

You Can Make



A Kingdom Difference

Living Day-By-Day With Eternity in View



Marshall Dean Whitaker

You Really Can Make a Difference

Daniel 2:31-45

31 “My king, as you were watching, a colossal statue appeared. That statue, tall and dazzling, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was terrifying. 32 The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its stomach and thighs were bronze, 33 its legs were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly fired clay. 34 As you were watching, a stone broke off without a hand touching it, struck the statue on its feet of iron and fired clay, and crushed them. 35 Then the iron, the fired clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were shattered and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The wind carried them away, and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

36 “This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. 37 Your Majesty, you are king of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and glory. 38 Wherever people live—or wild animals, or birds of the air—He has handed them over to you and made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold.

39 “After you, there will arise another kingdom, inferior to yours, and then another, a third kingdom, of bronze, which will rule the whole earth. 40 A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron; for iron crushes and shatters everything, and like iron that smashes, it will crush and smash all the others. 41 You saw the feet and toes, partly of a potter’s fired clay and partly of iron—it will be a divided kingdom, though some of the strength of iron will be in it. You saw the iron mixed with clay, 42 and that the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly fired clay—part of the kingdom will be strong, and part will be brittle. 43 You saw the iron mixed with clay—the peoples will mix with one another but will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with fired clay.

44 “In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and this kingdom will not be left to another people. It will crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, but will itself endure forever. 45 You saw a stone break off from the mountain without a hand touching it, and it crushed the iron, bronze, fired clay, silver, and gold. The great God has told the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its interpretation certain.”



Matthew 13:31-33

31 He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field.
32 It’s the smallest of all the seeds, but when grown, it’s taller than the vegetables and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches.”

33 He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into 50 pounds of flour until it spread through all of it.”



Seeing God's Kingdom Properly

When people consider the Kingdom of God, many images and ideas fill the mind. Sometimes the mind sees a future apocalypse with Jesus riding to victory on a white horse. Other times political ideas and cultural achievements come to the forefront of our thinking. Thus, diversity of thought, activity, and imagery highlight our understanding of God's Kingdom. Yet, for anyone who has trusted in the person and work of the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of sin and salvation of the soul, the Scriptures reveal vastly different images that describe God's Kingdom.

When the Kingdom of God is illustrated in the Scriptures, there are two enormously powerful backdrops used to draw the picture. One is Daniel 2:31-45, and the other is Matthew 13:31-33.

In Daniel 2:31-45, the Prophet Daniel reveals a dream and its interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar about the future of kingdoms that are to come. In this dream, the nations of history are displayed in the form of a statue that is struck by a rock that grows over the figure and destroys it. But, as Daniel reveals in these verses, this final kingdom, the Kingdom of God, shall never be destroyed or overcome.

In Matthew 13:31-33, Jesus shares two parables regarding the Kingdom of God. In both, the kingdom begins so incredibly small but ultimately grows. In the parable of the mustard seed, the Kingdom of God extends to be larger than the other sources produce. In the Parable of the Yeast, the Kingdom of God starts as only a tiny portion of the whole but ultimately permeates all that it is mixed with.

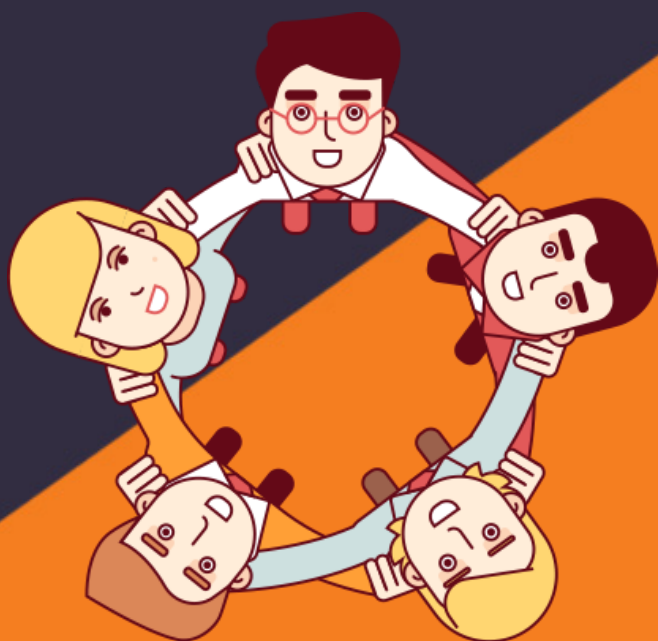
Thus, the Kingdom of God culminates in an unbreakable all-powerful kingdom that is greater than all others, but it does so gradually through permeation. Through lives being changed one by one, The Kingdom of God grows. Thus, the Apostle Paul would write in Colossians 1:13-14 that “He (God) has rescued us (believers) from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves. We have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, in Him.”

SEEING GOD'S KINGDOM PRACTICALLY

In every heart and life that finds salvation in the Lord Jesus through the Gospel, a new citizen of God's Kingdom is born. This means that every person that has ever experienced the life-changing work of God through the Gospel is a part of the Kingdom of God. Every inch of ground within the believer's life that looks a little more like Jesus today than it did yesterday is the continual growth of the Kingdom of God. Every behavior that aligns with the love of the Lord Jesus is the expansion of the Kingdom.

As a result, you can make a difference. What God has done in you through the power of the Gospel and the faithfulness of other Kingdom citizens, is how he desires for you to make a difference in the lives of others. Therefore, making a difference is your destiny as a Kingdom citizen.

That difference in some ways will be in the spreading of the Kingdom in the translation of others who are trapped in the domain of darkness into the kingdom of the Son He loves. The difference in some ways will be in the molding, shaping, and growing of other believers in their walk with the Lord Jesus. Sometimes the difference will be close and other times, the difference will be so far away that you will never know of its reality on this side of eternity. Nevertheless, you can make a difference.



**To discover how,
keep reading, and
my prayer is that
God will speak to
you about how you
can make a
difference.**

Five Practical Applications of True Ministry

Mark 1:21-34

21 Then they went into Capernaum, and right away He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to teach. 22 They were astonished at His teaching because, unlike the scribes, He was teaching them as one having authority.

23 Just then a man with an unclean spirit was in their synagogue. He cried out, 24“What do You have to do with us, Jesus —Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

25 But Jesus rebuked him and said, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” 26 And the unclean spirit convulsed him, shouted with a loud voice, and came out of him.

27 Then they were all amazed, so they began to argue with one another, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.” b 28 News about Him then spread throughout the entire vicinity of Galilee.

29As soon as they left the synagogue, they went into Simon and Andrew’s house with James and John. 30 Simon’s mother-in-law was lying in bed with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. 31 So He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them.

32 When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all those who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. 33 The whole town was assembled at the door, 34and He healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But He would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

Life is not a computer program. Computer programs are written to produce an appropriate response to a specific command or action. Even in a world full of video games and technology that opens up vast possibilities, the programming still provides an appropriate response to particular orders. In life, you can do everything just right and never get the proper response. In life, we deal with a physical reality, but there is also a spiritual realm that affects our lives in ways that we often fail to see. When we look at the ministry of Jesus in Mark 1:21-34, we witness Jesus in the work of ministry and the not quite rightness of the people’s response. Yet as these verses are looked at further, we can draw some practical applications to aid us in our day-to-day lives as we embrace the daily ministry that the Lord Jesus has entrusted to us as well.

In these verses, we see the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus, the confusion of Jesus’ hearers regarding his message and his authority, the spiritual opposition to the ministry of the Lord Jesus, and the healing ministry of the Lord Jesus as well. When we see these things, we find clarity and confusion. We find power, and we see humility. We see Jesus take steps to prevent the demons from proclaiming who he was, and we see Jesus publicly cast demons out and heal.



Through the ministry of the Lord Jesus, what we see is the reality of the Gospel ministry. The Gospel ministry will divide people between those who will believe and those who will not. The ministry will divide people between those who will come to Jesus because of who he is, and those who come to Jesus in the hopes of what they can get out of Him. These scenes in the ministry of Jesus provide us with the reality that we can teach right, act right, lead right, and do right only to find many rejecting. But we also see the reminder that we are to teach right, act right, lead right, and do right anyway.

Ministry is not a formula that results in automatic responses and programmatic effects. Ministry is messy, and often times the value of what we do in ministry cannot be effectively or adequately assessed. We have no idea how many of these early people in the crowds who experienced healing went on to follow the Lord Jesus and become part of the church, but we can rest assured that God knew them all.

These brief scenes offer a great deal to us regarding ministry as we advance. Therefore, I want to share 5 Ministry Applications from these verses to aid each of us as we engage in day-to-day ministry with the Lord Jesus and His kingdom.

Application # 1: All True Ministry Is Rooted In The Authority of The Lord Jesus

The ministry we engage in each day is not a ministry that is rooted in our authority or based on who we are. True ministry is rooted in who the Lord Jesus is. The Apostle Paul would write in 2 Corinthians 5 that we are Ambassadors for Christ. We carry his message, we go under his banner, and we seek his purposes. We are not building our own personal brand as though we can provide the hope that others need. We are not promoting ourselves or even the lasting benefit of our local church. Instead, we are carrying forth the name of the Lord Jesus, the hope of the Lord Jesus, the work of the Lord Jesus, and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. What we do is rooted in who he is and what he has done, and we desire what he desires in our ministry activity.

If what we are doing then is not rooted in the authority of the Lord Jesus, then what we are doing is something far less than the ministry to which we have been called.



Application # 2: All True Ministry Will Produce Mixed Results

The second application that we must understand then from this text is that All True Ministry will Produce Mixed Responses. When we look at this passage, we see some who believe, some who reject, and some who want what they can get. The reality is that all true ministry will produce mixed responses. The Scriptures tell us that those who do not yet know the Lord Jesus suffer from Spiritual blindness that only the Holy Spirit can remove, the Scriptures tell us that those who have come to know the Lord Jesus battle their fleshly nature daily, and the Scriptures tell us that ultimately it is God who is responsible for the spiritual maturing of believers. As a result, mixed results should be expected when we engage in ministry.

The reality is that we cannot guarantee the harvest of the ministry any more than we can ensure the yield of crops in the field or an investment return on the stock market. Sometimes the harvest comes from the ministry in ways we cannot fully understand. For example, in my previous church, the most “successful” preaching event I ever had was the Sunday I preached the worst sermon on giving to the local church in the history of preaching, and three families joined at the invitation. We cannot precisely know what moment of ministry God will use to bring forth his harvest, but we can guarantee that there will be responses to the ministry that we are engaged in. But we are also assured that there will be a mixed bag of responses.



Application # 3: All True Ministry Will Face Spiritual Opposition

Our third application is that All True Ministry Will Face Spiritual Opposition. I do not know the tone that the demons used in dealing with Jesus, but from the response of the Lord Jesus, it is clear that what they were doing was bringing opposition to his purpose and work.

Why? Because Jesus tells us that the ultimate work of our spiritual enemy Satan is to Steal, Kill, and Destroy in John 10. If that is his work, he will oppose the ministry we do that brings life and freedom to those who will believe. Spiritual warfare then is the unseen battle that often takes place in the work that we do. The reality of this warfare is why we must be engaged in spiritual warfare ourselves through prayer, encouragement for each other, and the faithful ministry of the Scriptures. We must pray as individuals, as families, and as a church. We must tie ourselves together as a family of faith and hold each other up in ministry work.

We will be opposed spiritually in the ministry that we do. The enemy will use circumstances, our flesh, and any other means within his grasp to fight against the daily ministry you engage in and the corporate ministry of the local church.

When you commit to ministry, you come face to face with spiritual opposition. In this spiritual battle, your weapons of prayer, the Scriptures, and God's calling will not fail. We must determine to hold tightly to those weapons and to use them faithfully.



Application #4: All True Ministry Will Produce Spiritual Fruit

Despite our opposition, we see from Jesus' ministry our fourth application: All True Ministry Will Produce Spiritual Fruit. The Scriptures are clear that all true ministry produces fruit. While we may not know what form that fruit will take, the evidence of fruit cannot be denied.

As you engage in ministry day-by-day, fruit is being produced in the hearts and lives of both yourself and in the hearts and lives of others. We will never know the breadth and depth of the fruitful harvest that will be produced this side of eternity, but the fruit is there. One Wednesday night, we played Bible Jeopardy with our church. For those who have taught children over the years, this was a time of celebration as the fruit of ministry was reflected in the answers those you have taught provided. That is worth rejoicing over because it further demonstrates the reality of the spiritual fruit of your ministry.

Application #5: All True Ministry Is Empowered by The Work of The Lord Jesus

The fifth application then is reflected in Peter's mother-in-law. All True Ministry is Empowered by the Work of the Lord Jesus. Jesus brought healing to her life, and from that healing, she then served others. Consider the fact that her service is related to the work of the Lord Jesus in bringing her healing. For those who have trusted in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, healing from sin has been brought to bear, and from that place, ministry to others can flow.

Every ministry we undertake is empowered by what the Lord Jesus has done. If he is not the power behind it, then it is not ministry. As we trust in him more and more to use us and as we surrender more of ourselves to him, his power in us for his ministry is more fully displayed.

Consequently...

Let us not fall victim to discouragement. Let us not give up the work of ministry to which we have been called. Instead, let us recognize the practical reality of ministry and embrace it fully and completely. Let our ministry be rooted in the authority of the Lord Jesus, let us accept that our ministry will produce mixed results and that it will be spiritually opposed, and let us rejoice in the knowledge that our ministry will produce spiritual fruit because all true ministry is empowered by the work of the Lord Jesus.

5 Practical Applications Of True Ministry

- » All True Ministry Is Rooted in the Authority of The Lord Jesus
- » All True Ministry Will Produce Mixed Responses
- » All True Ministry Will Face Spiritual Opposition
- » All True Ministry Will Produce Spiritual Fruit
- » All True Ministry Is Empowered by The Work of The Lord Jesus

3 Pitfalls Faithful Ministry Must Avoid

Mark 1:35-45

35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He got up, went out, and made His way to a deserted place. And He was praying there. 36 Simon and his companions went searching for Him. 37 They found Him and said, "Everyone's looking for You!" 38 And He said to them, "Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come." 39 So He went into all of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

40 Then a man with a serious skin disease came to Him and, on his knees, begged Him: "If You are willing, You can make me clean." 41 Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out His hand and touched him. "I am willing," He told him. "Be made clean." 42 Immediately the disease left him, and he was healed. 43 Then He sternly warned him and sent him away at once, 44 telling him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses prescribed for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." 45 Yet he went out and began to proclaim it widely and to spread the news, with the result that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly. But He was out in deserted places, and they would come to Him from everywhere



Defining success is often like nailing Jell-O to the wall. Do we evaluate success by baptism, budgets, ministry activity, spiritual discipline engagement, or any other standard? How do we gauge whether what we are doing is the right thing, and if we are doing the right thing, how do we know that we are doing the right thing correctly?

Previously, we have focused on the need to engage in daily ministry, and we have provided a practical reality to experience ministry daily. When we look at Mark 1:35-45, we have a prism to view success through, and as a consequence, we have a lens to consider potential problems with achieving success. Today, as we examine this passage, you are invited to discover with me 3 Pitfalls Faithful Ministry Must Avoid as we determine where success is to be measured and how to experience that in our daily ministry.

When we look at these verses, the text reveals that success cannot be anything other than faithfulness to the divine purpose. Thus, Jesus spends time in prayer while involved in robust and busy ministry work in Capernaum and decides that he must go to the other towns in Galilee to preach the Gospel because that is why he has come.

The size and scope of Capernaum's work could not replace the reality of why the Lord Jesus had come. His faithfulness to that purpose determined his priorities and his activities. Jesus declares this purpose again in Luke 19:10 when he states that he has come to "seek and to save that which was lost." In Matthew 20:28, Jesus reveals his purpose again when he says that he "...did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The success of Jesus' ministry then hinges on His eternal purpose. Therefore, what he does and whether or not he is successful is rooted in that purpose.

As believers, we must understand our purpose to experience authentic and genuine success in our lives. Several verses can reflect the purpose of the believer's life, but the best verse we can embrace towards our eternal goal is John 15:5. Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit because you can do nothing without me."

Success for the believer is remaining in Jesus, and Jesus remaining in us. Keeping that as the central purpose of who we are and what we do is critical to producing spiritual fruit. Whether that fruit is spiritual growth in our own lives, evangelistic fruit through sharing the Gospel, or congregational fruit through the local church, all true fruit springs forth from remaining in Jesus and Jesus remaining in us.

To be truly successful, then we must set our course for abiding in the Lord Jesus. As we do that, we can further identify three pitfalls faithful ministry must avoid as we pursue this.

Pitfall #1: Popularity Can Distort Our Priorities So Pull Away from the Crowds and Pray



Popularity feeds our ego and often makes us think we are more than we are. While we may know this, and we affirm it in these instances, the reality is that we often struggle under the weight of popularity at the moment. Those things that bring us acclaim can then begin to distort our priorities.

The desire to be popular can seduce us and lead us away from our purpose. Jesus was surrounded by those who desired his ministry and acclaimed his work. The temptation to stay was strong.

But Jesus models the antidote for popularity's distortion. When we are popular, we must pull away from the crowds and get alone with God in prayer. As we pull away from the clamoring of others and allow ourselves to rest in God, we reset our focus on remaining in the Lord Jesus. We sometimes find ourselves having to move away from what is popular for what is the priority.

Pitfall #2: Circumstances Can Distort Our View of God, so Look to The Scriptures for a Clear Revelation of God's Nature, Character, and Will

I often think of the people in Capernaum that day. People who were sick, people who brought their ill spouse, and people who brought their sick children only to find that Jesus had left. I imagine the feelings that they felt. I understand the helplessness that might have crept into their thinking. "Doesn't he know what we went through to get here?" "Doesn't he understand that unless he does something, my child is going to die?" "Does he even care?"

I think of the statement that the leper makes to Jesus as well. "If you are willing..." How many times had he prayed for deliverance? What was the cost of his leprosy? As he comes to Jesus, he seems not to doubt that Jesus has the power to make him clean but does he have the will to do so.

Circumstances have incredible power. Those things we know for sure today can be cast into uncertainty tomorrow by what we see and experience. What we think of God's nature, character, and will can be firm in our minds one moment, only to be doubted the next.

If we are to remain in Christ, we must run from this oscillation of thought brought to bear by circumstances. We must regularly turn to the Scriptures to see how God has revealed himself to us so that we can know him and abide in Him. The reality of circumstance is that there are so many things around them that we trust them as a reliable source for truth. Those people in Capernaum could not know that their greatest need was a savior from sin who had to move forward in that work. There will always be sickness, suffering, and death until the day that redemption is complete, but that day could never come apart from the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus being accomplished.

We cannot know the totality of circumstances surrounding so much of what we see, but we can know the one who is orchestrating the entirety of those circumstances to His appointed end. Therefore, do not allow circumstances to distort your view of God, but instead turn towards the Scriptures faithfully and see God as he has revealed himself to be.

Pitfall #3: Prior Faithfulness Can Distort Present Purpose, So Return to the Gospel and Remember Where You Started

Jesus heals the leper, and the leper tells everyone. So great is the response that Jesus cannot openly enter into towns any longer because people are flocking to meet him. His purpose has not changed, but his prior faithfulness has brought about new challenges to the work.

Similarly, our prior faithfulness can cause us to miss the point of our present purposes. Rather than embrace the crowds and the work they desired, Jesus retreated to the shadows and the secret so that he could finish his more significant work.

We are often faithful, and we experience God producing and harvesting fruit within our lives amid that faithfulness. As a result, we begin to shift the priority from abiding in Christ to managing the harvest. We forget that apart from the Lord Jesus, we can do nothing.

The cure for this is a constant reminder of the Gospel. Recognizing the reality of our sinfulness, our need for the savior, and our salvation rests on God's terms continually reminds us of where the power for fruitfulness is. Remembering that the Gospel is not just for others but that the Gospel is critical for you provides a proper perspective for faithful and fruitful ministry in the middle of our past faithfulness and our present purpose.

We often desire to forget where we have come from, but we are continuously reminded of where we come from and where we are going in the Gospel. Nothing else will protect us from the distortion of our present purpose.

So...



Our calling is to remain in the Lord Jesus, and for him to remain in us because without him, we can do nothing. But, to stay in him, we must avoid the pitfall of popularity; we must avoid the pitfall of circumstantial distortion, and we must avoid the trap of past faithfulness.

Through the retreat of prayer, the revelation of the Bible, and the rehearsing of the Gospel, we can remain in the Lord Jesus and expect a fruitful harvest in the wake of faithful ministry. We must reaffirm this purpose to produce fruit through remaining in the Lord Jesus over and over again. As we do that, we will experience faithfulness in our ministry each day.

An Invitation to Day-to-Day Ministry

Mark 1:14-20

14 After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the good news of God: 15 “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the good news!”

16 As He was passing along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, Simon's brother. They were casting a net into the sea, since they were fishermen.

17 “Follow Me,” Jesus told them, “and I will make you fish for people!” 18 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 19 Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in their boat mending their nets. 20 Immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed Him.



Have you ever felt like you just aren't enough? No matter how hard you try, you just seem to fall short? Those aren't happy thoughts that are brought to light by those questions, but they are authentic. However, when we look at Mark 1:14-20, the reality of not enough seems to radiate right off the page, and yet amid not being enough, we find a calling to be more than we ever thought we could be in the Lord Jesus.

The events of Mark 1:14-20 take place after both the wilderness temptation of the Lord Jesus and then, as indicated by the passage itself, the arrest of John the Baptist. A gap occurs here, and the reality is that in this gap, Jesus had begun to preach publicly, and many started to follow him. Among them are James, John, Andrew, and Peter. Yet those events are absent from Mark's Gospel to not distract from the main idea of the work and keep the pace of the text moving for a Gentile world.

Realize the Unchanging Message

So, let us follow suit and begin our quest for more than enough by looking at verses 14-15. In these verses, we must realize the unchanging message. John has been arrested for preaching the message of repentance, yet here comes the Lord Jesus preaching a message of repentance and faith in the Gospel for salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of God.

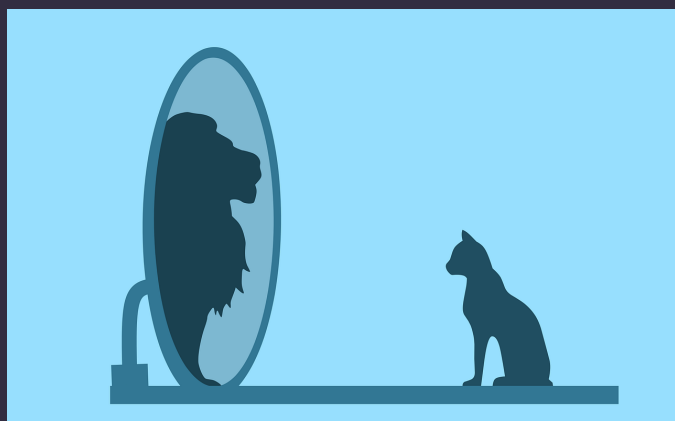
If there was ever a time to change the tune, it was after the arrest of John the Baptist, but in the aftermath of such an event, we are introduced to a message that cannot be changed. One cannot become a citizen of the kingdom apart from repentance of sin and faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, if we genuinely want to be less than God ever created us to be, if we desire to be less than enough, let us change the message offering false hope that our altered message brings to bear.

Salvation is rooted in the repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else offers genuine hope for salvation. The unchanging message is more than enough for humanity's sin, and it is more than enough to bring about humanity's salvation. The message is unchanging, and from that unchanging message comes hope for all.



Recognize Who You Are

So, with assurance in the message, we examine verses 16-20. As we look at these verses, we are challenged to recognize who we are. So often, we feel that we are not enough because we try to be someone that God never created us to be. Verse 16 declares that these future apostles were fishermen, and as a result, Jesus offers them the opportunity to fish for the souls of others. These men were not business leaders, though they owned a business. They were not orators, though they would come to lay the preaching foundation of the church. They were not authors, though they would write some of the most significant words ever penned. They were fishermen, and that is what Jesus offered them to be.



So often, we believe that to be what God has called us to be; we must become like someone else. Yes, the Gospel message demands change, but it is a change of character that results in a shift in attitude and action. The Gospel does not call us to abandon what makes each of us a unique creation of God himself.

We are to be molded into the image of Jesus and not into the image of other people. God made you who you are. He did not make you who you are to then trade that in to be someone else. We can learn from others in Christ and grow with others in Christ, but we cannot abandon our identity in Christ to become someone else.

Imagine the mess that we would be in if when we came to the Lord Jesus, we were then to focus on become another person rather than who God created us to be. God made you who you are. Your interests, talents, skills, and personality are all unique to you, and they are what the Lord Jesus wants to use to take the unchanging message to a world lost in sin and desperate for the Gospel. Being enough isn't being someone else, but instead trusting in God to use the you he created and the you he has made a citizen of his kingdom for his kingdom's purposes.



Rest in the One You Are Following

But we do not simply rely on knowing who we are. When we continue to look at verses 16-20, we also see that those who the Lord Jesus calls are charged to follow him. So in that sense, we know who we are, but we rest in the one we are following.

Jesus tells them follow me, and I will make you fish for the souls of humanity. I am reasonably sure that is a little out of their line and expertise. Nevertheless, in this, we recognize that we cannot accomplish what God has placed before us in and of ourselves.

We must follow the Lord Jesus, and as we follow him, he will mold us, shape us, and mature us into the disciples he has called us to be. The moment you trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ, you became more than enough because the Lord Jesus is more than enough. In what Jesus has accomplished, he has made you more than enough. Now we live each day to embody what the Scriptures have declared about who we are in Jesus Christ. Our value is not rooted in what we have done but in what the Lord Jesus has done, and our fruit is the product of following Jesus by faith each day faithfully.

So What Does This Look Like?

The last pages of this book is a simple listing of ways you can follow Jesus as his disciple. As you read this list, you will find things that appeal to you, things that don't appeal to you, and things that the Lord may invite you to join him in. No one can do all these things all the time, but all of us can do some of these things every day as we follow the Lord Jesus and join the work of the kingdom ministry. These things look different, these things are different, and these things are tools and instruments that the Lord Jesus can use in our lives to mold us further and expand his kingdom in the lives of others. So, as you go over your list, find several things to do and start to do them. Find the avenue for ministry that the Lord Jesus is leading you down, and then follow him faithfully.

What difference does this truly make? First, you are taking time to focus your life on eternal principles and purposes that the Lord Jesus has called us to embrace. Second, you are actively embracing your part in something greater than yourself in faith. Third, you are practically engaging in the ministry of the local church and the Christian life.

Previously, I challenged our church to abandon social media and network news coverage as a detox for a week. This also provided me an opportunity to see just how much social media engagement drives our online social media outreach. Without me sharing the content on my social media page this last week, our exposure dropped over 30% just from one person not sharing our content.

What difference might be made in the lives of those we are connected to if instead of one person not sharing, 20 people started to share and comment on our social media activities? How many people that you are connected to might hear the Gospel for the first time if you began to share the content our page posts? How many people you invite to join you for this time of worship might respond if you send them a direct link to last week's service and say, "Hey, I just wanted you to have an opportunity to see what our church is like before you decide whether or not to come with me Sunday"? This is just one potential area of ministry that you can get yourself involved in with very little investment of time, effort, and energy but with an investment of intentionality and focus.

As you engage in daily ministry, you will discover that in and of ourselves, we really aren't ever going to be enough, but through the Lord Jesus Christ, we are always more than enough. So, as we do ministry each day, let us realize the unchanging message and do that which we can do to share it with others as we minister, let us recognize who we are and find ministry that the Lord brings before us that fits the mold he has cast around our lives, and let us rest in the one we are following to lead us in the work of ministry that best fits his plans and his purposes.

A Daily Guide for Ministry Focus

Each day find avenues for ministry in and around your daily life

The Ministry of Prayer

- Pray for your church's leaders
- Pray for volunteers to support the ministry of your church
- Pray for three families in your church
- Pray for one lost person by name to receive Jesus
- Pray for the spread of the Gospel
- Participate in a Prayer Walk/Prayer Drive in your neighborhood

The Ministry of Care

- Let one family you are praying for this week know you are praying for them
- Contact someone who was not a church this week and check on them
- Prepare a meal for someone who has been sick
- Show love to someone else in a practical way each week

The Ministry of Outreach

- Share, like, and/or comment on a social media post from your church each day
- Share the Livestream of our weekly worship service
- Invite someone who does not attend church to visit with you on Sunday
- Volunteer to help with outreach events from your church
- Share the Gospel with others

The Ministry of Relationships

- Attend a L.I.F.E. Group
- Attend the weekly worship service
- Read the Bible and pray with your Family
- Share a meal with another family in your church
- Share a meal with a person who does not know Jesus

Volunteer to help a local community service organization/community service project

The Ministry of Service

- Volunteer in the nursery
- Volunteer in the kitchen
- Volunteer in the children's ministry
- Volunteer in the youth ministry
- Volunteer to help in your Sunday school class
- Volunteer to serve as a door greeter in Worship
- Volunteer to teach a class

- Volunteer to do some maintenance around the church
- Give financially to the ministry of your local church

The Ministry of Worship

- Sing praises to the Lord in private and in public worship
- Use your gifts and talents (singing, writing, drama, etc.) as a way to express worship to the Lord Jesus
- Encourage others to use their talents in worship
- Worship the Lord every day with prayer, Bible reading, and a commitment to being faithful

Every day is an opportunity to make a difference through the power of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit. You have heard the call of the Lord Jesus. Now let us join in the work with commitment.



Thank You

**We Pray That This Book Helps You
Discover You Can Make a Kingdom
Difference**



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