

1. So far in this series we have asked the question, why did God create me?
2. According to 1 Corinthians 10:21, we are to live our lives with the purpose of bringing God glory.
3. We are to follow Jesus' example of glorifying the father.
4. In John 17, Jesus prayed, I have finished the work you gave me to do. I have revealed you to those you gave me.
5. Jesus was referring to the disciples. He had brought God glory by forming and making a group of 12 rag-tag men into disciple makers.
6. And that is what Jesus is trying to do in our lives. He is in the process of helping us grow spiritually so that we too can be disciple makers.
7. Next, we answered the question, what is a disciple?
8. Disciples of Jesus are those who are willing to allow Jesus to make a...
 - **Head level change.** Jesus leads, we follow.
 - **Heart level change.** We allow him to change our character and our inward nature so that we become more like Him.
 - **Hands level change.** Jesus' mission was people. He came to rescue people from their sins, and to make them into disciples who could make other disciples. When Jesus changes us, his mission become our mission.
9. The next question we answered was, how are disciples made?
10. Disciples are made in intimate relationships with other believers.
11. And disciples are made when they are willing to speak and receive the truth in love.
12. Last week I made a statement that was based on Ephesians 4:11-15

TEXT: **Ephesians 4:11-14** So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. **14** Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. **15** Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

TITLE: **You can do it.**

INTRO:

1. Last week I made a series of statements and I want to repeat them this morning, and we will spring from there.
2. Spiritual maturity begins to happen when everyone understands that it's everyone's responsibility to serve and build up the whole.
3. Everyone who considers themselves a part of a church should be serving somewhere in the church.
4. Going to church isn't like going to a restaurant to eat. You walk in, sit down, and someone waits on you or serves you.
5. Going to church is meant to be a place where everyone serves so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of the family of God.
6. Now, I believe each and every one of those statements is true. However, I also believe there are some other truths from the passage in Ephesians that we need to consider.
7. Ephesians 4:11-12 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...
8. In verse number eleven, we see what has been called the five-fold ministry.
9. Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers. I fit into those ministries by being a pastor and teacher.
10. And then in verse twelve, we find the role that these five-fold ministries are to work together to fulfill.
11. To equip his people for works of service.
12. So, if every believer is called to serve, but not every believer serves, the next logical question is to ask why? Why is there a disconnect between what the bible says and the reality that we see.
13. And in my opinion, the blame falls first and foremost on the people who have been called into the five-fold ministry.
14. I believe the single greatest reason why more people don't serve in the church is that the apostles, prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers have not done their job effectively, if they do it very much at all. BTW, I'm talking to myself because I am a part of the five.

15. Those of us in the five-fold ministry have not done a good enough job of equipping the saints for works of service.
16. In fact, the model that many of us has set, not necessarily intentionally, is the exact opposite.
17. In the KJV of the bible it says **Ephesians 4:12** For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry...
18. If I am interpreting that correctly, the ministry of the church is to be carried out by the people of the church.
19. Those of us in the five-fold ministries are supposed to equip the body of Christ to do the ministry.
20. But part of what I believe has happened is that rather than equipping the church to carry out the ministry, those of us in the five-fold have taken on the ministry, we do it ourselves, which leaves very little time to train and equip others to do ministry.
21. And then we who are supposed to be equipping others for ministry, complain that the load is too heavy and demanding, when in truth we are trying to carry a load that God never intended one person to carry, but rather a group of people to carry.
22. I know this is the first time I have expressed this from the pulpit, but behind the scenes I have been talking about this for over 2 years.
23. And again, I ask why? Why have those of us who are supposed to be equipping others for ministry taken on the biggest part of the ministry.
24. What I am about to say next is my opinion, so I want to make that clear. I believe there are several reasons.
 - a. We are following the example of those who came before us. We're just doing what we have seen done. And those we learned it from just followed the example of those before them.
 - b. We have given the impression that ministry is something that is done by people who have been to bible collage or seminary. In some ways we have made ministry a profession for a few, when in reality it is supposed to be a way of life for all of us.
 - c. We have given the impression that ministry is something that happens on a stage. And again, only a select few are qualified to be up on the stage.

- d. Having the training, being up on the stage, being one of the few who can do ministry makes us feel needed and wanted, which makes us feel good about ourselves.
25. On behalf of myself, because I can't speak for anyone else, I want to apologize and say I am sorry.
26. Because what I have just described is I have described mindsets and attitudes that I have held at various times throughout the past 30 years.
27. The title of today's message is, you can do it. But I fear that how I have lead over the years has sent the message, you can't do it. Only a select few of us can do it. And that is not what the bible says. It is not the truth. And it is not what I believe.
28. I will say, it wasn't intentional. Up until a couple of years ago I didn't even know I was doing it. But I feel the need to be transparent and own up to it.
29. You say Pastor, why are you telling us all this? Because I am asking you to help me change the reality, and for us to move back to the biblical definition of church that God originally intended.
30. Where the ministry of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers is to equip people to do the ministry.
31. And the beginning place I believe is to change the message. And the message is...You can do it.
32. I know you can do it because God created you to do it. It's why you are here on planet earth.
33. And so that brings me to another question. Do what? What is it that the bible calls us to do?
34. I believe our lack of understanding of what we are called to do is another reason why people like me have inadvertently lead wonderful people like you in the wrong direction.

We are not called to make converts; we are called to make disciples.

1. **Matthew 28:18-20** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

2. The passage I have just read to you is called the great commission.
3. Jesus begins by saying, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
4. There's that head change that we talked about earlier. Jesus has all authority. That means he is Lord.
5. He is meant to lead, and we are meant to follow.
6. And because he has all authority, it is He who gets to decide where we go and what we do when we get there.
7. And what is it that he tells us to do. He doesn't say go and make Christians or converts or believers. He tells them and us to go and make disciples.
8. We talked earlier about John 17 where Jesus says to the father, I have completed the work you gave me to do.
9. A couple of weeks ago I highlighted that Jesus prays this before he dies on the cross. Jesus doesn't die on the cross until a couple chapters later.
10. So, how could Jesus say, I have completed the work you gave me to do? Because Jesus' purpose for coming to the earth was not just to die for our sins, he also came to give us the model of how Christians can accurately represent Him and deliver his message to the world.
11. And that model is making disciples.
12. If Jesus had not trained disciples who could in turn train others, the gospel message would have been lost. None of us here today would have ever heard the message of Jesus.
13. Maybe you wonder. But pastor. Don't we have the bible and the Holy Spirit to reach the world. Yes, the bible and the Holy Spirit are major aspects of what draws a person to Jesus, but if that was all that was needed, why would Jesus tell us to go and make disciples?
14. If that was all that was needed why wouldn't the world already be 100% saved?
15. Because that's not all that is needed. What is needed is for us to do what Jesus commanded us to do, and that is to make disciples.
16. But I don't know how to make disciples. Ok. Can you learn? You can do it.

We are the A-team.

1. Now, when I say A-team, I am not referring to the television show in the eighties about 4 soldiers who went around blowing things up.
2. I'm talking about the best. The cream of the crop. The first choice.
3. All throughout middle school and high school I really liked to play basketball.
4. I was on our school team for about 6 years. In middle school they had the B-team that was made up of 5th and 6th graders, and the A-team made up of the 7th and 8th graders.
5. Nobody really cared about the B-team. There was no trophy. Nothing to win. We were just out there competing.
6. But being on the A-team was different. There was a tournament. There was a championship. There was a trophy.
7. Everybody including me wanted to be on the A-team. The A-team was at the top of our small little world. But it meant something.
8. As it relates to the ministry of the church. As it relates to carrying out the great commission, I want you to know that you are the A-team. And there is no B-team. You and I are it.

9. We are plan A and there is no plan B.

10. If you have ever felt unimportant to the cause of Christ and the work of the ministry. If you have ever felt like the only people qualified to do ministry were professionals on a stage. I am here today to set the record straight.
11. You can do it. You are important to the cause of Christ and the work of the ministry. In fact, according to Ephesians 4:12 it's a part of your calling. Not because I say so, but because...

The bible says so.

1. In a moment I am going to read several scriptures. But before I do I want to ask you to do something.
2. Will you express faith in the word of God?
3. Will you say out loud with me. I believe I am who the word of God says I am. Pray.
4. According to the bible you have been given the Holy Spirit.

5. **1 Corinthians 6:19** Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;
6. According to the bible you are a part of the priesthood of believers.
7. **1 Peter 2:5** you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
8. According to the bible God had plans for you before you were you.
9. **Ephesians 2:8-10** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
10. According to the bible you are gifted, whether you feel gifted or not.
11. **Romans 12:4-8** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.
12. **1 Peter 4:10-11** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. **11** If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.
13. According to the bible, you are a vital part of the body of Christ.
14. **1 Corinthians 12:12-13** Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—

Conclusion:

1. I have such respect for amputees. Those who have lost a limb.
2. I respect them because in spite of the terrible emotional and physical difficulty they have been through, they keep on going. They keep moving forward in life.
3. Someone asked the question one time, if you had to go without one part of your body, a limb. A hand. A foot. Which one would you want to give up.
4. And the response came back, I don't want to lose any of them. All of

them are important.

5. In the body of Christ, in the family of God, as a member of that body, **you are valuable, you matter, and the body can't do without you.**
6. We know without a doubt that one of the lies of the enemy is that he continually tells us we are not enough. We're not good enough.
7. That our mistakes and failures and sins disqualify us from being used by God.
8. And it breaks my heart that I, the church, our culture, may have inadvertently sent the same message.
9. So today I want to set the record straight.
10. God has got a calling on your life for ministry.
11. You have the Holy Spirit living inside you, and you have gifts given to you by the Holy Spirit that make you valuable.
12. You are loved and God can use you to love others.
13. And what I'm asking all of us to do today is to simply surrender to God's truth about who He says we are.
14. Have everyone stand.
15. Pray.
16. Invite everyone to the front.
17. Lord, I trust, and I believe that I am who you say I am.
18. I submit and surrender to your calling for my life.