

From Drawn to Disciple

The Mission of the Church Part 07
Selected Passages 6-22-2014

Summary: Another part of how we become holy as a church is church discipline/restoration. Three of the methods for winning the lost are 1) Function as a church (Scripture, prayer, fellowship, worship, discipline, deacons, benevolence, fearing God). Righteousness establishes our witness. We use the infiltration program. 2) Preach the Word. 3) Call the drawn to become disciples. Since only the drawn will come, no human technique will work. To find the drawn, count the cost and offer Scripture.

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Introduction

If we are going to succeed as a church in God's eyes we need to answer three questions:

- 1) What are we?
- 2) What are we supposed to do?
- 3) How are we supposed to do it?

The answer to the first question is we are a body, bride, banquet, household, temple, pillar, and flock. The answer to the second question is a long list of responsibilities that can be grouped under three headings:

- 1) Worship
- 2) Wining the Lost
- 3) Becoming more godly

Expressing, spreading, and deepening delight in Christ. And by far the strongest emphasis in the Bible is on that last one – the church building itself up and becoming more holy and righteous and pure.

That takes us through the first two questions. Then last week we finally started on the third question – How are we to do this work? How do we become more holy and righteous? By applying the Word of God to the hearts of men and women. The power to change is in the Word, not in human wisdom, which does more harm than good.

And last week when I was talking about human wisdom, I had some very negative things to say about psychology. And some of you pointed out to me how my condemnation of psychology was overly sweeping. Clearly, not all psychology is ungodly. Many psychological observations can be quite helpful in the process of spiritual growth. If we buy padded chairs because we think people can focus on God's Word better if they aren't in pain – that is a psychological observation used for the purpose of spiritual growth. And there is nothing wrong with that sort of thing. So where do we cross the line from the good kind of psychology to the kind that the Bible condemns as human wisdom? I wrote up an answer to that question and it is the appendix to last week's sermon notes. So if you would like to do some further study

on when human ingenuity can be a good thing and when it crosses the line I would urge you to take a look at that appendix. For now I just want to make it clear that when I condemn psychology, I do not mean to condemn the entire study of human behavior. I am only condemning those doctrines within psychological circles that are unbiblical (like the idea that you are the product of your past and cannot change, or that some sins are actually diseases and not moral issues, or that you are controlled by your subconscious, etc.)

Restoration

One final point I need to make on this question of how to increase our holiness and purity as a church: One of the most important aspects of any church is how that church deals with sin. If you are checking out a church, and you want to know what sort of church it is, look carefully at how they deal with people who are in sin. 1 Corinthians 5:6 says that unrepentant sin is like yeast that pervades the entire batch of dough. It will infect the church from the inside like a cancer and very quickly destroy the church. If the sinner repents, and the church forgives and restores, then it is a different story. Then God brings renewal and restoration and blessing on that church. But unrepentant sin will destroy the church, so part of how we maintain our purity and the bride of Christ is by bringing people to repentance when they fall into sin. Jesus gave us a clear process for how this is to be done. Traditionally it has been called Church Discipline and it is spelled out step by step in Matthew 18. We prefer to call it Restoration, because the purpose is not discipline, but rather repentance and restoration. The sinner is to be rebuked and if he repents, he is to be restored. If he refuses to repent, you confront him again with two or three witnesses, then with the whole church, and if he still won't listen, he is to be removed from the church until he will repent. But as soon as he repents, he is restored. So we could call it the four R's - the rebuke, removal, repentance, restoration process. But whatever we call it, Scripture is very clear that we are to do it. And if we fail to do it the church will become overrun with unrepentant sin, our worship will be contaminated, and our progress will be greatly hindered if not completely halted.

And the same goes for the restoration part. If we refuse to forgive repentant sin, and we start attaching stigmas to certain sins and looking down on certain sinners even though they have repented; that will also destroy us.

We need to deal with sin, and we need to deal with it exactly the way Jesus instructed us to deal with it. If you want a fuller study of that, there are two full sermons on the subject of church discipline/ restoration on FoodForYourSoul.net in the Agape 101 class. Ok, so now we have an idea about what methods we are to use to deepen the church's love for the Lord. How about the spreading part? What methods are we to use for winning the lost?

1) Be the Church

As I have struggled this week to gather in all that Scripture says on this subject, the things I have learned I think we can fit under five main headings. The first one is very simple: Be the Church. Everything we have learned so far about what the church is supposed to do to reach spiritual maturity – do that. The more we progress toward spiritual maturity as a church, the more effective we will be in winning the lost. Everything we said last time about increasing our holiness and righteousness and purity – all that is a crucial foundation for reaching unbelievers. In the gospel, we are inviting people to a life of righteousness. We are telling them, “We know how you can escape the corruption of this world.” Nobody buys soap from a dirty man. In order for the world to desire righteousness, they need to see it in us. They need to see it in our marriages, in our work ethic, in our speech, in our attitudes – we have to be different; otherwise why should they buy what we're selling? 1 Peter 3:15 tells us to always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks for a reason for the hope we have. But no one is going to ask for an explanation of your amazing hope if they don't see you living a life of hope.

The Example in Acts

So to win the lost, step one is to become an excellent church. When we get together for a potluck and just enjoy one another in Christian fellowship, does that do anything to win the lost? Is that part of our evangelistic effort? Absolutely. When I started studying for this sermon the very first thing I did on Monday morning was read through the book of Acts. That was a time of incredible missionary success. The church went from a tiny group in Jerusalem to thousands and thousands of believers all over the Roman Empire and beyond in a just a very short period of time. What does that book itself point to as the keys to that amazing missionary success? I went through and underlined every place where it talks about lost people being saved. And I found a couple things. One of them is obvious – preaching the gospel. And I will get to that later. But the other one might surprise you. Over and over, what the book of Acts points to as bringing about numerical growth in the church, was the church just simply functioning as a church. Acts 2:42ff is a summary of what the church spent its time doing right from the very beginning. And here is the closing statement in that section:

Scripture, Prayer, Fellowship, Worship

Acts 2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Every single day people were getting saved! That is incredible evangelistic success. How did they do it? The believers gathered together in a very religious place – the temple courts, they ate together in their homes with glad and sincere hearts, and they did a lot of praising – worshipping God. The so-called church growth experts of today would have us believe that any time we spend focusing inward – gathering together, enjoying meals together, Christian worship – none of that will do anything to reach the lost. We need to stop focusing so much on that and hit the streets. But when God gives us the recipe for winning the lost, it starts with the church ministering to itself. They gathered together. And what did they do when they were together? Back up a few verses.

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

In other words – church. That is what we do in church – devote ourselves to the teaching of the Word, fellowship, prayer – and loving one another.

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

They took care of one another. Nothing there about meeting the needs of unbelievers. It specifies that it was believers. The church got together for worship, fellowship, Scripture, and prayer and people were getting saved every single day.

Discipline

Move ahead to chapter 5 and you see a bunch more converts.

Acts 5:14 And more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

How is that happening? What is going on in the context here? It is probably the last thing you would expect. Church discipline. The very first instance of excommunication in the church did not follow the Matthew 18 process because God just took care of it directly. He wanted to make a strong statement at the outset about the importance of the purity of the church and dealing with sin. Ananias and Sapphira sold some land and gave a big gift to the church from the proceeds, but they fibbed about how much it was. So God struck them both dead, right there in church, for the sin of lying.

5:11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events. ... 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14 And, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

People who were not serious about following Christ didn't dare come to church. They said, "Man, people die there" and they steered clear.

"If you're not ready to let go of the sin in your life, don't go there."

And so it was a very pure church – people repented of their sins. And what happened? In their purity the church had God's favor and their numbers exploded. People got saved.

Deacons/Benevolence for Widows

The next chapter is all about the first deacons, and the organization of the benevolence ministry to the widows within the church. Again – nothing for unbelieving widows, it was just some administrative maneuvering to try to get a handle on the logistics of taking care of distributing benevolence offerings to the widows in need. So the Apostles ask the congregation to put forward seven men for that work, and here is what happens:

Acts 6:6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

They come together for worship and fellowship, and people get saved. God does some church discipline, and people get saved. They take care of widows in the church, and people get saved.

Fearing God

Acts 9:31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria ... was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

Living in the fear of the Lord is a summary of righteous, godly living. The people just focused on fearing God, and people got saved.¹

Salt and Light

The cornerstone of our efforts to win the lost is our own spiritual growth and maturity as a church. And one reason for that is because of the critical role that our personal holiness and righteousness plays in our witness. In Matthew 5, Jesus said we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. And what does it mean to function as salt and light? Jesus tells us in verse 16.

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds²

We are to have an impact on this culture. And we accomplish that through living righteous lives.

The Infiltration Program

When people ask about our evangelism program here at Agape I tell them it is primarily done through what we call our infiltration program. We send out hundreds of people to get live in secular neighborhoods, work in secular jobs, attend secular schools, and frequent secular places of recreation. And then they live godly, Christ-like lives and share the gospel with people. And the really cool part is the whole program is funded by the world. Our people go into their workplaces like spies, and they function as salt and light, and those companies give our spies a paycheck! It is an amazing system.

¹ See also 11:23 and 16:5.

² I think it is safe to assume salt is the same thing as light. That would explain why Jesus does not interpret the salt analogy, but moves so quickly to the light analogy and then does interpret that. I think that means both metaphors are pointing to the same principle. Light and salt are good deeds – righteousness.

2) Preach the Gospel - Power is in the Word

So the first principle for winning the lost – function as the church, build one another up, and grow in righteousness. The more we do that, the more power there will be when we do principle #2, which is preach the Gospel. The other set of passages in Acts that mention people getting saved are in contexts of preaching the gospel. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached and 3000 people were saved (Acts 2:41). And we see that again – people getting saved through preaching, in 4:4, 8:12-13, 11:21, 13:43, 14:1, 16:14, 17:4, 11-12, 34, 18:8, 28:24. People get saved when the Word is preached. It boils down to the same principle that we saw last week – applying the Word of God to the hearts of men. The only way anyone can get saved is if their heart finally absorbs and accepts the truth of the gospel.

Romans 10:17 faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

If you want to turn unbelievers into believers, you have to activate faith in their hearts, and that comes as a result of them hearing the gospel. If we want them to become believers we have to give them something to believe.

A righteous life is crucial, but it is not enough by itself. At some point we need to open our mouths and tell them the gospel. A righteous life is a powerful witness, but who in this room is so righteous and holy and pure that you can just walk into the room and people fall down on their knees in repentance? Not even Jesus Himself did that. If anyone could rely just on His righteous life alone to win the lost it would have been Jesus. But what did Jesus do? He preached – constantly. Every time in the gospels when you see a summary of Jesus’ ministry, it is always the same – He preached. He did miracles and preached, did miracles and preached – every time. That is what He did, and then He sent out His disciples to do the same thing – preach the Word.

Now, is everyone called to preach? No. Most of the believers in Acts did not preach. But they were involved with the preaching ministry because they provided the financial support for those who did. And, of course, there was also one-on-one evangelism as well (Acts 8:35).

Proverbs 24:11 Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. 12 If you say, “But we knew nothing about this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?

If someone close to you is staggering toward slaughter, speak up! Hold him back!

3) Call Disciples

Ok, so principle #1 for how to reach the lost – be the church. Strive for greater holiness and growth. Principle #2 – Preach the gospel. Principle #3 – Call disciples. When we attempt to reach the world for Christ, we need to understand what “reaching” means. Reach them in what way? When you present the gospel to someone, what is it, exactly, that you are asking that person to do? That is important to be clear on, because it is going to give us insight on what methods to use. The greater the commitment you are asking someone to make, the more impact it has on the methods you use. For example, it is relatively easy to talk someone into signing a petition. It is a little different asking them to enlist in the military. It is a lot different convincing someone to marry you. Different levels of commitment call for different tactics. With a petition, all you need is the signature. The person does not really have to be on board with the cause. So you can trick them into it, or just become so annoying that they sign it just to get rid of you, or you can offer them some incentive– “I’ll give you this nice pen if you’ll just sign,” etc. But those methods won’t work in getting someone to agree to marry you, because marriage requires a person’s heart.

So when we ask people to receive Jesus Christ, what is it that we are asking? Is it more like signing up for something, or enlisting in an organization, or like getting married? What level of commitment are we asking for? Let’s look at what Jesus said about that.

Luke 14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.

The term “hate” there does not refer to emotional disdain or anger. It is just a comparative word that means you have to love Jesus more than you love your family.³ And if you don’t, you cannot be a follower of Christ. You don’t qualify. And the same goes for possessions (v.33).

33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

If you want to follow Jesus, He demands that every single thing you own becomes His – to be used for His purposes, not your own. He even demands your very life.

27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

This is before Jesus died on the cross, so the cross was not a symbol of Christianity at this time. It was just a means of execution. Jesus is saying, “Unless you’re willing to strap yourself into an electric chair, or put a noose around your neck, you can’t be one of My followers. I’m asking for your whole life.”

If you love your stuff or your family or your own life more than you love Jesus, you can’t be saved. Why? Because a Christian is someone who sees Jesus as the greatest treasure there is.

Matthew 13:44 The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. 45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The only way to become a Christian is to come across Jesus and say, “Wow, this is a treasure that is worth way, way more than all my other treasures put together.” And it is worth so much more that giving up everything doesn’t even feel like a sacrifice. Your joy drives you to do it because exchanging all your treasures for Jesus is such an amazing steal of a deal.

This is why Christianity cannot be spread by the sword. The “convert or die” approach that Mohammad used to spread Islam won’t work for us because conversion requires true love in the heart for Christ.

So what level of commitment are we asking people to make? Jesus not only requires that a person be willing to give up everything in this world to obtain Christ as his treasure, but that he be eager and joyful about it. Can you see how this impacts the methods we use? If we have a concert that presents Jesus in a positive light, and by the end there is an unbeliever who is thinking, “Man, Jesus is valuable. He is a treasure. He is a greater treasure to me than my job or my bank account or my house....”

“More precious to you than your wife and kids?”

“No, not quite that level.”

According to Jesus, that person cannot be saved.

Asking someone to become a Christian is not like asking them to sign a petition. It is way more than asking someone to enlist in the military. It is even more than asking them to marry you. It is asking them to marry God, and God requires 100% of their heart before He will say “I do.”

Obviously that doesn’t mean they have to be perfect. When you get married, your commitment to your spouse is not perfect. But it is a total, whole-life commitment. And you cannot have any other romantic interests. If you want a woman to marry you, you cannot have other girlfriends. That is what God requires when a person comes to Him.

³ Genesis 29:30 Jacob ... loved Rachel more than Leah. ... 31 When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb. Jacob loved them both, but he loved one more than the other. And so when the next verse says Leah was hated, it does not mean Jacob couldn’t stand her. It just means he loved her less than Rachel.

No Human Technique Can Do It

Now, that's pretty extreme, isn't it? Is there anyone in this room who has any bright ideas on how you could take a God-hater who is spiritual dead—totally unable to have positive relational interactions with God, and convert him into treasuring Jesus Christ *this much*? What technique can do that? I hope nothing is coming to your mind right now. There is no human technique that can make this happen. It requires an act of God.

Only the Drawn Will Come

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him

It is absolutely impossible for anyone to come to Christ unless the Father draws him. You can use human techniques that can be very effective in getting people to sign a card or walk an aisle or raise their hand or join a church or get baptized. But to take a Christ-rejecting, God-hating, spiritually-dead enemy of God who is blind to spiritual things, and bring that person to see Jesus as a treasure that is worth more to them than everything in the whole world—money, health, family, friends – everything – no technique can make that happen. Only a mighty act of God re-creating that person's heart can do that.

So the only technique that will work is a technique that enables us to find the people who are being drawn by the Father. So many of the modern techniques fail to see this. They think becoming a Christian is mainly an issue of making a decision and signing on the dotted line. And so you get statements like this, from Rick Warren in Purpose Driven Church: "Anybody can be won to Christ if you discover the key to his or her heart."⁴ If you are skilled enough with methods, you can talk anyone into becoming a Christian. How can he say that? You could only say something like that if you think the gospel is calling people to sign up for something, rather than to lay down their lives.

Count the Cost

"But shouldn't we hold off on that part of it until later? How about if we take it in stages? First get them to accept Jesus in an easy, non-threatening, light way. Then, once they start getting the hang of it, then we hit them with the heavy, full-blown commitment and discipleship."

That is a very popular approach to evangelism. Let's hide the cost of this thing at first so we don't scare people away. But Jesus taught us to do exactly the opposite of that. He said people need to count the cost before even coming to Him at all. Look again at Luke 14. I skipped verses 28-32. Listen to the rest of what Jesus said:

Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. 28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? 29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

If you are a builder, before you start a building you first think through what it is going to require. We did that. We wanted to build a new building on this property because this one is too small for us. But before we started building, we spent months figuring out what it would cost. When we finally got the total figure we realized, "Wow, that's way too much" and so we didn't move forward.

Jesus was totally honest and up front with people. He let them know, "If you want to follow Me, here's what it's going to cost you – your whole life." He did not bury that in the fine print for later on. He wanted them to know that before ever making a decision. In some cases it almost sounds like He is trying to talk them out of following Him.

⁴ Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, p.219.

Matthew 8:19 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” **20** Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

“I’ll follow you, Master!”

“Oh, so you don’t mind being homeless?”

21 Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” **22** But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Let the spiritually dead people worry about burying their family members. In Matthew 10, a rich young ruler came and “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus told him to sell everything he has and give it to the poor. Can you get eternal life by giving to the poor? No. Jesus just required that of this one man because He knew that this man loved his money more than Jesus, and Jesus wanted to expose that. If you want to understand Jesus’ method of reaching the lost, do a study sometime of how many people He turned away. Sometimes entire crowds. Why? Because Jesus was not interested in getting people to sign a card. He knew that the only people who would actually be saved are the ones the Father is drawing, and one way to spot those people is by putting the enormous cost right out there on the table. When you do that, guess what happens? The people who seem interested but aren’t being drawn will turn away, and the ones who are being drawn will keep coming.

If someone makes a decision to follow Christ, but that person does not see Jesus as the greatest treasure in the universe – worth more to him than his family or health or anything else – then that person does not have saving faith. But if we have an approach that makes it easy for people to sign up, all we do is create thousands of false converts– people who think they are saved when they are not. And that is cruel. One of the most common ways Jesus demonstrated His great compassion was by refusing to let people think they were on their way to heaven when they weren’t.

Decisions or Disciples?

Be very careful about pressing people for an immediate decision when you present the gospel. It is not like selling a used car where you follow the ABC principle (always be closing). It is not a sale you are trying to close. It is a transformation of a life that involves crucifying the old self and giving up everything to Christ and trusting Him with 100% of their wellbeing and looking at everything in a completely new way. Do you think it is fair to ask someone to do that after you just talked to them about the gospel for three minutes? When we press people for a decision we run the risk of getting a decision but not a disciple.

This is why we don’t do altar calls here. People get caught up in the emotions of the moment and they have all kinds of powerful, positive feelings about Jesus, and everyone else is going forward, and ... “What they heck – I’ll go too!” And in many cases they do it on an impulse – like when you pick up a candy bar in the checkout line. And then later, when you come to your senses, you regret it.

I realize a lot of people have been saved at altar calls. I don’t doubt that for a minute. But I believe those people who got saved at the altar call would have been saved even without the altar call. Salvation happens when you believe, not when you walk an aisle. And when a person gets saved in a situation like that, the reason he walks the aisle is because he believes. So he was already saved before he even starts walking. The sad part is there might be 10 other people who walk the aisle who do not have true, saving faith yet, and now they think they are saved.

The father of the modern church growth movement was Charles Finney, who really popularized the whole seeker-sensitive approach. And he was very effective at getting hundreds of people to come forward in his altar calls. But later in life this was his assessment of his own ministry: "I was able to bring many to temporary repentance and faith!" He said again in 1835, "They soon relapse into their former state." When you do what Rick Warren suggests and find the key to people’s heart so you can get them to invite Jesus into their heart as Lord and Savior, but you don’t give them the rest of the gospel, you find that most of them don’t last because most of them are not truly saved.

The seeker movement talks a lot about ways we can draw the unchurched. But what they end up doing is just churching the undrawn. They get people to come who are not drawn by the Father, and they get the churching, so they think they are saved, but they aren't.

Offer Them Scripture

So how can we find the people who are being drawn by the Father? First, by urging them to count the cost. A second technique for finding the drawn is to do what we have been saying all along – give them the Word of God.

John 6:45 Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

One sign that a person is being drawn by God is that he listens to what God says in His Word. He is eager to hear the Word of God and understand what it means. So if we want to attract the drawn, the way to do it is with the thing they are being drawn to – the Bible.

Imagine a father teaching a little boy how to fish. And he says, “The only fish you’ll ever be able to catch are the hungry ones. They are the only ones that will bite.”

“So how do I find the hungry ones?”

“Just put bait on your hook, and the hungry ones will bite on it.”

The only way we can ever find the drawn is by putting bait on our hook. And there is only one thing that works as bait for the drawn – the gospel. When the Father draws someone, the way He does it is by putting an appetite in that person’s heart for the gospel. If we really want to reach the lost, our method should be to simply put the gospel out there. Make it known that this is what we offer – the Word of God.

That is why we put the word “Bible” in our church name. If people want to know what to expect when they come here – it is a Bible church. You come here, you get the Bible. The way we set up our website and our ad on Google and the radio broadcast – if there is anything we can do to shape our public image, we want it to point to the Bible. If you just want to make some new friends, you may or may not find them here. If you are into philosophy, you might be disappointed here. If you are into history or politics or sports – we can’t help much there. But if someone is wondering what the Bible says – that is our target audience.

Remember, part of our identity is to function as the pillar and foundation of the truth. That means we are to see to it that the truth of God’s Word has a significant presence in this world. If the church is known for anything, it should be that. That is the kind of PR we want. Why? Because that is the bait that will get the hungry fish. It won’t attract a very large percentage of the population of Denver, but it will attract the people whose hearts are being drawn by the Father – and those are the only people who will accept the message.

Conclusion

Jesus demands that we go out and make disciples of all nations. How are we going to get that done? First, be the church. Strive for holiness and purity and spiritual maturity. Second, preach the Word. Third, call the drawn to become disciples. There is more we need to say about this concept of calling people to discipleship. And there are two other crucial principles for our list as well. So we will plan on picking it up there next time. But for now, let me leave you with this: Think for a minute about the unbelievers in your life. Some of them God might be drawing. Why not drop a little bait out there just to see? Just a word here and there from the Bible. I am not talking about anything weird or bizarre – just some biblical flavoring to your conversation so that if God does start drawing one of these unbelieving hearts around you, they will know who to come to with their questions. If you would like to know more about how to do that, go to the TreasuringGod.com website and look in the Resource Library for an article titled “Fishing for the Interested.” It is a very helpful article on how just an average person can learn how to become skilled at doing this.

And while you are waiting for those people to nibble on your bait, pray for them. Ask your Father in heaven to draw their hearts.

Benediction: Isaiah 55:2-3 Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. **2** Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. **3** Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.

Application Questions (James 1:25)

- 1) Think of the unbelievers God has placed around you. Is it possible that one of them could be drawn by the Father, but not even know that you are a person they could come to with their questions? How could you change that?
- 2) If you remember, briefly tell the story of when God first began to draw your heart.