

- I. My Notes ... WWC message 8/30 (Labor Day Weekend)
- II. Series: A Disciples Life – Our Daily Journey
 - Title: Overview
 - Text: Acts 1
 - Quote: All of God's people are ordinary people who have been made extraordinary by the purpose he has given them. Oswald Chambers (Teacher, Writer)
- III. Introduction
 - Following the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) is a big task. One to be understood and lived out to the best of our ability. It's a call that we get to grow into and then duplicate in our lives. Be a disciple that makes disciples ... most relegate this to a church or the pastor. This leads to a lack of discipleship. Let's answer the first question – what does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus? Biblical discipleship is a lifelong journey that begins with a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord. It is seen in the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, active participation (fellowship ... koinonia) in community, sacrificial service, and the heart to duplicate what you have learned. It is both relational and missional, rooted in Scripture and guided by Jesus' example and commands. Living as a disciple means embodying Christ's teachings daily and sharing the faith with others, growing in likeness of Him and being an example of the grace and mercy that has touched your life.
 - Now, I've said a mouthful and probably already overwhelmed some of you. It's hard to be a disciple-maker when there are so many problems going on in daily life that are difficult to deal with, right? There can be many reasons that being a disciple maker can be a challenge, let me propose a couple of them. The first is probably the biggest reason why this doesn't take place like it should ... Believers haven't been taught to be disciples. They have been taught to be "attenders" ... Many believers are told that they need to be "in church" or involved in a Bible Study. Discipleship has been reduced to a program (in church), not a relational experience and growth process that carries one through the challenges each day brings. Another reason is the hectic pace we

live at today. There is a lot of truth to the line that Brooks Hatlen spoke in the Shawshank Redemption (1994) ... “The world went and got itself into a big **** hurry” ... For many people today, this is a statement of fact. We rush to everything, including relationships. There doesn’t seem to be enough time. Something must give and for some it is their growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord.

- Jesus gave us the roadmap to follow. It was a process that taught those He called how He lived and then Jesus encouraged them to follow His example. In Matthew 4 Jesus called His first Disciples. After His time in the wilderness dealing with the temptations Satan, Jesus began to share the message of repentance and the Kingdom of God. *“17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, **“Change your hearts and lives, because the kingdom of heaven is near.”***

*18 As Jesus was walking by Lake Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake because they were fishermen. 19 Jesus said, **“Come follow me, and I will make you fish for people.”** 20 So Simon and Andrew immediately left their nets and followed him.” (Mathew 4:17-20 NCV).* While the message was important and impactful, it was the calling of Disciples that brought life change. Jesus’ calling of Simon and Andrew was the beginning of building a community that was centered on Jesus and His teachings. It was from this moment that the Church came into existence.

- We are about to enter a journey through the book of Acts. Many Bibles have it titles The Acts of the Apostles. That seems to focus on the Apostles. Maybe a better title would be The Acts of God and the Holy Spirit Through Those Who Believed. Just a thought. The book of Acts is a journey into daily discipleship of those who were part of the ministry team of Jesus and those who were impacted by the truth of the Gospel message. It should be an open-ended, continuous story.

IV. Background

- The author of this book is God. It was written by Luke; some have called him “The Evangelist Luke” ... Not a lot is known about this writer of 25% of the New Testament. But let’s take a minute and see what we can discover about him.
- I think that Luke is someone who “got it” ... not only was he a believer that Jesus was the Messiah, but he was someone who made other disciples. Think about this for a moment – Luke didn’t preach a sermon, perform a miracle, nor was he part of the original 12 Disciples. But his fingerprints are all over the New Testament.
- Luke was known as a physician (see Colossians 4:14). He was a doctor. That speaks to his discipline and intelligence. He wasn’t one to be easily swayed or fooled. This also tells us something else. He was caring and compassionate. Being a doctor involved ministering to the needs of people when they were in difficult circumstances. It appears that Luke was known for this as Paul referred to Luke as a “beloved Physician.”
- I think that part of Luke being a disciple that makes disciples was his writings. In both the Gospel of Luke and Acts, Luke was writing to Theophilus. Now Luke was a Gentile (non-Jewish person), writing to another Gentile, about what he had found out about Jesus being the Messiah (Luke 1:1-4). This was someone who had been taught the truth of the Gospel message writing it down for another person so that they could understand and believe. “... 3 *it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; 4 so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.*” (Luke 1:3-4 NASB). Luke was disciplined about investigating the things he had heard and seen. He asked a lot of questions and he recorded the truth. Luke showed us what it meant to invest in helping another find the truth.
- It wasn’t about preaching with Luke; he didn’t seek the spotlight. It was about the message of grace and truth and building relationships with others. Luke was a faithful servant – he accompanied Paul on at least 2 of his missionary journeys and was with Paul at other times. The writings of Luke preserved eyewitness accounts of Jesus and His ministry for others to read about. His writings traced the ministry of Jesus from its beginnings in Galilee to becoming a worldwide mission teaching all people about the love and grace of our Lord.

What I am telling you is that Luke used his God given abilities to tell others about Jesus – he lived his faith in real ways, doing real ministry.

- Being a Disciple – an apprentice, a learner – is an investment of time and self. Becoming a Disciple maker is taking that investment to the next level. It's what Luke did. He gave us another example to follow.

V. Beginnings

- **Acts 1:1-3 NASB**

1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. 3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

- I use a multitude of Bible translations in my studies and research. Language (especially English) is such a funny thing. Different words, at different times, in different areas, hold different meanings. For me, reading several different translations helps me gain a deeper understanding. Over the last several years, my go to translation has been the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) – it's readability and accuracy covers most of the bases. The most accurate word for word translation has been the New American Standard Bible (NASB). It is the translation I have used the longest. I mentioned this because I am going to be using the NASB for much of the teaching through this series.
- Luke has built a bridge for us to follow. By volume he wrote more of the NT than anyone. Luke's Gospel gives us a detailed account of the life and ministry of Jesus. Luke emphasizes the compassion and mercy that Jesus shows to those who were looked at as "less than" and in great need. This Gospel gives us parables and experiences that aren't recorded anywhere else. It is obvious that Luke went to great lengths to discover the whole story of Jesus. Now, in Acts, Luke is going to detail for us the early days of The Way (the Church). Luke's writings give us bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles. It shows us the actions and challenges of Discipleship.

- Many make a lot of the beginning of this letter by Luke to Theophilus. I am going to share a brief thought from my viewpoint. Both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts were written in the 60-64 CE (AD) timeframe. There is controversy over which letter was written first. Because I know the way I do things, is it possible that both accounts were written at the same time? My point is this shouldn't be a sticking point. When I am studying and writing a sermon or a paper and another thought comes to mind, I step back and jot down those things. Luke was interviewing those who had encounters or walked with Jesus. He gathered information so he could understand and then tell others. During this time, the Church was exploding – it was growing exponentially. And Luke was serving and helping. He was being a Disciple that was intent on telling others what he had found out.

VI. The Bridge

- Luke affirms the Resurrection of Jesus. He is bringing together his other letter to Theophilus with this one. Luke went to great lengths in the other letter to show both the humanity and deity of Jesus. He was the Messiah; He was a real man. It makes me think that there were already false teachings about who Jesus was that were becoming prevalent.
- It's no different today. Moral relativism, Universalism, and different doctrines have crept into the Christian faith today. We have drifted from honoring God by our faith and reflecting Jesus' teachings to the world around us.
- Luke is kicking out the crutches. The church began by sitting at the feet of Jesus, by listening and learning. By watching what He did and how He did it. And then doing those things.
- To reinforce the message and the purpose – pointing others to the Kingdom of God – Luke tells us that Jesus spoke to many people, including His Disciples, for 40 days after His Resurrection.

VII. It's About to Get Real

- **Acts 1:4-5 NASB**

4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from

Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

- We know that Jesus was about to be taken up to Heaven. Those Jesus was speaking to didn't know what was next. What John the Baptist had spoke of was about to come to pass. (see Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). They were being told to remain together and to wait.
- Too often, we rush to what's next. Either as a way to deal with uncertainty or to prove our value and worth. The Gospel message is a message about relationships. It brings us back to the bond that God intended from the beginning.
- Waiting is hard. Dealing with the unknown is a challenge that most don't do good at facing. Being a Disciple is about trust and perseverance. When things are going easy and make sense, it isn't much of a challenge. Doubts, fears, confusion, hurt all contribute to getting in the way of our focus on Jesus. Prayers that go unanswered, problems that don't seem to have a solution, hurts that come out of nowhere – real problems, real life ... How do you wait in those moments?
- We need presence and power in our lives. Jesus is telling His followers how it will happen. In unity, by remembering the words of Jesus, with trust and obedience.

VIII. Last Words

- The life of a Disciple starts with listening and learning. It is trust lived out. Anticipation, waiting, not action is the mode. Luke began his letter this way. Jesus is alive. The Kingdom of God is something everyone should hear about. And the Spirit is coming, to help and guide, to empower. But before the disciples rush to the next thing, they're told to wait. Not passively—but prayerfully, expectantly, obediently. That's the rhythm of daily discipleship: we don't rush ahead of God, but we don't sit still either. We wait with purpose, and we live with power.
So today, as we step into this journey through Acts, let's remember: the same Spirit that Jesus promised, the same Spirit that appeared over those first disciples' dwells in and empowers us. The same Jesus who taught, healed, and

commissioned them is still at work in us. And the same mission—to be His witnesses—is still ours.

- Let's Pray
- Grace First, Grace Always