

Theme: Jesus is calling a community of disciples/followers/apprentices to learn from His teachings, be transformed to have His character, and imitate His practices and life rhythms.

## I. Intro - The Meaning of 'Scan'

- A. Ask for definitions of 'scan' - read carefully; glance over cursorily; exact reproduction
- B. This one word has had many meanings!
- C. I fear the same has happened with disciple! What did it mean?

## II. Follow Me!

- A. Last week: the King summons followers/disciples  
"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. <sup>20</sup> Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. Mark 1:17-20
  - 1. Both sets of brothers had the same call & response
  - 2. The same three items - call, leave, follow
  - 3. The word disciple is not used here, but it is the idea behind the call to "follow", and they will be referred to as Jesus' disciples throughout the Gospel.
  - 4. Discipleship is a key theme in Mark's Gospel; some form of the word "disciple" occurs 59x in the Gospel!
- B. We need a full-orbed, proper understanding of discipleship
  - 1. The word 'disciple' has been watered down and changed over many centuries

- 2. For some, it simply means "Christian"
- 3. For others it means "super Christian" - stage 2 for followers of Jesus
- 4. For this reason, we need to supplement the term 'disciple' with other words that help us capture the essence of what the New Testament means by 'disciple'
- 5. I suggest we think of at least three terms together - disciples, followers, apprentices of Jesus

## III. Disciples, Followers, Apprentices of the Master

- A. Disciples/followers/apprentices learn from the teaching of the Master  
"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." Mark 1:17
  - 1. Jesus would teach them how to fish for people
  - 2. A master taught their disciples, passing along information so that they would know the truth
  - 3. This is why the word 'disciple' means 'learner'
  - 4. To learn something, including a new skill, requires that we learn new information.
  - 5. In Jewish contexts, this centered on the master teaching his disciples how to understand Torah.
  - 6. This was referred to as the masters 'yoke'  
"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

- a. Come to Me: become a disciple, follower, apprentice
- b. Take My yoke - learn from Me
- c. My yoke is not heavy or hard - it gives freedom!

7. Disciples/followers/apprentices of Jesus learn by being immersed in the Word of God, especially as it is interpreted by Jesus and His apostles in the New Testament.

8. One can not be a disciple/follower/apprentice of Jesus apart from regularly hearing, reading, studying, and meditating upon the Word of God.

#### B. Disciples/followers/apprentices learn from the character of the Master

“Come, **follow me**,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and **followed him**... <sup>20</sup> Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and **followed him**. Mark 1:17–18, 20

1. Disciples did not just occasionally hear teachings; they actually followed and lived with their masters.
2. This is because they were more than just students - they were followers.
3. They were not just trying to gather factual knowledge from the master; they were trying to become like their master.

A **student** is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be **like his teacher**. Luke 6:40

- a. ‘student’ is the word ‘disciple’ (μαθητής)
- b. A fully trained disciple does not just know what the teacher knows; he becomes like the teacher.

4. This is why Jesus wanted against not only the teachings but the actions and character of false teachers.

As he taught, Jesus said, “Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup>and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. <sup>40</sup>They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely.” Mark 12:38–40

- a. Here he is not criticizing their words, but rather their actions and character.
- b. This is why the NT talks so much about the character requirements to be a leader in the church.
- c. So always be careful of the character of those who you listen to - you are getting more than just information!

5. Disciples/followers/apprentices of Jesus learn not only His words but His character, and they are allowing the Spirit to root out sin and form their character to be like Jesus.

#### C. Disciples/followers/apprentices learn from the practices and life rhythms of the Master

“Come, **follow me**,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and **followed him**. Mark 1:17–18 (also verse 20)

1. Because disciples did not merely hear their masters, but rather followed and lived with them, they observed the practices and life rhythms of their master.
2. The disciples observed Jesus day and night and saw the practices that shaped and formed Him.

3. This included participating in his life rhythms - work, rest, feasting, fasting, Sabbath, worship, and prayer.

4. This is essential because the goal is to imitate the Master until the disciple becomes like the master.

Therefore I urge you to **imitate** me. 1 Corinth. 4:16

You became **imitators** of us and of the Lord... 1 Thessalonians 1:6

We do not want you to become lazy, but to **imitate** those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. Hebrews 6:12

- a. This is more than 'learn information from me'!
- b. This is a call to mimic the teacher and others as they mimic Jesus!
- c. This is like a child trying to imitate their parent in their words, mannerisms, and actions.

5. To mimic means to learn to think like the master, to have your character shaped to be like the master, but also to try to do the same practices and develop the same life rhythm as the master.

6. Our culture often downplays rituals, practices, and life rhythms, but they powerfully form our souls, minds, and character.

7. This means if we want to be disciples we must do the same practices and life rhythms as we see in Jesus' life - Word, prayer, Sabbath, gathering each week for worship, etc.

D. Disciples/followers/apprentices learn from the Master in community

At once **they** left their nets and followed him...<sup>20</sup> Without delay he called **them**, and **they** left **their** father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. Mark 1:18, 20

1. Note that Jesus called them in pairs, not alone
2. This is always the pattern in the Gospels - discipleship is a community affair, not a private one.
3. There are virtually no one-on-one interactions between Jesus and a single disciple in the Gospels.
4. We are disciples/followers/apprentices - the plural is essential!
5. In our culture of hyper-individualism, many Christians have a "me and Jesus" mentality but this is utterly foreign to the concept of discipleship in the New Testament.
6. The only way to be a disciple/follower/apprentice of Jesus is to be an active, vibrant part of the local church of disciples/followers/apprentices. Discipleship does not happen apart from community.

## V. Applying the Word

- A. Do I have a full-orbed understanding of what it means to be disciples/followers/apprentices of Jesus?
1. 'Disciple' does not refer to a cultural Christian, nor to a super-Christian. It is a description of what a true follower of Jesus is like.
  2. In the New Testament disciples/followers/apprentices of Jesus:
    - a. learn from the teaching of the Master
    - b. learn from the character of the Master
    - c. learn from the practices & life rhythms of the Master
    - d. learn from the Master in community
  3. When I consider this list, what part of my life as a disciple/follower/apprentice of Jesus needs to be strengthened?
    - a. Is my mind more shaped by the world or the Master?
    - b. Is my character becoming more like Jesus?
    - c. Do my daily/weekly practices and life rhythms look like those of Jesus?
    - d. Am I an active, vibrant part of the local church - loving/worshipping, connecting, serving, and reaching out to the lost?
  4. Let the Master reveal what area you need to learn in the days, weeks, and months ahead as we journey with Jesus in the Gospel of Mark!

## B. The Table of the Master

1. Let us come to take the yoke of our Master here at His Table
2. Let us come to receive fresh grace, strength, and encouragement from our Master!

### Disciples, Followers, Apprentices of the Master

Mark 1:16-20  
October 30, 2022  
Communion  
2 Peter 3:18

Teaching keywords: Discipleship; character; means of grace; sabbath and rest; community

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and forever! Go forth, filled with the blessings of being His disciple, and be a blessing. Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. <sup>20</sup> Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. Mark 1:16–20