

Steps 3 – Rethink Discipleship

**Bumper Video –

Welcome to the 3rd week of the Steps series...

We have rethought salvation... Jesus is salvation... We aren't saved by a denomination or a religious requirement list... but by Jesus.

Last we talked about the Race. Jesus is our finish line. We are running toward Jesus. Our competition isn't other runners but False Finish Lines. False Finish Lines will always distract you from the true finish line – Jesus Christ. Very often a false finish line will tell you that you've already crossed the finish line so there is no reason to run another step.

We are in a race and no one has placed a prize in our hand yet... so you should still be running until you see the savior face to face. It's up to you to take the next step.

It isn't an insult to be told you need to take another step... The crowd in Acts 2, Apollos, the Philippian Jailor, the City of Samaria in Acts 8, Cornelius the Gentile in Acts 10, the Disciples of John in Acts 19... They were all told about a step they needed to take... They weren't insulted as one would be if we were bragging we were further in a race than someone else... They weren't insulted! They GLADLY took the step because it took them that much closer to Jesus.

Rethink Discipleship

Redemption Church! Before today is over we are going to invite you to take a step. Are you ready to take a step today?

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,(NIV)

This is the Great Commission. Think of them as Jesus' last words before he ascended...

His first recorded words are... I'm about my father's business...

His last words on the cross are... It is finished...

His last words before he ascends from this earth... He looks at his disciples and says...

Go Make Disciples. This is what Jesus said to his disciples... go make disciples.

This is known as the Great CO-Mission. **It is the mission of every disciple... to go make disciples.**

It's not just the mission of the Pastor, youth pastor, or those that are more outgoing than most, or those that can quote a lot of scripture. It's the mission of every disciple to go make disciples.

These are Jesus' important words before He ascended. Think of all the other important things he could have said... Remember to pray and read your bible, teach others to worship, Take communion often, Go to church...

Your MISSION is to be a disciple who makes other disciples.

It is the great commission. It is your mission but not just you. It is a CO mission as in there are others who are in cooperation with you

on your mission. Believers should be in full cooperation in this mission... God is in full cooperation with us in this mission.

What is a disciple?

A disciple is a follower of Christ. A disciple is actively learning from the master.

Matthew 4:18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.(NIV)

Matthew 4:19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."(NIV)

Matthew 4:20 At once they left their nets and followed him.(NIV)

A true disciple of the Lord Jesus has had a firsthand encounter with the master. The Master offers them the opportunity of a life time... to follow Him. Upon that encounter they take the first step of believing... You can't follow without taking a step...

When do we become a disciple?

When did Peter and Andrew become disciples? Well this may seem over simplistic but... They became disciples with the first step.

Jesus says Follow Me... They followed Him... A disciple is one that Follows...

You become a disciple the moment you take your first step.

Being a disciple is closely related to salvation. Discipleship is salvation/Jesus being lived out.

This doesn't seem like a major revelation but there are many people that think discipleship comes long after salvation. Or that being a disciple doesn't transpire until they become mature Christians. There are also many that believe you can be saved without being a disciple....

Jesus' disciples became His disciples when they dropped their nets and followed.

Falling behind

If you are going to follow someone you are going to need to continue taking steps. If you are following someone in step... You are both traveling along but you stop in your tracks and the continue... You are now getting further away... you are letting them walk away... your choice to not take another step is bring an ever increasing distance between you.

Somewhere in the life of the disciple Judas this happened and it is very sad. He fell behind... and was lost

That is terrible news... but here is great news. You can **make up ground**.

If you find yourself far from God... Perhaps you have spent decades drifting further from God... Maybe you were at one time close to God but now you aren't sure you can ever close that gap

James 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Every step you take toward God He takes a step toward you. You are never so far from God that you can't decide to take steps back toward Him.

how are disciples made?

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,(NIV)

Matthew 28:20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."(NIV)

Baptize and teach them... Teach them what...? To Obey the commands of Jesus.

Discipleship isn't optional. We are called to make disciples. We are called to make disciples that MAKE DISCIPLES. And making disciples isn't that complicated.

Redemption Church I challenge you to be a disciple that makes other disciples.

Walk Further

Spiritual Discipline involved in being a disciple. We are to take on the teachings of our master. As we take steps toward Christ we should look more like Him.

We are no longer living by this world's standard... We aren't living by a religious denominations standard...

Paul talks about this in Galatians 5. He says we aren't living according to the Flesh and then lists a bunch of wickedness.... Idolatry, hatred, jealousy, sexual immorality...

Paul says disciples live by a higher standard! We live according to the Fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,(NIV)

Galatians 5:23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.(NIV)

Galatians 5:25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.(NIV)

Jesus holds up a higher ideal than this world! Disciples live according to that ideal.

- Jesus said our righteousness must exceed that of the religious Pharisees...
- Jesus instructed his Disciples to go the 2nd mile when the law only required 1 mile.

Disciples are committed to service and giving. True disciples can handle tough teaching and understand they need it. Disciples aren't focused on themselves but in God's Kingdom and making the next disciple. They know God's plan is that they continue to grow.

Disciples shouldn't always be taught... they should become teachers. When I hear Christians complaining that they aren't getting fed spiritually it makes me wonder if they are disciples.

Disciples launch out into the deepness of God's Spirit. Beyond the fruits of the Spirit and into the Gifts of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12 Talks about the Gifts of the Spirit. These are special ways that the Holy Spirit ministers to his church through His disciples. Here are the gifts... wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, tongues and interpretation.

1 Corinthians 12 ends with this command for disciples. 1 Corinthians 12:31

But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.(NIV)

Scary steps

We are walking in salvation. Salvation is about Jesus and His cross.

Discipleship is about your cross.

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.(NIV)

The cross isn't a nice jewelry charm you wear around your neck. It is an instrument of persecution, judgement, torture, and death. Jesus says his disciples have to take up their cross and follow. Scary steps

Being a disciple will cost you. It may cost you some relationships. It may cost you your comfort. It could cost you your life and freedoms

in this world. Following Christ can put you in harms way... Check out this exchange between Jesus and Peter

John 21:18 I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."(NIV)

John 21:19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"(NIV)

Make no mistake about Jesus' choice of words when He says "Follow Me." Those were his first words to Peter.

Jesus is really asking... Will you still follow me?

Maybe I'm talking to someone standing before a **Scary step.** A step that will cost you personally...

Maybe God is dealing with you about committing to prayer and study of God's word and you are looking at the cost of time that will take...

Maybe you know God wants you to walk away from a friendship that always causes you to fall to temptation...

Maybe you keep thinking about an area in God's Kingdom you could contribute... It is out of your comfort zone...

Following Jesus will cost you... but will you follow Him anyway?

Just like with Peter in John 21.. Along this journey Jesus is still asking you to follow him.

God has placed a step before Redemption Church in 2013. We had some members who had moved from Plano to Irving, you know the Fanes... They wanted to have Connect Group in their home... We thought it was going to stretch us but we will try to have a connect group meeting there 1 time a month. But then we visited this group and we see these people showing up that are hungry and unchurched and some don't know Jesus.

We decided God is doing something, we have to take a step here. So we multiply a Connect Group to Irving Texas and they are now averaging over 15 every week there. There is a real Christian community growing in this Apartment community... But it's requiring another step...

A close few joined me in praying for Irving because now we feel responsible for these people. We asked God if he wanted us to hand these people over to a local church in the area but we also asked God if He wanted us to go to them. We told God if He opened any door we would walk through it.

Within a few weeks of praying for the next step to take we received a call from someone offering us a free space to meet and hold a Church service.

I have personally weighed some things... Is this going to be more work for me? Is it going to make Sundays more complicated? This step will have some added pressure... am I willing to take this step?

I don't know what is beyond this step but I know I will take this step for God.

On October 13th at 6:30pm we are going to launch a 2nd Redemption Church Campus

Redemption Irving

We want you to cover this in prayer and be excited about this next step God is calling us. If you have any questions about Redemption Irving we would love to talk to you about it. It won't change how we operate here. It will be an addition to our outreach.

I challenge you to take the next step God has in front of you no matter how big and scary it seems.

Dirty Streets Beautiful Feet

Jesus calls His disciples and they follow. But along this long journey there are difficult moments, there are some failures... In the times of Jesus the roads they walked were dusty roads and in just a few steps their feet would be caked in dirt. To make matters worse, they shared the road with animals. Animals aren't clean and what they would leave behind on the streets was definitely not clean.

Following after Jesus would lead to dirty feet.

But Scripture declares disciples have beautiful feet...

Romans 10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"(NIV)

We walk dirty streets but we have beautiful feet.

Jesus before He went to the cross, before He sent his disciples out with their commission... The lord Jesus took on the role of a servant and washed the feet of His disciples.

John 13:4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.(NIV)

John 13:5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.(NIV)

John 13:6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"(NIV)

John 13:7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."(NIV)

John 13:8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."(NIV)

If you are going to walk this road you are going to walk through some hurt, some disappointment, some loss and sacrifice... Dirty Feet become Beautiful when we allow the Lord to wash them. Have you allowed the Lord to wash your feet? Allow Him to wash away the dirt and sorrow... He told Peter "You have no part with me... unless I wash you."

John 13:13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.(NIV)

John 13:14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.(NIV)

John 13:15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.(NIV)

John 13:17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.(NIV)

MUSICIAN

We are on a commission – a cooperative mission together. Jesus serves us but we also serve each other.

This is different but Jesus said we would be blessed if we do it. Marshal & Scott have been giving pastoral leadership to this church. I am going to wash their feet today but really I just symbolize what the Lord is doing and how He cleanses us and gives us strength for the journey. As I wash their feet I'm going to pray over them and I invite you to fill this altar and join me in praying for them.

More foot washing...

End...