

Main Idea:

What is discipleship, what is its purpose, and how do we define its successes.

John 15: 1-11

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Questions That Need Answers:

1. How do we define a disciple?
 2. Why is discipleship so vital?
 3. How is success found for Be Love and as a single disciple
-

Definition of a Disciple:

DISCIPLE

• As Jesus' apprentice or disciple I am learning from Him how to lead my life in the Kingdom of God as He would lead it if He were I. I am with Him in all my circumstances learning to be like him

- Let me pose a couple questions to you...
- what if we are over confident in how we believe we are suppose to exist?
- What if we are just as over confident in what we believe "The Good Life" is.
- What if, our lack of submission to discipleship, is a deep internal value that I already know what to do. (I just simply don't do it)
- What if... just hear me out, we don't know how to exist well. What if our ideas towards sex, money, power, success, race, good and evil, our vocation, our children are skewed.
- Being a disciple or apprentice of Jesus, starts with the process of abandonment of my ability to framework my own existence.

"Our wills are ours, to make them Thine." — George MacDonald

• **Discipleship confronts our own Kingdom.**

• Let me ask you something... in your day to day life, what actions have you taken to make the place you live better, without that tying into personal gain?

• Its a different thought right? Think about this... would you take up a vocation or start a business that wasn't your dream but helped your city get better?

• This is what The Kingdom of God is like... it often confronts the construction of our own Kingdom. It forces us to be ok that our calling carries with it, the better meant of the whole.

Galatians 5: 13-14

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

The whole law... is summed up in this, serving others.

• "If you are wondering why you haven't taken up the call to follow him, is it possible, because you simply can't see the gain in it?"

• We see the gain in eternity, and we see the gain of feeling good, but do we honestly see the gain of discipleship?

- If you are like me, we are left often with the thought... what is the gain? or even if we are more honest, what is success?

- **Have you ever wondered, how we measure success as a disciple?**

- I would say that success from my world growing up, came in the form of supernatural acts, abounding favor, and revelatory ability

- But I would say none of these are signs of success of the disciple...

- So what is the outcome and measures of success of a disciple? It is the ability to live fully out of the fruit of the spirit.

- The Fruit of The Spirit, is the mark of success of those who would call themselves followers of The Way of Jesus.

Galatians 5: 22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- The fruit of living a life in the spirit...

Paul uses this language

1 Corinthians 13: 1-3

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

- It has always been about the ability to give out of oneself, the greatest thing we can, the fruit of the spirit.

- Are you growing? check for these fruit...

- This is life as branch... This is John 15, its discipleship, it is life emanating from Jesus through us.

- Jesus says he is true vine... why? Because all of us are in someway attached to false vines.

- Discipleship is the ability to abide, it is the instruction of Jesus, that if we abide in him and we let him abide in us, we bare what... fruit!

- It feels so simple, yet somehow we have allowed the enemy, the world, and the flesh to make it so foreign to us.

- It is only the way of Jesus, to answer the call "follow me" and cast away our nets, to abide and live life in the vine. I challenge you tonight by saying this...

"Discipleship is the only way forward... period"

FINAL THOUGHT

- We are seeing the world around us, we are seeing the battle for culture, sexuality, truth, and law, and I tell you the only way forward is not a church... it is a church of disciples. It is the return of what made us what we were, salt and light.
 - When the vision of Be Love Co. as a church of discipleship by the way of Spiritual Formation, becomes realized as apart of your vision for your life, and our city begins to see a people group living out of the fruit of the spirit... that, that moment will be when we get to call ourselves and yourself a success.
-