

Matthew Week 18 - Oct 17, 2021

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Associate Pastor

Announcements:

- **Set Free** – end of this month! If you are reading this... You should come! 😊
- **Celebrate! Food and Clothing Drive**
 - We had 1253 people come through on the clothing side! 1000 hampers given away!
 - Over 100 volunteers on the day of the give away and approx. 50 per day the entire week! YOU GUYS ARE AMAZING! You are the church!
- **Nursery announcement for this weekend:**
 - Plan to open Nursery on Oct 24 for 9am service AFTER WORSHIP
- **Current Covid restrictions:**
 - **Masks** – please wear them throughout the duration of the service. I know it is hard!
 - **Vaccinated or unvaccinated** – we are welcoming both. Let's stay united!
- **NEW Series starting at the END of this MONTH** – P. Ray is going to be bringing us through the **Grand Story of the word.**
 - With increasing attacks on the bible being made, it's important that we understand what we are reading and why it is important.
 - We often focus on the heart and will continue to do so! But this series is going to focus on the MIND. Renewing the mind.
 - The Grand Story is a REDEMPTION STORY – let's be praying that the Spirit uses this to strengthen our foundation as a church and for P.Ray as he preps

Church-Wide Prayer Request: we week seeing further answers to our Church wide Prayer Requests!

2. SC family: Restoration, healing, and unity.

- **Many of you reported to me this past week that we took a big step in that direction last week!** Praise the Lord for this and let's keep working towards this. Letting go of hurts, unifying on a common vision to Love God & Love people by being a LIVING TESTIMONY of Jesus on the earth and seek to fulfill the Great Commission by modeling Christ and sharing him with those we encounter! LET'S PRAY.

Matthew Week 18 The Great Command & Commission

Our responses matter – our reactions matter – our focus matters

Our Mission statement: Love God, Love People, Be Discipled, Make Disciples

I DO – WE DO – YOU DO

A. Putting the Testimony of Jesus FIRST in our troubles

Philippians 3:7-21 (ESV) But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ...that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

The MOST important: The Testimony of Jesus in our lives and how that is being displayed to the world around us through our focus on LIVING the Great Commandment and FULFILLING the Great Commission.

Practice: we are going to go through the steps we talked about last week.

1. Pray like Jesus prayed:

a. Covid 19: restrictions, sickness, loss

- i. **Take a moment and think about what your thoughts, feelings, opinions are...** Bring them to God in prayer. Tell Him how you are feeling and then ask Him to give you His perspective & heart.
- ii. **Take a moment to think about those you disagree with...** bring them to prayer. Ask God to meet them where they are at and to meet you where you are at... then pray that the Lord unifies BELIEVERS and uses them to witness to UNBELIEVERS through this crisis.

b. Church Split: hurts, right or wrong, differing beliefs

- i. Take a moment and tell God how you are feeling (confess any bitterness or gossip)... pray and ask God to give you His heart and perspective.
- ii. **Take a moment and pray for Kris and those attending Crossview.** Pray for them as you would pray for our church family.

2. Prioritize like Jesus prioritized: give Jesus your agenda, heart, desires, opinions

- a. Jesus, "if possible, may this cup be taken from me, but not as I will. But as you will."
- b. **Prayerfully surrender your agenda,** opinions, heart, desires and what you think is best to the Lord. Then, ask him to align your will with His will and pray for lost people to find Jesus and for His Kingdom to come on the earth.
- c. **IMPORTANT:** Sometimes He gives us back what we gave to Him, other times He changes our course – But He ALWAYS does what is GOOD & BEST. We can TRUST HIM.

3. Love like Jesus loved: friends/family, the least of these, neighbors, enemies

- a. PRAYER – if you are going to LOVE like Jesus. You will have to approach it on a foundation of PRAYER.
 - i. Pray – ask the Lord to highlight two people – one who you are close with – the other that you don't usually contact – that you can encourage.
 - ii. Write them a note of encouragement. Text, email, on paper. And send it to them or give it to them this week.

4. Suffer like Jesus suffered:

- a. Prayerfully confess any offense, gossip, complaining that you have done. Then ask Jesus to fill you with His Holy Spirit and to bear his fruit in your life.
- b. REPEAT the process above. PRAY, PRIORITIZE, LOVE. REPEAT.

B. The Great Commission – GO and make disciples

Matthew 28:16-20 (ESV) Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 (ESV) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Besides laying down your life for Jesus... there is probably no greater expression of love than surrendering your life to Jesus and sharing him with the world around you.

- **For example:** can you imagine having a spouse or dating someone who didn't ever want to be seen with you in public? Or would deny they knew you if people asked? Or one that was more passionate and interested in their friends and hobbies than you?

Picture: Cruise ship vs War Ship

- **What is the main function:**
 - Cruise ship – to make sure everyone has a good time, they are well taken care of, served, and enjoying themselves.
 - War ship – to be ready for difficult circumstances, whether battle, storms, or other crisis.
- **How do you define success:**
 - Cruise ship – good weather, each person feels like they had a good time, nothing bad happened.
 - War ship – unity of the crew and ability to operate as one through storms or battle
- **Who does the work:**
 - Cruise ship – you have staff that work to please the passengers
 - War ship – all the crew has a function and role on the ship. There are no passengers.

We have an internal battle with two realities...

Ephesians 6:10-13 (ESV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Philippians 3:20 (ESV) But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

We were made for our Heavenly home... eternity is written on our hearts. We long for PEACE & REST.

While we are here... We are here on purpose. If we are here ON PURPOSE, we are here FOR PURPOSE.

The New Testament picture of the Church better fits the description of the warship!

Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 (ESV) For the body does not consist of one member but of many... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

What's at stake?

FIRST: The Mission of the Church is at stake! We were meant to function as a Body(warship) where everyone has a purpose and place to contribute and everyone is needed to function properly.

SECOND: there is a lost and dying world that will spend an eternity apart from Jesus if they do not receive him as Lord and Savior. THINK: families, friends, neighbors, classmates, coworkers!

Jesus' plan from His resurrection until His return – sending his Holy Spirit to work through his body the Church.

Changing gears... how do we shift?

Knowledge based discipleship vs Obedience based discipleship

- **Matthew 23:2-3 (ESV)** "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.
- Orthopraxy means "correct practice" or "correct behavior" orthodoxy, which is "correct teaching" or "correct doctrine."
- The Bible teaches that correct doctrine comes before, and informs, correct behavior. Without correct beliefs, we cannot have truly correct behavior. If we truly have correct beliefs, our behavior should align with those beliefs.
- **The New Testament clearly presents salvation as being a gift of God's grace**, apart from our works; yet it also calls us to do good works as a result of our salvation.
- Christianity is not a religion based on performance, but it is a belief system that affects the way we live.
- **James 1:21-25 (ESV)** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

1 John 3:18 (ESV) Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Our goal as a church is: “To genuinely care for people and to make fully devoted followers of Jesus within our church and region, who are being renewed and equipped for mission, and do it ALL for the glory of God.”

Where do we start? PRAYER & the HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 1:8 (ESV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

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Week 18: Passage of the Week: Matthew 28

MAP Challenge Jesus’ call to those who follow him:

M - memorize – review Matthew 22:38-39 & Matthew 28:18-20

A – application – discipling others to Jesus does not have to be complicated. We are simply being intentional to be a LIVING TESTIMONY FOR JESUS. Two challenges this week: 1) good works challenge – who is someone you can bless or serve this week? 2) share what Jesus is doing in your life challenge – who is someone you can “casually” share what Jesus is doing in your life with? *(I like to take stuff from my devotions, but you can use anything. Be sensitive if people tune out as you share! Don’t force it – I have gotten halfway through sharing and stopped many times. And many other times it has turned into a wonderful God conversation. I am PRAYING FOR YOU THIS WEEK AS YOU STEP OUT – Stefan. If you read this far, I would love to hear from you with what you did and how it went!*

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P – pray – Pray for the lost people in our region to be open to the Gospel and for our church to grow in loving God, people, and sharing the good news with those around us.