

Follow the Leader -- Mission Matters - John 17:1-23

"We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and saturated in His word."

In John 17:1-23 we see what some scholars call the "Holy of Holies" of John's gospel. We have the privilege of hearing Jesus conversing and communing with the Father. This high priestly prayer is so rich with truths and it impacts us as believers, disciples, and the community of Christ followers as a whole. This section points out the purpose of the disciples of Jesus is to be in unity and also to be on mission for the glory of God. This week we looked at the call to be a disciple making family in the midst of a broken and hurting world.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. What are your initial thoughts and reactions to being a people that pursue being a disciple making family? Jesus prayed that we would be one just as God is one so the world might know that Jesus was sent. He didn't mention a sermon, a song, or a miracle. He said unity would let the world know that God sent His son. Jesus did not call for uniformity but unity. How is this possible among a faith family? How have you seen this "unity" be attacked among the people of God? How do we as Christ followers live in unity with one another? How does this look practically?
2. In the disciple-making process that Jesus calls us to in Matthew 28:18-20 we are called to do more than impart knowledge and facts. We are to intentionally share life with people with the intent to lead them to follow Jesus, to be transformed by Jesus and to carry out the mission of Jesus. Who first told you about Jesus? Who led you to Jesus? When was the last time you shared the good news of Jesus with someone? What spurs you or hinders you from engaging in the disciple-making call of Jesus? (i.e., Don't feel qualified, fear, apathy, struggle with own sin, etc.)
3. Has anyone ever intentionally helped you or modeled to you what it looks like to walk in the faith? To study the life of Jesus with his group of 12 disciples we see that he challenged them to different levels of involvement. There was definitely a maturation process. In this prayer in John 17 Jesus points out that He had given them the word, he had protected them, he had literally shown them how to walk with Him and the purpose for which he came. These unschooled, ordinary men would now be his plan for making known His redemptive rescue. Jesus could rest in knowing His disciples could go, reproduce disciples and bear much fruit. We are the result of those first disciples over 2,000 years ago. What are some ways in which you think Jesus was very intentional in what He did?

4. To intentionally invest in others for the purpose of discipleship can be difficult because we as humans have limited time and can only genuinely invest in a small number of people. As we get close to people, we begin to carry their burdens and struggles as well. We may have a lot of acquaintances but only enough time to invest in a few disciples. Jesus spoke to the masses, invested in the twelve, and was very close to the three (Peter, James, and John). How do you think you are doing with this disciple making process? What would need to change in your life to begin to live with this kingdom focus? How can you line your life up with this pattern of Jesus? How do you make sure that your discipleship time doesn't just become a time that you enjoy and never leads to reproduction or multiplication of new disciples? (i.e., unwilling to leave a group to start another group, lose sight of the mission and become inward focused, etc.)
5. Pray that Heritage would continue to grow in the area of being a disciple-making family. Pray for this to be our missional focus. Pray for someone today that needs to be rescued and pray for a new believer today.