

Rethinking Church | Church Is More Than A Sermon | GUIDE - *Psalms 95:1-7*

www.ordinaryfaith.net/sermons/church-is-more-than-a-sermon/

There seem to be a lot of opinions on the church these days. Some view church as an institution, a religion, a denomination or a set of traditions. They might see the church just as a building or an organization. Still yet, other people might view church as a family of like-minded people. Regardless of their opinion of what a church is, many people think the church is all about listening to a sermon. But Jesus had something else in mind. When Jesus came to the earth 2,000 years ago, His mission was simple: help people pursue God.

Jesus envisioned a church that actually makes a difference in the world.

"What is the church?"

Church comes from greek word (ekklesiā) which literally means "called out ones." The church is people called out from the world in order to be the people of God. The church isn't a building, or a religion, or a location or organization and it is certainly not an institution in the eyes of God, anyway.

The church is the people who Jesus has touched and changed and called out from the world in order to be the people of God with each other and to the rest of the world. If you know and love Jesus, then He has called you out of the ways, the philosophies and the values of the world, in order for you to be the people of God to each other and to the people of the world.

Matthew 9:36 (NLT) When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

In this verse, we see what broke Jesus' heart. What breaks ours? Have we been struck to our core with the situation of hurting people? Have we forgotten what is at stake for those who leave this life without Him? Have we forgotten that Jesus is the only way to eternal life? What will motivate you to help people to pursue God?

Jesus wants to send out regular people to make an impact, not just pastors.

"Why did God put me on the earth?"

He didn't have to. He chose to. But why? So He could love you. So you could love Him back. So you could tell others of His love. In the end, that is why you are here. School, work, family, degrees, awards, vacations, marriage, as important as all of those things are, they are secondary things. The primary thing and the priority thing is that you can love God and help others love Him too.

Matthew 4:18-19 (NLT) One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. 19 Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow Me, and I will show you how to fish for people!"

Of course, that may be intimidating. It certainly was to the fishermen Jesus asked to be His disciples. Have you ever considered that He called fishermen, not Pharisees? They were regular people just like us. Ordinary people just like us. That is the way God has always done it. And that is the way He is going to continue to do it until He comes back.

You don't have to feel qualified to be obedient to Jesus.

"Do I know enough and am I good enough to be a disciple and to make other disciples?"

Let's be honest. Do you really think this motley crew of disciples was really qualified? Truthfully, the only one who had a good resume was Judas and you know how that went. Helping others pursue Jesus (becoming a disciple-maker) is more about availability and teachability than it is competency.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT) Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

In ancient times whoever had the authority in the kingdom controlled the power of the kingdom. Jesus is saying that since He is God and has been given not just some authority, but all authority, that means He also possesses all the power.

When we go out to make disciples with the authority of Christ, He gives us the power to accomplish this. We are not sent out to do a Tom Cruise Mission Impossible task. We are not only authorized by God, but we are also empowered by God to do what He asked us to do. We are able to complete the mission of making disciples because God has personally authorized our mission and personally given us all the power we need to complete it.

Conclusion:

When Jesus came to the earth 2,000 years ago, His mission was simple: to help people pursue God. To accomplish His mission, He disciplined twelve ordinary men for three years. Then he left. Those regular guys changed the world by passing on the truth of Jesus to others who would also pass it on. The biblical strategy for helping people pursue God is clear: every follower of Jesus must become a disciple-maker like Jesus.

[Adapted From PursueGod.org](http://PursueGod.org)

Talk About It

- *What is your initial reaction to this topic? What jumped out at you?*
- *What do you think of when you hear the word "mentoring?" Have you ever had a mentor at school, in sports, or at work? Describe the relationship.*
- *Read [John 1:43](#). Is it surprising to you that Jesus picked a bunch of fishermen as his closest disciples? Explain.*
- *Make a list of the activities you consider to be "normal" in the Christian life. Is disciple-making on that list? Have you ever actually done it?*
- *Read [Matthew 28:19-20](#). Do you think the disciples felt qualified to become mentors? Do you feel qualified? Why or why not?*
- *Who personally helped you to pursue God? How did they do it?*
- *Write a personal action step based on this conversation.*