

Teaching the Way  
DWJD - Week 4  
Various  
10/2/2022

## Introduction

Tim. Pastor. **Matthew 28:18-20. Pray.**

## Great Commission

**16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,**

We said last week → This is the charge, the "great commission" given from Christ to His disciples - to you and me and all who would follow Jesus - "Go make disciples." As you're following Jesus, go lead other people into a life of following Jesus.

And then Jesus says this means two things...

**baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**

As we said last week - What Jesus has in mind here is - go preach the gospel leading people to salvation in Christ! Remember baptism is an outward expression (immersion) of an inward spiritual reality (salvation). Lead them to saving faith in Him!

But there's a second part of Jesus' charge to make disciples and what we'll spend time talking about today:

**20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.**

Jesus says - "There's 2 parts to this whole idea of 'making disciples' - you lead them to salvation and then you show them how to live."

That is our practice for tonight → **Teaching the Way.**

What does it look like for us to make disciples by teaching others the way - teaching others how to follow Jesus.

**That you and I, according to the commands and teachings of Jesus, have a responsibility to help other Christians grow in their spiritual formation and maturity.**

**But before we hone in on the practice of teaching, I first want to make sure we're on the same page on what Jesus wants us to teach others, what he wants disciples to do and know.**

## "Obey"

First, he says...**Make disciples...teaching them to observe (or obey)...**

So the first thing we have to realize is **the call to discipleship is a call to obedience - or a call to action.**

And this is a theme we've come back to quite a bit as a church, even at the beginning of this series:

**The Christian life is not simply one of idea or desire or belief, but of practice.**

We've said this time and time again - salvation is free. You cannot earn salvation. You cannot live your way into eternity with God. No amount of church attendance, generosity, good deeds, or trying to be a good person can make you right with God. Apart from Jesus Ephesians 2 says you are dead in your sins. Christ must **save** you. He must make you an entirely new creation. You are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. That's it.

But in a good desire to keep people from thinking they can earn salvation, we can unknowingly remove the burden of obedience from them at all. So there's no invitation to life with God. No invitation to a total-life surrender of discipleship.

But to use the language of Dallas Willard - **"Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning."**

Another way to say it is that the Bible doesn't have a category for **converts**, only **disciples**. Following Jesus necessitates that we, after our conversion, learn to live as he calls us to live. That we learn to obey. If you're a true follower of Jesus, if you have put your faith in him and been saved by grace, that will necessarily make it down into the lived reality of your life.

And don't take my word for it, this is what Jesus himself says:

**John 14:21 - 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."**

**So Jesus says make disciples by leading them to salvation, but by then teaching them to obey.**

- Not just **know** a bunch of stuff about Him.
- Not just have all of the **right theology**.
- Not just pray a prayer and then move on with their lives as if nothing has changed.

But to **obey**. Teach them to **obey**. Teach them how to live.

**"All That I Have Commanded You"**

And Jesus is very specific about what it is we are to obey.

**Make disciples...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.**

Everything that Jesus has commanded is under the "must obey" list. Which, if you read through the gospels is quite a lot. Depending on how you're counting, most theologians argue that the list is somewhere between 50-70 commands Jesus explicitly gave during his time on earth.

**Here's just a snapshot of some of Jesus' commands, just from the book of Matthew, not even all 4 gospels:**

- Repent and believe - Matt 4:17
- Rejoice when persecuted - Matt 5:12
- Reconcile with others - Matt 5:23-25
- Do not lust - Matt 5:27-28
- Do not retaliate - Matt 5:39
- Love your enemies - Matt 5:44
- Give to those in need in secret - Matt 6:2
- Lay up treasures in heaven - Matt 6:19-20

- Do not be anxious - Matt 6:25
- Seek God's Kingdom first - Matt 6:33

That is quite the list - and that's just 10 of the 50-70. And there's nuance within these commands, specifications, and to dive into all of them is worthwhile but beyond the scope of this sermon.

**And yet what is helpful for us to consider is how Jesus summarizes his teachings and commands.**

During one of His many question and answer sessions with the Pharisees, the Jewish religious leaders at the time, Jesus is asked what are the greatest commandments of God? Jesus gave 50-70 commands during his time on earth, God had given over 600 to the Israelites as a part of what's called "The Law", spelled out in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

And so they approach him and want to know - what's the most important for us to follow? This is a lot, should we emphasize one over the other?

**Matthew 22:34-40 - 34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."**

How can you summarize the 613 commands of God and 50+ commands of Jesus - they all hinge on these two things.

- 1. Love the Lord your God with all of your being - heart, soul, and mind.**
- 2. Love your neighbor as yourself.**

**That is the way of Jesus.**

That is the "all that I have commanded you" of Jesus. That is the life of discipleship. This is what it means to be a mature follower of Jesus - **that we learn more and more to be a people of love.**

Not love in the world's sense - where it's all about good feelings of mutual interest or about me just affirming you and everything you are and vice versa - but love in the sense of the Scriptures, love as patterned by our Savior - love in the context of self-sacrifice - where I surrender all of who I am, was, and desire to be at the feet of Jesus in surrender to Him who first loved me. And then out of that love I learn more and more to lay down my wants, my preferences, my desires, my life - for you and your good - to help you look more like Jesus..

That is at the core of Jesus' command to "to obey all that I have commanded you" - is that followers of Jesus would become people who more and more love God and love others with all that we are, have, and do.

**And that's what it means to live into part 2 of "making disciples".**

**Part of making disciples means helping other Christians love God and love others with the practices of their lives.**

**"Teaching Them"**

**Which brings us to where the rubber hits the road for us → the responsibility to help other Christians, other disciples, love God and love others more - the charge to make disciples by teaching them to obey all of the commands of Jesus - that is a charge and task given to all who follow Jesus.**

**Just like all of us who claim Christ are sent in the world to preach the gospel, all of us who claim Christ are also sent to teach others to follow and obey Jesus.**

Preaching the gospel is not a task simply for evangelists and missionaries. Teaching the way is not a task simply for pastors, deacons, or leaders. ***This is the work and calling of every Christian.***

**Do me a favor right now** - Look around the room. Look at the people sitting to your left, to your right, in front of you, behind you. If you are a follower of Jesus - you have a God-given responsibility to disciple them. To help them follow Christ. To help them love God and love others more.

That is part of what it means to be a Christian → **You disciple other Christians towards Jesus...even as they're discipling you.**

We are called to mutually help one another love God and love others more. That is the work of discipleship - me helping you and you helping me - and us following Jesus together.

## **POURING INTO**

Can I just challenge you for a minute → We have this really limited picture of teaching the way/discipleship within the church today that says discipleship is only when a more mature Christian helps a less mature Christian know more stuff about Jesus, usually over a cup of coffee. And while I'm not disparaging that and it certainly can be a helpful part of it, and has been a helpful part of my journey with Jesus - that's not the total picture the Bible gives of "discipling one another" at all.

In the Scriptures, discipleship is not simply me finding an older, more mature Christian to answer all my tough questions about life.

**In the Scriptures, discipleship is the mutually beneficial work of those within a community of faith as we love one another, encourage one another, rebuke one another, pray for one another, discipline one another, and spur one another on towards love and good works.**

Consider the words of the writer of Hebrews...

**Heb 3:12-13 - 12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.**

**Heb 10:24** (written to the whole church) - **24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.**

The idea of someone "pouring into you" - (which if that language sounds weird to you it's just Christian-slang for being mentored in the faith). How do we typically think about it in the Church today - Who is going to pour into me? Who is going to help me? Who is going to equip, encourage, and counsel me?

**That is not a question or a challenge found in the Scriptures.**

You can search Genesis to Revelation, you will not find a call to “go find someone to pour into you” in the Bible. You know what you will find? Go make disciples. Go give your life away for the good of someone else. Go help someone else follow Jesus.

Do you know where we get this language of “pouring” even from?

**2 Timothy 4:6-7 - 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.**

Describing his life as being one where he constantly gives and gives and gives and gives for the sake of others knowing and following Jesus. And do you know what Paul is doing right before that? Challenging Timothy to go fulfill his ministry by discipling and equipping others.

And listen, again - I’m not saying it’s wrong to seek out someone who’s older or more mature than you to help you in the faith. It can be a good thing. Helpful thing. Don’t mishear. I’m trying to warn you that the danger, particularly for those of you in your early and mid 20s trying to follow Jesus - when it comes to discipleship is to only look up, and never look down or across.

Who can pour into me? Who can disciple me? And we can miss what the Bible actually calls us to in discipleship - a mutual responsibility one to another.

And here’s what’s crazy! If you’ve stepped into this then you know what I’m talking about - it’s often through us trying to disciple others that we often grow the most.

You see:

- **The American discipleship system often asks - “Who can pour into me so I can grow?”**
- **But the way of Jesus asks - “Who can I pour into so I can grow?”**

This is a charge to all of us - all of us are called to help all of the other ones of us follow Jesus more and more.

**Me + Discipleship.** I get “discipled” all the time by folks in our church. Even as one of the pastors, I’m not up on some pedestal above my need to be discipled by those around me. So I’m in a Community Group - and those guys speak into my life, encourage me, confront me, push me towards Jesus. I have a bi-weekly breakfast with some other dudes in the church where we get together just to talk about life - discipleship happens there too. I encourage them, they encourage me - we help each other look more like Jesus.

That’s the role of the family of God. That’s the role of the church body.

I love the way pastor Mark Dever puts it when he says - **“The Christian life is the discipled life and the discipling life...Discipling involves transmitting the knowledge of God and his Word through every moment of life...Discipling lasts all week as members meet to talk, pray, encourage, and assist one another in the fight for love and holiness.”**

That is the call. You and me, teaching each other how to follow Jesus more and more in a mutually beneficial way through the everyday stuff of life.

### **Barriers to “Teaching the Way”**

**Here’s the problem:**

**When it comes to discipling other Christians, teaching them the way, the Church has said you can't and the World has said you shouldn't.**

Can we just chat about each of these for a minute?

## **CHURCH**

Ingrained within the church, and I don't even think just in the West, in my experience this is true in most of the world - there has been either an explicit or functional divide between laity and clergy - or between church goers and church leaders.

Now the Church from its inception on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 has always had designations of leadership. That's a gift from God. Ephesians 4 - God gifts the church with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers - to help lead and equip God's people. Good Godly leadership is a beautiful and necessary thing for God's people to flourish. Every family needs a leader or leaders, including the family of God.

But where it went wrong was in the beginning of the 3rd century when the divide between the leaders and the members began to reach unBiblical grounds. It became common thought for almost 1200 years that the clergy - bishops, priests, pastors - were the only ones who could accurately read and interpret the Scriptures, so lay people shouldn't own Bibles, try to read it on their own - you need someone who can teach you the Bible cause you're too dumb to understand it. That was the basic thought.

This teaching was so pervasive that when John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English so "common folks" could read it in 1380 he was condemned as a heretic and when William Tyndale did the same in 1536 he was burned at the stake.

Now, obviously since then the Church at large has walked back such a strong position, but the functionality of it has very much not left the Christian culture - there is still a functional belief operative within the Church today that the job of pastors is to teach God's Word and the job of members is to listen and learn.

The Pastor teaches the ways of following Jesus. So if you want to know the way, come to church.

Now, is it my role to teach God's Word? Yes. Is part of your role to listen and learn and receive? Yes.

**But at some point we've turned the church into an avenue of Christian content consumption, and not a place in which we learn to together push, teach, train, and disciple one another towards Christ.**

Instead of - the pastor teaches the way so I need to get others to come and learn - it should be - "Pastor teaches me the way, so that I know the way, and can help teach others the way."

And that is the vision! That is the command. That is the charge of the Scriptures!

Isn't that what we read in...

**Eph 4:11-16 - 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held**

**together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

**Bible Study.** Let me give you an incredible picture of this - this past year some of our members started and ran a Bible study for months. Some of their Christian and non-Christian friends wanted to read the Bible together and so they just started the thing. Opened up their home on a weekly basis, and walked through the Scriptures, Genesis all the way through Revelation. And it was incredibly beautiful and incredibly challenging and stretching for them.

And I got to come alongside them as one of their pastors. There were times they reached out to me - how would you interpret this, how would you answer this question - and that was so great to get to do that - but they owned it for themselves. They didn't say - "Tim, our friends want to go through the Bible, can you come lead a study." They didn't shrink back in fear - "I'm not a theologian. I didn't go to seminary. I can't do this."

No - they have the Spirit of God living inside of them and so they went for it - and God did some really cool things in their friend group, but I also got to watch God do some incredible things in them.

You have the Holy Spirit inside of you. You can learn this stuff, grow in your faith, help others to grow in theirs.

## **WORLD**

**But not only has the Church taught you you can't, the World has taught you you shouldn't.**

Here's what I mean by that - We live in a "you-do-you" and "live-your-truth" culture. If it's good for you, it's good for you and who am I to step in and try to show you anything different.

In one study one by the Barna Group a few years ago, just shy of 50% (47%) of Millennial Christians said it was morally wrong to share the gospel with someone of a different religion. In addition to that 40% agreed that if someone disagrees with you it means they're judging you.

Which has massive implications for what Jesus is calling to in Matthew 28, does it not? We can't preach the gospel because to tell someone Jesus is the only way to heaven would be to tell them their worldview is wrong. We can't disciple other Christians, teach them the ways of Jesus, because that might mean showing parts of their life that are contradictory to the Scriptures which would be judging them.

*And so what are our options?*

- We say nothing. Let them do them.
- We go to a pastor, our CG Leader - "Hey, I'm worried about so-and-so maybe you could reach out to them?"

But all we've done is co-opted the world's theology that disagreement is judgment, and not the ethic of Jesus which says:

**Matt 18:15 - 15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."**

**Matt 7:5 - 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.**

**Gal 6:1 - Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.**

**Lindsay + Landri - “Don’t treat mom that way.”** My wife has an excellent story about this that I’ve heard her tell numerous times, and I got her permission for this don’t worry. When Lindsay was in middle school and high school, she did what a lot of teenage girls do - fought with her mom. They just didn’t see eye to eye on a lot of things, just a lot of tension as she’s figuring out what it means to grow into an adult - it’s part of life.

But one day, she said her older sister, Landri, sat her down, looked her square in the eye and laid it out for her - “You’re a jerk to mom. She’s good to you. She loves you. You need to think about the way you treat her.”

And Lindsay says it was incredibly difficult to hear and yet the Spirit used it in a powerful way in her life such that even 15 some odd years later she still looks back at it as a crucial moment in her relationship to her mom. Because Landri was willing to say hard things to her, her relationship with her mom was restored. She helped bring conviction where there was none previously-- and she opened her eyes to see ways she was wrong.

And that’s the work of teaching the way we’re called into. That’s a beautiful example. Where we step in, empowered by the Holy Spirit - who lives inside of every single one of us who follow Jesus - we stick out our necks in love to help one another follow Christ.

### **Teaching the Way.**

This is the charge for all of us - that we would make disciples of those around us - discipling others as they disciple others. Helping one another look more like Jesus - loving God and loving others more and more.

### **Practical + Application**

#### **So what does this mean or how could this look in your everyday life?**

We said at the beginning of this year we want to be a people who follow Jesus together with grit. To help one through the thick and thin of life look more like Jesus. Have you stepped into this? Could you now?

#### **Here’s what it might look like to *teach the way*:**

- **Maybe that couple in your CG whose marriage is struggling**, they’re going through a really hard time. Don’t wait and hope that a pastor notices or that we’ll preach on marriage soon - what would it look like for you to step in - hey let’s read a marriage book together. Hey, let’s meet for coffee so I can ask questions. Hey let’s study some Scriptures together on marriage.
- **That friend who has said for the past 3 years how much they struggle to read the Bible consistently** (I know - it’s just a 3-year-long season) - maybe instead of just “I’ll be praying keep us updated” what if we said - hey enough is enough. For the next month, let’s get together every Mon, Wed, and Fri at 7am before work, and let’s read the Bible together.
- **That CG member who is new to the faith, just really started coming around church for the first time in their life, really excited but super green to the things of Jesus** - instead of just hoping they learn and understand through sermons and CG time, what would it look like to own their new relationship to the Lord? Hey - let’s get together once a week and read through the New Testament. It’s a great place to encounter Jesus and see how God calls us to follow Him. I’ll buy us each a study Bible and we’ll figure it out together.

**We’re going to give you a chance to put this into practice this week and start down this journey.**



**We're calling our Practice Guide for this week – "Following Jesus Together"**

And it's a chance for you to own discipling others in your group. There's a chart, and with each chart there's a place to put the person's name, an area they want to grow in their walk with Jesus - patience, holiness, prayer - whatever that may be.

Then there's a section for you to say how you can be praying for them. Specific prayer requests. Then there's a place for you to say how you can help them, disciple them in that goal.

**Prayer** - You guys can read a book on prayer together. Or set alarms at 7am for all the women in your CG to pause and pray then hold each other accountable to that.

**Anger** - Let's do a bible for the next 4 weeks on Saturday mornings on anger. Let me walk you through our digging deeper tool and help you discern what's underneath the anger.

**Prayer. Communion.**