

1. I know I probably spoke about it to the point that you were sick of it, but our theme and our word from the Lord for 2023 was “This is Your Year of Jubilee”.
2. Part of the meaning of jubilee is freedom and another part of the meaning is restoration.
3. I was so encouraged, I had someone approach me after our Christmas Eve service, and they had tears in their eyes as they began to share with me an area of restoration the Lord had been bringing about.
4. They prayed and prayed and believed the Lord to bring restoration to a relationship, and it seemed like nothing was moving or happening, but all of a sudden, they received a phone call, and since then God has been bringing restoration to this family.
5. I was encouraged by another person who texted me the week between Christmas and New Years, and they said, this is my year of Jubilee all the way up to 11:59 new years eve, and I’m going to keep trusting God to bring jubilee my way.
6. I want to encourage you with those words that encouraged me. Keep trusting the Lord for your jubilee. Keep believing in Him to bring about that which he has promised you.
7. You may not have it yet, but it’s not because God is weak or incapable. God is still the great God that is able to do abundantly more than we can ask or think.
8. Another aspect of the year of jubilee that I felt the Lord just hammer into my soul was the fact that during jubilee, **God wants to restore us into what he originally intended us to be.**
9. I know it is easy to look around our crazy world and wonder, what is God doing? Why doesn’t he just fix this?
10. But at times we need to be reminded that things and people are not always who God originally intended them or created them to be.
11. Because of sin, because of heartache, because of the hurts and pains afflicted on us by others, what God originally intended our world to be and who God originally intended us to be can become marred and damaged and in need of restoration.
12. A great picture of that is found in the forming of a piece of pottery.

**13. 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.

14. It doesn't say why the object the potter was shaping became marred, or mis-shapen. But the potter didn't just give up, the potter formed this lump of clay into something useful as he saw fit.
15. God is always in the process of forming and shaping us. And even when what he is trying to make us into becomes damaged, 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.
16. So, because I believe that to be the case, I am going to ask all of us to ask ourselves a question.
17. You may have noticed the question plastered all over the walls in the entry, and the hallway, and even here in the sanctuary.

**TITLE: Why did God Create Me?**

**INTRO:**

1. If God is the potter and we are the clay.
2. And if in the living of this life it is possible for our lives to become marred or damaged or blemished, what was God's original intent for our life.
3. To be sure we were not all meant to be cookie cutter followers of Christ.
4. I want to be clear that we are not all meant to look the same and be the same and act the same.
5. We don't all have the same spiritual gifts, and even if we have the same spiritual gift as someone else, the way God uses us in that gift will most likely be different than others.
6. So, as we answer the question today, why did God create me, I want to direct us to think about some universal truths about how God intended us to be.
7. Truths that universally apply to all of us.
8. And to do that, we are going to answer today's question by asking 3 other questions.

9. Those questions are...
  - a. What does God's word say?
  - b. What did Jesus do while here on the earth?
  - c. What does that mean for me?
10. I won't spend much time here, but I want to be clear that I believe that God is a creator. Even more, I believe that God is my creator and your creator.
11. And I am convinced that in order for me to live God's best life, I need to allow the Holy Spirit to mold me each and every day into what God wants me to be and not what I want me to be.
12. Anybody besides me ever try to call the shots in your life. Do things on your own without God's direction. Only to find out that when I am in control of me and I am attempting to make me what I want me to be, the result is usually a colossal mess.
13. So, I will not try to convince you that is the truth. What I will say is this. If you need proof that doing life our way rather than God's way leads to utter chaos, just look around our world for a moment, and I believe you'll find all the proof you need.
14. So, this morning we are going to attempt to answer, with the help of the Holy Spirit, this question.
15. Why did God create me?
16. Remember this is a universal view, meaning it is something that applies to all of us.

### **What does God's Word say?**

1. What does God's word say about why am here and why I exist?
2. What is a part of my purpose. If we discover what our purpose is, then it will help answer the question about who we were created to be.
3. According to the scripture, we are here for the purpose of bringing Glory to God.
4. 1 Corinthians 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
5. Whatever you do. I believe the word whatever, which is a universal word, covers everything.

6. Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Another universal word in that verse is the word all. Do it all for the glory of God.
7. How many by an uplifted hand would say in agreement, I am convinced that this universally applies to all of us?
8. The word **glory: praise, honor, admiration or distinction. High reputation, honorable fame, renown.**
9. Whatever we do, we are to do it all, for the purpose of giving God praise, honoring him. Showing our admiration. Leading people to believe that God has a high reputation, honorable fame, and renown in our lives.
10. Maybe you're thinking, pastor, I already knew that. Tell me something I don't know.
11. Well, the reason why I am reminding us of this is because we need to know that if we submit our lives to God's purpose of bringing Him glory in whatever we do, we are going to be living in direct opposition to the way the vast majority of the world lives. And that matters.
12. Before I move on, I want to be clear that I am not anti-technology. I am not against social media. I am not calling the varying different ways that there are to communicate with others bad or wrong.
13. What I do want to say however, is that these tools, not bad or wrong, just tools have helped our world be better than we ever have been at breaking the command found in 1 Corinthians chapter 10.
14. Never in the history of the world has it been easier to live 24/7 for the purpose of bringing glory to ourselves, rather than bringing glory to God.
15. I want to ask you this question. Think about the forms of social media you are engaged in. Though people don't just come out and say it, how much of that activity, at its root is people saying, look at me. Look at me.
16. My life is great, my family is great. What I eat is great. My job and career is great. I have more money and stuff than I will ever need.
17. It seems to me that many people are doing whatever they can to get their 15 minutes of fame. And some of them don't care how shameful the activity is, as long as people are noticing them, and looking at them, then life is good.

18. But to be clear, living a life of look at me, look at me only fills that God shaped hole in our lives for so long, and eventually what we are left with is an emptiness that is so huge that many people in our world are determining life is just not worth living for. And they give up.
19. So important is this command to do everything we do all for the glory of God, that Jesus modeled this when he was here on earth.

## What did Jesus do?

1. John 17:4-8 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. 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.
2. Because of time limits I will have to go into more detail with this later. But notice what verse 4 says. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.
3. So, what did Jesus do while he was here on the earth? He modeled for us that bringing God glory was his work. The thing he had been sent to do.
4. Now. Don't miss this, and this is the part I am going to have to just skim over. But if you look at the headings of the chapters in the book of John you will notice that Jesus says I have finished the work you gave me to do in chapter 17. But Jesus doesn't die on the cross until chapter 19.
5. Jesus says, father, I have finished the work you gave me to do, before he was arrested. Before he was betrayed. Before he was beaten and abused. And before being nailed to the cross.
6. Yes, Jesus was sent to the earth to die for our sins and to set us free. But that wasn't the only thing he was sent to do. He was sent to the earth to bring God glory by his relationships with a group of men called disciples. How do we know that?
7. In verse 6 Jesus says I have revealed you to those you gave me out of the world. Who were they? They were the disciples.
8. In verse 7 Jesus says now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

9. Again, who is they? They are the disciples.
10. In verse 8 Jesus says, for I gave them the words you gave me, and they have accepted them. Who is they? The disciples.
11. Ok pastor. I see that. They is the disciples. But why does that matter?
12. It matters because while none of us can identify with dying on a cross, but every single one of us can identify with the command to live in such a way as to bring God glory.
13. And the command is so important that Jesus says, my work on this earth, to bring God glory by being in close relationship with my disciples, is so important that I am going to model it for you so you can do what you have seen me do.
14. I believe it is not just the words of Jesus that are sacred, I believe the actions and the methods of Jesus are sacred as well.
15. If Jesus came to earth and did it, so that we would see how to do it, then we probably ought to pay attention. So...

### **What does that mean for me?**

1. It means, I will never be the messiah. I will never be the savior of the world. I will never be able to forgive anyone of their sins. But I most certainly can be one of the they, one of the them that is in such close relationship with Jesus and with others that I too can bring God glory.
2. And what is that called? **It's called being a disciple.**
3. In the future we are going to spend a lot more time talking about what a disciple is and what a disciple does. Because calling someone a disciple, or calling ourselves disciples, is almost unheard of.
4. In fact, in most churches, the word disciple will very rarely be mentioned or used.
5. And I bring that up, not to crack a whip, not to point out something bad. Because calling people things other than disciples is not bad, I believe is just incomplete.
6. It doesn't capture the fullness of the kind of relationship Jesus wants us to have with him, or with others.
7. How many believe that the bible is The Word of God?
8. How many believe we should live and pattern our lives according to the

## Word of God?

9. How many believe that if there is a disagreement, what matters most is not what I think or what you think, but rather what God thinks through his Word?
10. So, what does the Word of God say about disciples? More specifically, how many times does Jesus and the word use the term disciples as compared to some other names we might call people by.
11. How about the word Christian or Christians. Again, I want to be clear. It is NOT bad or wrong to call someone a Christian. That is not what I am saying.
12. However, if we look at the 4 gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, how many times is the word Christian or Christians mentioned.
13. The answer would be none. Not one single time in the gospels.
14. How many times is the word Christian or Christians used in the entire bible? Only once.
15. Acts 11:26 The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.
16. That's significant because the people who began calling the disciples Christians, were not Christians themselves. They didn't accept Jesus as the son of God.
17. How about the word believers. Hear me clearly, it is NOT wrong to call someone a believer.
18. How many times is the word believers used in the gospels. Two times. But neither time was Jesus calling someone a believer.
19. How many times is the word believers used in the entire bible? The answer is 45. 45 times.
20. Now, how about the word disciples. How many times is the word disciples used in the gospels? 236 times, and every single one of them is associated with Jesus.

## Conclusion:

1. I know those are just a bunch of numbers. And we have to be careful putting too much emphasis on numbers.
2. But the reason why that stand out to me is this. When you want someone to remember what you said. You repeat it.

3. Some people repeat it so often that people get tired of them repeating it.
4. What if the reason the word disciple or disciples is repeated 267 times in the bible is so we will know how important it is to him? Or so that we don't forget it?
5. And yet in the church world today you almost never hear the word disciple.
6. Why did God create me? He created me to bring Him Glory. And I bring him glory when I am His disciple.
7. I'm going to close with that this morning. I know that is a lot to chew on.
8. All I know is this. I want to be whatever God wants me to be. And I know a tremendous number of people here today who want the same thing for their lives.
9. So, I just want to put myself in a position to let God mold me into what he wants me to be.
10. In just a moment we are going to partake of the Lord's Supper.
11. And as the worship team leads us, will you make it your goal to worship him with a heart that says, Lord, I want to be what you want me to be.
12. Pass out elements.
13. Jesus gave everything, let's give him ourselves so we can be everything he wants us to be.