

The Way of the Church: Personal Responsibility

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 September 2019

[0 : 00] But we're in Matthew chapter 4. This morning we'll be in verses 12 through 25. Matthew chapter 4 verses 12 through 25. We have taken the last several weeks and we have looked at the church.

We've been looking at not only just a vision for the church, but the values of the church. We have looked at four. This is the fourth value that we have, core value of the church.

This will be the third week we've looked at this value. But I may refresh you before we kind of get into it. We started this series with a biblical vision of the church.

What we think the Bible is calling the church to be. And how we feel like the Bible is leading the church and urging the church. And the vision that we came up for that is really just an overflow of my own personal convictions.

And that I shared with you and I kind of captured it in a sentence. And I gave it to you and I'll give it to you again. That the church is to be the visible, properly functioning fellowship. Reaching out into the community and world Christ has placed us in with the love of the Father.

[0 : 58] That the church, three things there is to be visible, properly functioning, and reaching. And from those three things, we looked at kind of the values the church holds to throughout Scripture and the value we should hold to in our personal lives.

And the first value we looked at was the weekly corporate worship of the saints. That we value the weekly corporate worship of the entire body of every member of the church. And we saw how God calls us to worship.

He created us to worship. He fashioned us to worship. He has set eternity in the heart of all man that man may worship something. And man is always trying to fill the void of worship with something, somewhere, somehow.

And we looked at the value that Scripture gives to worship. And how He commands us to be undone by the mercies of the Lord. And He commands us to be overwhelmed with His grace. And all of these things really just lead us to this place of exalted worship.

The book of Psalms says, Sing to the Lord a new song. It encourages believers to sing to the Lord a new song. And one of the things that you find throughout church history is that the saints really begin to mature when new songs of praise begin to flow out of congregations.

[2 : 06] That is, you say, Oh, you want to bring us into the contemporary society. It's not what I'm saying. I mean, when those local assemblies are so captivated by the goodness and greatness of God that they have to make up a song because no song on record puts into words what they're feeling, then they're really reaching this place of worship.

So worship is a command and it is a value we have. It is a value that we hold to, that God has called the church to worship. We value, the second one, was a growing knowledge of God's Word in every member.

Remember, a growing knowledge of God's Word in every member. I absolutely value the Word of God. And I value the Word of God to the point not just because I'm a pastor, not just because this is my living, this is what I give my days to.

Long before I gave my days to the study of God's Word and long before I was able to be a pastor or a preacher of the gospel, the reason God led me to that was because of the value He placed in my heart for the Scripture.

It was through the Scripture that He led me to those things. And I value not just my own knowledge of the Word of God, but I want you to know the Word of God. I want you to know more of it today than you knew of it yesterday.

[3 : 15] I want you to know more of it tomorrow than you know of it today. I want you to be surrounded by great teachers and preachers of the Word of God. And I want you to encourage one another as iron sharpens iron.

I want you to have these conversations that talk about the Word of God and what it's doing in your life because we see throughout Scripture that the Word of God is the only answer to the things and the problems and the struggles of our life. So we value a growing knowledge of the Word of God. The third one was that we value every part doing its part, every part properly functioning in the role that Jesus has called them to. A great truth we find in Scripture is that the moment you came to Jesus Christ, He imparted to you a spiritual gift.

You have been gifted by the Spirit. Sometimes it befits your natural abilities, and sometimes it goes farther beyond your natural abilities. Naturally, I'm not a public speaker.

Naturally, I'm not one. I wasn't one that was very comfortable given when I took speech in college before I was taking pastor classes. When I took speech at MTSU, I hated the class. I didn't like standing up in front of the class.

[4 : 14] I didn't like talking in front of people. My brother used to give me a hard time because I could not stand going to fast food restaurants where I had to stand at a counter and order food. It just bothered me to no end. Now I don't like drive-thru windows because they always call me a ma'am, and they always say I have a girl's voice, so I just almost refused to go through those.

But anyway, I just did not like standing in front of people and talking publicly. That wasn't my natural ability. But God gave me, I believe, the spiritual gift of pastoral ministry, of teaching and preaching. And so He took it beyond my natural tendencies. Sometimes He takes what is naturally yours and your giftedness and enhances it for the benefit of the church. Sometimes He does something with you that you never thought He would do.

But the truth of the matter is that the moment you came to Christ, you have been given a gift. And the gift is not for your benefit. The Bible says He has gifted you for the benefit of others, to the building up of the church, which means the church is really built up when every part of the church is doing the gift that God has given it to do.

When you're doing your part and I'm doing my part, all of a sudden the church becomes built up and the church begins magnified. And then we began to look at this fourth and final value, the one we spent the past two weeks on and the one we're finishing up today, and that is that we value prayerfully sustained missions, including both churchwide and personal evangelistic efforts in our surrounding ministry fields.

[5 : 38] We value prayerfully sustained missions, including both churchwide and personal evangelistic efforts in our surrounding ministry fields. And we looked at this, that the word missions is not found in Scripture.

Rather, we find in Scripture the church being referred to as the way. It was a way of life. It was a way of being. And that way spilled over into conversations, and it spilled over into missional activity that we saw through the missionary travels of Paul and Barnabas and others.

And we saw how God used the way they lived to take the gospel, the message they had, to the people that so desperately needed it. We spent the past two weeks looking at the way of the church.

We have seen how the way of the church is just a natural outflow of its relationship with Christ. But this week, as we wrap this message up, and we're bringing it down, really, to where the rubber hits the road, and we're talking about the church and the importance of the church and how much we love the church.

By the way, if you don't have one of those shirts, the red shirts that say, I love his church. My eye has been scratched out. I love his church. We have some more in the back. There are several sizes back there.

[6 : 42] Please get one. It's amazing to me. I know there's another church in Shelbyville that's doing, I love my church right now. Somebody, is somebody tipping these other pastors? I'm just, when I preach through the book of Acts, all of a sudden two churches in the community start preaching through the book of Acts.

I preach through the book of Romans. Another church started preaching through the book of Romans. I started this series, and now at the end of this series, another church is somebody tipping people, or they're just trying to benefit me. I don't know, but they're probably doing a better job than I do at it.

So, hey, I hope they put them online, and I would love to hear from them. But it is good, because the church is so important. I want everybody in the community, let's just be honest here, I would love to see everybody in the community fall in love with a local church, a local Bible-preaching,

Bible-believing, Bible-acting church, not in the business of building World Trade Baptist Church's kingdom.

If I speak with someone, and they don't live close to this church, I'm saying, find you a Bible-preaching, Bible-believing church somewhere you can get plugged into and be involved and fall in love with that church.

Because it's not my church, it's not your church, it's His church. And now we're down to this final one, and the one this morning we'll focus on this. We value on prayerfully sustained missions, including both church-wide, and here it is, this is what we're focusing on this morning, and personal evangelistic efforts.

[8 : 02] So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you would join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God found in Matthew chapter 4. Matthew chapter 4, I'm going to start in verse 12 just so that we can get it in context, and we're going to read down to verse 25.

Matthew chapter 4, starting in verse 12, going down to verse 25, really we're at the beginning stages of the public ministry of Christ. What you're going to see is really the door opening on the public ministry of Christ, and it is amazing to me when and how the door opens, and that's why I want you to see this in Matthew 4, starting in verse 12.

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, he withdrew into Galilee, and leaving Nazareth, he came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land in shadow of death, upon them a light dawned. Just side note, that light dawned when Christ moved there. Anytime Jesus moves in, the darkness has moved away, and the light has dawned, right?

Verse 17, From that time, Jesus began to preach and say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven as at hand. Now as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

[9 : 22] And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Immediately they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in the boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets, and he called them.

And immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him. Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

The news about him spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics, and he healed them. And large crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. God, we rejoice in all that we've had the opportunity to do. Lord, the songs that have been sung, the baptism which has been witnessed. Lord, the obedience that has been seen.

But God, as we come to the time where we open up your word and you speak to us, Lord, we pray that we would hear. Lord, may we have eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts and minds to accept and lives to live it out for your glory. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

[10 : 29] Amen. You may be seated. We are looking at this core value number four, that is the missional activity of the church. And we have titled these last three messages The Way of the Church.

Really, that this is not something that we're going to put on the calendar of events and schedule. It is not something that we're going to organize for. Even though we may have mission weeks scheduled and we may have mission teams sent out and we may have missions board meeting and we may have a missions trailer.

Really, all of these things are just an overflow of the way in which we are living. It is not something we are trying to schedule so that we can put a check mark beside it and say, yes, we are doing missions because we could do that in various ways.

We could do that by giving. We could do that by supporting. And those things are good. But rather, the giving and the supporting and the going and the praying and the doing and the building, all of

those things are just an overflow of the way in which we live.

The activities that are seen and the sacrifices that are witnessed really are things that should be pointed out because of the way in which we are living, not because of the things which we are doing.

[11 : 36] It is a very big difference. And we have been looking at the way of the church. And this morning, we're going to move the way of the church beyond this corporate church idea, though I believe in the corporate body of the saints.

I believe in the church and I'm a very adamant supporter of the church, but I also understand this great truth. Church corporate, the church body, is made up of individual parts.

So before you can really ever affect the corporate body of the saints, you have to begin to meddle in the individual parts of the body. You have to begin to look at yourself in the mirror. You have to begin to look at others.

And that's not meddling in a bad way. That's just kind of inspecting because the psalmist cries out, Search me, O Lord. Try my heart. Help me to know my desperate and wicked ways. But we see here this morning the way of the church that is the personal responsibility of the saints.

We're going to see the personal responsibility of the saints. And I'm going to try to make my way through it just as quick as I can. And hopefully we won't be too long, but I want you to see four things from this passage. Because we are looking at your personal and my personal responsibility to live out the way of the church.

[12 : 42] It is the personal evangelistic efforts in our surrounding ministry fields. As we sit here and stand here this morning, we really represent a wide array of evangelistic fields.

You have fields and circles of influences which I will never have. I have opportunities to talk and to see people you may never have. We have within ourselves individually maybe really small circles of influence, but corporately we have a very large circle of influence.

These are our ministry fields. Paul told them when he was in Athens that God determines the day and the time and the month and even the place where you live.

As he was standing on Mars Hill and he was given this great message of the gospel, he gave the truth that God appoints not only your days, not only the length of your days, not only the time of your days, but also the place and the residence of your days.

You say, oh no, I chose to live here. Really? I believe in a God bigger than any choice you make.

The Bible tells us that man plans his steps, but the Lord directs his way. You can make all the plans you want to, but God has an overarching theme that directs your lives and if we really believe that, then we understand that we are put here at this place at this time in our lives around the people we're around for a reason.

[14 : 04] That God has put us in a ministry field and I'm not talking about just us here in this building, but in our individual lives, in our personal spaces, God has put us in a ministry field because he wants us to be in that field and he wants us to minister to people in that field.

You say, oh, but my field is so small. Then that means that God really needs you to minister to the few that you can. Oh, but I know a lot of people and that means that God wants you to reach out to the multitude you can.

But I want you to kind of narrow it down as we begin to see this thing here, your personal responsibility to live out the way of the church. Number one, it is an initiated call. It is an initiated call we see here from this passage.

Now, when Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been taken into custody, he withdrew into Galilee. Now, that's an odd way to begin a public ministry, but it is actually a very biblical way to begin a public ministry. Just as kind of a side note, John the Baptist is what you would refer to as the last of the order of Old Testament prophets.

Okay, John the Baptist does not fit the mode of New Testament Christianity. New Testament Christianity, thankfully, and I rejoice in this, we don't walk around wearing camel's hair and a leather belt, eating wild locusts and honey.

[15 : 14] That's not what we do. We don't withdraw into the wilderness. We don't follow that order. That is an Old Testament order where God calls a prophet to stand apart by himself to herald a truth and a message of repentance to people that they may repent of their wicked ways, call them broods of vipers and refer to the wickedness that's in their life and call them to change their ways because the kingdom of heaven is coming.

That is an Old Testament order and John the Baptist is the last Old Testament prophet and Jesus knew that when the Old Testament prophet's business stopped, thankfully, the New Testament order would begin, right?

And in the perfect and the fullness of times, John is arrested, Jesus steps out because John was preaching the kingdom of heaven is coming, the kingdom of heaven is coming, the kingdom of heaven is coming and Jesus stands up and preaches the kingdom of heaven is what?

Here. It is here. It is here. It is here. So we see this New Testament versus the Old Testament. John the Old Testament prophet. I know he's found in the New Testament. Don't get bent out of shape about that because it's really just one great letter.

We don't have this brick wall between Malachi and Matthew that we can't knock down. It's one coherent theme. We see here John the Baptist's work is nearing completion. We know that in this imprisonment it will end with his beheading, that his life will be ended there and now because his is nearing completion, I must decrease, but what?

[16:29] He must increase and Jesus steps out and says, okay, let me introduce to you what we refer to as the church age. which is what we still live in, the church age. So this has application to us, okay?

So he steps out of the door and it says, now when Jesus heard, I just want you to pay attention to this, okay? Where the emphasis is. When Jesus heard, he withdrew, he came and settled in Capernaum and then it goes on down here.

Now as Jesus was walking by the sea, Jesus began to preach and then Jesus called out to them. Do you see here that the emphasis on this passage is on Jesus? I hope you see that because I know there are some others referred to in this passage.

There are some individuals. There is Simon who is referred to as Peter. There is Andrew. There is James and John. Very important people, but in this passage, they are not the focus of the passage. John the Baptist, the greatest among men born of women is referred to in this passage and that's a testimony that Jesus himself gave, but he is not the focus of this passage.

What is the focus of this passage? It's everything Jesus is doing. Jesus hears, so Jesus moves, Jesus moves, Jesus begins to preach, Jesus walks around, Jesus looks, Jesus sees, Jesus calls, Jesus commands, Jesus does this, Jesus does that.

[17:38] Friend, it's all about Jesus, right? And it's everything that Jesus is doing and it says that Jesus saw Simon who is also called Peter and Andrew his brother and he called out to them and Jesus said, follow me and I'll make you fishers of men.

So it says they left their net and they followed him immediately and then he moves on. There's James and John. He says, follow me and they left their nets. Now, I told you in my infancy of Christianity when I was a very new believer, I used to read Matthew 4 and I know kind of a side note but you need to understand this because I don't want you to leave discouraged, okay?

I used to read Matthew 4. Man, I would beat myself up, just being honest with you. I would read Matthew 4 and I'm like, see, that's what I should be doing. The moment Jesus says something, boom, instantly doing it. Boom, immediately doing it.

Why am I still holding on to my fishing nets? You know, why haven't I left my nets behind? Why haven't I? And I would just beat myself up and Satan used that to beat me up, to beat me up, to beat me up. Then I realized that what I was reading in the New Testament wasn't necessarily in chronological order.

Okay, I don't have time to take you there but I want you to understand that before Jesus made this call, Jesus had also already taken this crowd to a wedding in Canaan. You find that in some other Gospels, right?

[18:44] You have to read all of the New Testament to get it. He had taken them to a wedding feast in which he had turned big major jars of water into wine at the word. He had shown them his power.

He had displayed his power and then they had went back home and they had sat around and thought about what they had saw of Jesus. Man, this guy took me to a party. The party ran out of wine. Now, we're not talking about that kind of party, okay, right?

We don't have time to get into it but he had taken me to this wedding celebration and everybody was going to be defaced and everybody was going to look bad and Jesus stepped in and took over and he took this natural order of process.

Water turns into wine whenever water waters the grape plants and the grapes grow and the grapes are crushed so he just bypassed the whole growing season and just said, okay, water to wine, boom, in an instant and it was the best they had and they saw this power, they saw this, all he said was take and do and they were thinking about this while they're fishing.

You see stuff like that, you can't get it out of your mind, right? And then now, a few days later, Jesus walks up and says, follow me. Okay. I can either stay here and catch fish with daddy or I can follow this man who has authority and power that I've never seen.

[19 : 48] This is why when you invite people to Christ, one of the best things you can do is let them hang out with Christ for a little while. Very seldom will you see somebody the very first time you share Jesus Christ with them will you see them come to faith in Jesus Christ.

There are those few that will. Most times, research shows us it takes about seven gospel presentations before someone will consider accepting Christ because people need to hang out and see Jesus for a little while before they'll drop those nets.

And isn't that what, come and see, come and see, come and see. That's what Jesus is asking, come and see, come and see. But now, we're coming to this place where he's calling them. But I want you to see it's an initiated call, right? We have personal responsibility.

We're putting ourselves in Andrew and Peter and James and John's position because we are disciples. You say, yeah, but these were the 12, these were the apostles. And listen, Peter had problems just like you and I have problems.

Andrew has problems just like you and I have problems. They're still just men, but they're called. But this is what I want you to understand. All of the initiative is taken by Christ. He is the one that invited them to the wedding feast.

[21 : 06] He is the one that found them when they were fishing. He is the one that was intentionally walking by the Sea of Galilee. You think he was just walking around having a casual stroll? What I have found is God's never in a hurry, but God may appear to be taking casual strolls, but he never does anything casually.

He's always somewhere intentionally. So we see this, that it is Jesus who is by the sea about the time the fishermen are coming in. It is Jesus who calls out. The initiation is all of Christ.

It is not that Peter and Andrew and James and John said, you know what I think we should do? I think we should follow Jesus and go fish for some men, guys. No, Jesus initiates. A work is only as big as the person who begins the work.

Remember that. Something is only as great. They tell you that water will never rise above its source, right? However high the inlet is will be as high as the water will ever get because water will never rise above its source, which means that the one who starts it, the work will never get greater than the one who starts it.

So if Andrew or Peter had come up with this idea, it would have never got bigger than cutting off Malchus' ear in the garden. It just wouldn't have. That's Peter, that's as high as Peter could take it.

[22 : 15] But this is a work initiated and begun by Jesus Christ. Why do you have personal responsibility? Because the moment you came to Christ, it was not because someone invited you, it's not because someone shared with you, it's because Jesus sought you when you were not seeking Him.

The Bible says, while you were yet sinners and while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me, the godly for the ungodly, and He loved me in my sins, and He called me to Himself. The Bible tells us over and over again, it is an initiated work of Christ.

And friend, listen to me, here's the personal responsibility, it is because Jesus thought enough of you to come to you and find you and call you to follow Him. And if that does not motivate you to follow Him and to serve Him and to take on your personal responsibility, I really cannot give you any other greater motivation than that.

Because if you don't see Jesus as grand and big and magnificent, and you don't see Him as the exalted Savior, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, if you're still seeing Him as a baby to be wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger rather than the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and the white horse with the sword of the Lord coming from His mouth and the white hair and the flame of the Lord coming from His eyes, all those things, when you see that Jesus and then you're like, and that's the Jesus who came to me and initiated the work in me, then all of a sudden you have a motivation to labor.

It is an initiated work. It is not something you came up with. It is not something you thought about. It is something that He started and He calls us to. It's an initiated work. Number two, it is also an inclusive program. We're talking about personal responsibility.

[23 : 46] Really, we would call it today personal evangelism. North American Mission Board does something called Who's Your One? I'll wrap us up with kind of that and it'll start by J.D. Greer at Summit Church in Raleigh, Durham, North Carolina called Who's Your One?

And I'll kind of give you the nutshell of that in just a minute, but I want you to understand this is not something that is just for the professionals. You say, well, see, this doesn't entail me because I remember in that list of spiritual gifts that God gave some as evangelists, so since He didn't give me as an evangelist, it has nothing to do with me.

No, evangelists are a different set-apart office of the church as we read it that way, but it doesn't mean you don't have that personal responsibility because this is an all-inclusive program.

We look at these personal responsibilities, we look at the responsibility to share Christ with those around us and we say, well, I'll let somebody else do it. I don't know enough Scripture, I don't know enough Bible, I don't know enough of this and I don't know enough of this and I'm not as good at that.

Friend, let me just be honest, neither do I. When you think about it, do any of us really know enough to talk to someone about their eternity on our own? No.

[24 : 52] I mean, we're talking about matters of eternal importance. I mean, like forever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever. As S.M. Locker used to say, forever and forever and forever and when all the forevers are done, amen, there is no end to forever, right?

But we understand here that none of us are really sufficient. Paul himself said, who is sufficient for this work? We are like broken vessels, we're just, we're shattered, we're just like clay jars carrying about this glorious thing inside of us.

Who is sufficient for this work? It's not us. But we understand that we are responsible for it, it is all-inclusive and we see that it is all-inclusive because you don't have to be eloquent of speech, you do not have to be that great, you don't have to be outspoken.

This means that every one of us have a work and a responsibility to take a hold of and that you can be active in your gospel presentation to others and we know this from the first two people we meet, Peter and Andrew.

He called Peter and Andrew, the same Jesus who called Peter is the same Jesus who called Andrew, right? Now in scripture, you would have a hard time finding two men who were more polar opposites than Peter and Andrew.

[25 : 56] I know they were brothers. I have a brother, I have an older brother, some of you know my brother, my brother and I are completely opposite individuals but we're brothers. There are some people who are more like me who are no blood relative to me but my brother and I, we're still brothers.

That's Peter and Andrew. Peter, you know Peter, Peter's always the first to talk, it is Peter who gives the great confession to Matthew 16 of who Jesus is, it is Peter who steps out of the boat and walks on water and then sinks, it is Peter who is up on the Mount of Transfiguration and begins to talk before God tells him to be quiet, it is Peter who is in the garden and pulls out a sword.

Only one sword was found in the garden and guess whose hip it was on? Peter's, right? And Peter pulled out a sword and cut off Malchus' ear. It was Peter who went into the inner court there and denied Christ three times before the rooster crowed.

It was Peter who had this great betrayal and he wept and he went back to fishing. It was Peter who left everyone out, brought everyone else back to fishing until Jesus met him cooking fish on the shore and he didn't catch anything.

It was Peter who stripped off his clothes, put his clothes for work back on, ran through the water, went and met Jesus. It was Peter who was restored. It was Peter who was preaching the Pentecostal message. It was Peter who was thriving the church in Jerusalem.

[27 : 05] It was Peter who was crucified on a cross shaped like an X upside down. It was Peter, old, outgoing Peter. And you say, yes, Jesus can use a lot of those.

Then there's Andrew. Andrew never gives a public message. Andrew never cuts anyone's ear off. Andrew never walks on water.

Andrew never denies. Andrew never says anything out of place. The only thing, you know if you read scripture, the only thing you ever find Andrew doing, bringing people to Jesus.

Who brought the boy who had to sack lunch to Jesus when there were 5,000 men hungry?

Probably about 10,000. Andrew. Andrew said, I found a boy who's got two fish and a couple, you know, five fish and a couple loaves.

What'd he do? Brought him to Jesus. Who brought the Gentiles to Jesus right before his crucifixion who had these questions about who Jesus was? It was Andrew. Andrew said, I can't answer your questions but I know the man who can.

[28 : 05] I'll take you to Jesus. Right? So all you ever find of Andrew is he's just bringing people to Jesus. That's all he ever does. As a matter of fact, the Billy Graham Association has a ministry called Being Andrew.

Every time he would go and do a crusade when Billy Graham was still alive, he would do crusades and he would always raise up Andrews. All he was saying is this is all I want you to do. I just want you to go out and invite somebody to come meet Jesus tonight at the crusade.

That's all I want you to do. You don't have to do anything. Just bring them to Jesus. And that's all we ever find Andrew doing. Now listen, if God can use a Peter as much as he could use an Andrew, then surely he could use us. All of us fall somewhere in between those two.

Which means it is an inclusive program. He didn't just call some of us to share Christ with others.

He has called all of us to share Christ. You may share differently than me but you can still share.

Maybe all you can do is say, well come here, let me introduce you to the man who knows all your questions. Not just all the answers to your questions but all your questions. Let me bring you, maybe you're an Andrew, maybe you're a Peter. I don't know, some of us are more Peter type, some of us are more Andrew type, some of us are sons of thunder, James and John.

[29 : 11] We get this great picture of James being some little saintly looking little kid. You've seen Leonardo DiCaprio's painting, you know, you see all these great things and he looks so sweet. Now don't forget that they refer to as the sons of thunder.

He was young, you know, he was ambitious, he was mighty, he was also saying, God can we call down fire and brimstone on these people? They seem not to be for you. Can we just rain down fire? That's John, right? Love your enemy John and his brother James but that's okay. God can use us like that. Look at the 12. You have a tax collector and a zealot. Polar opposites.

One working for the Roman government, one trying to kill everybody working for the Roman government and Jesus called both of them to the 12. Friend, listen to me, it's all inclusive. You have a place and you have a part and you also have, that leads us to the third thing, an individual responsibility.

If God can use us all then God expects to use us all and we all have the responsibility to be used by him. Individual responsibility is the third one. Jesus sees them and he says, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.

[30 : 13] There's the responsibility, follow me. Jesus begins his public ministry, he's preaching about the gospel and I'm trying to make my way quick. He's preaching about the kingdom and here's the responsibility, follow me. You know that when Peter followed or Simon as he's referred to in this passage, Simon's following couldn't have done a thing for Andrew.

It would have been fairly possible for Peter to walk away and Andrew to stay. It would have been possible for James to walk away and John to stay. But each of them individually had to take the initiative based on what Christ was doing.

Each of them had the own responsibility that when Jesus said, follow me, he was talking to me.

When Jesus said, I'll make you fishers of men, he was referring to me. I mean, if I'm Andrew and I'm standing beside Peter and I know that I'm quiet and I'm a little bit reserved and my brother over here is a lot more outgoing and Jesus says, follow me and I'll make you fishers of men, the tendency would be he must be talking to Peter.

He must want him and I'm just going to stay here and help dad out because I don't want to leave dad out high and dry. I don't want to leave him with these nets by himself. He must be talking to Peter. But no, they both follow because here is the individual responsibility.

The call, my friend, listen, is to each one of us. The call to live according to the way of the church, to live missionally is not a call to a few. It is not a call to the outgoing. It is not a call to the professional.

[31 : 29] It is not a call to the equipped. It is a call to each one of us to come and to take the initiative to step out on faith and allow him to equip us for the work he's calling us to. It is a call to

say, yes, I will answer that.

It is not to say, man, God must be really working on somebody here. I mean, he's really getting worked up about this personal evangelism thing. God must be speaking to someone here today. Could we ever step back and go, God may be speaking to me today?

It might be me that needs to hear this. Maybe there's someone in my life that needs to hear about Christ and maybe I'm the one that needs to be moved to share them with Christ.

Or don't say, oh, I should have brought so-and-so here. No, maybe it's me. See, it is an individual responsibility. No one can lean on the obedience of others. You can't do that.

We have to all accept individually the responsibility. We have to be obedient ourselves. Now, fourth and finally, and I'm cutting some out, but that's okay because we're going to still get the crux of the matter here.

[32 : 26] Fourth and finally, it is an intentional work. It is an intentional work. It is an initiated call, initiated not by us, but by Christ. It is an inclusive program, which means it's every one of us.

Those who have accepted Him as their Lord and Savior, it is a program for all. It is an individual responsibility, which means we must all take action upon it. And it is an intentional work. He says, follow me and I'll make you fishers of men.

He didn't say, follow me and I'll let you do whatever it is you want to do. He said, follow me and I'll make you fishers of men. He didn't say, follow me and I'll let you determine the program. Follow me and I'll let you determine how things go. Follow me.

Listen, you don't follow and decide at the same time. The only one in the decision department is the one at the head. Right? And the Bible tells us that while we are the church, Christ is the head of the church.

And being the head, He is the one who gets to make all the decisions and He gets to set the program. He gets to set the standard. He gets to set it. And He sets it right here. It is an intentional work. I will make you fishers of men.

[33 : 22] Some of you in here are really good fishers and you love to fish. I don't like fishing. I like catching. Big difference. I like eating fish.

That's why I don't like fishing. I'm not really good at fishing. I think every time I throw a hook in the water, a big fish needs to get on the end of that line so that I can pull it in wherever I'm setting and I can take it and cook it.

I like Jesus' style of fishing. Cast the net on the right side of the boat and bring in your catch. I like that. That's what I like. Right? I'm not really good at fishing and the reason I'm not good at fishing is because I've never been intentional enough to figure fishing out.

It just goes beyond me that fish behave differently at different times of the day and it goes beyond me that you have to use different color of lures for this and some of you are going to come and try to explain it all to me after the service and I promise you if you explain it, I'm still not going to get it because I really don't care.

I mean, I'm not being mean or anything. I'm not intentional. I would rather you catch it and me eat it. That's a good way to go. That's a great program, right? My father-in-law keeps them in the freezer and I'm like, yes, thank you.

[34 : 25] Some of you bring me fish. Oh, Brother Turley and Miss Sarah brought me one. Oh, it has never been frozen, big fish, and a picture of it from the day before and I said, praise the Lord that God put that fish on your hook so that it can go in my oven so that I can eat it and put it in my belly.

Man, that thing was good. And they told me what they caught it on and how they caught it, listen, that's intentionality. That is the people who can catch. I can't catch because I'm not intentional. My idea of fishing is that's a day I don't plan on doing anything. If I don't catch anything, great. I didn't have to clean anything. Right?

Most of my time growing up fishing, I did what we call creek and river fishing. I liked wading in the water. I didn't like catching fish. If I happened to catch one, okay.

I just liked being in the water. That's what I did. I wasn't intentional so there's no wonder that I've never been very good at it or successful. Friend, I want to tell you something. Jesus calls us to an intentional work which means if you are not being intentional about being around people to share Christ with people, you may stumble across one every now and then.

[35 : 33] But it's going to be very few and far between. You're not going to catch those big fish that will make a meal for a family of six. You may accidentally get something on the end of your line but you're not going to do it effectively.

Jesus says, I want you to do something and we're going to be intentional about what we're doing. I'm going to show you how to do it but this is what your life is going to be consumed to doing. The Who's Your One initiative is this.

I told you I'd tell you about it and I don't have a whole lot of time to really get into it but the Who's Your One just so you can understand you can go to who'syourone.com and look it up if you want to. It's very good. It's so simple. You don't really have to do a lot of research.

Who's Your One is this. I could give you these cards. I have 25 of them in the back. My son's got one from where he was at Brainerd and they did it. A lot of churches are doing it across the Southern Baptist Convention and it's a very worthy program and it's very good.

There's a 30 day prayer initiative that goes with it. There's all these prayer guides. There's a sermon series that should go with it and all this stuff. I've never been one really good at following other people's sermon series.

[36 : 44] Just kind of go as the Lord leads me but I want you to explain. I want to explain to you what the Who's Your One is. It is this. Answer the question of who is the one person in your life you're praying to come to Christ.

Just one. Just one. Who is the one person you want to see come to Christ? You pray for that person.

You think of that person. You take the opportunity to be around that person which means you may invite that person. You have to be intentional, right? You may have to invite them over for a meal. You may have to get in their life somehow.

They're not going to come to Christ because you're I mean God may do it through your prayers but He's always going to do it through a person. Right? The Bible tells us very clearly that no one comes to Christ apart from the Word of God no one hears the Word of God unless someone share the Word of God and no one shares the Word of God unless they're sent from God.

Let me just go ahead and let you know this is your sent service. Be intentional to be in somebody's life. Somebody who doesn't know Christ I'm going to just ask you and we're going to end with this this is how I'm going to close out.

[37 : 50] If the church is important and it is if worship is important and it is if a growing knowledge of God's Word is important and it is if everybody doing their part inside the church is important and it is if the church is the one organization that's really an organism it's a living being if it is the one thing in existence on the face of the earth that will not be shaken when everything else is shaken and it is if the church is the one thing that has the opportunity to be present in time and to affect eternity then shouldn't we be intentional about the people we're around and giving them the opportunity to be a part of it too.

This is a real quick question I want to ask you and I'll be done. This is an intentional work. how are you being intentional in the work?

I heard testimony from another brother who is not in this church this week talking about how he is intentional daily what he's doing to give himself opportunities.

I have things these are matters I wrestle in my own hand there are things that I do and probably overextend myself at times and probably don't do them enough but I do things having the opportunity to go back seeing where I'm at in life God what are you giving me the chance to do? Where are you giving me the opportunity to be now God why are you giving me that opportunity to be there? Who's there? Are you in your daily life just surrounding yourself with other believers?

[39 : 37] Other believers are great fellowship is awesome fellowship is important I love being around the saints I love being encouraged but God's called the saints to live in fellowship with the world too.

you say oh no no no what fellowship has light with darkness right that doesn't mean that you participate in what they participate in but you love them while they participate in it. I'm so glad somebody loved me when I was in darkness I'm so glad somebody loved me while I was away from Christ when I was yet unlovely I want to ask you how are you being intentional?

and if you're not then just like me when I go fishing I don't really ever expect to catch anything I don't but if the gospel is really that good wouldn't we at least make it a point to be intentional about

how we proclaim it?

I can't remember the statistics and I'm done what you witnessed this morning is a rarity in church life a rarity very rare you saw something that is probably about less than 10% of all people who come to Christ less than 10% of people who come to Christ come as a result of attending church and hearing the preacher and that one really goes back not to the preacher but to the husband and to the friends and to the family what you witness is a rarity it's a gem I used to beat myself up thinking that every time I preached people should come to Christ and I would love to see that but the reality is that some 90% of people come to Christ based upon a relationship they have with another individual not because they hear the professional because if we were to take a poll and you were to be honest and it would be an anonymous poll if I asked each one of you do you think I really believe this or do you think I said it because I get paid to say it a lot of people in the world now some of you I know you're church members but the world would say oh he's just saying that because that's what he gets paid to say but what about you your life the people you know they will never listen to me they'll listen to you because your life will be intentional let's pray Lord thank you for this day God may our heart resonate with these truths I thank you for the church I thank you for this church God what a testimony of your greatness and your glory and your steadfast love Lord may we be intentional people for your glory in Jesus name Amen God bless you

[42 : 57] God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.