

Matthew 23-07-05a

Good evening Welcome back everyone including myself. I welcome myself back to grace and truth Bible Church. It's great to be with you and To have the opportunity to look at the Word of God together This is the 5th of July 2023 We're doing a special here.

It's sort of a supplement or appendix perhaps to our final study in Matthew Having to do with how disciples are made and we covered pretty much what we needed to in Matthew 28 19 and 20, but It is such an important subject. It is so prevalent in discussion and in the mission emphasis of churches and ministries that I thought perhaps we could explore a little further see what the Bible has to say about discipleship and how disciples are made and what our role is Relative to that process that operation there certainly is such a thing as a disciple there certainly is a need for disciples to be made and We certainly want to be disciples. I think those are self-evident propositions, but the exact Nature of that process and the role of a healthy and growing believer in it is Something we can fruitfully investigate looking at the Word of God.

So that's our goal for this evening and we'll Take a moment to go to the Lord in prayer and then begin Father we are so privileged to be Related to you through the Lord Jesus Christ to be his followers and his representatives Now the body of Christ on this earth we're grateful for the resources and the provisions that make that possible the inspired and enduring Word that you have given to us through the scriptures the presence and power of your Holy Spirit the example and words of the Lord Jesus to guide us the testimony and witness of the Apostles to put flesh on that structure and to enhance and enliven our Daily walk before you we pray that as we look at this Subject together that the Holy Spirit will lead us into the truth. Help us to understand it more fully and to see our Pertinent and applicable opportunities in regard to Discipleship being disciples and observing and understanding the process by which we Become that we ask it in Jesus name. Amen a Good starting point is probably our ending point in our gospel of Matthew study and that is Matthew 28 19 and 20 this is popularly called the Great Commission as you know, and it is Widely, if not almost universally understood to be our primary function The Great Commission Jesus gave many instructions many exhortations many commands But this one is termed the great charge the Great Commission and in verse 18, which is many times Not included in the quotation Jesus begins with all important context and as we saw in that closing Study in Matthew You really need to begin at verse 16 because it is important to understand to whom Jesus is speaking It is always a very excellent idea to make sure when we are looking at an exhortation of Scripture Who were the original addressees if this had been included in the Sermon on the Mount? It would be quite a different lesson Quite a different understanding quite a different emphasis, but we know from verse 11 that verse 16 that the 11 disciples went away into Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them the mountain which Jesus had appointed If you remember back in Mark chapter 3 as one of several witnesses Mark

3 13 Jesus went up on the mountain and called To him those that he himself wanted
Mark 3 13 Jesus has been by the sea Great crowds.

He's been healing. He great multitudes follow him Judea Jerusalem Judea beyond the Jordan Tyre and Sidon great multitudes heard how many things he was doing they came to him So he told his disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for him because of the multitude lest they should crush him it's You know, there's so many things you can just pause and reflect on this is why I love to just open the Bible and start reading The Lord Jesus the second person of the Trinity the most unique and Potentially powerful human being who has ever lived Took practical steps to avoid being crushed By the multitudes even the Lord Jesus. He didn't just activate a proximity field.

He didn't Create an aura around himself, which no one could enter He told his disciples have a boat ready. And when these crowds assemble, I Will get in the boat and push off a short distance Which facilitates everyone being able to hear and I don't get crushed So they've been by the sea he healed many this is mark I'm reading in the vicinity of three seven through twelve He healed many Those who had afflictions pressed about him to touch him the unclean spirits whenever they saw him fell down before him cried out saying you Are the Son of God, but he sternly warned them that they should not make him known They should not make him known what these demons are speaking is absolute truth Is it not? You are the Son of God Absolutely true Jesus shuts them up and forbids them from communicating that truth to this audience Why doesn't he just Let them testify even the demons Know who I am He forbids them. He sternly warns them that they should not make him known There is a time in a place and there is a proper Avenue for truth God has structure God has authority Demons do not have authority to communicate truth to believers or potential believers Demons are not used by God to bring people to himself Even if they are speaking the truth This impinges on on some of the things we're going to come to understand tonight so then in verse 13 of mark 3 Jesus goes up on the mountain and calls to himself those that he himself wanted He went up on the mountain He called those he himself wanted What is the emphasis in that verse? Who is Forming this plan who is choosing the time and the place and the people and the mission He he himself The emphasis is on the Lord Jesus you remember in Matthew 28 18 all Authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth It is by the authority of the Lord Jesus that these men are called to this mountain And it's really important to remember that Because the authority in your life and my life is not The pastor it's not the Ministry leader it is not the book author it isn't the the tape series Progenitor it isn't the the guide it isn't the The person you know providing the information that is not the authority This would be all the same as saying this Lance Corporal that is dishing out the hash on the mess decks as Marines are Taking a ship from point A to point B Which I've done innumerable times and this is always I apologize It's always the first illustration that comes to my mind of what a pastor is He's the Lance Corporal on the mess decks taking what has been provided and Dishing it out Nobody should look to the Lance Corporal for

orders for the mission for the five paragraph field operational strategy He's providing the food that enables and empowers troops who are under the authority That is includes and provides those PFCs and Lance Corporal's working on the mess deck, but those guys aren't in charge They're they're provision haulers.

They are Making available something that is needful for people who are going to function under proper authority and it's really important because if pastors are not the Strategists and the generals on the field deciding who goes where and who does what? How much less so are Is one believer standing or sitting or walking beside another? if imagine us all as fellow believers brothers and sisters in Christ and We look to a source for teaching for in enlightened Observation interpretation and application the Holy Spirit energizing and superintending We trust and hope in that entire process both the delivery and the reception but if that whole scenario and that Teaching and learning structure isn't the authority by which we figure out what to do then Five of us sitting in the pew should not be looking to the right and to the left and telling each other what to do either If it was going to be anywhere other than where it actually is you would expect that there would be a hierarchy This is the mistake the Catholic Church made. Well, we've got Fathers and friars and priests and then we've got bishops and then we've got Cardinals and we've got the Pope and we've got the College Of Cardinals and we've got this hierarchical structure. These guys will figure out what your average Catholic is going to believe and do and It is Inserting a human element into an authority structure that God set up through the Lord Jesus Christ When Jesus is talking to his disciples in John chapter 14 to which please turn he describes this relationship in John chapter 14 and And he is talking to his own disciples and The provision is The Word and the Spirit Jesus authority is manifested in the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

So you come down to Verse 15 John 14 15 if you love me keep my commandments remember in the Matthew 28 19 and 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you to teach them to observe Commandments here. He's talking about commandments. If you love me keep my commandments I will pray the Father and he will give you another helper that he may abide with you forever The Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him but you Know him for he dwells with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you Jesus has just described the way that he himself is going to come and be with his Apostles his disciples. I will not leave you orphans.

I will come to you What is Matthew 28 20 say Io I am with you always Even until the end of the age in what sense is Jesus with? his disciples with his Apostles In and through the Word and the Spirit that's why it is so important to keep his commandments And You remember I am the vine you are the branches in the next chapter he who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit This is 15 5 Notice that there is a Single level of connection

there is the Lord Jesus and there is the believer. I am the vine He doesn't say I am the vine My Apostles are the branches and you are the twigs I am the vine the Apostles prophets pastors evangelists. They are the the branches and you are the leaves.

You are the grapes. You are the fruit Abide in me Directly and you will bear much fruit you abide in me. There is no intrusion You think about a husband and wife You know, there is no need for a third party in a marriage.

You've got a husband and you got a wife you don't want anybody coming between the husband and the wife that that connection needs to be firm strong and Uninterrupted our Relationship with Jesus Christ is not mediated in and through any other human being It is direct it is in the presence and the power of the Word and the Spirit That the Lord Jesus is connected to us and we are connected to him. It's vitally important to understand this the Word comes to us in a very specific way So if you Take a look at Matthew chapter 14 We're in John 14, we'll go back to Matthew 14 Matthew 14 and 15. These are chapters that are pretty easy to remember because in 14 you have the feeding of the 5,000 in 15.

You have the feeding of the 4,000 There's all kinds of fives and fours and but this is how I remember things It's squirrely memory aids, but the five thousands in Matthew 14 the four thousands in Matthew 15 14 15 5,000 4,000 so In 1413 of Matthew Jesus departs by boat to his deserted place by himself the multitudes heard it They followed on foot from the cities. He sees the great multitude and you had the feeding of the 5,000, right? he has compassion on them and They say Master this is a deserted place the hours late send the multitudes away that they may go into the villages And buy themselves food This is such a great Illustration of the way our Discipleship works The disciples say let these people go to other people who can provide them food Jesus says no They do not need to go away You give them something to eat you disciples Soon-to-be apostles you give them something to eat And you remember this we've been through it many times our miracle study Which I think I've done twice and and in the Gospels feeding the 5,000 is even in the Gospel of John So we've been through it many times you're in but you remember how does an individual sitting in a group of 50? Get his food Where does it come from? Here is how it did not happen and behold Jesus reached into the basket the five loaves and the fish and Handed it to the disciples the disciples went to a man in the group of 50 and said Hand this out to the people in the group He went to a group of five and said hand this out to your group of five Do you notice that there is only one level? Jesus gives it to the disciples the disciples give it individually to each person they are not getting it from each other this notion that well people just sort of Kick their toe in the dirt and pulled loaves and fish out of their own pockets and fed themselves That's how they try to explain the feeding of the 5,000. It wasn't miraculous multiplication.

It was just miraculous generosity Everybody decided that they just got loved into being generous how it actually happened is Jesus Supernaturally creates the food it is divine food it is like the manna that God provided Israel and He gives it to his disciples who give

it to the people He doesn't give it to his disciples who give it to other people who give it to the people Lord Jesus disciples people You say well, maybe you're pressing that a little too far Take a look at what happens in Matthew chapter 15, which is the feeding of the 4,000 verse 32 Jesus called his disciples to himself and said who was he talking to at the beginning of the feeding of the 5,000 his Disciples who is he talking to now? He doesn't say all you people come straight up to me and I'll hand you some bread in either case He doesn't say disciples hand it to other people who will hand it to other people who will hand it to other people and that's how they'll all get fed wouldn't you think that that a Multi-level distribution would be the most efficient way. That's not how it's done. And there's a reason for it Everything has a reason What is the reason he does it this way? He called his disciples to himself just like when he called them to himself on the mountain Just like when he calls them to himself in Galilee before he ascends These same men are called in every single case.

They are 11 individuals Personally commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to not only accompany him and learn To be his disciples and be trained to be his apostles but they are going to be witnesses to him as We emphasized on that final Sunday study Until the end of the age until the end of the world You shall be witnesses to me and that you is you 11 plus Paul you 12 the original 11 minus Judas plus Paul You are my witnesses. You shall be witnesses unto me You 11 are going to be Jerusalem Judea Samaria until the end of the age Paul is going to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. It doesn't mean that Paul can't talk to Jews He witnesses to them all through the book of Acts in the synagogues first place He goes in any new town is to the synagogue synagogues full of Jews very very few Greeks, you know some proselytes, but he starts with the Jews The whole gospel begins with the Jews.

It's not a Legalistic I'm sorry, you're Jewish. I can't talk to you Jesus was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel But he still heals the Syrophoenician woman and the little girl and the crumbs falling from the children's table You remember that but the emphasis the thrust the primary mission of the 11 Mostly Peter and John is to that first generation in and around Jerusalem Judea and Samaria The primary thrust and emphasis for the Apostle Paul and the reason we've got all of his epistles 1st and 2nd Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1st and 2nd Thessalonians 1st and 2nd Timothy Titus Philemon, and I think Hebrews Look how many more books look how many more nations? How many more people and Paul the Apostle was uniquely qualified? To straddle the dispensations to be trained at the feet of Gamaliel and be steeped in the law of Moses and then to excavate and turn that Old Testament knowledge into a New Testament truth that surpasses and transcends Everything that God had originally intended for Israel, so Jesus calls his disciples to himself and said I have compassion on the multitude because they have now continued with me three days and have nothing to eat and I do not want to send them away hungry lest they faint on the way his disciples said well, where can we get? Enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great

multitude. What have you got they said? We've got seven loaves and a few little fish so he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground he Commanded all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth the way that the multitudes are fed is organized and overseen Structured Constructed by the Lord Jesus himself, it's his authority by which the multitudes are fed He commanded the multitude to sit down.

He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave. Thanks Notice this in every instance. It says that Jesus took the food he gave.

Thanks What does that do? What does it do? What's the function? What do you come away with? When Jesus lifts his eyes to heaven and gives thanks for what he's got in his hands. What does it communicate? What does it say? Where did this come from? What is the source? I? Am distributing something to you Through my disciples that came from the father giving thanks Acknowledges the source I wouldn't have it father in heaven if it weren't for you Our father who art in heaven Dot dot dot give us this day our daily bread right Authority structure Design simplicity and It is all inspired it is of God's origination he gave thanks and took the loaves and the fish Broke them gave them to his disciples and the disciples gave to the multitude Jesus gives to the disciples the disciples give to the multitude it would have been Simplicity itself if God had wanted to give us a different model Jesus could have said disciples Take this and give to the head of every family give to the tallest man in each group Give to the lady that's got the biggest shawl that you can dump bread and fish into and she can then distribute There is no additional level it comes from the father to the Lord Jesus to the disciples to the multitude there is nobody between the disciples and the multitude just as there is nobody between the Lord Jesus and the disciples and there is nobody between the father and the son It is an unbroken uninterrupted Chain of custody from the father through the Lord Jesus to the disciples to the multitudes every single time Turn with me to John chapter 6 You don't find people going to John 6 all that often It's a tough one It was tough at the time hasn't gotten any easier John chapter 6 Verse 22 on the following day after Jesus had walked on the sea You remember in John 6, this is the feeding of the 5,000 That's how it begins and you remember then he sends the disciples ahead and after the Fragments are gathered up Men Had seen the sign that Jesus did they said this is truly the prophet who is to come into the world This is John 6 14 in John 6 15 when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take him by force To make him king He departed to the mountain by himself alone It's so interesting to me and I'm gonna have a discussion with my good friend Ken one of these days Because in so many of these contexts you've got to see you've got boats You've got mountains and you've got people coming up with the wrong conclusions Have you noticed that? Jesus is by the sea He's trying to talk to the multitudes Then he goes to the mountain He calls his disciples Even in the last instance in Galilee when he calls him to the mountain to do the 28 16 through 20 of Matthew He's at the sea Peter and John are fishing the net etc. And then he gives them the Quote unquote Great Commission Something going on there the sea the mountains the people

the power So when Jesus perceived they were about to come and take him by force to make him king He departed to the mountain by himself alone When evening came his disciples went to the sea got in the boat went over he walks on the water Verse 22 on the following day people were standing on the other side of the sea They saw that there was no other boat there except one and Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples His disciples had gone away alone They begin to wonder.

How did he? get there and other boats came So people saw Jesus was not there. They come to Capernaum. They find him verse 25 They find Jesus on the other side of the sea.

They said rabbi. When did you come here? What we can't figure out the physics of this you had no boat Jesus answered them and said most assuredly I say to you you seek me not because you saw the signs But because you ate of the loaves and were filled People can seek Jesus people can serve Jesus people can talk about Jesus people can follow Jesus wherever he goes and the motivation is not Pleasing in God's sight Jesus says you are not following me and seeking me for the right reasons You're following and seeking and somebody can say look. I'm a Jesus follower.

I'm a Jesus seeker Look, I'm following I go wherever he is. I'm I'm questing What is the inmost motivation of the heart? Am I looking for something to meet my cravings? To satisfy my needs there is something I want out of this Jesus is going to meet my need or am I Following to serve This is the difference between following Jesus as he carries his cross down the Via Dolorosa to Crucifixion Hill versus taking up our own cross and following Being a disciple is being a follower, but not all followers are disciples These people are following and they are manifestly not disciples and Jesus calls them out for their motivation. I Could give you plenty of instances Lord, I will follow you anywhere But first let me go bury my father No, man, putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom If you love father and mother more than me you cannot be my disciple if you Love anything more than me.

You cannot be my disciple We'll see that here shortly You seek me But why? Not because you saw the signs and to see the signs is To if you really see them if you see and perceive you see the sign and you draw a conclusion from the sign The sign tells you something Everybody saw the sign but who Perceived the sign who saw it and understood what it meant Like Peter You are the Christ the Son of the Living God Later in this chapter. Jesus is going to say are you going to leave also? Does this offend you? and This is verse 67 do you my disciples also want to go away Simon Peter says Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life Where did they come from? The Father in heaven to whom Jesus gives thanks who Receives these words from the Lord Jesus His disciples Peter says you have the words of life. You have the words of eternal life I know this and you are communicating them to us.

We're not leaving We know what you are giving us This is what they are going to be

witnesses of this is what they are going to teach these are the Commandments. These are the precepts. These are the exhortations that the Lord Jesus shares with his disciples and they as Apostles are going to hand them to the multitudes Some will receive Some are going to leave the fragments that will be taken up in the baskets Do not labor verse 27 of John 6 for the food which perishes but for the food which endures to everlasting life Peter says you have the words of eternal life everlasting life Which the Son of Man will give you Because God the Father has set his seal on him.

Do you see the structure? God the Father has sealed the Son and given him these words of life to give to his disciples who are going to eventually Give them in place of the Lord Jesus himself while Jesus is here he's Teaching he's delivering the words. He keeps his disciples with him so that they Soak those up and they will be his witnesses when he leaves. I will send you another comforter He will take of the things of me and impart them to you my disciples.

He will lead you into all truth What shall we do the way I work the works of God Jesus said this is the work of God that you believe in him whom he sent He doesn't say believe my disciples doesn't say believe in each other Believe in the one that the Father sent. This is the work of God believe in the Son John 3 16 John 3 36 It's all about the Son God. The Father is on one side sending him the Disciples slash apostles are on the other side witnessing and testifying to him Jesus Christ is at the center he is the focus and that apostolic witness the word and the Spirit That have been sent by the Father through the Son to the Apostles is the witness From the time they were commissioned until the end of the age until the end of the world Matthew 28 18 through 20 acts 1 8 heyos Until the end telos of the age or the world They are witnesses they communicate it is the Apostolic witness the power is in the word and the Spirit.

The power is not in human flesh These men were uniquely gifted uniquely chosen uniquely called he called to himself those he himself wanted They were specifically chosen Specifically commissioned and it is their specific witness and testimony that brings the loaves and fishes to us Such an important concept so What conclusion do we draw over and over again there is a consistent witness to the Authority that has been given to the Lord Jesus by the Father to choose his witnesses To commission those witnesses to empower those witnesses With the truth and the Holy Spirit to witness to him until the end of this age until the end of this world that's What the Commission is the Great Commission was given to 12 men the 11 original disciples lacking Judas and Paul Those 12 and only those 12 not the Pope not a bishop not a cardinal not me not you those 12 Called at the beginning to the mountain called at the end to the mountain Called on the road to Damascus That's it that's where the authority has called the witness to reside and that witness is Entirely sufficient it is entirely comprehensive. It is everything that we need We are filled like the 5,000 like the 4,000 There is more than enough to fill us From that direct source Thanking the Father through the Son through the disciples apostles directly to us So who are we thankful to who do we look to as our

mentors as our? leadership as our disciple makers The Apostles this is what we saw in 2nd Timothy Chapter 2 this is saw what we saw in 1st Timothy chapter 1 When Paul tells Timothy take the things that you have heard from me an apostle and Entrust them to faithful men who will teach them He doesn't say find faithful men who will make disciples He says take the truths that you have heard me communicate and entrust those to additional teachers the truth Has the power in the hands of the Holy Spirit the truth and the Spirit make disciples That is the Lord Jesus. I am with you always to the end of the age Jesus is present in the word and through the Spirit and The Lord Jesus makes his own disciples to intrude into that process To try to take some bread away from a disciple and say I'll go give it to this group of 50 over here is presumptuous It's a misunderstanding It's a lack of clarity on the authority that Jesus invokes in Matthew 28 18 more about this when we come back from the break