

- WELCOME TO -
MAURICE REFORMED CHURCH

...following God, loving others...

410 MAIN STREET | P.O. BOX 148 | MAURICE, IA 51036
712.567.4665 | WWW.MAURICEREFORMED.ORG

« 7 WEEK SERMON SERIES »



DECEMBER 31 - FEBRUARY 11 @ MAURICE REFORMED CHURCH

DAILY DEVOTIONALS
WEEK OF: JANUARY 14-20

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7-12

TO DISCIPLE, YOU MUST SHARE LIFE TOGETHER

Do you share life with anyone outside of work or Sunday morning church? Who are the people in your life that you invest in and check in on regularly? When Paul went to Thessaloniki, he did not want to be a burden on the people, so he worked hard to raise his own support while he preached the gospel and shared his life with them. Paul was always on with his faith. Whether he was working, hanging out after work, getting ready for the day, or having lunch, it seems that Paul is always using his time to engage people with the gospel of Jesus Christ and showing them how to live it out.

The love that Paul has for the people in Thessaloniki first led him to share the gospel with them. In other letters, we hear Paul say that the gospel is of the greatest importance. He wanted to make sure that everyone knew the truth of Jesus Christ, but it didn't stop there. The passage goes on to say that he also wanted to share their lives together. While he was there working and sharing his life with them, he was equipping them to live in a way that honored God. In verse 12, it is described as encouraging, comforting, and urging people to live lives worthy of God who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

God has called you into his kingdom and glory and has asked you to follow him and help others follow him. So, today I encourage you and urge you to live lives worthy of God. Do life together with people at your job, do life together with people in the stands at a basketball game, do life together with your neighbors or your classmates. What I mean by doing life together is to live a life worthy of God when you are in all these situations and then share why you live that way. Let's help others live worthy lives as well this week!

SONG:

"Open the Eyes of My Heart" - North Palm Worship

KIDS' QUESTIONS:

Do your friends and family live for God's glory? How does it show in the way you are? In the way they are? Do you live life as a disciple of God?

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

When can you disciple? How will you build this type of relationship?

PRAYER:

Lord, open my eyes to the person or people you have called me to disciple. I pray that over the next year, you will use me to equip them to disciple others as well and we can multiply the kingdom for Your glory.

[illegible]

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16

1 THESSALONIANS 1:8

TO DISCIPLE, YOU MUST LET YOUR FAITH BE KNOWN

Have you ever had someone ask you why you act or live in a certain way? Have you ever taken the time to make your faith known in a conversation? I have heard some great stories over the last 18 months (about 1 and a half years) of people who take the time to insert their faith into the normal day-to-day connections in the community and at their work. I know the typical response in Northwest Iowa is that we live in a sheltered place that is saturated with Jesus, but I think that we have more opportunities for our faith to be evident than we may initially think.

In this short verse from Paul to the church in Thessaloniki, which comes a chapter before our passage yesterday, we hear something profound. The faith of the people in Thessaloniki was heard everywhere. Wow, I love that. I looked it up in Greek and the original writing says “all places” or “every place”. I know the world looked a lot differently back then, but how amazing would it be for a town to be known for their faith hundreds and thousands of miles away?

This is another way for us to expand our discipleship. Yesterday we were encouraged to do life together and today we are encouraged to make our faith known to everyone. As we live out this faith, we can invite others to walk on this journey with us. It doesn't matter where they are on their faith journey. They could be a brand-new Christian and you could take them under your wing and help them learn to fly in their faith. You could even team up with someone that is in a similar stage of faith as you and encourage each other to be equipped with how to disciple someone else and then do it. Let's keep up the year of action and make our faith known to everyone we see!

SONG:

"I Speak Jesus" - Charity Gayle

KIDS' QUESTIONS:

Making your faith visible to those around you is important. How do you show others? How can you encourage others to do the same?

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

How do you make your faith known to the people around you?

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that we reflect you in every place that we go. May people give you glory for what they see in our lives!

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

ACTS 19:8-10

TO DISCIPLE, YOU MUST SPEAK THE TRUTH OF JESUS TO OTHERS

I am in a discipling relationship with two guys and want to disciple a couple of others. If I do not prioritize time with them, it will not happen. I can easily fill my schedule with meetings, projects, and so much more. What I have found though is when I prioritize talking about God with others, I am reenergized to accomplish whatever God has before me. My times of discipleship look different. With one guy, we take a lunch break together every other week to talk about God and what is going on in our lives, as well as challenge each other to reach out and connect with other people about God. With the other gentleman, we Zoom every week for 45 minutes-1 hour, go over a Bible study, and talk about how God has been moving in our world over the last week. In both situations, we close the time by praying with and for each other.

Discipleship will take an investment of time and energy, but I can attest that it is well worth the time. Paul also saw the value in talking to people about his faith, but he didn't waste his time on the people who were uninterested. He moved his teaching to a different location and in 2 years' time, he helped the whole province of Asia hear the word of the Lord. Some may say that Paul talked to all of them, but it is more likely that Paul equipped those listening to go and share the truth with the people they knew who trained those people to tell the people they knew and so on and so on.

It will take a lot longer to reach an entire community or area if it is just the pastor, staff, or leaders going out & discipling. It takes the whole body of believers to go out in action into the community that God has placed them in and to train the people they go out to connect with to connect with others. It is a beautiful picture of multiplication and the impact an active body of Christ can have on an area for the kingdom.

SONG:

"Lord of My Life" - Belonging Co.

KIDS' QUESTIONS:

Being a disciple is something that you need to focus on! How can you tell others about God, so they can tell others about God? Talk with your family about how they disciple.

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

What do you need to go out and disciple someone?
Reach out to a leader or staff and ask for help so that you
can be equipped to go and train others to grow in faith?

PRAYER:

Lord, send us into this world with your truth to train and equip others to continue the discipleship process.

[illegible]

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-17

STAGE OF DISCIPLESHIP - UNBELIEVER/BELIEVER

Over the next three days we are going to cover 4 stages of discipleship. In training, this was taught using chairs, or you can simply think of it as steps on the journey of faith. Today we will talk about steps 1 and 2 on the journey of faith. We all begin on step #1. We all come into this world as lost, unbelieving people. Scripture tells us that we are sinful from conception in our mother's womb. I know this sounds harsh, but sin caused brokenness in this world which is passed on to each and every generation.

In our passage today, Paul talks about his life of sin. We know that Paul was pretty intense in his life, and no matter what, he was all in. He didn't believe Jesus was the Christ, he went to arrest and persecute Christians and he even approved of the stoning of Stephen. Paul was lost, but he didn't stay lost. On the journey to Damascus, a great light shown around him, and he heard the voice of Jesus. He spent time in prayer and put his faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone. In that moment, Paul took the next step on his journey of faith to the believer step.

Paul took a few years to study and spend time with God before he headed into ministry. Even though he had a miraculous conversation, he still had much to learn about Jesus. That's the same for new believers today. When you go from unbelieving to believing, it is an immediate change in your heart, but there is so much to learn. That's why new believers desperately need someone who will talk beside them in their faith and be good examples of how to live in this broken world as a believer.

Some of us transitioned from an unbeliever to a believer at an early age. For some, you were so young that it is hard to remember a time before you took that step. It is our prayer that everyone takes that first step from unbeliever to believer, but we don't want people to stay on step #2. We have been saved to keep taking steps in our faith where God is leading us. Come back tomorrow for step #3.

SONG:

"The Commission" - planetboom

KIDS' QUESTIONS:

What is the first step in your journey of faith?

Second step? Keep moving!

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

Tell when your faith changed from knowing about

Jesus to truly knowing Jesus in a personal relationship.

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that you will draw unbelievers closer to

you and that you will grow new believers in a deeper

understanding of you!

[illegible]

FRIDAY, JANUARY 19

MATTHEW 4:18-22

STAGE OF DISCIPLESHIP - WORKER

It's time to get to work. The sad part about many Christian communities is that they stay stuck on step #2 their whole life. It's comfortable, it's easy, and it doesn't cost anything. There is value in step #2, but step #2 is to be taken with the understanding the steps 3 and 4 will also be taken. It reminds me of a portion of a movie where they describe the instructions about how long to hold a hand grenade before throwing it. In the movie they say you must not count 2 unless you immediately proceed to 3. The same thing goes in our journey of discipleship, we are not called and saved to remain on step 2. We must proceed to step 3, and that step is a step of action.

Jesus calls the disciples to follow Him and that He will make them fishers of men. We know this means that they would go out and spread the gospel and help expand the kingdom. That is exactly what step 3 is all about. Step 3 is not just evangelism and helping those unbelievers take the step of belief, but it is also helping believers take the step to become a worker. This is exactly what we have been talking about for the last three weeks. We are trying to move our congregation and our body of Christ to be more active and a part of step 3 in their journey of faith. We could argue about what this does or doesn't look like. What I know is that it doesn't look like just sitting in the pew on Sunday, but it does look like action throughout the week of sharing your faith with those who do and do not believe. Coming alongside fellow believers and showing them what a life lived for Jesus looks like and helping non-believers trust in Christ for the first time.

Many of us are taking this step right now and there are still others that need to be encouraged to take the step. If you are here, I want to encourage you to share a testimony of

what it's like to live your life for God in this way to help a fellow believer take this step in their life. I also want you to start looking for that ministry God is inviting you to be a part of for His kingdom. It may be new, or it may be set up already, either way come back tomorrow with an open heart and mind for what next step God is calling you to.

SONG:

[“Captain”](#) - Hillsong UNITED, TAYA

KIDS’ QUESTIONS:

What is step 3? Have you made that step? Tell your family ways you are working for your faith.

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

What kept you from taking this step? How does it feel to be actively working for God in your faith?

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that as you send us into the harvest field, that we will be able to work long hard days for the kingdom with joy and gladness.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10

STAGE OF DISCIPLESHIP - MULTIPLIER

Step #4 is a continuation of step #3. In step #3 people are starting to use their spiritual gifts and starting to be active in their faith inside and outside of church. Step #4 is taking it to a new level where you are actively training others to do the same. God may be calling you to start a new ministry that is going to reach an unreached demographic in your area. Maybe God is calling you to actively lead an ongoing ministry that is struggling or in need of new leadership. It could even mean that God is calling you to come alongside a leader and support them in their gospel advancing ministry.

I took a step like this last fall when God laid it on my heart to team up with the staff and local churches to provide resources to help people live 100% committed lives to Jesus Christ. Just like mentoring and discipling someone, being in the fourth step of your faith journey will take time and investment. Over the last year, the staff at MRC has invested countless hours in putting together a conference and daily opportunities for spiritual growth. Looking back over the last year, I would gladly do it all over again. As we are now only 6 days away from Full Send 2024, I am anxiously awaiting what God is going to do in and through that weekend. That's what step four is all about. Step four desires to provide ministry opportunities where God is the focus and where God gets the glory.

What is God inviting you into today? Be a dreamer, be a visionary, be a supporter, and be a fixer. Sometimes good ministries need to be tweaked to be great ministries. Maybe God is calling you to come in and tweak for His glory. I have heard stories of many people being sent into the mission field or ministry field in the past, but it hasn't happened much lately. Let's return to a place of equipping and sending out for the glory of God. Let's keep producing step 4 disciples who are all in for Jesus!

SONG:

"This Is The Kingdom" - Elevation Worship

KIDS' QUESTIONS:

What does it mean to be a step 4 disciple? Do you think this is something God is encouraging you to do? Use your gifts for His glory!

ADULT/YOUTH QUESTIONS:

What is God laying on your heart to do right now for Him?

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that you will reignite current ministries and start new ministries for your glory!

[illegible]

NOTES:

[illegible]

NOTES:

[illegible]