



## **Serve the World** **John 17:17-26**

Good morning. If you have your Bibles and I hope you do, I invite you to open with me to John 17. As we study this chapter for the last time in this series on what it means to make disciples of all nations, I want us to start by reviewing before we study the Word. We have walked through, up to this point, three different components of disciple-making. You have in your notes the first three components of disciple-making. Don't forget that doesn't necessarily mean these are chronological.

The first one is to share the Word. The second one is to show the Word and the third one is to teach the Word, which we dove into last week. The final component of disciple-making that we are going to dive into this morning is we serve the World.

What I want us to do, before we read from John 17, is I want us to get a picture in our mind about how all of these connect together. We have been looking into each one of these facets of disciple-making and I hope we realizing that this is something that is intended to take place and carry out in our lives on a daily basis, in our everyday lives. We have been talking every week about the people God has entrusted to us to share His Word with and to show His Word to and to teach His Word to. God has given us people right here to do that with. Disciple-making happens in our everyday lives right here. You don't have to cross an ocean to make disciples.

So, let's dive in. I want us to see how these three components we have talked about – sharing the word, showing the word, teaching the word – relate to this final component, serving the world, as they come together in a process called disciple-making. I want you to look with me at John 17. We are going to read starting in verse 17 and we are going to go to the end of the chapter, and we are going to see basically the conclusion of Jesus' prayer specifically for His disciples in verses 17, 18 and 19. Then we are going to see how that prayer plays out in the lives of believers that would come in succeeding generations of disciples, including you and me. Look in verse 17. Jesus prays:

*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.*

*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*

*Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.*

*Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them (John 17:17-26).*

Here is the climax. Jesus in His disciples and what He has done in their live now reproduced in the lives of others. What I want you to notice is that in those verses we read over and over again, you see a couple of different phrases repeated, but there is one word I want us to focus on. It is the word world.

When you look at this chapter as a whole, nearly 20 times Jesus mentions the world. Even in the last part here, He mentions it over and over and over and over again. Look in verse 13 and you might circle or put a box or a triangle or something around these words because we have been circling a lot of different words. You might want to do it in a way that differentiates it from the others. I want you to circle or make some kind of note every time you see the world mentioned.

Look in verse 13. It says, *"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world"* (John 17:13). Look in verse 14, three different times, *"I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world"* (John 17:14). Then in verse 15, *"My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them"* (John 17:15). You get down to verse 16, *"They are not of the world, even as I am not of it"* (John 17:16). That "it" at the end of verse 16 is the world in the original language of the New Testament, in the Greek it is mentioned there. So you have got it twice there in verse 16. When you get to 18, which we have just read is, *"As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world"* (John 17:18). Then you get down to verse 21. It says, *"May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me"* (John 17:21). Verse 23, *"I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me"* (John 17:23). Then in verse 25, *"Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me"* (John 17:25).

Over and over and over again we see the world emphasized in this prayer. Jesus had said earlier in the prayer, *"I am not praying for the world, I am praying for the disciples."* But we know that He was praying for the disciples through which the world would come to know who He was, through which the world would come to know His Father's love.

So, obviously, there is an emphasis here on the end goal of disciple-making being the world knowing that God is good and gracious and merciful. What I want is to do is I want us to unpack in this final component of disciple-making the end goal, the ultimate purpose of disciple-making, where it is all heading and I want us to look at it on a few different levels.

## Understanding The Goal Of Disciple-Making

### **We are sanctified for each other's sake.**

Number one, we are sanctified for each other's sake. I want you to hear that in Jesus' words right at the end of this prayer, specifically for his disciples. Obviously, the context of mission is pretty strong. Jesus says, "As you sent me into the world, Father, I am sending them into the world." This is obviously a pretty missional picture, but don't miss it! Verse 18 is kind of sandwiched in between two verses talking about sanctification. It says in verse 17, "*Sanctify them by the truth*" (John 17:17). Then He gives this incredibly missional statement in verse 18, and then in verse 19 it says, "*For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified*" (John 17:19). So this idea of sanctification is sandwiched in between.

Now, last week we talked about how the Word was the means by which we are sanctified but we said we were going to wait until this week to really dive into the meaning of sanctification and what is sanctification. It is at this point that we need to realize that the Holy Scripture basically shows us that to sanctify something means to set it apart for a special purpose, to fulfill a special calling, a special purpose, some kind of service. So if something is set apart for that purpose that is what sanctification is.

You go back to the Old Testament, even the sacrificial system and you have Exodus 28 and 29 talking about how Aaron and his sons needed to be sanctified. The word that is used sometimes in the Old Testament is consecrated, set apart for exclusive service to God as priests. You see that over and over again. People are sanctified, set apart for exclusive service like that. Then you see things that are mentioned that are sanctified, that are set apart for exclusive service to accomplish some purpose.

Now that is the meaning of sanctification we see over and over and over again in the Old Testament, and this is huge for us to get our arms around. Sanctification or holiness is most often described in Scripture as being set apart for a specific purpose, set apart to do certain things. But, the way we often times view holiness and sanctification, we view it, in that, it is that we are set apart to avoid certain things. If you are holy that means you don't do this and this and this and this and we define holiness and we define sanctification by not doing wrong things. As long as you avoid these things that we would all consider would be major sins in our culture today, then you are holy.

At that point I have got to wonder if we are the only organization in the world, in the church that is defining success based on what we don't do instead of what we do. Are we really a people that want to be known for what we abstain from? I don't think that is the biblical picture of sanctification here. The picture is not us living our lives to avoid all these things. That is nowhere in this prayer of Jesus. Yes, He said, they are not of the world but He said they are right in the middle of the world and we are sanctified not to avoid certain things. We are sanctified in order to do certain things, to give ourselves in exclusive service to God, exclusive service to His mission.

That is what Jesus is saying right here when Jesus says, "I sanctify myself." It is not that Jesus is making Himself more pure or more holy. That is not what He is saying. He was completely holy, the Son of God, no sin in Him whatsoever. So how can he sanctify Himself? What He is saying is He continually devoted Himself to the mission that the Father had given to Him. He was exclusively devoted to that mission. What I want us to think about when we think about sanctification is not avoiding the wrong things – it is giving ourselves to something. What do we give ourselves to?

When we are sanctified, we are dedicated, consecrated to the purpose of disciple-making for others' transformation. Now that is a pretty loaded sentence and I want us to think about it. We are dedicated. That is what it means to sanctify, set apart for a special purpose, dedicated to the purpose. What is our purpose? What we are seeing in the context of this whole chapter is our purpose is to make disciples of all nations. We see that in all of the Gospels. It infiltrates Scripture from cover to cover. We are supposed to make His glory known by reproducing the image of Christ that has been entrusted to us. That is the purpose. That is the will of God for all of our lives as believers. We are dedicated, set apart to that purpose.

But listen to what Jesus says. He says in verse 19. He sanctifies Himself for whom? *"For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified"* (John 17:19). So Jesus says, "I set my self apart and serve as to the mission of the Father so that they might be sanctified." He dedicates Himself to the purpose of making these disciples so that they might be sanctified.

The term right there in the very beginning of verse 19, for them, is a term that is used in different parts of the Old Testament of the Greek translation there when it is talking about is sacrifices like the atonement, the day of atonement when an animal was offered on a sacrifice for the people on behalf of the people. That is what Jesus is saying. He is saying, "We give ourselves to the mission of the Father for the sake of others." This is where we are reminded so clearly that the reason we make disciples, the reason this mission must be primary in our lives and in the local church is because of others' sake.

I am convinced this is one of the reasons we have such a dangerous tendency to ignore disciple-making because somewhere along the way we have got the idea that the purpose of the church is to help us grow in Christ and I don't think that is the purpose of the church. I don't believe the purpose of the church is to help us grow in Christ. The purpose of the church is to equip us to help others grow in Christ, because if the purpose of the church is to help us grow in Christ, then what we do in here is for the sake of us in this room. But we are not living for ourselves. We are living for the sake of a lost and dying world outside these walls. We live for them. We have got to get a hold of the fact that this whole Christian picture is not about you and me. It is about people whose lives are at stake for eternity based on what we do with the Gospel that has been entrusted to us. We dedicate ourselves to the purpose of disciple-making so that others might be transformed.

I want you to see this from another angle as well. Not only do we dedicate ourselves to this purpose so that others might be transformed – this is where it gets really good and this is the crux of disciple-making – we have got to get a hold of this. Second, we are dependent on this process called disciple-making for our own transformation.

When you get to verse 19, what we've got is a picture of Jesus sanctifying Himself as the disciples are being sanctified. It is the discipler and the disciple being sanctified at the same time. This is a picture in this process of disciple-making. Jesus is sanctified. He sanctifies Himself and the disciples are truly sanctified. It goes together. Now we begin to realize that this whole process of disciple-making living for the sake of others, sharing the Word, showing the Word, teaching the Word with others actually is a part of the process of us becoming more holy and becoming more set apart to the service of God. Could it be that disciple-making is the process that God wants to use in every single one of our lives to produce holiness in our Christianity?

I am increasingly convinced, especially in the study we have been walking through over the last few weeks that we will be destined to live dull, complacent Christianity as long as we

live our lives apart from this command to make disciples because we will only go so far. I am convinced every single one of us will stall in our Christian lives until we begin to rise up and take responsibility for sharing the Word, showing the Word and teaching the Word to others. I think the evidence is all across the seats of churches. Because we ignore this mission, this responsibility, we don't have to know the gospel, we don't have to show the gospel, we don't have to teach the gospel, but when we give ourselves to this mission, it will radically change our walk with Christ.

I have had conversations with many of you and gotten emails as you are catching it. One email that sticks out to me is from one person in this faith family who has been sharing the gospel over the last couple of weeks with a friend. The email talked about how he was seeing his own faith grow quickly, how people around him were making remarks about his walk with Christ because he was now taking the responsibility to share Christ with his friend. He was realizing, "Hey, I have got to get in the Word. I have got to know this and that in order to do this." He is going to new heights in his walk with Christ, why? Because he is now living for the sake of others. We are dependent on the process of disciple-making.

That is why the worst thing we could say when we walk out of here after this series is to say, "Well, once I get to a certain point in my Christianity, then I will be ready to do what David is telling us to do from the Word." If we say that, we miss the whole point of making disciples. If we wait until we arrive at that point where we are now ready to make disciples, we will never get there. We will stall down here for the rest of our Christianity and it is possible – don't miss it – it is possible for us to coast out successfully avoiding things for holiness Christianity and never give ourselves to this mission.

However, when we rise up and we start to do this, not when we wait until we have arrived at that point where we say, "I want to get to that point." Could it be that God wants to use the process of disciple-making to get you to that point that you are imagining?

I read an article not too long ago from a prominent youth magazine, and it was talking about how we shouldn't tell students to make disciples because students aren't ready to make disciples. They are not at a point where they are able and spiritually mature to do that. What I want you to know is that we have got a group of students that is debunking this article completely with the way they are living their lives right now. I wish you could hear some of the stories that are coming out in these guys' lives.

Here is the beauty of it. What the writer of that article or anybody along those lines thinks is and what they are missing out on is the fact that it is when students begin to rise up and take responsibility for sharing the Word in their schools, showing the Word in their schools – here is what the character of Christ looks like, teaching the Word to their friends like they are doing on their sports teams and with their classmates. When they start doing that their Christianity is going to new heights that it could never go to apart from this mission.

Now if that is happening to them, what about us? We have got to get that picture. We are dependent on the process of disciple-making for our own transformation. The beauty of it is, when we give away our life, we find life. Now that sounds New Testament, doesn't it? It makes sense.

Philemon 1:6 – this whole share the word thing – Philemon 1:6, *"I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."* You won't have a full understanding of the gospel until you start to share the gospel, Philemon 1:6 says. Show the Word, take responsibility for showing His character. Teaching the Word, we talked about that last week how when we have to teach

the Word, the more we have to learn the Word. This goes together. We are sanctified for each other's sake. "For them, I sanctify myself so that they may truly be sanctified." God help us to live our Christianity for the sake of those around us. We are sanctified for each other's sake.

### **We are servants for the world's sake.**

Second, we are servants for the world's sake. I want you to see this unfold and the theme that we see all throughout this chapter about how Jesus had been sent from the Father. Obviously, it is the thrust of verse 18, "*As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world*" (John 17:18). Then you look down in verse 21. Jesus reiterates it again, "*That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me*" (John 17:21). Then you get down to verse 23 and He says it again, "*May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me*" (John 17:23). In verse 25 He says, "*Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me*" (John 17:25).

This is the picture that we see throughout the Gospel of John that Jesus had been sent on a mission. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son." He sent us His one and only Son. The very next verse, verse 17, "*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him*" (John 3:17). That is why He sent Jesus. Jesus was sent with a commission to be the Savior of the world. He summarized it in Mark 10:45, "I came not to be served but to serve. I am sent to give my life as a ransom for many." Jesus was sent. This was His whole commission sent from the Father to serve.

The disciples had seen that played out even just a couple of chapters before as Jesus knelt down and He washed their feet. Here the Savior of the world, their rabbi, their teacher, was about to die on the cross. God Himself in the flesh kneels down and begins to wipe their dirty feet. They had seen it over and over again the way He served the crowds, the way He gave His life, the way He held so loosely to the things that they thought were so important in this world and the way He embraced poverty, the way He embraced spiritual things in a way that they had never seen before. That was His whole purpose. He was sent to be a servant.

But here is where it gets really good. When you get to verse 18 and Jesus says, "Father, just as you have sent me into the world, now I send them into the world." What Jesus is talking about in His mission sent from the Father relates to you and me. I want you to see how this unfolds.

First, Jesus identifies us with His mission. Jesus is identifying us with His mission. "Just as you sent me into the world, so now I am sending them into the world." Over and over again in this chapter He is identifying the disciples with Him. Look back in verse 14. He says, "*I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world anymore than I am of the world*" (John 17:14). "We are the same." You get to verse 16 and He says, "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of it*" (John 17:16). "We are on the same wavelength." You get over to verse 21 through 23 and it is a whole picture of the comparison that we have with Christ, Him in us and us in Him. Everything that Christ received or was treated as in this world, we can expect the same. We are identified with His mission.

The neat thing, when you get to verse 18 there, "*As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world*" (John 17:18), that word is the word "apostolos" from which we get the word "apostle". It literally means sent ones. Now in the New Testament we see apostles

referred to in different ways. Obviously, the primary terminology when we see apostle referred to as those who were eye witnesses of Jesus, the twelve apostles. These are people who are eyewitnesses to Christ. However, it also is used in the New Testament to refer to how other believers are sent out. We are sent as representatives to identify with the mission of Christ, and this was at the thrust of these guys entire process of discipleship.

I want you to hold your place here and turn with me back to Mark 3. I want to give you an opportunity maybe to circle a few different places where you see Jesus using this same term in His identification with the disciples. This is Mark 3, the very beginning of Jesus' relationship with these guys. It is when He is appointing them. I want you to hear what He says to them in verse 14. We will start in verse 13 just to make sure we have got the context. Look at Mark 3:13, *"Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him."* This is the beginning here. *"He appointed twelve, designating them"—what? "apostles—that they might be with him and that he might"—do what? "send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons"* (Mark 3:14-15). These are the 12, the appointed and He gives their names. They were appointed for a purpose to be sent out.

Now go over one book to the right. Go to Luke 9. Look at Luke 9, and I want you to see what Jesus does. He is walking around with these guys. He is showing them how this mission looks with the way He is living. Then you get to Luke 9:1-2. Listen to what Jesus does. He pulls them together and He says, Luke 9:1, *"When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick"* (Luke 9:1-2). Here He is sending them out just as He had said He was going to do.

Go to John 20. I want you to look at verse 21. This is after Jesus has died on the cross. He arose from the grave and He is speaking to His disciples and what does He say? It says in John 20:21. He had showed them His hands and His side and it says in verse 21, Jesus said, *"Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you"* (John 20:21).

So the picture is these disciples were identified with the exact same mission that Jesus had identified Himself with. That is an incredible thought! John 3:16 really comes alive at this point, *"God so loved the world, that He sent His one and only Son."* Could it be that God so loved the world that He sends you and me? We are identified with the very mission of Christ. We have an identical purpose as Him. This is a much greater purpose than living for the next dollar or living for the bigger house or the bigger car. This is a much greater purpose. This is the mission that Christ gave Himself to and we are identified with.

Not only does He identify us with this mission, it gets even better. Second, Jesus empowers us for His mission. You saw it in all those verses. Luke 9 when He is sending these guys out, He says, *"I give you authority to drive out demons. I give you the authority to drive out spirits."* These guys do that in Luke 10. You study that passage and some of you will be doing that in the small groups that you are in. Luke 10, they go out and they are seeing demons cast out of people and they are seeing people healed and they come back and they are saying, *"Jesus, you are right. This is pretty cool. You have empowered us to do this."* It wasn't just Jesus doing it anymore. They were getting a glimpse of what would happen when He ascended into heaven and the Holy Spirit would be on them and they would be empowered for this mission. He said, *"You have got my authority, my full sponsorship."* We will see that next week in the great commission even deeper. *"Everything I have is yours to accomplish this mission."* He empowers them to do this mission. Not only did Jesus model for them how to do this mission, but He empowered them to do it. It was on the job training at its best. He empowered them.

Third, Jesus unites us in this mission. The petition that dominates the last part of this prayer, *"May they be one as we are one"* (John 17:22). It is at this point that we could easily go off into a sermon on how the church needs to be unified, and here is what we need to do in order to be unified. But what we have got to realize in John 17 is He is not praying for some contrived, manufactured unity that we can create. What He is saying is that when my people give themselves to the mission I have identified with them, then they will be unified. This is good!

Could it be that though we could do all kinds of things in a church like this to promote unity, and to try to manufacture unity, could it be that when we all as a faith family surrender our lives to the mission of making disciples that we won't have time to fight with each other because we are fighting the needs of a lost and dying world with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Could it be that unity is compromised in the church only when mission is compromised in the church? And if we give ourselves to the mission, the byproduct is unity? He unites us in His mission. This is what we do, Him in every single one of us accomplishing His purpose.

Now, that is what Jesus does with His disciples. He identifies them with His mission, He empowers them and then He unites them. Now I want us to think about how that looks in the way we carry out this command to make disciples. This whole idea that we have been talking about – dedicated to the purpose of disciple-making, dependent on this process for our own transformation – could it be that God wants us with the people God has entrusted to us to serve the world with them? Could it be that what we are seeing in Scripture here is that it is not just that we are supposed to serve the world? It is that we are supposed to equip others to serve the world with us? Because, if it stops with us then we have done addition as opposed to multiplication where it is spreading through us.

We identify with people, people that God has put in our lives. How can we serve with them? Instead of just teaching them the Word in a classroom, we take advantage of opportunities to go and serve with them and we empower them to serve. We enable them to serve. We help them to serve. In the process, we find ourselves in a community that nothing in this world can even begin to touch.

I know in my own life, the picture that kept coming to my mind as I was reading this and preparing and studying this, was – and you have heard me talk about the French Quarter Ministry – I want you to picture this. Going into the French Quarter in New Orleans and sharing the gospel and trying to be a part of making disciples, I remember when this first started to click with me and I invited two guys to go along with me. I walk away from the French Quarter and these guys have caught it. They are zealous. "Man we need to be down here everyday." I am like, "I can't do it everyday." They said, "Well, we are going to do it everyday."

So they start to catch it. They start to see the need. So, I go down there with them and along the way, pass on anything that I have learned over going down to the French Quarter, and the time I have been down there and then before long I am realizing that I have got to step it up in order to keep these guys going. Now this process is actually effecting my own transformation to the point where these guys are going to surpass me. I am doing the best I can but they are going to surpass me and the beauty of it is that they begin to take leadership in that ministry. They begin to pour their lives into these guys and now I am teaching a seminar on disciple-making miles away and one of the guys that I had taken down to the French Quarter brings some of the homeless guys that he is investing his life in to this disciple-making seminar to learn disciple-making. Now this picture is starting to multiply, and one of those guys that was going down with me, and hear this I messed up plenty of times along the way. It is the beauty of this process of disciple-making. This guy is

now organizing an entire home for homeless men and women to go from New Orleans to receive help that they need with all their addictions and all their struggles and gospel teaching.

This thing works! God does have this thing rigged for us to depend on others for our own transformation and us to see His glory revealed in ways we never could have seen. That is the beauty of how this works. We empower each other in mission. Now, at that point we are realizing this can't take place in the walls of one building at one location in a couple of hours during the week. That is not the full picture of disciple-making. We are seeing that, right?

## **A Question We Need to Ask in the Church... Are We Discipling or Disinfecting?**

It is at this point that I want us to take a little pause and I want to put before us a question that I think we need to ask in the church. The question is this, "Are we discipling or are we disinfecting?" Are we discipling or are we disinfecting?" You are thinking, "What do you mean?" Well, I'm glad you asked.

### **Disinfecting...**

Disinfecting – what I mean by that is that disinfecting isolates a Christian in a spiritual safety deposit box called the church building and teaches him or her to be good. Disinfecting isolates a Christian in a spiritual safety deposit box called the church building and teaches him or her to be good. And when we do that success is dependent on how big a building we can get, to have as many people as we can come inside.

I read another article this last week from a well known church leader talking about how as a pastor that you need to dream big. Picture the thousands of people that can come into your place and plan for that. So, we put all our resources and energy into that kind of picture. We bring them in and our goal is to help us be good. Let's avoid the things that the world needs to avoid. Let's be holy, separate, right? If that is the case, if that is what church is about, then we have got to realize what we are producing. The results are pretty clear.

Number one, the results are decent church members with little world impact. Some of you think that might be a little too strong. But I believe the proof of the point is in the fact that the majority of the Christians in our culture have no more world impact today than they did the day before they were saved. We isolate ourselves in this quarantined building where the world is as big as our eyes can see around here and all our energy is made to focus on what is going on in here and as a result, we are insulated from the spiritual lostness of the world around us and we have little to no impact on our community and the world with the gospel.

Second, it gets deeper. Not only do we result in decent citizens with little world impact, but second, disobedience to God's command to reach the entire world with His gospel. We sit in our walls with the Great Commission celebrated, but completely ignored with the way we are living. As a result, we are disobedient to His command to reach the world with His gospel. We are decent people with decent families, and decent homes and decent jobs, decent citizens, but nowhere in Scripture is that what we are supposed to produce. We are supposed to produce disciples of Jesus Christ who are radically, whole heartedly, set apart for the purpose of God to make disciples of all nations.

Maybe the most tragic result is not decent citizens, but little world impact and disobedience to God's command. I think the most tragic result may just be a wasted life. A picture where Christianity is all about self absorption where we focus on, "Pastor, dream big, bring thousands of people into your building," while there are a billion people who haven't even heard His name. I think that misses the mark.

### **Discipling...**

I believe that is a far cry from the discipling process of Jesus. What is discipling then? Well, instead of isolating a Christian in a spiritual safety deposit box called the church building, teaching him or her to be good, could it be that discipling propels a Christian into the world to risk his or her life for the sake of others? Now that is holiness. That is a picture set apart for a purpose and that is a radically different way to look at church because now church is not based on how many thousands come into the building. Church is based on how many thousands are going out into the world with their disciples to impact nations for the glory of Christ. That is where success begins to take on a whole new shape.

The results are, number one, disciples of Christ with total world impact where we realize that it is not going to happen in one location, one time during the week, with one teacher letting us know how to do it. It is going to happen in multiple locations all throughout the week with gospel seed-sowers going out into the world, in this community sharing the Word, showing the Word, teaching the Word and serving the world together.

Confident, second, in obedience to God's command to reach the entire world that when we give ourselves to this plan, when we give ourselves to this command, He will bless it for His glory in all nations. He has promised, based on His very character to bless this plan for His glory. What happens when we live our lives where if this word is not true, we fall flat on our face? I have got to believe God is honored in that kind of devotion. He has promised to bless that. Obedience to God's command to reach the entire world and the result instead of a wasted life is an abundant life.

What happens when the local church is a community of believers united with the disciples of Christ around the world partnering together like you have seen in the picture in Indonesia, where these seminaries and the convention that he talked about are now using the curriculum that we are using, we are teaching week in and week out, that we are walking through with our small groups, they are now infusing that into their 600 churches that are spread throughout Indonesia and now we are partnering together with others around the world to impact nations for the glory of Christ? It all comes together here. Could anything less than that be called a New Testament church? This is what it is all about. Are we discipling or are we disinfecting?

### **We are saved for Christ's sake.**

Last facet that I want us to see: we are sanctified for each other's sake and we are servants for the world's sake. Third, we are saved for Christ's sake. As you come to the conclusion of this prayer, this climax, this picture, Jesus begins to talk about how He desires His disciples to be with Him, to see His glory and to know His glory. It says in verse 22 an incredible statement, *"I have given them the glory that you gave me"* (John 17:22).

Now, what do you mean we are saved for Christ's sake? I want you to think about it. First of all, we enjoy His glory. He has given us His glory. What is His glory? It is His character. It is His person, His power, His love. He talks later in this chapter about how the love that the Father has for the Son is the same love that is in us. Isn't that an incredible picture? The love that is experienced in the Trinity in the relationship between the Father and the Son is the same love that you and I know and experience and have in us so we enjoy His glory.

Second, we display His glory. The whole purpose of the unity of the Father and the Son in us is so that the world might know that He is good, verse 20. The whole purpose is worldwide evangelization so the world might know the gospel, the truth. We magnify Christ. We display the glory of Christ by making disciples.

So we enjoy His glory, we display His glory and then third we will see His glory. He says it, *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world"* (John 17:24).

Let me give you a little picture of where this whole sanctification thing is headed. This sanctification thing is headed not just to a time when we will be free from sin and free of all the wrong things, although that will be a very good thing, but this sanctification thing is all headed to the day when there will be a *"multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb'"* (Rev. 7:9-10). The whole goal of sanctification is not our perfection and holiness. The goal is we are now bowing around the throne of Jesus Christ with multitudes that no one can count from Indonesia and East Timor and from right across the road who are worshiping Christ for the salvation He has given. That is where the whole picture is headed. We will see His glory. We will enjoy it forever. We will display it on our faces for all of eternity. That is where this whole thing is headed.

The end of disciple-making is the earth spread with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, just like the waters cover the sea. Impacting the world is the goal of this whole picture and at The Church at Brook Hills, we will not settle for any goal less than that.

## **So What Now...**

So what now? It comes down to two thoughts that go together. First of all, my encouragement and my challenge for you is to let Jesus empower you to serve others. Let Him empower you to serve others, to be sanctified for others sake. But then, don't let it stop there. Let your life empower others to serve the world. Together, we are part of this thing called making disciples. John 17 is good, an incredible text, incredible picture.

So here is what I want us to do as we come to the conclusion of our study in this chapter. I want us to have a time of Communion because Communion is a picture of Jesus serving us. It is reflecting on the cross of Christ, and how He died on the cross for each one of us. How he rose from the grave for our sake so that we might have life. So as we go into a time of Communion, what I want to invite you to do is I want to invite you to let Jesus serve you and see a picture of His service on your behalf and on my behalf. Then, consider how that service is going to not stop with you, but spread through you in your lives as you surrender yourselves to this picture – making disciples of all nations.

I know there are people here this morning, and we are talking about disciple-making, and, you don't know what in the world we are talking about. You are thinking, "What is going on? I am just new to this whole thing." You just came to church, maybe for the first time. But, I want you to know that the beauty of what we are celebrating in Communion is the fact that Jesus Christ, the Son of God died on the cross so that you might be forgiven of your sins, so

that you might have eternal life and knows His glory. If you have never come to the point in your life where you have trusted in Jesus, or you have placed your faith in Him to forgive you of your sins, then I want to invite you as we take communion today to say for the first time in your life, "I want to trust Jesus. I am going to ask Him to forgive me of my sins. I want to see His glory." This time in communion could be the first time for you in your life where you celebrate a relationship with Christ.

If you are not at that point, not ready at this point to begin a relationship with Christ, and you haven't made that faith commitment, I want to invite you during this time of communion simply to observe when the bread and the cup come your way, just to pass it to the person next to you. This is in Scripture, something that is specifically for believers who have trusted in faith in Christ. But, I do want to invite you to see a picture of a faith family, who is celebrating the life-change that Christ has brought in us.

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