

III. CHALLENGED BY HIS EXAMPLE

World has had a lot of leaders but Jesus is by far the greatest-- superior in every way....

He was tempted in all points -----

He came not to do his own will-but will of the one that sent him.....

Men will find some fault in our lives----- But when they examine the Life of Jesus they say with Pilate" I find no fault in this man" Luke 23:4

IV. CHALLENGED BY HIS COMMISSION

Beginning of his earthly ministry Jesus extended his Invitation--come unto me- follow me....

End of his ministry commands them to Go-----

What a daring commission.. Possibly the twelve or at most 500 were given this program of world conquest

Here are our marching orders--- this is our task----- Gospel to the last man, woman, boy, girl in the darkest part of the world....

Lord what would you have me to do???????

Think of our Military - U.S. Sending Men to over 70 Countries -
Believe I am correct - 41,000 So. Baptist go into the Military Service each year - What if they would go as Miss. for X & tell how God is Blessing, of X down to save -
Less than 2,000 home & Foreign Miss -
we could send them with high Motivation & Commission

Never Employ enough missionaries to do our work -
Every Xian

CHALLENGED BY CHRIST

Prize Fighter -

Intro: No Person has ever reached the full potential until he ties life to a cause or program bigger than himself..

I. CHALLENGED BY HIS INVITATION

John 1:38-39

Two disciples came and ask Jesus where he was staying- He said COME AND SEE..... This is a continuing invitation.

These two Disciples went home with Jesus.. Andrew and John--- They brought their brothers--simeon and James.

FOLLOW ME----- Matt. 4:19 I will make you fishers of men--- Not only come to me, but follow me. Promises them he will make them over again. I will bless you, you will be a blessing to other people.....

A challenge--- If you dont believe it, if you do not think it is so, sincerely ask yourself "What would it mean in my life if I really followed Jesus"???????

Never force us to do this----- they were to have fellowship with him and then he would send them out into the world/.

II. CHALLENGED BY HIS IDEALS

Perfection..... Matt 5:48 Jesus talks about light and salt.....

"So you my followers ought to be perfect as your heavenly Father is"

Perfection is the Ideal for society..

Prayer he taught his disciples---Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven----- this would mean perfection

Test is are we going in the right direction???? are we moving toward the ideal????? Are we closer then we were yesterday???

Judge - 1,000 cases studied in Reformatory - "Why Are You here?"
What was it that sent you here? ① - Presence of Alcohol in our homes
② Home Broken - Divorce & Death ③ We lack Rel. Training ④ Parents Away from Home No Discipline

are some evidences that are apparent and that will manifest this discipleship.

First, a desire to share it. This to me is an evidence of true discipleship. That there is an idea of sharing because we discover that Jesus did not tell Andrew to go for His brother, Peter. He did not plead with him to go. Andrew went for his brother because it was the most natural and normal thing in the world for him to do. He had found the Messiah. And certainly he would share the news as quickly as possible with his brother.

The desire to share the experience of salvation with someone else is the first and most primary evidences of true discipleship.

If you never have any concern or put forth any effort to help someone else come to know Jesus, my friend, I'm affraid there is something the matter with your discipleship.

The New Testament describes discipleship as yeast. It is an experience that can never be contained. And when we discover that these early disciples not only shared the message in spiritual matters, but they shared the message in material matters, with their money.

Do you know that this is one of the great needs of this hour among all Christians. To come to the place that they

"DISCIPLESHIP"

JOHN 1:35-51

INTRODUCTION:

There is something delightful about this passage. Here is a refreshing and simple statement. In a day when Christianity has become a powerful world-wide movement with many complex organizational super structures, it is most fitting that we should seek to return to the kind of experience prevailing during the days of the formation of Christianity.

This passage gives the account of the beginning of Christianity. It was at the time of this experience in the life of Christ, that the church was born. The church was not born on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came into such power. The church of the New Testament was born when the first disciples attached themselves to Christ.

The beginning of the historical movement that has achieved great power is a thrilling experience. It is the same kind of thrill that an explorer must experience when he traces some river or some mountain, or chart some untraveled course. The study that we are thinking about this morning is the one that will take us back to the beginning of Christianity.

The type of (modern) Christianity, with its endless divisions, and sub-divisions, which has been broken down into denominations and sects and cults has confused many people, as to the essential meaning of discipleship.

Exactly what does it mean to be a Christian. One denomination says one thing, and another denomination says another.

Our text will answer the question. Andrew and his unnamed friend were the first disciples. They were the first Christians. And I believe that what discipleship meant to them ought to mean to us.

You will notice that these two men did not join an institution, or a movement. They did not even join a church. For there was no church until they became followers.

They did not join a movement. Jesus had not begun to preach or teach. He was not enlisting followers under the banner of His cross, or His cause. At this time, He had done nothing, except to identify himself by (John the Baptist) as the Messiah.

These two men joined Jesus. Now this is what it means to be a Christian to this day. It means to join Jesus. To attach ones self personally to Him.

They were motivated by a (sense of need.) There was doubtless much that ^{WAS} thrilling and satisfying about being a disciple.

of John the Baptist, as these men were. But John's ministry and message only looked forward to the coming Messiah. He looked for another and a greater one who would come after him. His disciples must have felt the incompleteness of his message. It was not ultimate, and there was something else. It must have been this desire for the something else that prompted Andrew and his companion to leave John and to begin to follow Jesus.

The (element of commitment) that was involved in the relationship into which Andrew, Peter, Phillip, Nathanael, entered into with Jesus. They began to follow Him. They did far more than give mental ascent to the fact that he was the Messiah. They became His (companions and helpers).

Their recognition of Jesus as the Messiah is no small matter. This is an essential of discipleship. There are those who think they are Christians because they recognize Jesus as a (great teacher). That is not enough. There are others who believe that they are Christians or disciples because they merely use some of the Bible terminology. But discipleship is that experience of submitting ones self to Jesus Christ as the Son of God. There is no way to get around this.

And now I come to the proof of discipleship because there

Leviticus 22:19-20.

The kind of sacrifices that the people were offering and God's attitude toward them is revealed in Malachi 1:6-8 and 13 and 14.

God does not want our left overs. He does not want the little scraps of time and strength that we have left. We have spent most of our hours of energy upon ourselves.

I think the most religious thing some of you people could do would be to change the way you spend Saturday nights. So that you would be fresh and ready to worship and serve God on Sunday.

The people of Israel were withholding the tithes that they owed God. The law of Moses made clear the responsibility that God's people have to give back to God 1/10 of all that he gives to them. Leviticus-27:30-32.

What the people of Malachi were practicing in terms of tithing was disclosed in Malachi 3:7-10. Verse 7 and 9 reveal that they were separated from God.

Verse 8, says one of the main reasons for this separation and Verse 10, gives the solution.

What he was trying to get the people to have a mind to do what work they needed to in order to realize in money matters they must be right as well and that God was going to bless the people. And until they were ready to get right

will be willing to share of (their income) with the Lord's work. There is somewhat of a (depression) in this area. Do you remember the depression of (1930.) Do you recall the despair, the suffering, the national calamity. Do you remember what it did to the spiritual people, and to their religion. It made many people question whether there was a God or not.

They had a depression in (Jerusalem) in 450 B. C. which was a great deal like the depression we had. To many Israelites the end of the Babylonian captivity in 536 B. C. (seemed to continue.) The nation, it was believed, was about to recover the vanished glory of the days when David ruled. The land would become fruitful. The rain would never fail. It would come when needed.

But the (reality) of the matter was different. It was only a small portion of the nation that returned under Zerubbabel and they found life as hard as ever. The rains would fail to come. There was drought, there was famine. And this condition persisted year after year. And the spirit of dull depression settled over the community.

It was in this climate that (Malachi) preached and wrote. He opened the words of his book, the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. Now sometimes preachers have to bring messages that they don't enjoy delivering. Every

preacher would like to devote all of his sermons on happiness. But knowing the lives of the people, that they are breaking the heart of God, he must come and say some things that may be difficult. I think the book of Malachi was written in this way, but I think it was preached orally before it was written. And it was no longer possible for a prophet to gain a hearing simply by saying, "thus sayeth the Lord." There was a spirit of rationalism in the air. I think the same spirit is abroad today. We have skepticism and rationalism in the air today. Thus sayeth the Lord means nothing, whatsoever, to many people. They will only accept that which they can reason in their mind. They will accept nothing that is not reasonable to their own mind.

Now this attitude affects life. When people make their own spiritual and moral laws, Malachi was forced to say something about this condition. "I have loved you said the Lord. Yet ye say, wherein as thou loved us. The people of Israel were blaming their hard times on God, because they doubted that they were getting a square deal from God. They were not only depressed, they became spiritually irresponsible and they were offering unfit sacrifices in the temple. Their sharing in God's work had certainly declined.

Now the main purpose of Malachi's message was to get

the people to see that they had brought this trouble upon themselves. And therefore, he thundered forth. Ye are cursed with a curse. For ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 3:9.

Over 100 years before this time Ezekiel had delivered the same message to the groups of people spread about abroad in Israel. Now the people of his day blamed their fathers and they had a proverb. And they said the trouble is this. "The fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." Now Ezekiel said no, they were not there because of the sins of their fathers. They were there because of their own disobedience of God. There is a lesson in that for us. If our church does not have great success in its ministry, it is going to be no ones fault but our own. It is not going to be God's fault. It is not going to be the fault of anything in the past, it is going to be the fault of the membership.

Malachi's messages deal of course with money and he is trying to get them to get in the right standing with God. And there is no way we can by-pass this. The people were offending God in the ways they were sacrificing and the way they were offering the animals -- they were the worse kind. They were rather than the best that they had, the law had required that which was a victim without any imperfection.

at our house last night. What happened at your house, my boy. I should like to know. And he said, oh, you should have been there. Papa prayed last night. Papa, sister, and me called into the room and Papa sobbed and said he told us he had not lived like a Christian father ought to and Papa asked sister and me to forgive him. Neither of us could talk. He did not know what to say. Both of us cried. Papa asked Mama to open the Bible for him and he tried to read it. But he could not. And then Papa kneeled and prayed, mostly about himself, and then he said when he got up -- children, Papa is going to live a different life from this time on. And the boy said, I went to my room and I could not sleep. I said why couldn't you sleep my boy. And then as he leaned over on the preacher's shoulder, he said, I found out last night that I am a sinner, that I am lost. You do not know how I wanted to see you. That you might tell me what to do.

The preacher said we turned into a little store house vacant, and there in a few words I told the boy how it is that Jesus saves a sinner. And the lad made the simple honest surrender, and was saved that very Monday morning. You should have heard him the next Sunday morning when the pastor said, (tell us my boy what started you on this upward way. He looked across at his father on the other side of

in money matters, God was not going to bless them.

I know we are praying for a revival in our church. We are praying for the staff members. We'd like to have more staff members. We are praying for a good program. We are praying for a successful ministry. Now I think God is ready to give us all of these things, but I don't think and believe He is going too unless the members of our church family are right with God financially. Perhaps we are right with God money-wise but our offerings cause me to doubt it.

I am not trying to raise the (budget). My purpose is vastly more important than that. I am trying to bring about an (awakening). For us to awaken to the conditions that we are going to have to face in order to get the blessings of God upon our church.

Getting right with God financially is not something the church can (vote to do). It is a personal and an individual matter. It is not something that we can legislate. I would like to challenge the members of our church who have been neglecting God financially to catch up. And to catch up this week. I know there are some who give \$10 when they ought to be giving \$20. And some who have been giving a dollar when they ought to be giving \$5-\$10. And I think we need to get our finances right with God. I know that we

have a great number of tithers who faithfully give. There are some who give over and above their offerings. And I know that you love the church, and you love God. And others of you who have neglected this, I know that you love the church and you love God. But I would encourage you to keep your financial relationship with God up to date.

Now this is not for the sake of meeting a financial crisis but I think it is for the sake of meeting a spiritual crisis. This could mean the beginning of an awakening in the church. It could be the dawn of a new day, if every person who loves the Lord and loves South Norfolk Baptist Church, would pledge to do what he knows is right under God and then let him do it. Now this was something that happened in the New Testament as well, concerning discipleship. The disciples had something to share. They shared the message, they shared their money.

Second, transforming experience. Discipleship once again means a transforming experience. It is illustrated here as Jesus told Peter that he was going to be called Cephas, the Rock.

And Jesus made a rock out of Peter. And he was the least rock-like man that anyone could have thought of. But Jesus transformed him from shifting sand into a solid rock.

Discipleship, my friends, will make a new person of you. It will change you from the inside out. It is a miraculous transforming experience. And Andrew went and shared and the result was the transforming experience. A preacher many years ago begged his people to put first things first and that the men who were Christians would pause at the breakfast table for a season of prayer, or the loved ones around them in the evening time when the day was done, that they would gather the circle about them and speak with the great Saviour an acknowledgement and continual plea for His mercy to be granted them. Numbers that morning said they would change their ways. One outstanding business man whose voice was often heard in the city searched the preacher out and said, "oh, I have lived miserably far from what is consistent and right. I will turn over a new leaf tonight. Family prayer shall be at my house tonight and every night hence forth." I follow it just a moment more, the next morning as I crossed the city the preacher said, I saw his only son about 15 or 16 years of age, and as I traveled rapidly along, the boy called me. And when he reached me, I saw in his face that there was a deep battle of some sort going on. And he said, what is it my boy, that I can do for you. And then he looked down and then looked up, with his face covered with tears he said, you ought to have been

the church and said, Papa's prayer last Sunday night started me on the upward way.

Now I know it is difficult to pray for men and women.

And I know it is difficult, but listen to this. "Everything on this earth worthwhile costs." And you and I must dare

not thrust back into some little corner in our lives

a thing that is chief and that God commands, and that God has appointed, for the winning of this world to God. We must share our testimony, we must share with our money.

Andrew Zack magnified the place and the power and personal work in the winning of lost people to Christ.

And he helped to bring about this transforming experience.

Third, a [revealing experience.] Discipleship is not only something we share and something that transforms, but it is something that brings to us a revelation.

Nathanael was amazed at what Jesus revealed to him.

Jesus said "you haven't seen anything yet". And he hadn't.

For after Nathanael had followed Jesus for three years, I am sure that this first little miracle was insignificant.

When a person becomes a follower of Jesus Christ, there are things he comes to understand that he never did before. He understands things about himself. He understands things about other people. He understands things about God.

And he would never have understood these things apart from being a follower of Jesus Christ. They cannot be comprehended by the mind alone, they can only be learned in the experience of walking with Christ.

Now this is not strange when we think about it. Because there are many things that are only understood by experience. For example, marriage or parenthood. You could never really understand by reading a book, or some pamphlet written on the subject.

God's plan is very simple. He means for it to be done just as it was in this passage. One man tells his brother about Christ. And another man tells his friend.

The world is not going to be won to Christ by professional disciple makers.

To whatever degree it is to be won, it is going to be won by folks just like you. You must tell your brother, and tell your friends, about Jesus Christ. Do you Christian men and women listening to me really wish that sinners should be saved. Probably you will say yes, I wish that sinners might be saved. But do you Christians promise God and in the presence of God and of angels and men, declare that you not only desire to see sinners saved but that you will try yourself. Fail, though however weak you might be, you will try to be like Andrew, and win somebody to Christ. Would

you say that is my desire. That is my purpose, God helping me.