



Discussion Guide

Sermon Synopsis

It has often been said that last words are weighty words. They though may be brief and few, then tend to impact us greatly and stick with us for a long time. In this message, we study the closing of Jesus' earthly ministry and discover the final words of Jesus as He drew the disciples near and gave them the final charge. Though these words are familiar to most, in many ways the Church is struggling greatly to fulfill the charge. We pray that you will listen closely today to be encouraged and challenged to live out your calling as a follower of Jesus.

April 28, 2024

Matthew 28:18-20

One Liner of the Week

The call is clear, "Go and disciple." Will you answer the call?

Food for the Soul

M: Luke 5:1-11

T: Luke 10:1-20

W: Matthew 5:13-16

T: John 14:16-31

F: John 16:5-15

S: Romans 1:16-21

S: Romans 10:12-15

Question #1

While we know that not everyone is going to be drawn to us in a way that fosters dialogue and opportunities for Gospel conversations, what things might we do, either intentionally or unintentionally, *that hinder people from being willing to listen when we speak of Jesus?*

Question #2

The great power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is the fuel of a Christian's evangelism. **Read Galatians 5:16-26** as a group and then focus on verse 22 & 23. The proof of conversion is found in whether a person is increasingly demonstrating the "fruits of the Spirit" that the Apostle Paul lists, here. Talk about each of the fruits Paul mentions. *Which of these do not affect our social lives in some way? Does any genuinely born-again follower of Christ have an excuse to be a cold, difficult, argumentative, or confrontational person?* There is comfort to be found in being open and vulnerable with people you care about. *As a group, consider discussing specific fruits of the Holy Spirit that you realize you are lacking in. Encourage one another in ways to grow in these areas for the sake of being more effective evangelists.*

Question #3

We are called to be a people marked out in the world by the manifestation of the fruits of the Holy Spirit listed in Galatians 5. But that is not all we are to be known for. We are a Spirit indwelt people with a message. If we are to be effective evangelists, it isn't enough to be nice, to be social, to be likeable and relatable. We must know the content of our message and be able to speak about it confidently. Our message is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul said, in Romans 1:16, that the Gospel "*is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes...*" Pretty important, huh? Yes, it is. We must know what the Gospel "is". **Hint:** It isn't a formula of words. It isn't a step-by-step process. It isn't a series of verses that a person must believe in their head only. The Gospel, the Good News, is a person. *Who is He? What has He done? What is He doing? And what will He do in the future? Why is this important? Finally, what will you do with this message based on your answers?*

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you in ever increasing measure. May His Spirit dwell in you all, richly. May the world know you are His by your love for Him which is proven in your love for them.

~Wills Kitchen

Leader Guide

Hey, you... Yea, you! Yes! You are an evangelist!

According to Princeton University psychologists, it takes people as little as 1/10th of a second to form an opinion of another person when they first encounter them. That's shocking. But think about it... Do you make flash assumptions about a person based on their facial expression? How quickly do you do that? What ideas do you immediately form about someone based solely how they're dressed? If we're honest, we make assumptions based on our own preconceived notions about what is normal, and we do so quickly. It's a two-way street my friends. Just as we do, others do as well.

If it is true that people form such fast impressions other people (and we have no reason to doubt that), and if we really want to shine the light of Jesus into this dark world, it's obvious that we should always try to always put our best foot forward. Jesus' call to go and make disciples is your calling and my calling, after all. *1 Peter 2:8 reads "And He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall. They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them."* Peter is talking about the Gospel message, here. The Gospel is a rock of offense to hardened hearts. So, if they reject our message, let it not be because we walk around scowling, frowning, or being generally unapproachable! Maybe you would say "I'm not attractive enough to be an evangelist. I'm not a good talker. I'm not social enough for that. I'm just not a happy, approachable person." Some might even say "I'm just not called to be an evangelist." First off, the Bible is abundantly clear: Every single genuine follower of Jesus is called to be an evangelist! The Great Commission is your commission! Christ's command to go and make disciples is your duty as well! But if you fall into the category that says you're not joyful enough, social enough, approachable enough, or some other shortcoming, please consider Paul's words in Galatians 5: 22-23a: *"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."* These character traits are the markers of mature and genuine Christian faith. Many of these things are social in nature. You are called to be a loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled follower of Christ. No excuses. Get in the Word and on your knees in prayer, today, and begin cultivating these things in yourself. You are called to be an evangelist, friends. So let the Spirit's fruit grow in you and share your faith in Christ with a big smile on your face.

Social graces alone are not enough, though. We're called to be followers of Christ and to call others to follow Him too. We have a message to share. You must know this message inside and out. This message is the Gospel. Paul said, in Romans 1:16, *"It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes..."* Therefore, this message is **all kinds of important!** So, what is it? Is it a step-by-step formula that the lost must follow? Is it a series of verses they must believe? What is the Gospel? I'm here to tell you it's none of those things, dear friends. No. The Gospel, the Good News, the greatest news of all is a PERSON! The Gospel is the message concerning the person and works of Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah! And where do we learn of Him? What are we to tell the lost about Him? We find everything we need in the 66 books of the Bible. It's all about Him. We are all about Him! Who Jesus is and what Jesus has done is what saves people from every tribe, nation, and tongue. So, get in the Word. Get into the four Gospels. Make Jesus the focal point of your daily lives and you'll find that His name rolls off your tongue freely, His goodness and lovingkindness radiates through you to all those you encounter. You'll find yourselves in Gospel conversations that may prove the difference between eternity spent under God's awful wrath or basking in the sunshine of His glory forever and ever. This is your calling. So, let's get to work!