

The Art of Following Jesus

Part 3: What is God's purpose for my life?

Mark 1:14-18 - [watch online](#)

Summary:

According to Jesus, your life has infinite importance. You aren't here by mistake. You were made on purpose for a purpose. That purpose is only fully realized and experienced when we practice the art of following Jesus.

Main Points:

[00:51] A full life is a life full of purpose.

[01:55] When we discover the purpose of following Jesus we discover the purpose of our lives.

[03:51] We discover true life within the Kingdom of God.

[04:38] We can discover the Kingdom of God but not actually live like citizens of the Kingdom of God.

[06:45] Following Jesus means devoting our lives to bringing the Kingdom of God to the people in our lives

[08:15] When we are devoted to the purpose of Jesus we discover purpose in every part of our life.

[09:40] The art of following Jesus trains us to focus our life on the purpose of Jesus... others.

[12:50] (Radio Tower explanation)

[16:54] We have an unbelievable opportunity to live for an unbelievable purpose

[17:30] In the Kingdom of God the King's purpose is our life's purpose.

Invitation: [15:40]

Read: Matthew 5:14-16

Pray: *Holy Spirit, please show me two people you want me to influence for the Kingdom. Show me my next step in following you.*

Plan: Write 2 names. Pray. Act.

Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus used the word picture of fishing for people to describe his purpose for his followers. What word picture would you use?
2. Jon said, "When we are devoted to the purpose of Jesus we discover purpose in every part of our life." Have you seen this play out in your own journey? If not, what do you think this could look like?
3. Read Matthew 5:14-16 and Luke 15:1-10. What stands out? What do these passages show you about God's heart?
4. Who might be your "two" that God is revealing to you? What is your next step in the art of following Jesus for this week's practice?
5. How can your group pray for you this week?

Transcript

IN: According to Jesus, your life has infinite importance. You aren't here by mistake. You were made on purpose for a purpose. That purpose is only fully realized and experienced when we practice the art of following Jesus. So, let's talk about it... together.

WE: There is something mind blowing about the human race. Every person you interact with, every person you drive by or are stuck in traffic with are completely unique individuals with their own thoughts, stories, hopes, dreams.

And whether we've had time to think about it lately... we all want to have a life of purpose.

Something inside us tells us... **A full life is a life full of purpose.** ...

Sure we start as naive and idealistic kids... but no matter how jaded or "experienced" we become we want our lives to mean something...

That's why Jesus was so revolutionary...

He taught that God wasn't just some distant deity or force... he showed that God is our personal heavenly father. Who sees each of us. Knows each of us. Is intimately involved in our stories.

And Jesus showed us that each of our lives have meaning... no matter where from, what have/haven't done... you were created on purpose for a purpose.

And when we don't know what that purpose is we feel like something is missing in almost every part of our lives...

- Work, relationships, school, family

But when we find that purpose it brings new energy, new life to each of those areas... Jesus showed us what that purpose is... we discover it as we practice the art of following Jesus.

When we discover the purpose of following Jesus we discover the purpose of our lives.

It is the purpose Jesus gave his followers from the very beginning.

GOD: Mark. 1st Bio, written around 70 AD, and Mark was a friend of Peter.

Sets up the biography w/ JB getting the hearts of the people of Israel ready for something/someone new that was coming...

Jesus is baptized by JB. HS descends like a dove voice says "You are my dearly loved son, and you bring me great joy."

Then Jesus goes into the wilderness for Solitude... Silence... Prayer- after which Satan offers him everything in the world and Jesus rejects and begins his ministry...

Mark 1:14-15 Summary of Jesus' main message...

"God has promised to come and fix the separation between humanity and himself and to personally live within his people... I am here to make all of that happen."

The KoG is near.... God ruling in every part of humanity and creation. Making the world as it was meant to be in the beginning.

“To be a part of it... Repent... give up allegiance to yourself and you ruling your life and pledge allegiance to God and his rule of your life.”

“Believe the Good News... I am bringing God’s promised new life. A life that truly matters”

Jesus is saying... **We discover true life within the Kingdom of God.**

When we make God king of our lives, we find true acceptance, love.

We discover our true identity as children of God who inherently bear his image.

And it all comes from belief... Trust.

Trust that God sees us, knows us, loves us, and that Jesus is the one who brings us into this new life.

Now here’s the rub, something you might have discovered already...

We can say we believe and trust and know a lot about what Jesus taught and did and still not be living the life he promises us...

We can discover the Kingdom of God but not actually live like citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Why? B/c we haven’t fully realized/aren’t living out the purpose of following Jesus...

Mark 1:16-18 Follow me... walk w/ me, do as I do... become like me

- Remember to follow... 1st we have to listen (Last week Solitude/Silence/Prayer)

Follow me... And I will show you how to fish for people... great analogy...

Fishing: takes preparation, practice, patience, a fondness of fish... it can be an all consuming life.

- You view the world as a fisherman.
- And the world views you as a fisherman... smell, look, demeanor

Fish for people: Search for people, prepare selves to bring people into the boat of KoG, patience, love for people, practice.

- We begin to view our lives through the lens of being a fisher of people
- And others begin to see us as followers of Jesus... love, patience, peace, joy

Jesus is saying... when you follow me... my purpose becomes your purpose...

What was his purpose? **Luke 19:10**

Following Jesus means devoting our lives to bringing the KoG to the people in our lives

Jesus is inviting us into the most important purpose in the cosmos... He is inviting all of us to work w/ him in bringing his Kingdom to earth now.

To bring his love, peace, clarity, acceptance, joy to the people around us.

To invite others to discover his kingdom through both our words and our actions.

To bring Jesus into the lives that have been put into our path.

But look... Jesus is not saying "Try really hard/feel bad when can't figure out. Feel like bad Christian b/c the idea of talking about faith scares you."

He says, "Follow me... and I will show you how to fish for people..." other translations... and I will make you fishers of people.

Meaning... *As you are following me, I will transform you and how you see and interact with everyone in your life.*

Practice the art of following me and I will make you into this fisher of people if you let me

He gives us his purpose for humanity... to seek and save the lost.

He gives us new eyes to see the world and our lives as he sees them!

And this is where we find our true purpose... **When we are devoted to the purpose of Jesus, we discover purpose in every part of our life.**

Often we don't see the purpose in our lives b/c we think work/life/church/following Jesus is about us... what we can get, what we want, what we need.

And if life is simply all about me... or even just all about me and Jesus... everything seems disconnected... we miss the the thread that runs through all of life.

A full life isn't focused on ourselves... **a full and great life is focused outward.**

Jesus said the best way for humans to operate is to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. And to express that through loving our neighbor as ourselves.

If I am really loving God then I am living for God's purpose and I am fishing for others to show them his love by loving them as I love myself.

As we practice the art of following Jesus our focus is transformed from ourselves, our lives, to the people around us

It's a command with a promise... Follow me. And I will make you fishers of people.

The art of following Jesus trains us to focus our life on the purpose of Jesus... others.

Every aspect of life is now viewed through the purpose of the KoG...

We discover our purpose in every interaction, we have a filter through which to make life's large and small decisions, it gives our lives clarity.

We now make decisions through asking questions like... How will this further or hinder my influence for the KoG? Which choice will allow me to show Jesus' love best?

Our attitudes, reactions, interactions are filtered through the lens of our true purpose. It influences what we do/don't do, what we say/don't say, how we say it, what we post/don't post.

Everything is molded by our true purpose as followers of Jesus... to influence and draw people to the true life found only in the KoG!

Work/School becomes an opportunity (through our actions and words) to bring the KoG to those we interact with.

Parenting becomes an opportunity to bring the KoG to our family through our words and actions... an opportunity that continues as they move out and start their own lives and/or families.

Even changes how we use and view our money is transformed from selfish hoarding to purposeful generosity.

As we continue to follow Jesus he makes this focus become more and more of who we are... all the other parts of us are transformed as well.

So how do we actually do this... how do we follow Jesus in such a way that we allow him to transform us into fishers of people?

YOU: It starts with following Jesus... Trusting that he is who he says he is and can do what he says he can do...
- And learning to know him... Why we started with Solitude-Silence-and Prayer.

The relationship developed in those times is the foundation for living out our true purpose...

And as we talk about other practices in the art of following Jesus they are all ways to live out our true purpose...

But we need to know what that purpose is before we start...

Otherwise we run the danger of all of this just becoming another exercise in a life of "me and Jesus" and we miss the whole point.

Becoming a fisher of people for the KoG is the purpose and it is something we have to practice...

We have to purposely and even structurally practice and plan for it... with becoming a **fisher** as our goal.

A goal w/o a plan is just a wish.

So we have created a community to help and support everyone discover and live out their purpose in the KoG with their actions and words... We call it CCC

We exist to invite our neighbors to discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers... together.

We do this by providing opportunities/space to practice the Art of Following Jesus...

Radio tower... the whole point of the structure is for each person to be able to live out their purpose of inviting their neighbors to discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers... together.

Starts at the top (**Antennae**)- is you radiating out Jesus' love to your people.

The rest of the structure is designed to support/train/provide opportunities to practice the rest of the practices we will talk about in this series.

All of this is based on relationship... the higher up we go the closer the relationships, like the struts on the tower.

Not a step by step process... puzzle pieces that bring together the whole picture.

Lowest/largest section of tower- **Together For Salem**

- Introduction to Discovering who Jesus is... what it means to follow him. The most available, accessible.

Next Section- **Gatherings**

- See we are part of larger community/ Not alone / something about being together
- Practice a lot of what we talk about in a safe community environment.
 - Studying Jesus, service, generosity, hospitality, worship, celebration

For Salem Opportunities

- We are for Salem b/c God is for Salem.
- We want to show our neighbors we are FOR them before they are ever FOR us... even if they never are.
- Trains us to see our role as the messengers of Jesus' love

Connect Group

- Safe communities to share life together
- Praying for/supporting/caring for (Shepherding one another)
- Discussing messages/explore/questions
- Seeing God use others and use you to love each other.

Alliances

- Groups of 2 or 3: Learning, growing, and supporting each other.
- Personal and personalized paths to practice the art of following Jesus.

Again, it's all designed to support and hold up... you, in their life... **the antenna** declaring the message of Jesus' love wherever God takes you... home, work, neighborhood, hobbies, etc.

So I Invite you to see your journey through the purpose of Jesus.

At this week let's

Read: Matthew 5:14-16

Prayer: *Holy Spirit, please show me two people you want me to influence for the Kingdom. Show me my next step in following you.*

Then **Plan to practice:**

- Write down those 2 peoples names and put it somewhere you will see it and for now when you see it... pray that God would clearly show his love to them... maybe even through you.
- Then take whatever practice step he is directing you toward... Whether it's within CCC tower, or not.

WE: **We have an unbelievable opportunity to live for an unbelievable purpose**

Jesus didn't come to earth, die, and rise again so we could sit around, sing songs, read the Bible until he comes back...

He came to establish his kingdom on earth now... and we have a role to play in it...

As individuals and as a community.

To be who we were created to be we have to accept our purpose and practice to make it the driving force of our life.

And that's when we find the life of love, peace, joy, purpose Jesus offers us... together.

In the KoG, the King's purpose is our life's purpose.