

# The Resurrection Gives PURPOSE

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*Prepared from the spoken message and lightly edited for readability. Scripture quotations and spoken phrasing are preserved as delivered.*

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Sorry for that little delay. I thought Jeff was giving me the day off for 20 years. But I've got a sermon here just in case he didn't.

1874, right? A long time ago. The New Shoreham Life-Saving Station - it's a mouthful. Let me say it again. The New Shoreham Life-Saving Station was built on the coast of Rhode Island, and it had a very distinct purpose. It was built to save lives. It's right there in the name.

It was a local rescue club. You'd see them all over the Northeast. For us to understand it, think volunteer fire department, right? It was a group of volunteers, a group of guys who got together, and they would go out into the open ocean to help boaters who got in trouble or to help sailors whose ships were wrecked.

These rescue clubs were common for even a hundred years or so before that. You can trace them back to before the Declaration of Independence was signed. The story of lives saved because of these clubs is incredible. Just Google it. You'll go down a rabbit trail.

There's a guy named Joshua James. He's credited with saving over 600 people who would have drowned out in the ocean if this guy hadn't been ready to go out and save them. All of these rescue clubs across the Northeast had a very distinct purpose: to save the lives of those who found themselves in trouble out in the ocean.

Over time, the people who were saved by a rescue club would think, "That's pretty great. I'm going to join a rescue club too." They would jump in and begin saving lives in that same way. It's hard work. It's dangerous work. It was necessary work. So many lives were saved as those clubs operated under their very distinct purpose of saving lives.

That's why the New Shoreham Life-Saving Station was built. But if you go there today, there's a different name on the building out front. Right now, in its place, you're going to find something called the Block Island Yacht Club.

What happened was, over time, the people in those rescue clubs - and again, this was all over the Northeast - got tired. They still wanted to hang out. They still wanted to do dinner together. They enjoyed the brotherhood. They just didn't want to do the hard work of rescuing people anymore.

So many of the rescue clubs in the history of the Northeast became yacht clubs. They traded in the rescue gear for restaurants and swimming pools. They stopped going out in storms and started racing their sailboats on calm days in calm water.

I want you to see the transition that many of these clubs made. They were a group of men who started out dedicated, hardcore, and passionate about rescuing people who were perishing. But they abandoned that mission and became devoted to their own comfort. They forgot their purpose.

That's the same danger a lot of believers face today.

Open your Bible with me to Matthew 28 and Acts 1. We're going to bounce back and forth between those two chapters. As you're turning, just answer this question for me - not out loud. What's your purpose in life?

Think about it. Our world's got a lot of answers to that question. Some would say success. Others would say, "My purpose is to be happy." Some would say, "My purpose is my family, my business, or my company."

Seniors, you might be thinking, "My purpose in this next chapter is to go out and get a great job, to get a great education, or to find a great spouse." I've heard others say, "I'm just trying to figure it out. I don't know what God wants me to do with my life." Some have even said they're confused about their purpose.

But as I've prayed about purpose this week and studied the Word, here's where I've landed: Our purpose is so clear, it's become easy to ignore.

Our purpose as followers of Christ is so incredibly clear in His Word, so much so that, for many, it's become easy to ignore. When Jesus rose, He clearly defined our purpose. This morning, we're going to unpack it together.

If you're taking notes, our title is "The Resurrection Gives Purpose."

Look with me at Matthew 28. We're going to start in verse 18. It says this:

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe, or to obey, all that I've commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

— Matthew 28:18-20

This passage, if you're unfamiliar with it, is called the Great Commission. It's the final command Jesus gives His disciples before He returns to heaven. He is sending them out with a very specific job to do, and that is making disciples.

Now look at Acts 1:8. We're going to go back and forth, so hold Matthew.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

— Acts 1:8

Both of these interactions, these conversations with Jesus and His followers, happened after the resurrection and right before Jesus ascended to heaven. These are His last words to His people.

## Jesus Gives Us Identity

We're going to start our unpacking today in that Acts verse because it's important for us to understand that, before our purpose, Jesus has given us our identity. That's our first point today: Jesus gives us identity.

He tells us very clearly who we are. We are His witnesses.

Look at Acts 1:8 again:

*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses.*

— Acts 1:8

I want you to pay attention to the grammar here because I've read this verse a million times, and I know I've read it wrong some, and I'm sure you have too. Look at the grammar.

Yes, Jesus is telling us to go out and witness. We can make that connection. But that's not how He phrases it. He's not giving a command here. He's giving an identity here. He's telling us who we are to be as His followers. We're to be His witnesses.

What is a witness? In the first century, just like today, a witness is someone who would tell of their firsthand experiences, regardless of what it was going to cost them.

Make no mistake, it cost those first disciples something to be a witness. Today, it's going to cost you and me something to be a witness. But that's the call here.

Jesus says, "You guys have been with Me. You've seen that I'm alive, that I've risen from the dead. You've been in My presence. Now just tell people. Tell people about what you've experienced with Me. Let them know who I am. Yes, it's going to cost you, but it is so worth it."

Acts 1:8 isn't limited to those who were with Jesus on the day that He ascended to heaven. As followers of Jesus, you and I share in that identity. We share in that reality. Jesus has called us His witnesses. He's called us to go out sharing our firsthand experiences with Him.

Now, some of us are older than others, but none of us were in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago when Jesus first said this. So your firsthand experiences of Jesus that you're going to go out and share aren't going to be a firsthand eyewitness account of Him ascending into heaven.

But I do want you to think for a minute about what they are. What are your firsthand experiences with Jesus that you can share with somebody else?

If you're a Christian, start there. You had a moment in time when God worked in your heart in such a way that you trusted in Christ as your Lord and Savior. You became a child of God. In that moment, you experienced the forgiveness of God. You experienced the love of God as He brought you into His family.

That is a firsthand experience. It happened to you. You can tell people about that.

As you've walked with Jesus, what else? You've experienced His presence in your life. You've experienced His

peace that passes all understanding in moments of chaos or illness. You've experienced His comfort to you, to your heart, and to your family in seasons of grief.

You've experienced the wisdom of God that He promises to give to you if you'll ask for it in moments of confusion. He's given you clarity. You've seen and experienced the work of God in unique ways in your life, in personal ways in your life. You're a witness of that, so tell people about it. Tell people so they can experience it too.

It's not something you have to fake. It's not something you have to work out. It's just who you are as a child of God and what's happened to you. You can tell people about it. A watching world needs to know all that God has done in your life.

So who are we? We're witnesses. We're witnesses of all that Jesus has done. That is our identity.

Personally, I've been dealing with identity theft the past few weeks. Apparently, there was a data breach with AT&T, and all of my information is out there. It's a big mess. It is a constant headache.

But here's what I know: Identity theft doesn't apply to Acts 1:8. Jesus has called you to be a witness. Nobody can steal that. You can't lose that. That doesn't go away. You're a witness.

You need to know that because, at the end of the day, our identity - who we are - drives our purpose. Our identity drives our purpose. When we understand who we are, we have clarity about what we're supposed to do.

It's very simple, right? Who we are naturally shapes what we do day in and day out. It naturally shapes what we do when we leave the house. It naturally shapes what we do when we're with our families. It shapes what we do.

Jesus knew that, so He tells us who we are, and then He tells us what to do.

## Jesus Gives Us a Purpose

That's our second point: Jesus gives us a purpose. He has called you and me to make disciples.

Look at Matthew 28, starting in verse 18:

*Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I've commanded you. And behold, I'm with you always, to the very end of the age."*

— Matthew 28:18-20

The mission, the command that Jesus has given to us as His children and as His witnesses, is to go out and make disciples.

Now, if you read the verse, look at the "G." It's not an English lesson today, sorry, but look at the grammar again. "Go" isn't the command in the verse. The command is "make disciples." "Go" in that verse is just a

participate.

So you could translate it like this: "As you are going through your life, make disciples. As you are moving through life, make disciples. Wherever you go, wherever life takes you, make disciples."

If you're going to school, okay, I got it. I'll make disciples there. If you're going to work, okay, lock in. Lock in with the people who work with you, for you, or around you. Lock in with those people and make disciples.

Walking around your neighborhood, going to the store, spending time in your friend group, or sitting in the bleachers with other parents - wherever you are, make disciples. That is the purpose God has given us as His children. It's just a natural outflow of who we are.

We're going to flesh this out a little bit more, but before we do, remember that Jesus has given us power to accomplish our purpose. Look at Matthew 28:18. He says:

*All authority has been given to me.*

— Matthew 28:18

In Matthew 28:20, He says:

*I'm with you always, to the very end of the age.*

— Matthew 28:20

Jesus is saying, "Listen, you've got a job to do because of who you are, but you're not doing it alone. I am with you through every single bit of it."

Not only that, He says, "I'm going to give you some power to make it happen."

What does He say in Acts 1:8?

*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.*

— Acts 1:8

He told those early disciples, "Do not get started on your own. Wait for the power of the Holy Spirit. The same power that raised Christ from the dead - wait for the power of God to be inside you before you go out and do it."

Remember, you've got the Holy Spirit of God residing in you. That is a promise from Jesus Himself.

There are a lot of maybes in this life, aren't there? Think about all the maybes that could happen today. Maybe the Astros will win. Maybe they won't.

Parents, you're thinking, "Maybe my kids can make good grades next year in college. Maybe they won't. Maybe I'll get a promotion. Maybe I'll get that raise. Maybe I won't. Maybe we'll go on vacation this summer. Maybe we won't."

There are a lot of maybes in life. We face them every single day. But here we read that the Holy Spirit resides

in followers of Jesus. There is no maybe about that. You can walk out the commands of Jesus knowing that you have the power of God residing in you.

Stay plugged into the power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Every single day, almost all of us are focused on plugging in and charging up what we use. Not necessarily some of the most important things, but every single one of us focuses on plugging in our cell phone and charging it up.

We don't want the cell phone to go down to zero. We don't want to see that little red 20 percent bar. We start to get anxious or stressed out with it. Nobody wants their phone to die. We make it a priority. We charge it at home. We charge it in our cars. We take these little portable chargers with us everywhere we go.

We want to start the day fully charged. At the end of the day, we plug it back in to charge it up for the next day as well.

I just want to remind you this morning that your soul is of infinitely greater value than the cell phone you carry around in your pocket. Stay plugged into the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. Be aware of Him. Let Him be the guide, the leader, the counselor, and the comforter that Christ has promised He would be in your life.

As you're aware of and plugged into His power in your life, guess what? It's just going to flow. You're going to naturally make the disciples God has called you to make.

That's your purpose. Jesus gave it to you in the Great Commission. If we're going to live it out, we've got to stay plugged into the power of the Holy Spirit.

We also need to make sure we know what we're making. We need to know what a disciple is.

As a church, you just heard Jeff talk about our focused priorities. The first one is on a big banner out in the atrium. The first one is making disciples. Why? Because we take the words of Jesus seriously here. We understand our purpose. We know that's what God's called us to do.

So let's make sure we're on the same page about what a disciple is. Here's a working definition for you: A disciple is someone who is with Jesus, who's being changed by Jesus to become more like Jesus, and - this last part is so key - who reproduces that in others.

In the Bible, a disciple literally means "learner." It's not just a learner of intellectual knowledge, but someone who's being formed and shaped by the teaching and example of their teacher.

Jesus tells us that His disciples love Him, obey Him, become like Him, bear fruit in their lives like He did, and, at the end of the day, love like Him. Then, in the Great Commission, we see that we're supposed to make disciples just like that.

The last phrase of our definition cannot be left out: Disciples of Jesus make disciples of Jesus.

If you're a disciple of Jesus, you're someone who makes disciples of Jesus. The Great Commission doesn't say, "Let your pastors go into all the world making disciples of Jesus." It doesn't say, "Let deacons and life

group teachers go into all the world making disciples of Jesus."

I don't read in Matthew 28 or Acts 1 that we're to set discipleship and evangelism aside for those who have gone to seminary. None of that is in here. All I see is that disciples make disciples.

So if you're a disciple of Jesus, your purpose is to make more disciples of Jesus. You can say it this way: If you love Jesus and are following Him, you're going to help other people love and follow Jesus as well. That's it.

## How Can I Make Disciples?

I want to break it down for us this morning. I want to show you two ways that you and I can and should be making disciples every single day.

Seniors, you guys are entering your next phase of life. Parents, grandparents, and church members in here, I want to show you how every single one of us can and should be making disciples every single day.

First, live a godly lifestyle. Live like a disciple. If you want to make disciples of Jesus, you need to live like a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus says this in Matthew 5:

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and glorify you.*

— Matthew 5:16

That's wrong. Nobody knows that verse? Look on the screen.

*In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

— Matthew 5:16

Your lifestyle is going to point people to Christ if you're living a godly life.

You've heard the phrase, "Talk is cheap," right? When people say that, they're saying it's what you do that actually matters. That's what Jesus is saying. He's saying, "Listen, when we live in a way that's honoring to the Father, what we're doing is pointing people to the Father."

That is a great step for us in making disciples.

William Barclay says it like this: "More people have been brought into the church by the kindness of real Christian love than all the theological arguments in the world."

Think about that. How we live our lives matters. How we love the Lord matters. How we love the people around us absolutely matters. It points people to our Father in heaven.

But the opposite is also true. You need to understand that.

Listen to what Brennan Manning says: "The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their mouth and then walk out the door of their church and deny Him with their

lifestyle." He says, "That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable."

It's important for you to know that if you claim Jesus as your Savior, your actions are going to point people to Him or away from Him. There is no neutral there. The way you live your life is pointing the people around you somewhere.

We have a purpose. We are witnesses to what Jesus has done in our lives. We're to make disciples, and that is going to happen if we live like disciples of Jesus.

Love people well. Let your words be kind, uplifting, and filled with grace - not crude, not profane. Be intentional in your marriage as you love and sacrifice like Jesus has called you to. Be intentional with your kids in the way you parent them, prioritizing a walk with Christ above all things. Live actively connected to other disciples in the church family.

Listen, we duplicate what we are. Live a godly life.

Second, if you want to make disciples and live out that purpose, share the good news of Jesus with your words.

We're going to live the life, and then we're going to speak the words.

There's a phrase I love in Acts 8. It's about a guy named Philip. Philip is a disciple of Jesus, and it's very clear in his life. You see it in his life and in what he does. He goes from Jerusalem to Samaria. He goes to the Gaza road. He's going all over the place, and you see this trail of disciples behind him.

He's doing what God's called him to do. He's living a godly lifestyle that points people to Christ. But there's this moment when he connects with a guy, and I love the phrasing here:

*Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.*

— Acts 8:35

He opened his mouth.

You've heard this phrase, I'm sure: "Share the gospel, and when necessary, use words." It's a great thought. The whole idea is what I just said: Live a godly lifestyle. Absolutely do that, and let your life point people to Christ.

But there comes a time when, like Philip, you have to open your mouth and use words so that people will understand what God's Word says about trusting in Jesus as Savior.

Be prepared to speak the good news of Jesus in a way that helps people understand how much He loves them. Help them understand their great need for Him and how to respond by grace through faith to step into a relationship with Him.

Remember, we've got a purpose: Make disciples.

My question is, are you equipped and ready right now to do that with your words? Do you know what to say?

Could you connect with a friend this week at lunch or breakfast and steer the conversation in such a way that you're able to articulate the gospel to them and let them respond and trust in Christ?

If the Lord connected you with someone this week on a flight, in a coffee shop, on a walk in your neighborhood, at the park, at Lupe Tortilla, or anywhere else, are you ready with your words to walk out the good news of Jesus?

If we're going to live out our purpose with purpose, we need to be ready. Here's the reality: As we live godly lives, we're going to have more and more opportunities to open our mouths and speak the good news of Jesus. We've got to be ready.

First Peter 3:15 says:

*Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.*

— 1 Peter 3:15

Man, if you're living a godly life, you're living with this incredible hope in your Lord and Savior. It's going to stand out, and the Lord is going to usher you into conversations and into people groups. You're going to have the opportunity. The point is, you've got to be ready.

Here's an action step for you. If you're looking for an application or action step to take home this week, learn how to do that. Learn how to share Jesus with someone using your Bible. Look up some verses. Memorize them. I'm going to give you a few in a minute. Just get comfortable with it.

Practice on somebody at home. You've got a captive audience in your home. Just share the gospel with somebody in your home. Walk it out and get comfortable. Get natural with it.

It's like everything in your life. The more you do it, the more natural it becomes. We do a lot of baseball in our house. Before a game, we're hitting off the tee to get ready, then we're doing soft toss to get ready, and then we're doing live hitting in a cage to get ready.

We do so much work so that when we get into the game, we're not thinking anymore. It's natural. It flows. It just happens when you get up to the plate.

It's the same here. It's okay. It's a good thing to spend time practicing sharing the gospel.

I want to give you two tools you can practice this week. The first - you're going to have to forgive my artistic ability here - is an outline called "The Bridge." You can Google this. You can watch videos of it on YouTube.

I use this because it's natural for me. I've done so many reps off the tee that, when I'm in a conversation with somebody, it just flows out. I've drawn this on airplanes. I've drawn it in restaurants. I've drawn it at the park. On a trip one time, I drew it in the sand on the ground to help somebody see it.

It's just a great visual that helps people understand what it means to trust in Christ. It's all from the Bible.

I'll draw it out from the beginning and say, "Listen, at the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 1 and 2, we see that you and I were made in the image of God."

Then I'll draw the picture right there. At the very beginning, I make a joke about how this is you. "Did I do a good job drawing it?" They always say no, but I start there, and it sort of breaks the ice.

I say, "We were made to be in a relationship with God. That's what we see at the very beginning of Scripture. But the bad news is this: On the second page of the Bible, in Genesis 3, man chose his way over God's way."

What came into the world at that moment? Sin came into the world. What happened with sin? Adam and Eve are now outside of the Garden of Eden. Immediately, we see the main consequence of sin. It's death. It's spiritual death. It is separation from God.

That happens at the beginning of the Bible, and Romans 3:23 tells us that exact same thing:

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

— Romans 3:23

Sin separates us from God.

Then I'll explain, "The rest of the Bible, starting after page two, is all about God's plan to bring us back into a relationship with Him." Ultimately, at the end of the day, God's plan is who? Jesus.

Romans 5:8 says:

*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

— Romans 5:8

We know God's plan to reunite us with Him through Jesus is the cross. So I'll write that verse, and I'll draw a cross here.

What am I covering up? Can you see it? What is gone now? What took the sin away? The cross did, right? The cross has covered up that sin. Now, all of a sudden, I've got this opportunity to be in a relationship with God again - not because I did something about that sin on my own, but because of the cross, because of the price Jesus paid on the cross.

Then I'll tell them Romans 6:23:

*The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

— Romans 6:23

I'll say, "Because Jesus died on the cross, all of a sudden we've got this opportunity once again to be in a relationship with God. But this relationship with God isn't an automatic thing. It doesn't just happen because Jesus died on the cross. It happens when, by grace through faith, we place our faith and trust in Him."

Then I'll read Romans 10:9-10:

*If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

— Romans 10:9-10

That's it. That's the entirety of it. It's visual. The verses that go with it are there. You can write it down on a napkin. You can write it down anywhere you are. It's all right there.

People can ask questions. It starts at the beginning of the Bible and walks through to Jesus.

Guys, we've got to be equipped with our words. You never know when the Lord is going to give you that opportunity to live out the purpose of making disciples. Be ready for it.

There's another great tool you can get on your phone. If your art skills are worse than mine and you don't think you can do that, there's an app called Life on Mission. They've put a picture on the screen. Download this app. It's on iPhone and Android.

In that app, there are several gospel-sharing tools, and one of them is the Three Circles outline. Pastor Jarrett uses it often. He loves it. That's natural for him. It flows out of him. We've got it on the wall over at the Champions Campus. It's a tool you can put in your tool belt when it comes to sharing the gospel.

The beautiful thing is this: As you're still building up the confidence to use the words God has given you, there's a video on the app. You can press play and set it down for somebody you're talking to. The video in the app will walk them through it. You can see someone come to know Christ through that video as you're sitting there with them.

Here's the point: Be ready. Be ready to open your mouth and use your words to point people to Jesus.

Use your mouth, but not at the expense of your ears. Make sure you're really connecting with someone. Make sure you're sensitive and understanding about what's going on in their life and where they're coming from.

As you listen, you've got power inside of you. You've got the power of the Holy Spirit. He's our counselor. The Holy Spirit is going to give you the words. The Holy Spirit is going to give you that spiritual sensitivity and discernment to know when and how to approach that conversation.

Francis Schaeffer, a brilliant Christian thinker and writer, was once asked, if he had 10 minutes to share the gospel with someone, what would he say? He said, "I'd listen for nine minutes, and I'd talk for one."

He wanted to make sure he was connected to the heart of the person he was talking to, but he would talk. He would use those words.

So be ready with your words to make disciples of Jesus. Then just finish out the verse. We want to see people baptized. We want to see people knowing the commands of Jesus. Then we want to see those new disciples making disciples as well.

## Live on Purpose and Without Excuse

We want purpose in our lives. At the end of the day, we want to look back and know that it mattered that we were here, that we did something with the time God has given us.

The beautiful reality is that we don't have to guess about what our purpose could be or should be. Our calling is so clear. I said at the beginning that our calling is so clear that, for many, it's become easy to ignore. I pray that's not said of us.

I want us to live on purpose and without excuse.

Here are some common excuses believers make when it comes to making disciples. They might say, "I don't know that I can do that because I haven't lived a good enough life, and I'm not a good example to others."

Some would say, "I have a hard time doing that because, if they ask me a question, I don't know what the answer would be."

Some would say, "I have a hard time doing that because I don't know the verses. I haven't memorized them, and I'm not ready to share them."

I understand that some of these are legitimate concerns. But here's what I would say to you: If you have those concerns, excuses, or any others, address them.

Walk close with Jesus. Learn from Him. Study common questions. Practice sharing the gospel at home, like we just talked about. Don't hold on to these as excuses, because the truth is this: You can make excuses, or you can make a difference, but you can't do both.

Be ready to live out the purpose God has placed inside you. You know who you are. You are a witness to what God has done. You know what you're supposed to do with it.

I still remember a buddy from my senior year. His name was Darrell. We were friends. We hung out all the time. We ate lunch together. We played sports together at school. We played volleyball and football. We did all those things together.

I still think about him when we have sermons like this because, as a senior in high school, I had a good friend, and I never shared the gospel with him. I didn't invite him to camp. I didn't invite him to church or anywhere else.

I missed it. I missed the chance.

I've tried since then, but apparently he's the only person my age who's not on any form of social media anywhere. I can't find him.

Would you understand that there are moments you won't get back? There are relationships you have now that you're not going to have forever. It could very well be that God has you connected to the people you're connected to right now because you're the one. You're the one He's got to share the gospel with them.

God turned the world upside down. You read that later in Acts. God turned the world upside down with a small handful of believers. They were listening. They heard who they were. They were witnesses. They heard what their purpose was - to make disciples - and they did it.

More and more of us gather here every single Sunday, and I love to see it. But I don't want us to gather every

week as a yacht club. It's not just about hanging out and having a good time.

Let's do that. Let's hang out. Let's have a good time. But that's not what God saved us for.

Let's be a rescue club, going out into the world and making disciples of Jesus, knowing that disciples of Jesus make disciples of Jesus.

Who is it? Who is going to follow Jesus because you are following Jesus?

## Invitation

Would you pray with me this morning?

As you bow your head this morning, just thank God for your identity and your purpose. Wherever you are or whatever is going on in your life, just thank Him for those two things.

"God, You've told me who I am. As Your child, I'm a witness to all You've done."

Thank Him for that. Then thank Him for the purpose. You don't have to guess. You know what it is. Thank Him that He's given you purpose in this life to see other people experience the joy of knowing Jesus.

Listen, He doesn't have to use us, but that was His plan. He chose to. As we step into that, man, there's so much joy in it. Thank Him for that this morning.

If you're here today and you don't know Jesus as your Savior, I want to tell you there's nothing greater than walking in fellowship with Him.

In just a minute, we're going to sing one closing song. We're going to stand up and worship together. As we do, we're going to have some pastors and prayer partners down at the front.

If you don't know Christ as your Savior, I'd encourage you to come down and say, "I'm ready to trust Christ." We'll take it from there. We'll tell you what that means. We'll answer any questions you have. You'll have that moment right there to trust in Jesus as your Savior.

For others of you, you might be saying, "I'm a follower of Christ, but my life isn't pointing people to Christ." Maybe you need to get that right with the Lord this morning. Just confess that to Him.

Or maybe you're in here, and hopefully you are, and the Lord is putting a burden on your heart for people you're around every single day, for people in your life who don't know Jesus as Savior. Maybe God's putting that burden on your heart, calling you to love them well and share the good news of Christ with them.

If you've got people in your life and you want to pray over them specifically by name with one of us, we'd love to pray over them, that God would soften their hearts and that they would respond and trust Christ as Savior.

Whatever God's doing in your life, whatever God has on your heart, in just a minute when we stand, that will be your invitation. We would love to pray with you.

Heavenly Father, we love You. God, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You for the clarity of it. God, we

thank You for the purpose You have put on our lives.

God, in all that we say and in all that we do, help us to live on purpose with purpose, pointing others to You.

It's in Your name we pray. And everybody said...