

## “Shift:Accelerating on the Discipleship Highway - Ready to Go!”

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Timothy 2:1-21

Graphics: car, highway, shifter

Big Truth: Discipleship is not a passive event or anything we complete in our lifetime. Following Jesus is a process that takes intentional engagement and sacrifice to live fully into the call of Jesus to, “follow me.” There are milestones along the way to help orient us and show us what areas we can engage: Worship, Community, Openness, Obeying, Serving, and Sharing.

Focus phrase: Our ministry teams are the bus through which we shift the church.

### 1. Introduction

- A. When Jesus called out a few fishermen on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, they followed Him.
- B. When Jesus invited a tax collector to work for him, he followed Jesus.
- C. When Jesus walked alongside women from Bethany, they followed Him.
- D. Jesus walked around the whole region of Galilee and Jerusalem, healing and teaching, and people saw what he did and some followed him. Some did not.
- E. When Jesus was dying on the cross, having endured the pain of torture and crucifixion, a soldier standing nearby believed that Jesus is the Son of God.
- F. Even one of the thieves hanging on his own cross next to Jesus’ put his faith in Jesus and became, for a moment, his follower.
- G. After Jesus walked out of his own grave and appeared to the women and men who followed him, even MORE believed and followed. It was then that Jesus gave them - gave us - a MISSION. In Matthew 28, we read these words, “Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- H. Before Jesus ascended back to heaven, after his resurrection, Jesus gave them a VISION of what they would be doing now. They asked, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:6-8)
- I. From that day on, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, women and men have been making the decision to believe in and follow this

Jesus as their way of life, their passionate pursuit, and their thankful focus. To be on mission to make disciples and realize the vision of being witnesses.

- J. Today, we wrap up our sermon series that's been focused completely on what it means, 2,000 years later, to be a follower of this Jesus today...what it means to be a disciple of Jesus engaged in mission and seeing the vision.
- K. And not just a disciple, but an **intentional disciple**...one who is actively growing from exploring what Jesus means, to a true disciple who's whole life is centered on Jesus - in worship, community, openness, obeying, serving, and sharing.
- L. We called this series SHIFT because shifting a car or motorcycle or bicycle takes an intentional act of clutching-shifting-accelerating-repeating in order to move down the road. The same goes for the follower of Jesus who has been saved and empowered for the work of discipleship.
- M. This morning, we gave each person a Road Map to Intentional Discipleship on your seat. If you didn't get one, just let the ushers know and they will bring you one. There's a lot of information in this packet, and we'll review this in a few minutes, but this is our guide to intentional discipleship.
- N. Over the last 6 weeks, we've asked each person to give some serious thought about where they are currently in a Life of Worship...a life of Community...a life of Openness, a life of Obeying, a life of Serving, and a life of Sharing. I pray that time has been a great way to see where the growth can occur in your life, and that you've begun to SHIFT and accelerate on the discipleship highway.
- O. This morning, as we wrap up this series, we'll be doing some shifting of our own. We're broadening our focus from you and me...to US. We're zooming out the map to see how all this fits with the church...our leadership teams, our learning teams, our outreach teams, and every group that serves in the church and out in the community.
- P. The Growth and Vision Team, starting today, will be working with the team leaders, team members, and every place where people gather, to infuse these six waypoints into the DNA of the church. This isn't a once-and-done series, but a whole new way to keeping us on the discipleship highway together.
- Q. As we get some equipping in this today, let's pray and then open our bibles to Paul's instructions for Timothy and the early church.
- R. PRAY!!!
- S. Turn with me to 2 Timothy 2, starting in verse 1. The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to his younger friend Timothy, who was leading the church in Ephesus.

## 2. Scripture

## **A. READ 2 Timothy 2:1-2**

- i. I don't know if you've ever played the Telephone Game, but you sit in a circle and the leader whispers something trivial in the person's ear to the right. That person whispers what they heard to the next person and so on until it gets back to the leader. Every time, the message that the leader hears at the end is drastically different than what he said because we don't always listen to speak correctly.
- ii. The Telephone Game is a terrible way to communicate important things! Instead, it's better to speak truth to a group, with many witnesses, and then have those people pass that truth to others who are good at teaching.
- iii. This is the whole process of discipling those around us. We hear and see what Jesus said and did. People like Paul teach guys like Timothy. Guys like Timothy lead women and men to teach and lead others in Ephesus. We hear the same truth, as written in the Bible, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and we teach and lead others. That's intentional discipleship for the church.
- iv. In verses 3-19 (I won't read it to us, but) this whole section is about the church engaging in intentional discipleship - like a soldier serving in the army, an athlete competing in the games, or a farmer doing the hard work of raising crops. Being confident in the truth about the gospel. There's a goal...and Paul asks the church to think about what it takes to be a disciple and disciple others.
- v. Even though Paul is in prison while writing this, he wouldn't let ANYTHING stop him from teaching others about Jesus.
- vi. He's fired up passionate about Jesus even from prison. Then in verse 20...

## **B. READ 2 Timothy 2:20-21**

- i. As we think about Paul's encouragement to the church here, I can't help but think about our leaders, our ministry teams, and each and every person growing in intentional discipleship.
- ii. Paul reminds Timothy that in every house, there are things (utensils...tools) made of gold and silver - things people notice...things of beauty. But there are also tools made of wood and clay - not beautiful or flashy, but useful every day. You know this about YOUR house as well.
- iii. But he's really not talking about tools in your house right? He's talking about people...about disciples of Jesus.
- iv. All those disciples who reject the distractions of the world and turn to Jesus to intentionally follow him, will be cleansed, dedicated and useful for the work that God has for that person, that team, that ministry to do.

- v. As much as this applies to us as individuals, as we grow in our intentional discipleship, it also applies to our ministry teams, and the church.
- vi. Some teams are flashy - the Praise Team or the Worship Team...the Church Council...the Hospitality Team (LOVE those folks!) Other teams are in the background - the Safety and Security Team or Safe Sanctuaries Team...the Trustees Team.
- vii. Yet, every single one of our teams is called to be disciple-making teams for the transformation of its team members, the church, and the world.
- viii. This is a new way of thinking - that every team is called to be dedicated and useful for the Kingdom work of making disciples. To be on mission. To be holy and pointing people to the holy work of that mission.
- ix. Paul has a vision for the church to use every tool for God's glory, gold, silver, wood, and clay...

### **3. Application**

- A. In this church, we have people serving in countless ways. Some are flashy like gold and some are not, like clay. This morning, instead of me trying to tell us about how this works and how we can grow in this as a church, I've invited 4 people to give us short testimonies. These four people you may know or not. Yet, they are leading and serving, worshipping and building community, sharing, obeying and being open to God. They are part of the body of Christ, becoming like Jesus and joining Jesus in ministry.
- B. Each of them is a witness to how one or more of the waypoints we've been studying has had a direct impact on them through their ministry team or teams.
- C. TESTIMONIES...
- D. Thank you, Tory, Carol, Luke, and Kim...

### **4. Conclusion**

- A. The mandate for intentional discipleship is found in Matthew 28 - Go make disciples... The vision for intentional discipleship comes in 2 Timothy 2 - you'll be dedicated and useful for God's mission to make MORE disciples.
- B. We've heard some passionate testimonies from 4 of our leaders. Each of them is passionate in a different area, with different gifts, and unique ways to live our faith. Yet, each one is being cleansed and used for God's purposes as He has called Tory, Luke, Carol, and Kim.
- C. What about the other teams? What about the leaders? What about you?
- D. Jesus has saved you by grace through faith and given you everlasting life. That's the Good News, church!

- E. But salvation is not all there is. There's also vocation. It's what you DO because of the Good News. Jesus loves the fact that you've been saved by grace through faith, but he also wants every person and family in our community to have the opportunity to believe in and follow Him, like those first disciples.
- F. Your vocation is join together with the others that are here, to grow into intentional discipleship...to intentionally engage with the Holy Spirit in accelerating on the discipleship highway.
- G. He's given you and me and us a job...to keep growing (keep learning how to be dedicated and useful for every good work) in the 6 waypoints until we're centered in Christ...and inviting and walking with others in our mission to make disciples for the transformation of the world.
- H. When we were touring the Grand Canyon this week, we hopped on a bus which took us to places where the views were amazing! **The church is the bus that we hop on to get to the place where we are growing together to become centered in Christ for the sake of others. The view is amazing from God's perspective.**
- I. The vision for our church is that every time we gather, every worship, every event, every meeting, every class and group, every time we go out into the community, every place we go, we talk about and incorporate worship, community, openness, obeying, serving, and sharing.
- J. This is God's call on the Church: for us to be a life-giving, grace-filled, robustly-passionate, servant-minded, kneeling, loving, inviting, bible-directed, forgiving, risk-taking, Spirit-filled, on-fire, Satan-defeating, Jesus people who stop at NOTHING to radically love people and beat a path to the cross and new life in Jesus...so that EVERY person and family in our community has the opportunity to believe in and follow Jesus.
- K. Worship. Community. Openness. Obeying. Serving. Sharing. Together.
- L. Almost everything we do falls into one of these waypoints. Our new goal is that every team be doing and pointing us together to grow in every waypoint.
- M. We've heard some great testimonies of how some of the leaders already see this at work. Now's the time to Clutch-Shift-Accelerate-Repeat.
- N. Just like it's not optional for individuals to be growing in or doing just one or two of these waypoints, our teams must be vehicles for us to be growing in every waypoint.
  - i. The Missions Team worshipping and obeying.
  - ii. The Church Council sharing and building community.
  - iii. The Ladies of Light serving and sharing.

- iv. The Community Outreach Team being open to God and worshipping.
- v. You get the idea...what about YOUR team? Your class? Your ministry?
- O. It doesn't matter if your team or ministry is wood, clay, iron, straw, silver, or gold. It doesn't matter if it's a flashy ministry that everyone sees, or a ministry that NO ONE sees. God is calling every one in every team in every area of ministry to be cleansed and ready to be used for His glory...to clutch-shift-accelerate-repeat to grow in intentional discipleship.
- P. Use your RoadMap. When I was a kid, we used to love of AAA TripTiks (remember those?). This is like that. It includes the categories and waypoints. It includes a table of the waypoints and what it looks like to be growing in each waypoint from Exploring to Centered, as the Holy Spirit draws you into deeper water. The Road Map includes the handouts we have given out each week. This is your resource for ministry...to guide your teams and team leaders...and for US to accelerate on the discipleship highway.
- Q. I can't wait to see where God takes us together!
- R. Ready! Set! SHIFT!
- S. Let's pray...