

## **What Does the Church Teach**

Matthew 28:18-20

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, February 26, 2017

Before we get started, I would like to tell you a little bit about what I would call my "Coffee Adventures." I am trying to be a good BC'er and drink six cups of coffee per day, but it's hard! I just want you to know that. I don't know how you guys do it. For instance, my first Sunday here I tried to grab a coffee after church but I never made it to the back of the gym. I got to talking and couldn't get back there and by the time that I did, all the coffee was gone. It had all been poured out. So, Connie White brought me a cup of instant coffee but, I couldn't get the real thing. The next week, my family just came in and they were jet-lagged. We had to leave early and I didn't get any coffee that week. The next week, we got snowed out. The next week, we didn't have a Coffee Fellowship after church. And last week, we had to leave the gym early! So, I don't know how you guys drink six cups of coffee per day. I am impressed, but I don't know how you do it! I am planning on getting a lifetime membership to Tim Horton's or joining the Starbucks Club of the Month but, I can't seem to get there yet. But, I'm trying. I just want you to know that. Now you guys are real sweet people, so don't bring me ten cups of coffee after church. I know you would do a thing like that because you are very gracious, but don't do that. I'll be alright. I just wanted to whine a little bit.

Well, you didn't come to hear that. You came to hear the Word of God. So, turn in your Bibles to Matthew 28 and as you are doing that, my first job out of Seminary was not as a pastor of a church, but as a window washer. When Katie and I first married, I was part of the singles ministry at Grace Community Church, which means that they threw me out on the day of my wedding. When you get married, you had to leave the group. We called it the "left foot of fellowship." So, we had no reason to stay in Los Angeles anymore.

Katie and I started life together in Atlanta, Georgia where she worked as a Registered Nurse and I worked as a Window Cleaner while I looked for an opportunity to pastor a church. While I was there, I had a lot of opportunities for ministry. One of them was with a guy named "Mitch." Mitch was an alcoholic. He drank every day, to the point that he started buying alcohol with the company credit card. He couldn't afford it with his own credit card anymore. He was going broke, so he started putting it on the company's credit card and he got fired for it. He lost his job.

But, right before he did, the boss said, "I want you to go downstairs and talk to Jeremy to get help," which he did. We sat down for two hours in the office and I listened as this guy pour out his life to me and told me how he started drinking, how his dad left him at an early age. And he told me how his wife later left him to raise two kids on his own and that led to his drinking. He got drunk every night to kill the pain. He hid it from the kids in brown paper bags. After hearing his story, praying for him, and crying over him, I said, "Mitch, I could give you a bunch of steps to get you through this thing but you can't do any of them until you trust in Jesus Christ first. Are you ready to do that?" "You can't kill the sin of drunkenness until you kill sin in general, and that can only be done in Christ. Will you believe in him?"

I will never forget what he said afterwards. He thought for a minute and said, "Do you have anything else?" *"Do you have anything else?"* I mention that story to you because I think a lot of people, a lot of "Christians" go through life like that. Mitch was a professing Christian. They want something else. Sure Jesus is fine for salvation and all that other stuff, but when it really comes down to it, when life is hard and I have to get drunk every night to get through it, I want something else. I want another savior. I want a higher spiritual experience. I want something else to get me through this and bring me closer to God.

Can I just tell you this morning that it doesn't exist? There is nothing else. There is no such thing as a "higher spiritual experience." There is no such thing as another savior, because nothing can get you through this and bring you closer to God like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read Matthew 28:16-20. It says,

16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Jesus says that there is nothing higher than being my disciple. There is nothing greater, because "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me." That means all authority. That means all the authority that there is. There is nothing that doesn't fall within the realms of Heaven and Earth. Do you see that? Does that make sense? And, "It's all been given to Me." "It's all mine." He also says, "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.", meaning this is eternal. Which means that if you are in Christ, not only are you close to God, but you stay that way forever. If you believe in Him and come to Him and trust in Him, not only are you near to the King of Heaven, but you will always be that way. That relationship will never change. There is no higher "spiritual experience."

If you study the word "disciple" in Scripture, you will also see that it simply referred to being a Christian. Any Christian. If you are a follower of Christ, then you have the same standing before God as Peter, and Paul, and the Apostles. They are not higher than you. They are not way up here and you are way down here. We all come to God the same way. We go through the same Savior. Also, if you study the word "disciple," you can see that it meant "learner" in Greek. We talked about that last time. A disciple was someone who learned how to follow Jesus, which means that we are all learning this thing together. No one has it all figured out already. No one is perfect in this. It came from the word "discipline," which means that a disciple is someone who learns the discipline of following Jesus. They learn how to follow Him through the hard times. Not around the hard times, but through the hard times.

I was talking with someone awhile back who was going through a tough time. They said, "I just want it to end. I just want the bad feelings to go away." But that's not how you honor God, my friends. You honor God by following Him through the tough times. You honor God by following

Him through the bad feelings. That's what discipleship is. It is the process of saying, "I don't need something else. I only need Jesus." John Piper writes a lot about this sort of thing and in one of his books he says,

Life is not a straight line leading from one blessing to the next and then finally to Heaven. Life is a winding and troubled road. Switchback after switchback. And the point of Biblical stories like Joseph and Esther and Ruth is to help us feel in our bones and not just in our heads that God is for us in these strange turns. God is not just showing up after the trouble and cleaning it up. He is plotting the course and managing the troubles for our good and for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Isn't that good? He is right, and I would add that you make disciples as you help people through these strange turns. You make disciples as you help people through the switchbacks of life.

Discipleship is basically, "Relationship plus content." If we were to give it a short definition, that is a good one. It is relationship plus content. You relate to people. You get to know them and as you do that, you give them content. You tell them the truth. The greatest way you can do this is through the tough times, through the switchbacks of life, but that's not the only way you can do this. There are a million different ways you can disciple someone.

If you do a survey of the New Testament, you will see that Titus 2:4 tells older women to disciple younger women. That's one way to do this. That's one way to make disciples, as older women meet with younger women. It says, "Older women encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home..." Ephesians 6:4 tells fathers to do that with their kids. It says, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." A lot of men abdicate that role to women, but Paul says that fathers should disciple their own children. They should teach them how to follow the Lord. Hebrews 3:13 says, "But encourage one another day after day, so long as it is still called 'today,' so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." That means that we should all be discipling one another...day after day. We should all be encouraging one another so we aren't hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." We should disciple each other with our gifts. Matthew 28:19-20 which we just read said that we should do this with the nations, or with the lost, which means that you could just walk up on the street and do it. You could make disciples with strangers, and we could go on and on. There are a million different ways that you can do this. Just as there are a million different ways that you can relate to people, there are a million different ways that you can make disciples. But, there are not a million different things that you can teach them and that is what I want to talk to you about this morning.

This morning we are in the middle of a series called, "Foundation of the Church," where we are answering some foundational, or big picture questions about the church. We started off with, "Why is the Church Necessary?" Then we went to, "What is a Church?" And last week we answered the question, "What Does the Church Do?" It makes disciples. It makes followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the 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 commanded you," and that's what we do. We go, we baptize, we teach.

But this week, I want to focus on the latter part of that and answer another question with you, "What Does the Church Teach?" As it makes disciples, "what does the church teach?" If discipleship is "relationship plus content," then what is the content? What are we supposed to be telling people as we do this? That's what we are going to talk about today.

So, if you are taking notes, a very simple outline...Here are several things we tell people when we make disciples. The first one is this, we tell them *a high view of God*. As we help people follow Jesus and learn from Jesus and walk with Jesus, we give them a high view of God. To say that another way, the highest spiritual experience starts with a high view of God. This is the foundation of everything. This is where it all begins. You must see God as supreme. Supreme here is not referring to a pizza with everything on it, including mushrooms and green peppers. It means that God comes before everything. Like I just said, He is enough. You don't need something else.

As I'm sure you know, we live in confusing times today, so we need to be very specific when we refer to the God of the Bible. When we say, "the God of the Bible," we mean the Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We mean the God who created the universe out of nothing and who made everything in six days. We mean the One who formed Adam and Eve and flooded the earth because of man's sins. Who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and gave their descendants a Law. And when they broke the Law, He sent prophets to confront them. When they didn't listen to the prophets, He sent His Son to save them. When they didn't listen to the Son, He sent His Son to the Gentiles.

When we say, "the God of the Bible," we mean the God who is perfect, and holy, and just, and who punishes anything that is not. But, He is merciful, and gracious, and kind, and rewards anyone who asks for forgiveness in Jesus' name. This is the God that you tell people about when you make disciples. You can't just pick a god. You can't just pick a random savior. This One is enough. He is supreme over everything. He has absolute rank and power and authority.

In the Scriptures, He shows this several different ways. He first, is superlative, which means that He surpasses everything. He goes beyond it. He is superlative. Theologians would say that He is "transcendent." He is wholly other than you and me. Don't turn there, but let me read some passages to you that talk about the superlative nature of God. Exodus 15:11, referring to God being superlative, says, "Who is like You among the gods, O Lord? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?" There are no gods like the Lord. The highest thing you could think of, the gods, are nothing like the Lord. They don't even compare. 1 Chronicles 29:11 says, "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all." Isaiah 40:15-17 powerfully says that: "Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. All the nations are as nothing before Him."

Has anybody ever gotten on a scale and said, "Hey, who put dust on this scale? I only weighed 175 pounds yesterday, now I weighed 195. Who put dust on this scales?" Any of our farmers here ever gone to milk a cow and said, "Hey, who put a drop in this bucket? It's too heavy now. I

can't lift it. Who did that?" Well, Isaiah said that the nations, plural, the nations...all the nations are like a drop in the bucket compared to God. They are like dust on the scales. They are nothing. You can't even feel them. A.W. Tozer said it this way:

Were all human beings suddenly to become blind, still the sun would shine by day and the stars by night, for these owe nothing to the millions who benefit from their light. So, were every man on earth to become atheist, it could not affect God in any way. He is what He is in Himself without regard to any other. To believe in Him adds nothing to His perfections; to doubt Him takes nothing away.

You can't add anything to the glory of God, and you can't take anything away.

Let me say it like this. My friends, God doesn't need us. God doesn't need us. We do Him no favours by worshipping Him. We give Him no extra glory. He is superlative. And that leads to another way the supremacy of God is seen in Scripture. God is sovereign.

God is sovereign, which means that He controls everything. He is the boss. So, that when you pray, "Lord Jesus," you might as well pray, "Boss Jesus", because that's what He is. "Master Jesus." "Ruler Jesus." You can be my friend and not submit to me, but you can't be God's friend and not submit to Him, because that's who He is. He is your Master. He is your Boss. He is sovereign over you. Psalm 115:3 says, "But our God is in the heavens; He does what He pleases." Do you do what you please? No. Why? Because you are not God. You don't control everything because you are not God. Isaiah 14:27 says, "For the Lord of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?" People turn back your hand all the time. They turn back my hand but, no one turns back God's. No one says "no" to Him. Not in an ultimate sense anyway.

Here is how this plays out practically. When you are enslaved to alcohol, your greatest problem is not alcohol, your greatest problem is that you are offending God. That's your problem. That's what you need to deal with. When you are having a pity party and giving in to depression, your greatest problem is not your bad feeling. Your greatest problem is that you are rejecting God. You are saying that He isn't enough. When you say terrible things to your husband or wife, your greatest problem is not facing your husband or wife. Your greatest problem is facing God. He is your Boss. He is the one you will ultimately answer to.

That is what you have to tell people when you make disciples. You have to give them a high view of God. You have to take their view of God way, way up there on the throne. Higher than it ever was before, because people don't naturally have a very high view of God. Is that safe to say? Would you agree with that? People don't naturally think that God is supreme and superlative and sovereign over everything. They think the opposite.

If you followed the News this week, a famous Evangelical came to Vancouver and put the city in an uproar because he had said that homosexuality was a sin and Muslims are going to Hell. Why? Because people don't have a very high view of God. They don't want to hear God say, "No, you are wrong." "You can't do this." It wasn't that long ago that a famous pastor in Vancouver was in trouble for committing some horrible sin. It got him thrown in jail. Why?

Because people don't have a very high view of God and they don't want to follow a man who does. They don't want to follow a man who says, "God is the Boss."

But if we are going to make disciples, then we are going to have to tell them that. We are going to have to tell them that God is way, way up there. We are going to have to tell them that God is sovereign, superlative, supreme...and they are not! We are going to have to tell them that God is God and they are not.

And that is another thing you teach people when you make disciples, a low view of man. This just goes along with the first but, you must teach people a low view of man. They have to see God way, way up there...a high view of God, and they have to see themselves way, way down here...a low view of man. Turn with me in your Bibles to Romans 1. And as you are doing that, when I was in Seminary, I had a Professor who was a very strict grader. He was an engineer by trade and he graded like one. (No offence to our engineers in the room). He did it on a four-point scale, so that if you got a one hundred, he gave you a four. If you got a ninety, he gave you a three. If you got an eighty, he gave you a two. If you got a seventy, he gave you a one. And, do you know what he gave you if you got a sixty-nine percent or below? He gave you a zero. A big, fat goose egg. It was the most frustrating thing to study and study and study and get a 0% for your efforts.

I mention that because the Bible says that God is an even stricter grader than that. James 2:10-11 says, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not commit murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law." In other words, if you keep the entire law, but break one little part, you are a law breaker. If you keep commandments one through six, but break commandments seven through ten, you fail. Period. No points at all. Why? Because God is holy. Because He is high and exalted, and if you don't live a life like that, a high and exalted life, you are lost. And that's what Paul says in Romans 1. If you look at Romans 1:18-23 with me:

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Now look down in Romans 3:9-18, 23:

9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; 10 as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; 11 there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; 12 all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is

not even one. 13 Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; 14 whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; 15 their feet are swift to shed blood, 16 destruction and misery are in their paths, 17 and the path of peace they have not known. 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes."...23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

What does Paul say man's condition is? He is lost, right? He has failed to keep God's Law. Notice the all-inclusive terms in this passage. 3:10, "There is none righteous, not even one". 3:12: "All have turned aside, together they have become useless. There is none who does good." Verse 23, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Do you get the point? "All have sinned." "All have turned." "None have been righteous." That means all of us, every last one of us. No one has passed this test.

Isaiah 64:6 describes it this way, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment." The word for "filthy garment" in Hebrew means menstrual cloth. It was the most unclean thing that Isaiah could think of. When a woman was on her monthly cycle, she had to stay outside the camp for seven days because she was considered ceremonially unclean by the Jews. Isaiah says that our righteous deeds are like that in God's eyes. They are ceremonially unclean. They make us stay outside the camp. We can't do one good thing for God without thinking a bad thought right behind it. Get in the car and drive to church and I guarantee you, you will have at least one bad thought. Don't look at me like that! You know what I'm talking about! Does anyone else have small children? Did anyone else have bad thoughts on the way to church today? Satan is alive and well in the backseat on the way to church. He knows what he is doing. Your righteous deeds are like filthy rags. Not your unrighteous deeds but your righteous deeds. They can't save you.

To look at this another way, you don't need to have your self-esteem built up. You need to have your sin confronted. And that's how you make disciples. By confronting people's sin. By telling them that they have scored a zero in God's eyes. You can do this politely. You can do this graciously. But you have to do it. In his book, "The Cross," Martin Lloyd-Jones says, "If you think you deserve Heaven, take it from me, you are not a Christian." Isn't that good? "If you think you deserve Heaven, take it from me, you are not a Christian." But then he says, "For any man who knows that he deserves Hell, there is hope." You can't be a disciple and think you deserve Heaven. You have to realize that you deserve Hell. You can't be a Christian until you first say, "I have scored zero in God's eyes." And let me just say that if all this stuff about being unclean and unholy is hitting home with you, then be encouraged! You are going the right way. The highest spiritual experience also starts with a low one and this is it. You have failed in God's eyes. That's the low experience. You have broken God's law. You are not good enough for Heaven. It all starts there, but it doesn't end there.

And that leads to the next point, a necessary view of Jesus. As the church makes disciples, it gives people a high view of God, a low view of man, and a necessary view of Jesus Christ. If you are discouraged and depressed because you realize that you have failed, let me encourage you that you are not alone. Jesus has kept the Law for you. If you believe in Him, He has been perfect in your place. For a couple of reasons. One is that, He is the Son of God. No one else could do what Jesus did because no one else was who Jesus was. He was the Son of God. He lived a totally unique life. In John 1:18 it says, "No one has seen God at any time; the only

begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." That word, "only begotten God" is *monogeneis* in Greek. It means "only born" or "only born Son." Jesus is the only born Son that God gave us. "Son" with a capital "S." "Son" as a title or an office. He is the only One who ever held that.

Hebrews 1:3 says, "...He is the radiance of [God's] glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power." Colossians 1:15 says, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." Colossians 2:9 says, "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." 1 Timothy 3:16 says, "He was revealed [God was revealed - the Son of God was revealed] in the flesh."

To understand this a little better, the greatest Council in the church from the time of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 until the Protestant Reformation was the Council of Nicea. It was convened in the fourth century to confront a heresy called Arianism. Arianism said that Jesus wasn't God. He was god-like, god-ish, a similar substance to God, but not God, and here is what the Council decided. This statement was essentially sent to all the churches in the fourth century. Today it is known as the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made.

Jesus was one substance with the Father. *He* is God of God and Light of Lights. *He* is God's Son in every sense of the word. Every disciple must affirm this. Every disciple must affirm that Jesus is the Son God and the Light of Lights. And here is why: because He was a substitute for sin.

That's another reason why Jesus could be perfect in your place, because He was a substitute for sin. He was the Son of God and that allowed Him to be a substitute for sin. He could stand in your place and give you a perfect life. In hockey if you are messing up and blowing passes and missing shots, the coach calls in a, what? He calls in a sub. Right? Do you call it that here? He calls in a substitute? That sub plays in your place and works in your place and skates in your place. In a similar way, the Bible says that Jesus "skated" in our place. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 1 Peter 2:22-24 says, "He committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." Jesus bore our sins on the cross. *He* took our place. As the Son of God, Jesus was clean. Always clean. One hundred percent clean. As the Only Born of the Father, He never scored a zero with God. He always got a hundred. He always kept the Law. If you believe in Him, you can experience the benefit of all of that. That's what the Bible teaches. *If* you believe in Him, you can be rewarded for His perfection.

In his book "Miracle on the River Kwai", Ernest Gordon tells the story of some Scottish soldiers who were forced to build a railroad through the jungles of Thailand. As they were doing that one morning, it was discovered that a shovel was missing. The commander in charge said he would



kill all the men unless the thief came forward. Finally, one soldier did, and the commander beat him to death in front of all the men. Later it was discovered that the shovel was lost. He didn't steal it. But, that man gave his life for his friends. Didn't he? He sacrificed so that they might live. The Bible says that Jesus gave His life for His enemies. Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus gave His life for people who hated Him. The encouraging thing is that if you have ever hated Jesus, then Jesus gave His life for people like you. If you have ever disobeyed Him and done evil things, then Jesus gave His life for people like you. If you are His enemy, then you can come to Him and be saved. He came to rescue His enemies.

You could look at it this way, as the Son of God, Jesus had a power no one else had. He could do things that no one else could do and with that power, He allowed the Father to crush Him, so He could save the likes of you and me. That was His mission. That's why He came. To save people just like you and me. This is what you have to tell people if you are going to make disciples. This is what you are going to have to believe if you are going to be a disciple.

The highest spiritual experience starts here. It was said that an old recipe for cooking "Rabbit Stew" started off with the phrase, "Catch the Rabbit." Well this is the rabbit. This is what you have to catch. You have to believe in Jesus Christ. If you miss Him, then you miss everything. If you leave Him out, you leave out everything. That's why I told Mitch, "I can give you a bunch of things to do to get through this, but you can't do any of them if you don't trust in Jesus Christ, because you are wrong with God, Mitch. Because you are His enemy. You can't fix that with a twelve step program. You need Jesus."

Listen friends, we can talk about clothing preferences, food preferences, and music preferences if you like. We can talk about end times, creation, and the cessation of the gifts if you want to, and we will, there's a place for all of that. If we fail to talk about *this*, then we fail. Period. If we leave this out, we leave out everything. We miss the entire rabbit. Point them to Christ. Tell them about Christ. Show them Christ and Him crucified. The church is built on this. We have no other foundation but Jesus Christ our Lord.

That leads to another thing we teach people when we make disciples, and I'm going to go through these next two pretty quickly. A sufficient view of Scripture. A sufficient view of Scripture. Not only is Jesus enough, but His Word is enough. The Bible contains all that you need. Turn with me to 2 Timothy 3:16-17. "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

The word, "inspired" in Greek is a compound word coming from *theos*, "God" and *neustos*, "Spirit." Scripture has God's Spirit in it. It is God-breathed. Some of you have had to take a breathalyzer test, where you breathe into a machine and it keeps your breath inside it. Scripture does that with God's Spirit. It keeps it contained within its pages. So that when you read it, you read the mind of God. So that when you hear it, you hear the breath of God breathed out. Paul says it makes you, "...profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness...adequate, equipped for every good work." Adequate means "enough." Scripture makes you "enough." You don't need anything else to be a disciple.

When you are going through a tough time, the Bible is enough for you. It contains all that you need. When you are walking through a valley and you can't see the sun, the Bible is enough for you. It will tell you what to do. Which means that when someone comes to you struggling with life, you can take them to the Bible. The Bible gives them the Breath of God. When someone comes to you struggling with alcohol, you can go to this Book and show them what it says. When someone comes to you struggling with a bad marriage, you can show them the Bible. It will help them.

I told you earlier about Mitch and my time with him in the office. Unfortunately, that didn't go so well. As far as I know Mitch never came to the Lord during my time there, but another man did. His name was Chris. He came from a rough background as well. He used to do drugs. In fact, I remember the time I came in for Bible study with the guys and Chris didn't come. He was out all night on a drug binge. He got wasted. But, he would come to our Bible studies once a week and do the assignments and ask questions. He called me several years after I finished working there, about four years later, and he said, "I just want to tell you that the Lord used you to change my life." When he explained what he meant, he said, "You taught me the Bible, and that changed my life." The Bible does that. Doesn't it? It changes lives. It gets people off drugs. It gets them off alcohol. It fixes their broken marriage. One anonymous author put it this way:

This book contains: the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here heaven is open, and the gates of hell are disclosed. Christ is the grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you here in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and is established forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its contents.

In other words, it is sufficient! It contains all that you need. This is why we do expository preaching here at Grace Fellowship Church. We go verse-by-verse through the Bible, because we believe it contains all that you need. We want you to see for yourself that it is enough. We don't want to just tell you. We want you to see it for yourselves. This is why we do Biblical counseling. When you come in for counseling, we don't take you to a twelve step program or some type of therapy. We take you to the Bible. We want you to see what the Word of God says about your problems.

And that leads to a final thing you teach people when you make disciples, an essential view of the church. We have already been talking about this in our series, so I won't say much here. An essential view of the church.

We live in a very independent culture, don't we? Would you agree with that? People don't think that relationships are all that important anymore. I read somewhere recently that,

In 1950, only four million Americans lived alone, and they accounted for less than ten percent of all households. Today, more than thirty-two million are going solo. They represent twenty-eight percent of all households on the national level.

The numbers in Canada are much the same. In a 2012 Article, the National Post wrote that twenty-seven percent of all homes in Canada are single parent households. People like their privacy. They like their independence. They want to be left alone. The Bible says that you can't do that if you are a disciple. Christianity is not a private thing, it is something we do together. In the church. And we have to tell people that as we make disciples. You can't get over your alcohol problem alone. You need other people. You can't get over your drug problem alone. You need the church. You could look at it this way. I don't know if you've ever seen one of those nature videos with a lion eating an elephant, but a lion can't take down an elephant if it's in a herd. So what the lion does is he singles one out, and he claws at it and he nips at it and he drives it crazy until it leaves the herd. Then the lion pounces on it and kills it. Satan does that with Christians. He claws at us and nips at us until he can get us to leave the herd. Then he kills us. You can't let him do that. You can't let him get you all alone. There is strength in numbers. There is power when we are together. You need the church. We won't turn to a lot of passages on this because we have been doing that in this Series.

1 Corinthians 12 says that the church is a Body with many members, plural members, meaning there is a whole bunch of us. A whole bunch of disciples. Not just one. John 15 says that we are a vine with many branches and just like a branch draws life from a vine, so we draw life from each other. We draw life from Christ and from each other. We are inter-connected. John 10 says that we are sheep, meaning we need protection. We are helpless on our own. We get in trouble like sheep do. The point is that you can't go through the Christian life alone. You need the church. You can't say, "Because I have an iPod, I don't need you." Or, "Because I have sermons on my computer, I don't need you." Or, "Because I have good Reformed books in my library, I don't need you." You need other people. You can't go through life on your own.

What is a disciple? A disciple is someone who believes that Jesus is enough. It is someone who believes that He is the highest spiritual experience there is. There is nothing else. There is nothing greater. How do you make disciples? You could make them a lot of different ways. You could make them as older women disciple younger ones. As fathers disciple their children. You could make them as you hang out in the mall, go to a barbecue, or watch a game. Shovel snow on a day like today! You could make them by passing out tracts on the street or talking to people at work. You could make disciples a million different ways but you can't teach them a million different things. You have to teach them a high view of God and a low view of man. You have to teach them a necessary view of Christ, a sufficient view of Scripture, and an essential view of the church.

It is my prayer that we will do that here at Grace Fellowship Church. To the point that when someone says, "Tell me about Richard Procee." They'll hear that "Richard loves his church and he tells others to do the same. He loves the Body of Christ and he knows that he can't go through the Christian life alone." When someone says, "Tell me about James Mitton." They'll hear that, "James believes that the Bible is all he needs for life and godliness. It is sufficient for him. He doesn't need another book. He doesn't need therapy." When someone says, "Tell me about Dwayne Spies." They'll hear that, "Dwayne has a very high view of God. His God is way, way

up there on the throne. He is exalted." And when our friends say, "Tell us about Grace Fellowship Church", they will hear, "That is a church where people hear of their sin and of their Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Substitute. The Son of God."

Let me say it like this. Dawson Trotman was a popular evangelist in the 1950s who founded the Navigators and died while saving a little girl from drowning. He actually held her up while he perished under the waves. At his funeral, one of the speakers said, "Dawson died the way he lived...holding others up to God." That is what discipleship is all about. It is holding others up to God. Will you do that this morning? Will you hold others up to see God? Will you do that as a church? Will you tell them that Jesus is enough? That they don't need anything else. I guarantee you, they won't hear this anywhere else. The TV won't tell them this. Neither will the Internet or the radio. Will you? Will you tell them? I believe you will, and let's pray for the Lord's strength to do just that. Let's pray.