

Main Emphasis Idea:

Formation effects as a whole, and without a careful and thoughtful existence, you will ultimately become what the world wants you to be. So our goal is to create a thoughtful and careful existence, but we must understand how we do that.

John 15: 1-8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Questions That Need Answers:

1. What is the gospel?
 2. What does it mean to be a disciple/apprentice
 3. How does the process of apprenticeship work exactly?
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INTRO

Disciple vs Apprentice

Last week, we concluded the only way forward was this... We must take a slow holistic approach, to re-ordering and reorienting our lives.

Now the language we have used for this for a long long time, is discipleship... discipleship is the only way this happens... but I want us to look at another word for discipleship and that is "apprenticeship". The greek word for disciple is Mathetes, another word you could use is apprenticeship or pupil even.

How does salvation work?

For most, the idea of salvation and christian life is... you put faith in Jesus, you go to heaven. Tied to that is a lot of problems.

1. The goal is to get to heaven. That has and never has been in all of scripture and church history the message of The Gospel... That has never been the goal up until about the last 100 years of seeker friendly conversation processes.
 2. It leaves us a grand canyon of time between my conversion and my death. Thats why you hear people use weird ways to describe their faith.
 3. Because for most, the idea of salvation and christian life is... you put faith in Jesus, you go to heaven. Tied to that is a lot of problems.
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The true process of Salvation

The process of salvation is 3 fold and it can be looked at like this

1. The Entry
 2. The Goal
 3. The Assurance
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The Entry

The entry is quite simple, its believing that Jesus of the town of Nazareth, was a man who actually was The God of the hebrews incarnate, who came and died for the sins of not just the hebrews but the world, and through his sacrifice of love has opened a door to be in union with the creator of the universe who desires a real relationship with his creation. Through this faith in this man, you will have peace with God, right standing with him, you will be given his righteousness, and be filled with his and his fathers spirit. This faith means also that you are believing that Jesus is Lord and you are making him your Lord, learning to live life as he would by his morals, thinking, teachings, and people.

The Goal

2. The goal... this is where we often miss things, because the goal is often, you need to do this to get into heaven and not hell, but thats not the goal. The goal is the same goal that Jesus had during his public ministry, which is to bring the Kingdom of God to the world around you, through returning to your original intent, which Adam and Eve where charged with, to be Gods image bearers here on earth, representing his ways and his way of life, as to bring about a different way of existing and allowing Gods Kingdom to bring freedom, peace, healing, and justice to the world

The Assurance

3. The assurance, is what people look at the most, the assurance is that, through our faith in Jesus Christ, at the end of time, he will raise us all from the dead in resurrected bodies to enjoy the life intended from the garden of eden forever.

Now if we are honest, the entry doesn't sound that hard, or it shouldn't, the assurance sounds awesome... its the goal, where most of us get tripped up.

Apprenticeship is Hard

"The greatest issue facing the world today... is whether those who are identified as 'Christians' will become disciples—students, apprentices—of Jesus Christ."

- Dallas Willard

Here is the starting place of apprenticeship, where the immediate stumbling block is, apprenticeship or studentship under someone else, is by nature saying "I don't know."

That is where often apprenticeship ends, is at its beginning... Because all of us, me included don't want to say, I don't know or worse, I AM WRONG.

Attacking the Root

Now all that may be a lot to digest, but you can look at it like this, what you genuinely believe, is never played out in your thoughts, its played out in your actions. What you are willing to act on, is what is considered for you a core belief.

"Most people are saints in intention, few are saints in actions."

Thats what apprenticeship, is trying to get to root at, thats why its the only way forward... its not changing you from angry to nice, its not changing you from petty to humble, its figuring out why you think anger is a correct choice of action and pulling up the weed of what creates that action.

Pruning a solution

John 15:2

2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

This type of change, only comes through formation, and formation is simply Gods pruning.... (explain pruning)

Pruning is the cutting away the ends of where you have reached the end of being able to grow yourself, so God can reform your belief so that you can act accordingly.

Now here is the other side of this, if grape vines could talk, do you think they would say that pruning feels good? I don't think so...

So the problem you are going to have in abiding and apprenticeship with Jesus, is once it goes against your beliefs and your happiness, it's not going to feel good, but that's what pruning is.

“Christ is not valued at all unless He is valued above all.”

— **Augustine of Hippo**

For most of us pruning evil is not that hard, it's not hard to not kill people, it's not hard to not harm children, it's not hard to not participate in prostitution or completely drug-ridden days... but pruning for most Christians often becomes too hard, and is abandoned, when The Holy Spirit begins to prune what is good, for what is godly.

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I know tons of people who have filled their life with good... and the good is keeping them as empty as evil. The only difference is it's a slow death, versus a fast visible one.

What choosing apprenticeship will soon come to mean for you, is having to choose between what is good and what is godly, what you believe and act on or what will live in your mind as good intention.

Rule of Life Practice #2

Weekly Rooting

The practice of intentionally placing ourselves in rhythms of discipleship alongside believers who have a common pursuit of formation in Christ.

To participate in the practice we ask that you commit to participating in one of our deeper levels of formation, either in participation in joining us weekly at Mid-Week for deeper biblical teaching, or joining our deepest levels of discipleship sessions (1 on 1 discipleship) or Cohorts (discipleship done together in community.)
