

1. In last week's message the title asked a question.
2. Why Did God Create Me?
3. That is a valid question, because what God originally created us to be can become damaged and marred.
4. Without a doubt, our world does not resemble what God created it to be. It has become marred with sin and wickedness.
5. The word marred is a word often associated with pottery. It means damaged, blemished, or mis-shapen.
6. Like a piece of pottery, God is continually trying to mold us and shape us into his image, and at least for me anyway, sometimes as a piece of clay I am trying to wiggle my way out of his hands.
7. And when I do, I often become marred.
8. But we learned from Jeremiah 18 that even when we are marred, there is hope. Jeremiah 18:3-4 So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. ⁴ But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.
9. God doesn't give up on us. In His perfect hands, he is able to mold and shape us into something new. Into what he intended us to be in the first place.
10. So, to answer the question, why did God create me, we asked 3 questions.
 - What does God's word say?
 - What did Jesus do while here on the earth?
 - What does that mean for me?
11. What does God's word say about why were created. 1 Corinthians 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
12. We exist for the purpose of bringing God glory. We are here to praise Him and honor Him. By the way we live our lives we are meant to make God honorably famous.
13. But we need to know that submitting our lives to the Lord for His glory will set us perfectly in opposition to how most of the world lives and acts.
14. Many in the world live to bring themselves glory. Without using the exact words, they scream, look at me, look at me.

15. So important is the command to bring God glory, that when Jesus was here on the earth, that is what he did.
16. John 17:4-8 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do... 6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.
17. Interestingly enough, Jesus says I have brought you glory by finishing the work you gave me to do before he dies on the cross.
18. How could that be? That could be because while Jesus did come to earth to die for our sins, he also came to earth to bring His Father glory.
19. And the way he did that was by revealing his father to the 12 men he called to follow Him, the disciples.
20. If you look at Jesus public ministry throughout the gospels, you will find that it had everything to do with the disciples.
21. Jesus began his ministry by calling 12 disciples.
22. He brought God glory by revealing his father to those 12 disciples.
23. And then one of the very last things Jesus did after the cross, but before he ascended into heaven, is he commanded the disciples to go into all the world and make disciples.
24. So, what does that mean for me? I am unable to be the messiah, the savior of the world.
25. I am unable to purchase freedom from sin for all mankind by dying.
26. But I can be his disciple, and I can be obedient to his command to make disciples.
27. I mentioned last week. There are a couple of words we often use to describe followers of Jesus. They are good words. There is nothing wrong with them.
28. But they were not the words that Jesus used.
29. One of those words is the word, Christian. How many times is the word Christian used in the gospels? None.
30. Another word is the word believer. How many times is the word believer used in the gospels? Twice, and neither of those occasions are associated with Jesus.

31. How many times is the word disciple or disciples used in the gospels? 236 times, and all of them are associated with Jesus.
32. My belief is, if Jesus used the words Christians and believers so little, and he used the word disciples so much, it would probably be a good idea to focus on what Jesus focused on, and that is being His disciple.
33. So, this morning we are going to ask another question.

TITLE: What is a Disciple?

Probably the best definition I have ever heard, is based on the scripture where Jesus called his original disciples. The invitation is the definition.

TEXT: Matthew 4:18-22 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. **19** And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.** **20** And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. **21** And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. **22** And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. (KJV)

INTRO:

1. Based on Jesus' words in verse 19, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men, we are going to examine 3 aspects of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.
2. The first thing that is required to be a disciple of Jesus is a...

Head Level Change.

1. Matthew 4:19 And he saith unto them, **Follow me,**
2. From Jesus' perspective, a disciple is someone who follows Him.
3. I have often wondered why in the world 12 different men would drop everything they were doing and follow a guy that they didn't even know.
4. And I believe part of that answer is they did know Him. Over time, Jesus revealed himself to them and he allowed them to know who he truly was.
5. In the book of Luke chapter 5, it tells us that before Jesus asked his disciples to follow Him, he did something miraculous. He helped them catch two boatloads of fish.

6. Peter and Andrew, and James and John followed Jesus, because in a very simple, basic way, they got to see who Jesus was.
7. For sure, as they followed him, they would see many more things that would help them grow in their understanding, but they had an idea that Jesus was someone who was going to change the world.
8. Another reason why these men dropped everything and followed Jesus was because in Matthew 3:3, John had already identified Jesus as the messiah.
9. Because of their upbringing, they had been hearing all their lives about the coming messiah. So, when the man they thought was the messiah invited them to come along, it must have been very exciting.
10. As they followed, they would see even more exciting things.
11. In Matthew 14 Jesus walked on the water.
12. In John 6 Jesus calmed the sea with just a word.
13. In Mark 4 Jesus fed thousands of people with a little boy's lunch.
14. As they got to know Jesus more and more, they became convinced that he was who He said he was, he was the one they had been waiting for, and as the messiah, the son of God, that Jesus deserved to be their leader.
15. To be a disciple, we too must recognize and accept who Jesus is, and we must place ourselves under His authority.
16. When Jesus said, "Come follow Me", what he meant, and what we must begin to understand is that we are positioned behind Him. He leads. We follow.
17. John 12:26 *Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.*
18. Another aspect of following Jesus is to obey Him.
19. John 14:23-24 *"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24 Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.*
20. Jesus also let us know that following Him wouldn't always be easy. He said in Matthew 16, if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.
21. Many people in the world today like the idea of being saved from sin.
22. However, they fail to realize that believing in Jesus means

acknowledging who he is in his entirety.

23. Yes, he is savior, but he must also be Lord. He cannot be one without the other.
24. He is who he is, and we can't change who he is to fit our mold.
25. So, the first part of being a disciple is that a disciple is following Jesus.
26. We call that a head change. Those who were truly Jesus' disciples chose to make Him their authority.
27. A head level change means to know (head) who Christ is, and then make Him our head (authority).
28. When we accept that part of the definition it leads us to the second part of the definition. And that is a...

Heart Level Change.

1. Matthew 4:19 *Follow me, and I will make you...*
2. From the very beginning of his calling the disciples, Jesus let them know what his intentions were.
3. He said, "I will make you". In other words, I am going to change you into something different.
4. Maybe in the beginning the disciples thought Jesus had chosen them because of their godly traits, but that wasn't the case.
5. He was taking them as they were, regular guys who others might have passed over, and then he made it very clear that he intended to shape them and mold them into something different.
6. John 15:1-2 *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."*
7. We are currently renting a home, and out front are several shrubs.
8. I don't know exactly whose job it is to keep them cut back; I just know I haven't taken the time to do it.
9. They look terrible. What they need is for someone to come along and cut off the dead parts, remove what doesn't need to be there, and shape them into something better.
10. Jesus made it abundantly clear in John 15 that he plans to cut on us and shape us and mold us.

11. Why? Because he wants our life to bear fruit. And what kind of fruit was he looking for?
12. He has chosen us to be his representatives in the world. So, in order to represent him, we must be like him.
13. Jesus has to change our beliefs (head) and then he is going to address our attitudes (heart or character), so that we can be His messengers in the world.
14. Because it is only when we are like him that others will come to Him.
15. **Romans 8:29** For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
16. How are conformed into His image. Jesus has given us His word as a shaping force in our lives, and then he gave us the Holy Spirit, to change our hearts on the inside, so that the likeness of Christ can be produced in us.
17. And as a result of these changes in us, God uses us to help bring change in others-to help make and train disciples.
18. So, the second part of our definition of a disciple is that a disciple is one who is being changed by Christ.
19. I repeat, it is not wrong or bad to use the words Christian or believer to address someone who is a true Christ follower, but in our world today a person can call themselves Christians, and yet there is no noticeable change in their life.
20. And according to James 2:19 even the demons believe and tremble. So being a believer isn't enough either.
21. To be a disciple is to be a follower of Jesus who has made him Lord and authority in my life.
22. To be a disciple is to allow Jesus to change my nature, or my heart, to be more like him.
23. And the final part of our definition of a disciple is a...

Hands level Change.

1. **Matthew 4:19** Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.
2. A disciple is committed to the mission of Christ.
3. What is the mission of Christ, to seek and save the lost.
4. Prior to their call, the disciples were fishers of fish, but Jesus was

going to change them into fishers of men.

5. The mission of Christ is people. When we spend time with Jesus, when his Holy Spirit lives in us, the result will be that we will care about what Jesus cares about.
6. And what Jesus cares about is people.
7. Jesus came to earth to rescue that which meant everything to Him: people like you and me.
8. The people we know and love who do not know Jesus are lost for eternity unless they accept Jesus as their Lord and savior.
9. When we believe this to be true, it changes the way we think, pray, spend our time and even spend our money.
10. According to the Word of God there are only two categories of people: the saved and the unsaved.
11. **2 Corinthians 5:15-20** And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. **16** So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19** that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. **20** We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
12. When we know and follow Jesus, we look at people differently. We don't judge them, instead we reach out to them in love.
13. That's a hands level change. Our purpose and our being are conformed to the purpose and the mission of Jesus.
14. A disciple is committed to the mission of Christ.

Conclusion:

1. So, let's review for just a moment.
2. A disciple of Jesus first experiences a head level change.
3. A disciple has surrendered to Jesus as savior and lord of their life, and they accept Him as their authority or head.
4. A disciple of Jesus experiences a heart level change.
5. Jesus told the 12 disciples that he was going to change them, and the same is true for us.

6. The Lord expects our lives to bear fruit. Not perfect fruit, but growing fruit. And as we spend time with Jesus, he changes us internally. He changes who we are.
7. And finally, a disciple of Jesus experiences a hands level change. A disciple knows that Jesus saved them for a purpose and a mission, to help save people from their sin.
8. A disciple takes on the mission of Christ as their mission, and recognizes they are here to be the hands and feet of Jesus.
9. Before you get discouraged, understand something.
10. None of us are perfect at being a disciple. I am not perfect at being a disciple. I need a lot of improvement.
11. But thankfully, perfection is not what God is looking for.
12. He is looking for someone who will submit themselves to Jesus each and every day, and all of us can do that with God's help.
13. Why did God Create me? To be his disciple.
14. Can we find a place to pray this morning?
15. Head level change.
16. Heart level change.
17. Hands level change.