People identify themselves as being sports fans—Penguin fans or Steeler fans. I’ve been to funerals where all the memorabilia is of the Steelers. And then that certain person formed an identity. And then I’ve even been in a conversation with a person like that. We’d talk about who would be getting the draft pick, and what plays they should run, and who will be the quarterback?

And then you say, “Well what about?” And then you ask them a question about Scripture, and all of a sudden their faces go blank; they’re not interested in that at all. And then comes the question: Where do we find our identity? Is it in the Steelers, or is it in Jesus Christ? Is it in political affiliations or in Jesus Christ? It’s a strange thing and I battle with it because I know one side is wrong. But then it’s so challenging that as Christians we want to live out the truth where the truth is found, and to call out lies like that. So I think that being a disciple is intentionally finding our identity in Christ.

Mike: Yes. Where is our hope?

Matt: Not in the Steelers!

Mike: Right.

Matt: This year I hope they don’t do well. *(Laughter)*

“Discipleship”

Brave Man: Isn't it amazing how all of society rises and falls on those things. We see just how much it affects us. It could be something as simple as smiling Monday morning after the Steelers lost when everybody else in the office is grumpy about it. “Well, I don't know; my team wins.”

Mike: Yeah. So we've got to wrap up. But just a couple thoughts as we wrap up. When you think about making disciples, first of all are you a disciple? Are you a follower of Christ? That's #1.

#2 is if you're a follower of Christ, you are challenged to make other followers of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 4 Paul literally says, *“Imitate me as I imitate Christ.”* There's a whole lot that you read in all of Chapter 4, and you'll finally get to that verse. And you'll see what he's talking about and what that looks like. He says, *“Imitate me.”*

And so are you willing to say to anybody, “Imitate me?” Are you willing to build a relationship with somebody to maybe lead them to Christ, or maybe with somebody who has already come to Christ like we've talked about, and he's floundering because he's come to Christ and they say, “Okay, go to church.”

“Okay, I'm doing that. Now what do I do?” And you walk alongside him and say, “Hey, let's talk.” And you know, when you think about a relationship, Jesus built relationships, right? He spent time; He spent His priority making disciples. His priority was doing that. And so when you think about that, if that is even a little bit of a priority in your life, it takes relationships.

And you know, you can call somebody and meet somebody and say, “Hey, meet me at Eat 'n' Park. Let's talk. Think about what I just said.”

But if you say, “Meet me at my house; I'll cook you breakfast,” what's the difference in that relationship? You bring somebody to your home, okay? What's the difference whenever somebody says to you, “Hey, come on over to my house and we'll have breakfast. Come on over to my house and we'll have coffee and hang out for a little bit?” You're going to somebody's house; it's kind of cultural, okay? You're going to somebody's house; it's about a relationship. It's not just meeting somebody out there; you're bringing them into your domain.

I'm stirring your thoughts a little bit. My goal today is to stir your thoughts. What does discipleship look like? What does making disciples look like in 2022?

So as I wrap up, I go to church here at Christ Church at Grove Farm. Right now we're in a sermon series called “Follow Me”; it started last week. It's about following Jesus. And this coming Tuesday (August 16, 2022), Cliff Cartwright and myself and a couple of others are starting a training session on this very point: what we need to make disciples in 2022. And it's going to be three one-and-a-half-hour classes; obviously in 45 minutes I can't do a whole lot. But it will whet your appetite a little bit for thinking about these things, because at Christ Church at Grove Farm the decision has been made at the top and is coming down through that we are going to be a church that makes disciples. We're going to be a church that in three or four years is going to have a culture of making disciples and being disciples. When you come through the door we'll be stressing the fact the fact that this is a different place, and it's about the people. It's about reaching out; it's about being disciples and making disciples, and that's happening right here.

We begin to think about what this means. And so we think about the goals. If I'm going to disciple somebody, what's the goal? What am I going to accomplish in a year?

“Discipleship”

When will I cut them loose to go and make other disciples and help them to go and do that? Making disciples that make disciples: how does this all work in 2022?

And so I want to challenge you to really begin to think about that, and to really begin to look at the whole picture of what we’re called to do. I know we haven’t been trained that way. I know that in general the church for a lot of years has been about wanting to start people here. We’ll have Bible studies; we’ll have Sunday school. It hasn’t been about this thing that we’re talking about here: Jesus walking among the disciples and training them, and then telling us to do the same. We’re not seeing a whole lot of that in the church in general going on practically.

And so this is just a challenge. Whether you agree exactly with what I said or not, it’s a starting point. We have to get on the same page, okay? If everybody has their own definitions it doesn’t work too well that way. We have to get a solid definition; we have to have a solid direction, solid goals. Let’s be intentional.

All right. So let’s pray. Father, thank You so much for this time we have to be together. Thank You, Lord, for what You are doing in our midst. Lord, as we talk about these things I know that as I open up my heart that we don’t want to think this way because it means change for us. It means that we can’t be complacent or comfortable and just sit back, that it’s not about having events and doing all kinds of stuff. It’s about being intentional and changing the priorities of our lives as we begin to think about these things and do these things. And so Lord, my prayer is very simple. Lord, stir our hearts, that we would be the men You call us to be, as we are new creations in Christ Jesus. Stir our passions, that You would raise us up to be men walking in the power of the Spirit of God, being a light to the world, being a very direct connection with other people to You, that we might be humbled by who You are and humbled by what You call us to do. And Lord, even as Jesus spent time in solitude in prayer, that we might do the same, that we might walk in Christ. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. (*Applause*)