

Missions Week: Making Disciples Like Jesus, Luke 5, 4/2/17

When **George Leile** first was converted to Christianity he was a slave in Georgia in the late 1700's. Born into a slave family. George had little hope of doing anything extraordinary in his life, let alone to be the first missionary to be sent out from US. Late 1700's Lord called him to Jamaica to preach the Gospel. It is said of him, *"This unknown hero without formal education who learned to read the Bible and become a preacher and missionary shared the gospel with thousands, baptized hundreds and disciplined many who became preachers, missionaries and world leaders. This from a slave."*

The Holy Spirit uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Do you believe that? Some of you may read through the book of Acts and hear these amazing stories, or look at Rio Sibriani or one of our missionaries and have a total disconnect because it is hard for you to imagine that God could use you to have the kind of impact that you read about or hear about. Anybody feel that way? You might be a Christian, but you'd say you are kind of an ordinary Christian, not a super-Christian. A pastor or a missionary... God's mission is for those people but not me. Maybe you hear the mission of **BVBC- to introduce people to Christ and help them follow him** as the mission of Pastor Nate, the staff, and the few... but not YOUR mission.

Take out a piece of paper and write down the answer to this question- **What has been a barrier in your life to being more involved in the Mission of BVBC?**

-Competence: "I don't have what it takes": This is the Moses excuses...I'm too old, too young, too feeble, too busy, I'm not good with words, too introverted...I don't have the skills... don't know enough about the Bible...I'm not good enough.

If God can use 80 year old runaway Moses, if he can use the ex-Christian killer Saul, Quadriplegic Joni Eerickson Tada, if he can use an uneducated slave like George Liele, and a punk from a nowhere town like me... God can use you! God is much more interested in your availability than he is your ability.

Second kind of barrier-

-Calling- "God didn't call me to missions." I've heard people say, "The disciples, apostles, Missionaries, evangelists, pastors- those are the called people." Nate- that's why we hired you, that's why we support these missionaries." In essence when we say this, we are excusing ourselves from the Great Commission.

Matthew 28:18-20

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.

But the disciples were not the only ones on that mountain...You know who else was on that mountain receiving this commission? Verse 20- I am with you always even to the end of the age. Who are the disciples at the end age? Certainly not the disciples! He's talking to us! We are the disciples who are called to make disciples. As Chuck Swindoll once said- "We must not treat the Great Commission like a Great Suggestion."

So what does that look like? For many our minds immediately go to thinking about sitting on an airplane preparing to land in some distant land, or a mud hut somewhere eating strange food...bugs or something, or street preaching. And maybe it will be something that radically unfamiliar and out of context to your life, but whether God will one day want to send you out of the country was not the immediate point of the great commission. In Acts 1:8, another version of the commission Jesus says that they would start in Jerusalem (their own context), Judea and Samaria and then to the end of the earth. It's living a lifestyle on mission wherever God has you now or sends you.

And there's no better person to show us where to go and how to live a lifestyle on mission than Jesus. Turn with me to Luke 5. What I want to do from this one chapter is give us just a brief glimpse into where Jesus went to make disciples and see what we can learn from his example.

We see a consistent pattern in the Gospels that Jesus didn't only go to the synagogues and "holy" places- he spent much of his time among ordinary people where they lived and worked and experienced life...In other words using sports imagery, Jesus spent much of his time on their turf

In the Workplace

We see an example of this when Jesus called Peter, James and John- the fishermen. Luke 5:1-11

Summarize story- Jesus goes out for a catch of fish with some fishermen. Jesus doesn't wait for these men to come into the synagogue. He doesn't wait for them to come onto his "religious" turf. He goes to their turf. They understood nets, and hooks, and boats, and water.... They knew how to rightly divide a fish not the Bible. Jesus goes to them, he spends time with them on the boat and nets, getting wet, getting fish guts on him, he spends time in their world.

What do we learn from Jesus' example? Joining God's mission means be willing to spend time on the "their turf", not just inside the church, not just in small groups... And here's the wonderful news- for many of us we have that opportunity every day! Where is the "turf" of those who don't know Christ? Your workplace, your gym, your school, your Brew Ha Ha, your hair salon! I've told you about a friend of mine who would always say I'm a mortgage broker, but that's just my cover. Really I'm Christ's ambassador for people when they are making big decisions.

Doctor in the medical field- not just a doctor but Christ's ambassador so that people see what God looks like when he helps hurting people.

Teacher- not just a teacher but Christ's ambassador so that people see God's love and care for every child, even those that others forget.

Athlete- not just an athlete but Christ's ambassador so that people see God get the glory in victory and defeat.

Business- Not just running a business but Christ's ambassador so that people see God's character, trustworthiness, work ethic and desire to help human flourishing.

"But I'm retired"- If you are a Golfer, shuffle boarder, Quilting club...

Ex: Businesswoman transaction

If you see yourself as Christ's ambassador, and you pray for opportunities, they will come and then you will open your mouth and share your faith. You are the most likely person that God will use to reach your coworkers.... Think about that. I'm not the most likely person, neither is Rio, not a street preacher... YOU!

Not only did Jesus spend time in the places where people lived and worked, but **Jesus spent time on the turf of the outsiders**... the sick, the poor, the religious outsiders, the despised and rejected.

Luke 5:12-14

While walking streets of the city he meets one such outsider, a man full of leprosy. This man was an untouchable. People would avoid him, walk around him, tried not to look at him, who knows how long it had been since this man had felt the embrace of another human being... and it says quite intentionally in v.13 what does Jesus do?

Luke 5:13

And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, making him clean.

Jesus could have healed him without embrace. But his hand was communicating his love for such an outsider as him. Jesus spent time loving and caring for those the world rejected and left behind.

Luke 5:27-32

Jesus then goes onto the turf of the most unlikely outsider of all...the despised tax collector, Matthew. And strikes up a conversation with him. The tax collectors were known by the religious insiders as traitors of the Jewish people because they worked for Rome, even though they were Jewish and cheated their own people.

Matthew was not a good guy. Like someone who would run a strip club...

Matthew is so shocked, so honored that someone like Jesus would care about him and call him as a disciple, he drops everything and follows Jesus and he throws this giant party at his house and invites all his tax collector buddies to meet Jesus. And the religious elite are horrified. They can't believe a rabbi like Jesus would be spending time with such sinful, horrible people.

Luke 5:31-32

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

If Jesus was walking the earth today, where do you think he would be? Do you think he would be hanging out in the church the whole time? Do you think he'd only hang out with the Christians? I think he would be among the outsiders... I think he would be in the difficult parts of the city with the disadvantaged, forgotten... I think he might be at a crack house talking to addicts, or in the jails ministering to convicts. He would be crossing ethnic barriers... I think he would be downstairs on Tuesday nights at ESL, I think he would be eating Shwarma and Tabbouleh with Syrian refugees. I think he would be in nursing homes and children's hospitals with the lonely and sick.

Ex: Pretty n' Polished- Painting nails for ladies in the Nursing home.

In Summary:

If you are a disciple, a Christ follower, you have been called to Christ's Great Commission of making disciples of all people groups. And just like George Liele, God calls ordinary people to do extraordinary things. He wants to use you to reach your workplace or school or football team. He wants to use you to reveal the love of God to the sick, poor, lonely, criminals, immigrants...

So what will you do to join God's mission today? Our vision for Brandywine is not to be a holy huddle and just hold on to what we have... The church that does not evangelize will fossilize. And the mark of a great church is not its seating capacity but its sending capacity. What I don't want to happen is that you leave with your head down... oh man, I don't make disciples....but instead to say wow, you are saying that I can be used to make disciples? You mean that the barriers that I wrote down or thought about don't limit me from being part of God's mission? That's awesome! While it doesn't make it easy- friends there is nothing more exhilarating, nothing more rewarding, nothing that makes you feel more alive, that your life has purpose and meaning, nothing that has more payoff in eternity than being part of God's mission in the great commission! You want to experience the presence of God in your life? He says I am with you when you go and make disciples.

Today you can take a next step- out in the lobby...