

From Disciple to Disciple Maker

by Santosh Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the transition from being a disciple of Christ to becoming a disciple maker, particularly focusing on the role of young people in this process.

Duration: 59:27

Scripture: Acts 5:29

Topics: "Discipleship", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the journey from being a disciple to becoming a disciple maker, focusing on the importance of surrendering to God, learning from godly examples, and being prepared for the task ahead. It highlights the need for a personal revelation of God, the spirit of a servant, faith that does not fail despite failures, firm obedience, and diligence in ministry. The examples of Joshua and Peter are used to illustrate these principles and encourage young people to be faithful in their walk with God.

Transcript

So today I'm going to talk to you about being going from a disciple to a disciple maker. And this is a message that I believe is important for our time, especially for our young people, and I'm glad that so many of you young people are here gathered together to learn, to learn from godly examples that have gone ahead of you. But there's an important task that's ahead of you now, given all that you have learned and all that the Lord has taught you.

And I include myself in this category. I still think of myself as young. So before we start, let's ask the Lord to bless this message and bless our time together.

Heavenly Father, I pray that you will speak to me through your Holy Spirit and speak to all of us, Lord, that your Holy Spirit will have preeminence and that as your Holy Spirit comes upon us that Jesus will be glorified. We seek to glorify you, Lord Jesus, in everything that we do in our lives, in our words, in our thoughts, in our motives. And so I pray that you will be glorified even now in this time together.

I pray for each of the young people here, Lord, that they will grow up to be your disciples, to be pillars in your church. Fill them with your Holy Spirit, I pray, Lord, as they seek to be used by you, to be a blessing to many, to set the captives free, and to be shining lights in this land and in this world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

So like I said, we're going to talk today about going from being a disciple to being a disciple-maker. And I'll tell you a little bit more about what I mean by that in a little bit. But first, I thought I would ask you to think about some of your favorite promises from the Bible.

And, you know, I bet if you were to ask Christians around the world, most Christians, what their favorite promises are in the Bible, you'll hear things like, Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and the door shall be opened to you.

That's Matthew 7. Or, if you have faith, like a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, Be cast in the sea, and it will. Or, if you believe in prayer and ask, it shall be given to you, Jesus said in another place, I think Matthew 16. Or, yeah, this one is probably a lot of people think about is, Give, and it shall be given to you.

You hear this a lot today. That according to the measure you give, you will receive. Press down, shaken together, running over, it will pour into your lap.

A lot of people think, well, that's a promise I'd love to have. But I'd like to show you a promise today that most people have never even thought of as a promise. And yet, I think it's one of the greatest promises that we have in the New Testament.

Turn with me, if you will, to Mark chapter 1. Mark chapter 1, and I'm going to read verse 17. This is right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. He's calling some of the disciples, some of the early disciples, the first ones, like Simon, Simon Peter, and Andrew, and James, and John.

And at that time, he says these words to them. Mark chapter 1, verse 17, he says, Jesus said to them, Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men. Let me read that again.

Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men. Now, if I was to paraphrase that, what Jesus said there, what he is saying is, You be my disciple, and I will make you a disciple maker. They say that also again.

You be my disciple, and I will make you a disciple maker. Now, if you're like me, for many years, and like with most Christians, I thought of this as a command. Jesus was saying, Follow me.

That was a command, saying, Be my disciple. And yes, that is a command. He says, Follow me.

So, that is a command. Follow me. Be my disciple.

But to me, the greatest part of that, or I don't know if it's the greatest part, but as much an important part of the verse is what comes after that. Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men. You be my disciple, and I will make sure that you will be a disciple maker.

If you truly follow me, you will be a disciple maker. So, I started to see this verse as a promise. And it's becoming one of my favorite promises as well.

I think the reality of this is that the ultimate proof of my being a disciple is that I also become a disciple maker. The ultimate proof of my being a disciple is that I also become a disciple maker. Then, this verse is true.

See, Jesus never lied. And the Word of God never lies. And if Jesus was to say this to you, if you follow me, I will make sure that you become a disciple maker.

If you are my disciple, I will make sure that you are a disciple maker. And notice that the responsibility is not on us to be disciple makers. Jesus said that, I will make you a disciple maker.

It's not something you have to concoct. It's not something you have to come up with, and you have to come up with this technique, or that, and work up this, or work up that. Maybe try to work up some boldness, or things like that.

It's not about that. Jesus said that the only responsibility we have is to follow Him, is to truly follow Him, and He will take care of making us disciple makers. Now, as I look back on my life, I see that there were times in my life where I thought I was truly following Jesus.

And yet, I couldn't say that it was true that I was a disciple maker. That the result of my life, the result of my following Jesus was that other people also became disciples. I believe that that should be the case.

That the more we follow Jesus, the more others will follow Jesus as well. The more others will be drawn to be disciples, not of us, but of Jesus Himself. The disciples that we're making are not disciples of me, but disciples of Jesus as well, because I am truly following Jesus.

Now, for those of you at CFC, and myself included, having grown up in CFC, we're in a very unique situation. We have a very unique privilege that we have so many godly examples that have shown us, by their lives, the reality of this very thing. As they have been disciples of Jesus, God has made them disciple makers.

Other people have also become disciples because these godly examples that we have, that have gone ahead of us, have been faithful disciples themselves. And as they have followed Jesus faithfully, others have been drawn to be disciples of Jesus themselves. And so, I wanted to show you two examples from the Bible of young people.

Two young people in the Bible who are in much the same situation as we are in. They've got to be around some godly people, around godly examples. And like it says in Hebrews 13, observing their conduct, imitate their faith.

And that's what I want to do for you today, I want us to take a look at, is that we can observe their conduct and imitate their faith. How they, as young people, being around godly examples, did certain things. There were certain aspects about their behavior, certain ways in which they followed the example set by that godly leader that they had, that made them effective leaders themselves, and made them disciple makers.

These were two examples who were disciples who became disciple makers. So, on the sheets there that you have, you'll see that there are five characteristics here that I'm pointing out about these biblical examples. The first is that they observed the godly example that they had.

Then they became a disciple. They were tested and approved by God in His time. And I want to emphasize that part, in His time.

It wasn't like they did it for a certain amount of time and said, okay Lord, now I'm ready. God had a portion of time within which they were to be tested and approved so that they could become disciple makers, so

that they could become leaders themselves. Then they were empowered with God's Holy Spirit, and they became disciple makers despite being young.

And I have that there again. I mentioned the fact that they were young, because that gives us an example to follow. That means that we don't have to wait to say, well I'm going to wait until I'm 40 or 50 years old before I can really be a leader of God, a leader.

And a leader doesn't mean that we are called to preach, or are called to be elders in churches, or anything like that. People in the world will try to convince you that if you really want to be a leader, you have to go pastor a church somewhere, you have to go out in the mission field. All of you, men and women alike, all of us are called to be leaders.

In different spheres of influence that God has allowed us to be in, we're called to be leaders. And so therefore, this is not just a message for people who want to be pastors, who want to go in the mission field, or things like that. This is a message for every single one.

If you're a young sister that wants to be a godly mother someday, well how am I going to be a leader? Believe me, God wants you to be a leader in the circle in which he puts you in. And so this is a message for you as well. So, the two examples I'm going to look at, I'll tell you who they are in a second.

But before that, I want to talk about the approval process, and that's where we're going to focus our thoughts mostly on. And I'm going to point out five areas of proving, or five areas of testing, that God used, and I believe God uses even today, to distinguish those whom he can use from those whom he cannot use. There are certain people who pass these tests, and I wouldn't say that this is necessarily the all-inclusive category, or all-inclusive list of tests.

There are many different kinds of tests, but I'll point out these five areas of proving, or areas of testing. In both of these examples that God used to test them, and therefore approve them, so that by the end of that proving process, he could say, okay, you're ready to be my leaders, you're ready to be disciple makers. The first was the test of priorities.

What were their priorities? And the second is the test of submission. How did they submit? They were all given opportunity, both of these examples, were given opportunities to submit. And how did they submit? That was a test.

The third is the test of faith. The test of their faith. Fourth, the test of obedience.

How much do they obey, and how did they obey? And the fifth is the test of diligence. Were they faithful in the work that God entrusted to them? So like I said, with each of these examples, you will see those five areas, and I believe those are five areas that are very important for us as young people, and especially as we prepare for the Lord to use us in whatever way that the Lord decides to use us. The first example I'm going to talk about is Joshua.

And for this, you'll have to read in Exodus 13 onwards, the story of Joshua. He's first mentioned, I think, in around Exodus 16 or so. But it's quite clear from studying the story that Joshua was born in Egypt.

So he was born into slavery. As we know, the Israelites had been in slavery in Egypt for about 400 years. And Joshua was still a young man when the Israelites were delivered through Moses and Aaron, and God led them out through the Red Sea and on through the wilderness towards the land of Canaan.

Joshua was born in Egypt. And so he began his life in slavery, just like all the other Israelites, doing backbreaking labor. You know, they're the ones that most likely had to build the pyramids and make bricks from straw, like we read that Pharaoh forced them to do.

A lot of oppression that Joshua was born into. Born as a slave. Joshua was born as a slave.

And then he experienced liberation with all of God's people through the 10 plagues and how God did miraculous wonders in Egypt. And then led his people out, part of the Red Sea. Imagine what it must have been like for Joshua to be a part of that movement.

These 2 million or so people and all their cattle and all their goods just walking out of the land of Egypt after. See, Joshua didn't know any better. He didn't know that there was a promised land.

Maybe his parents told him because his grandparents had told them or his great-grandparents. Many generations. Think about this.

400 years Joshua's ancestors had lived in this land of oppression and slavery. He could have very easily just said, well, this is my life. I'm just going to accept this.

But there was something a bit different about Joshua that made him God's leader. I believe that he must have heard stories about the promised land that God's going to someday liberate his people. And he was captivated by that.

So he experienced God's liberation just like all the other Israelites did. Coming out of the land of Egypt and going through the Red Sea. And then he witnessed God's power through all the miracles that God did.

You know, imagine if you could have experienced Moses putting that tree in and all of a sudden the water is sweet or manna falling from heaven and quails just coming in droves so that you could have food in the midst of this wilderness where there's no sign of birds. Or Moses hitting that rock and water just gushing out of a rock. So Joshua got to see God's power along with God's people.

He got to witness God's power. But he was surrounded by a multitude of grumblers. As we know, if you read the story of the Israelites, they were all complainers.

Anytime something happened, they complained. In fact, if you read the story carefully, it's just three days after God had parted the Red Sea. Three days.

Think about that. 72 hours after God had parted the Red Sea that they complained because the water was bitter. Imagine seeing this mighty miracle happening and then three days later you come to some water and it's bitter and you think, oh God, you let us here in the wilderness to die and they complain and grumble.

And then I think it's a couple months later they fear that they're going to die of starvation and God then has to miraculously provide manna and quail for them. And then a little bit later they come to another place where they think they're going to die of thirst. There's no water at all now.

And again, they grumble and complain. So Joshua was around a multitude. Everybody around him was grumbling and complaining about their lot in life.

But he was different. I believe he was different. There was an aspect of Joshua in his faith that we see that he wasn't a grumbler and a complainer.

And so he distinguished himself from all these other people that were grumbling and complaining. Joshua stood up. Now Joshua also made some choices in his life.

And I talked about the five characteristics earlier that Joshua, I believe, observed Moses' life. And with Joshua, the godly example that God gave him that God allowed him to have was Moses. Moses was a godly man.

It said of him that he was the meekest man, the humblest man on the face of the earth. And Moses had been through many trials in his life. 40 years living in Egypt in the palace.

And then another 40 years living in the wilderness with his father-in-law. And then coming back and being used by God to set his people free. Moses had a relationship with God.

But Joshua saw that and he was drawn to it. He observed Moses' godly life. And then he became a disciple himself.

It said about Joshua that he was a servant. He became a disciple himself. Whenever you read about Joshua, he says, Joshua, Moses' servant.

So he became a disciple because he was drawn by what he saw about Moses' life. Then he was tested and approved. Remember, we talked about being tested and approved by God.

In God's time, he allowed Joshua to go through many years of testing. I think it was about, yeah, I guess it would have been about 40 years that Joshua was tested. 40 years.

Imagine going through a period of testing of 40 years before God says, hey, now you're ready. Now you're approved by me. But Joshua had proved himself little by little during that way, during those 40 years.

And therefore, he could lead God's people into the promised land. That was a big, that was, I'm sure a lot of people wanted to be the leader who would finally take God's people after 40 years of wandering into the promised land. But God selected Joshua because he was proved.

He had been tested and approved by God over those 40 years. And then he was empowered with God's spirit. It says in Numbers 27 that about Joshua, God tells Moses, okay, it's time for you to select Joshua, a man on whom is God's spirit.

Let me read that verse for you. Numbers 27. Turn with me if you will to Numbers chapter 27.

Numbers 27, it says in verse 18. So the Lord said to Moses, Numbers 27 verse 18. So the Lord said to Moses, take Joshua the son of Nun.

This is just before Moses is about to die. And they're on the verge of the land of Canaan. And it says, God told Moses earlier, you're not going to be able to lead God's people into the land of Canaan because you disobeyed me earlier.

But he says, but take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit. And lay your hands upon him. So God didn't say, okay, Joshua, I want you to lead God's people, but I'm not going to give you any help

with it.

No, God poured his spirit on Joshua so that he could have the power to lead God's people. And finally, the fifth choice that he made is he became a leader despite being young. And so he became a disciple maker.

Remember, we're talking about going from being a disciple to becoming a disciple maker. And Joshua went from being a disciple to becoming a disciple maker even though he was still young. I'm not sure how old Joshua was.

He may have been perhaps about 60 years old or so when he finally led God's people into the land of Canaan. But that was still relatively young. If you think that Moses lived to be 120, for how old people lived in that time, 60 years was about, you know, in today's thinking, that'd probably be about 35 years old.

Think about it, that Joshua was 35 years old, in today's thinking, if you were to look at it that way, when he led God's people into the land of Canaan. But in the years leading up to that, Joshua had been approved by God. Step by step, year by year, God tested him, God allowed him to be tested, and he was approved by God.

Now, I'm sure there were numerous other older leaders among the multitude of Israelites who thought, hey, I want to be the next leader after Moses. I'm sure they thought, well, Moses is going to die at some point, who's going to take over after him? A lot of them, they respected Moses' authority. It's quite clear from that.

But God selected Joshua, and there was a lot of other, think about a lot of the other older people, even Aaron, Moses' own brother. You know, if this were today's, if this was a company or if this was some of today's churches, I'm sure they'd be passing it on to Moses' son or Moses' brother, younger brother, while he gets to, I guess it was Moses' older brother. But I'm sure that sort of thing would be passed on to the family, why wouldn't it? But with God, it's quite different.

He saw a young man who was serious about being a disciple and about serious about being a leader and a disciple maker. And God chose him above all the others, all the other older leaders. Think about an older leader like Korah, who rebelled against Moses.

And we'll look at that a little bit in a second again. But there were other leaders like Aaron and Korah and others who I'm sure wanted to be the next leader. But Joshua distinguished himself despite the fact that he was young.

So we're going to look at the approval of Joshua, the five-step process that I mentioned earlier that Joshua had to go through as well that God used to prove that he was an effective leader for God's, of God's people. The first was, like we said, the test of priorities. What were Joshua's priorities? Turn with me to Exodus chapter 33.

Exodus chapter 33. And it says here in verse 11, something very interesting about Joshua. And I alluded to this earlier.

Exodus chapter 33 in verse 11, it says, Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses, and you have to read a few verses before that, which I won't in the interest of time, but there was this place called the tent of meeting that was a little bit away from the camp. And when Moses would go there to the tent of meeting to speak with God face to face, like it says, thus,

and so you read that context about how Moses read, Moses talked to God face to face in the tent of meeting.

Moses spoke to God face to face. Now all the other Israelites would stand at the doorway of the tent and watch him. They'd watch Moses go in and they'd just stand there out of respect and they'd watch him.

Then Moses would be done and then they'd go back to living their everyday life. So out of a sense of respect, they just watched or something might happen and they were just watching. But look at what it says about Joshua, verse 11.

Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, so Moses was done speaking to the Lord face to face and so he returned to the camp and everybody else goes, okay, Moses meeting is over. Let's go back to doing the life, doing what we need to do.

Look at what Joshua, it says, his servant Joshua. Remember how I said it was said about Joshua consistently. He was a servant.

Imagine if you coveted that name. Who are you? Well, I'm so and so's servant. I'm CFC's servant.

Do you want to be called that? That's what Joshua was called. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of man, a young man would not depart from the tent. Everybody else would go back and go back to their life, but Joshua would stay there because I believe that that's because Joshua said, Lord, you speak to Moses face to face.

He has that relationship with you. He is a disciple of yours and he's got that relationship with you where you can speak to him face to face and I want that. And Joshua coveted that.

I really believe he did. So he'd stand there and says, Lord, maybe one day you and I can have that face to face conversation that I see you having with Moses and he coveted that. His priorities were that he wanted that personal revelation of God.

See, Moses had a personal revelation of God. God, imagine if it could be said of you like it was of Moses that you spoke to God face to face, spoke to God face to face. I mean, there's God's face and there's your face and you're speaking to him.

There's no greater personal revelation of God than that and we're called to an even greater revelation in the new covenant. Think about that. But here was Joshua.

He saw that Moses had that personal revelation of God. Where he could see God face to face and he wanted it. He had a hunger for a personal revelation of God.

That was his priority. See, with all the other Israelites, even all the other ones who claim that they wanted to be leaders perhaps. Maybe they harbored secret thoughts of one day I'm going to be the next leader of God's people.

But when Moses was out there speaking with God face to face, they'd stand there and watch him. But when he was done, they went back to their everyday life. They didn't have that hunger for a personal revelation of God's face like Joshua had.

And Joshua was a young man. Like I said, he must have been perhaps in his 20s. And there he was standing at the tent.

Says, I'm not going to leave your Lord one day. I'm just going to stand here every time Moses go in. For some reason, I can't have that yet.

But I'm going to stand here until I get a personal revelation of God like Moses has. The second test that Joshua had to go through is the second area is the test of submission. Look at what it says in Exodus chapter.

These different verses that I read for you. Exodus chapter 24. I have those verses on those sheets.

You don't have to turn to all of them. Exodus 24 verse 13. I'll read that for you really quickly.

Exodus 24 verse 13. It says, so Moses arose with Joshua his servant. Like I said, how many people come to be called your so and so servant? And you know, we know in India what it's like to be a servant.

We see them and some of us have been around servants. A servant is one who's just there to... They have no privileges almost. It's just like, well, they just get to be a servant.

That's all they do. And you know, remember the parable that Jesus told once of a servant, a true servant, is one who comes in from the field working and then he doesn't expect to get served a meal. The master doesn't say, hey, you've been worked, servant.

You've been working in the field all day. Come and have a good meal. No, he says, yeah, I know you've been working in the field all day, but it's time for you to serve me my meal.

That's the attitude of a servant. And Jesus was asking, will God find servants like that? Will God find people, young people who have that mentality of a servant? Who are not ashamed to be called a servant. So Moses arose with Joshua, his servant.

Then that other verse that I read for you earlier in Exodus 33 verse 11, when Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man would not depart from the tent. And then in Numbers 11, 28, again, it's called, Joshua is referred to as his attendant. Somebody who's just waiting on Moses.

Okay, Moses, you need a cup of water? You need something else? Anything I can do for you? A servant, the servant mentality. Now in Numbers 11 verse 29, you read an interesting story about Joshua that there were certain people who were prophesying and you can turn Numbers 11 verse 29. You can turn to that sometime later.

I encourage you to look at that incident. It's a very, it's just a couple of verses. And Joshua said, hey, Moses, tell him to stop.

Moses, my Lord, restrain them. Numbers 11 verse 29 says, hey, they're prophesying, but they're not supposed to. And then Moses said to him, rebuked him almost and says, are you jealous for my sake? That all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.

And so Joshua was like, hey, he said this and Moses had to rebuke him. And how did Joshua react to it? I think it's later on that he's actually said, well, he's Joshua's attendant. He's still Moses' servant.

There was that mentality of even when he was rebuked, even when, you know, Joshua could have gotten offended at something like that. He says, hey, Moses, I've been your servant all these years. And how, and you speak to me like that? You treat me like that? Joshua had the mentality of a servant.

Now look at it at the end of his life, the end of Joshua's life in Joshua chapter 24. This is the last chapter of the book of Joshua. He's led God's people into the land of Canaan.

He was the mighty leader. They got part of the Jordan again for them. They walked across into the land of Canaan and they fought mighty battles.

They defeated giants. The walls of Jericho have come down, all of this. And now Joshua is at the end of his life and he's ready to go to die.

And what does he say in Joshua chapter 24? It was verse 15. At the end of that, it says, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. As for me and my house, we will be God's servants.

Imagine at the end, however, I think Joshua was 110 years old when he died. 110 years old when he died. And after 110 years of being a servant, the end of his life says, so me and my house, I'm 110 years old.

I've walked with God. I've done all these mighty things. I've been the leader of God's people.

As for me and my house, I'll be the Lord's servant. And if we can covet that mentality that Joshua had to be God's servants, to be the servants in the church, that's how Joshua was approved by God. He remained a servant to the end of his life.

See, Joshua, when he was rebuked, he could have rebelled. Moses never rebuked Korah. Moses never rebuked Aaron or Miriam.

And yet all three of them and many others rebelled against Moses because they didn't have that spirit of a servant. I tell you, if we have that spirit of a servant, it will protect us from rebelling, ever rebelling against authority, from ever getting offended when somebody says something to correct us or to direct us in the wrong way. Imagine if you've ever been in a situation where an older brother says, rebukes you even perhaps, or nudges you and points out something in you that needs to be said right.

You have two choices. You could rebel or you could get offended in your heart and God can't use you because you don't have the spirit of a servant. Or you could say, Lord, I'm just your servant and be a disciple.

And those are the kind of people whom God is looking for because they prove themselves to be God's disciple makers. So Joshua went from being a disciple to a disciple maker because of these two areas. I'm going to take a pause here to flip the DVD.

So we'll continue. Again, I just want to reiterate the two points that I mentioned already. The test of priorities and the test of submission, the two areas that we've already looked at with Joshua.

That he had a hunger for a personal revelation of God. He began as a servant. That's what, that's if you, Hey, who's Joshua? Moses' servant.

He began like that. He remained like that over the course of his life. Even when he was rebuked, he never rebelled.

He remained as a servant, preserved that attitude of a servant. And then even at the end of his life, Moses is long gone. And he could say, well, who's serving am I? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Let's continue this. So to continue where we were, we were looking at the approval of Joshua. We looked at who was Joshua and how God had to take him through this approval process so that he could be an effective disciple maker, an effective leader.

And we looked at the first two areas in which God tested him. The test of priorities, how Joshua's priority was to get that revelation, that personal revelation of God, like he saw his godly example Moses had. The second area was in the area, the test of submission.

Was Joshua able to submit? And this was having the mentality of a servant. That's what it means to submit, is to have a mentality of a servant. I submit under the authority that God puts over me.

And he started out like that. That's what identified him, Joshua the servant. And then even when he was rebuked, he submitted.

He didn't rebel like the others did. And so I could imagine maybe Korah, God was looking at Korah. Maybe Korah, maybe Joshua.

Then he saw Korah rebelled. No. Maybe Aaron.

No, Aaron rebelled. No. But Joshua had that spirit of a servant.

And then finally, at the end of his life, we saw that Joshua still had that spirit of a servant. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Now continuing on, the third area of proving is Joshua's test of faith.

And most of you know this story. In fact, it's probably one of the stories that Joshua's most well known for. The story when the spies, the 12 spies went out into the land of Canaan.

As they approached the land of Canaan, and 12 spies were sent out, and only Joshua and Caleb proved that they had faith. That God's word was true. That God had said, I will take you into a land flowing with milk and honey.

And as far as Joshua and Caleb were concerned, God didn't even have to mention the giants. Because God didn't say, well, you'll see giants. He didn't forewarn them.

He was, it was a test of faith there. And Joshua's faith was, well, it doesn't matter about giants and all that. God's word is true.

He said, he will take us into the land of Canaan. And so that was Joshua's test of faith that amid other people who, who, the majority. In fact, it was only Joshua and Caleb.

Imagine among 2 million, perhaps even more than that. If you were two, two out of 2 million, that's one out of 1 million. I don't even want to calculate how much, that's a minor, minor percent, 0.0001, I think, or something like that.

Imagine if that's the minority that you're in. You know, they say Christians in India, for instance, are a minority. That's 2%.

That's still a large number of people. Think about being a minority, 0.0001% or something like that. That's Joshua and Caleb.

And yet they, despite being so far outnumbered, they would refuse to be swayed. And Joshua refused to be swayed in his faith in God. So no matter how much people around him would say, well, that God didn't really say that you can have victory over sin.

God didn't really say that you can be a powerful witness. God didn't really say that He will pour out His Holy Spirit upon my sons and daughters, and they will prophesy. No, God didn't really mean that.

That was for that time. But if you say, well, no, everybody else is saying this, but I'm going to stand on God's Word, and God's Word is true. Sin shall not have dominion over me.

When Jesus said that if I lust after a woman, I've committed adultery, He meant that. When Jesus said that if you get angry at your brother, you have committed murder, He meant that. Now, the rest of Christianity may say, well, no, that's not really what it means.

It's okay, you're going to live with your anger. You're going to live with your lust. But if you stand in your faith and refuse to be swayed in your faith in God, not in our ability, not in anything in yourself, but in God and His Word, that is another area of testing.

And Joshua proved himself here. The fourth area is the test of obedience. Now, what happens after this? God says, okay, fine, Joshua and Caleb, you guys are going to get to go, but nobody else is going to go.

So everybody else says, well, okay, fine, then we're going to go. You read that in Numbers 14, the next verses after that, later on in the passage, Numbers 14, verse 40 onwards, they say, fine, we're going to go. The next day, I think it was, yeah, the next morning, Numbers 14, verse 40, after this act of unbelief, they decide, well, we're going to go ahead and just try to capture the giants then.

That was disobedience because God had said, no, you can't go. You have to wait and you have to wait for God's time. Before that, God wanted them to go, but they had unbelief.

God says, no, you can't go. They tried to go anyway. Again, Joshua proved himself because there he says, well, God said, I can't go.

I know yesterday I wanted to go, but today God's saying not go. And he didn't go. The others went and they lost the battle there.

Joshua proved his obedience. He proved that his obedience was not, that he was prepared to be obedient to God above anything else. And again, everybody else, maybe the same 10 spies who previously had unbelief, they went back there, got a bunch of people together, got a little army together and said, we're going to kill these giants.

And they were defeated soundly. Joshua proved that he was firm in his obedience even when facing persecution. Now, earlier, they had said they were going to stone, they were going to kill Joshua.

I'm not sure if it was stoning or somehow they were going to kill him. But even in the face of persecution, Joshua was firm in his faith and firm in his obedience. And so he was like, well, God, we can't go now.

So we're going to wait. That's what it means to be obedient. And that's how we ought to, as young people who are looking to grow as disciples so that we become disciple makers, so that we fulfill that promise.

God is able to fulfill that promise in our lives that Jesus said that if you become my disciple, I will make you disciple makers. As we seek to become those disciple makers, God will test us to see, will you be obedient even in those little areas? I'm obedient in every aspect of my word. The fifth area of approving for Joshua was the test of diligence.

Now, the first time we read about Joshua is Exodus chapter 13 in verse 13 and 14. And I'd like you to turn to that. Exodus 17, sorry, Exodus chapter 17.

This is the first time we really, that Joshua's name is brought up and he's called the servant of Moses. And then this is the first time that the Israelites, as they were traveling, faced an attack from enemies. And in this case, it was the Amalekites.

And they came up upon, and you probably know the story where Moses' hands had to be uplifted. As long as his hands were up, and Aaron and Hur were holding it up later on, they won. And then if his hands drooped, they started to lose.

But there was Aaron and Hur and Moses up on the mountain doing this, doing what God had asked them to do. But what was Joshua doing? Look at what it says in Exodus 17, verse 13. It says, well, we'll back up a little bit.

We'll read in verse nine. Then Moses said to Joshua, choose men for us, and you go out and fight against Amalek. Here it was Moses' leader saying, hey, Joshua, I need you to do some dirty work for the Lord's people.

And Joshua could have said, well, hey, Moses, you're the leader. You should be leading the people. Tomorrow, Moses says, tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill where it's safe.

Now again, this was God's calling. It's not that Moses, I don't believe Moses was trying to avoid fighting the battle. I'm sure he would have loved to do that.

That was the spirit Moses had. But this was God's calling for Moses. Moses had to be there on the top of the hill with the staff of God in his hands.

But Joshua had to be down there in the battlefield doing the dirty work and being diligent down there. And it says in verse 10, Exodus 17, verse 10, and Joshua did as Moses told him and fought against Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

You know the rest of that story. In verse 13, so Joshua overwhelmed Amalek. And he didn't just kind of pit potter and says, hey, you know, when the battle started to work against him because Moses' hands were tired, Joshua didn't run.

He stayed on fighting. And then Moses was able to lift his hands. And eventually Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Then the Lord said to Moses, write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar and named it, the Lord is my banner. You see how Joshua was faithful in the work that God gave him to do.

And it was hard work and it put his life in danger and it was an inconvenience and it was a lot more than that. But Joshua was prepared to do that. Moses said, hey, Joshua, your task is to go out there and fight.

Get some people around you. You'll be a mini leader. Take a band of people around there and God's going to strengthen you.

But you go and fight. You have to do the dirty work. I'm sure Joshua got some cuts and bruises and maybe a lot more.

And he was terribly tired and I'm not even sure how long the battle went on for. But Joshua was diligent and faithful to finish the work that God had called him to do. To be faithful in that little thing.

He could have said, hey, Moses, I'm your servant. I'd like to be up here with you. Why don't I hold your hand up? Let's send somebody else.

Joshua heard the message. You have to go fight. And he went and he was diligent in that.

So he was faithful and bold in his ministry. I'd like to move on to the second example that we're going to look at. And this is from the New Testament.

And the example is Peter. Peter also, let's look at his circumstances. He began in slavery like Joshua did.

You know, at the time of Jesus, all the Jews were slaves of Rome. And so not in the same sense that they were in Egypt. They got to live their own lives.

But basically, if the Roman soldiers or anybody from the Roman Empire told you to do something, you had to do it. You had no choice. You had no identity, no privileges in that sense.

And he too was called to a life of liberation. He answered Jesus' call to a life of freedom. And I believe he got to see Jesus.

He got to observe him. And he says, oh, I'm going to answer this call. Jesus says, leave your nets and come follow me.

And he says, he dropped them immediately and followed Jesus. He witnessed God's power. He got to see the miracles that Jesus did when he was walking around in Galilee and other parts of Israel at the time.

But he too was surrounded by a multitude of unbelievers. Most people in Israel, the majority of the people in Israel at that time didn't believe that Jesus was the Christ, that Jesus was the one who was the Messiah who had come to save his people. But Peter did.

You know, that famous confession that Peter made. So again, we see with Joshua and with Peter that they were in the minority. They were, everybody else said, well, no, this can't be.

And they weren't swayed by the majority opinion. And that's also a mark of God's leaders. And it starts young.

Peter was young too. He was probably in his mid to late twenties, probably around the time when Jesus called him. And here you could have said, well, you know, these Pharisees and these leaders whom he considered the spiritual leaders earlier, they're saying this, they're rejecting Jesus.

But he had seen something about Jesus and he was not afraid. He was not swayed, even though he was in the minority. Now, the choices that Peter made, he observed Jesus' life.

It wasn't Peter whom Jesus said, come and see. But I believe that in the same sense, Jesus got to see, Peter got to see Jesus' life. And he observed it.

Then he became a disciple. He answered Jesus' call, come and be my disciple. He became a disciple himself.

He was tested and approved by God in time as well. You know that after that famous confession where Peter said, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Jesus said, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you.

That's Matthew chapter 16. Let me read that for you real quick. Matthew 16, verse 17.

Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father who is in heaven. But I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

He was approved by God through Jesus because Peter had made those decisions. He was tested and approved by God in his time. Now there was still another level of approving that Peter had to go through, as you know.

Then he was like with Joshua, he was empowered with God's Holy Spirit. And this was a real anointing of the Holy Spirit, quite different from what Joshua experienced. In Acts chapter 2, verse 4, the Holy Spirit came upon Peter like he did with all the other 120 that were there, and Peter was a changed man.

So when God calls us to be his leaders, to be disciple makers, he doesn't say, okay, like we saw at the very beginning that Jesus doesn't say, you be my disciple, and then go ahead and make disciples. He says, you be my disciple, and I will make you a disciple maker. I will fill you with the Holy Spirit so that you can be an effective disciple maker.

Because guess what? You can't do it unless you have, unless you're filled with the Holy Spirit. And God promises, like he did with Peter. Jesus said, go wait in Jerusalem until soon, in a few days, you will have the Holy Spirit come upon you.

And sure enough, he did. And therefore, Jesus, Peter could be an effective disciple maker. And then he became a disciple maker despite his being young.

Despite his youth, Peter was then probably maybe in his early 30s at that point, having walked with Jesus for three and a half years, and still a young man. Imagine being that young and being called to be the leader of the apostles, the start of the church. The first pastor that ever was, Peter, being the leader of the church at that point.

And so it's young people whom God calls who go through this process of approval. Now, let's look at the process of approval that Peter had to go through, just like we did with Joshua. And the same categories we'll look at.

The first is the test of priorities. Where were Peter's priorities? Let me ask you this question first. Where were Peter's priorities before he met Jesus? Fishing.

He knew how to do that good. Maybe his father and his grandfather and generations before that were fishermen. Those were his priorities.

And then Jesus came and said, leave your nets and come follow me, Matthew chapter four. Walking by the sea of Galilee, Matthew four verse 18, it says, walking by the sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers. Simon was called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they immediately left the nets and followed him. Peter's priorities were right.

He saw, he observed Jesus and he longed for that personal revelation of God as well. I believe that's what drew Peter. Why else would he leave his business and say, hey, okay, Lord, I'm following you.

There was something about Jesus that Peter saw. He saw that Jesus lived that spiritual life, whereas the Pharisees did not. He says, I'm sure just like Joshua standing there at the tent, I picture Peter in his room after he comes home from a day of fishing.

He says, Lord, I want what Jesus has. There's something there. I want that revelation of God that he seems to have in the things that he says and the way he conducts himself.

I want that too. And it's that longing, that hunger for a revelation of God, for a personal revelation of God that Peter had that therefore he could make that confession. Remember when Jesus said, blessed are you Simon Bar-Jonah for flesh and blood has not revealed it.

There's that word revelation again. The reason Peter, flesh and blood didn't reveal it to Peter, but the father in heaven was because Peter had that hunger. Lord, I want to have that revelation of Jesus Christ being the Messiah.

That face-to-face, Peter too got to talk to God face-to-face with Jesus. And the reason he got to experience that was because he had that hunger for a personal revelation of God. His priorities were right.

His priorities were a personal revelation of God. The second area was the test of submission. Peter also began as a servant.

You remember when Jesus brought a big load of fish and Peter says, depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man. Luke chapter five, look at that sometime. But like we saw with Joshua, it's interesting that here too, God allowed Peter to go through a time of rebuke.

In fact, Jesus used some pretty hard words, harder than he used on anybody else. He said, get thee behind me, Satan. He was talking about the spirit of Satan that was influencing Peter's words, but Peter could have listened to that and walked away.

Judas Iscariot was rebuked too and he fell away. But Peter, his heart was that of a servant. And if you read, here's the most amazing thing.

If you read the last few words of Peter, the last letter he wrote was the epistle of second Peter. He begins that by saying second Peter one verse one. Look at how Peter, the great apostle, he's written scripture.

And look at the title that he addresses himself by. Simon Peter, a bond servant. That's like lower than a servant.

A bond servant is one who has no privileges. He says, Lord, I'm your servant. Just like with Joshua, at the end of his life, here's Peter, maybe I don't know how much before he died, he wrote this epistle.

There's he saying, I'm not Simon Peter, the great apostle or Simon Peter. In the first epistle, he calls himself Simon Peter, an apostle. He didn't say Simon Peter to whom had been given the keys of, the authority keys of heaven that Jesus promised would be given.

It wasn't that Peter. It was Peter, the bond servant. And that's why God could make him a true disciple maker.

He was a true disciple with the spirit of a servant. Peter, a bond servant. The third category is the test of faith.

Now, you know, Peter's faith was tested. You know, when he, when he denied Jesus and you know, Jesus' famous words, Simon, Simon, Satan has demanded to sift you like wheat. But I've prayed for you that your faith may not fail.

And that's the thing about Peter. His faith did not fail. At the end of, after Jesus' resurrection, you find Peter, Jesus saying, cast your nets on the other side.

And Peter does. That's faith. That's, Peter said, Peter could have said, well, I've let you down and things like that.

But you, you want me to cast my net on the other side? Okay. I believe you, Lord Jesus. I still do.

And he cast his net on the other side. See with Peter, it wasn't the multitude that tried to sway him, but I'm sure it was his own sense of failure. He had let down the Lord Jesus so much.

He'd let down all these hopes that he had of being a, going to the end and, and, and staying with Jesus. A little maidservant scared him away. And I'm sure Jesus, Peter beat himself up over that.

But he didn't allow his failures to sway his faith. His faith did not fail. That's why he could, he could become the apostle, the mighty apostle that he did.

He did not allow his own failures to cause his faith to fail. And I want to, I want to say this, that ultimate victory in your personal life as well, really want to, I want you to pay attention to this part. Ultimate victory in your personal life is not determined by your, by whether you fail or not.

It's determined by how you respond to that failure. Ultimate victory in your personal life is not determined by a failure, but by whether you get up and believe in God. It's determined on your faith, not on your failure.

That's how you get victory, is, is even if you've fallen, if you get up and say, Lord, you, you, you are able to keep me from falling and I'm, you're going to complete the work that you started in me. I know I've fallen into that thing again, but Lord, I'm going to get up and trust you. That's why Peter could be a disciple maker.

The fourth area was the test of obedience. Um, no, it's a, you know, Peter's later on in Acts chapter five, he says those famous words, we must obey God rather than men. Acts chapter five, verse 29, the Pharisees were putting, were threatening them with death or with persecution.

He says, we must obey God rather than men. There was that test of obedience as well, that, that Peter had started his life with obedience by following Jesus, obeying Jesus' command to leave his nets and follow him. And then that continued through his life.

He was, God was able to prove that Peter was obedient. The test of obedience, we must, Peter was firm in his obedience, even in the face of persecution. And finally, the fifth category, the test of diligence.

Um, Peter, you know, Peter, I picture Peter standing up in front of that multitude on the day after the day of, on the day of Pentecost, after the Holy Spirit has come upon him and he gets up there, ready? And he said, you know, it says Peter, um, put himself forward. Let me read that. Acts chapter two, verse 14, I think.

But Peter taking his stand with the 11, taking his stand with the 11, he raised his voice. And I'm sure immediately the devil said, huh, is this the same Peter that was cowardly over there with a maidservant and three times cursed and swore that he never knew Jesus? But Peter didn't allow that. He was, he knew that the Lord had called him to, to, to fulfill a task, to be an apostle, to be, to spread the good news of the gospel.

And the, and God had empowered him with the Holy Spirit within him. And he wasn't going to let that deter him from being diligent and faithful to the task that God had called him for. And so today I believe that a lot of, a lot of sincere men, young men and women who have failed the Lord in the past, the devil is, is able to trap them and hold them captive, preventing them from accomplishing what God wants to accomplish through their lives because they, he beats them up and discourages them over their failure.

And, but in Peter, we have an example that even his failure didn't deter him from getting up there and preaching a powerful message. Um, just a few days after, just, I mean, a few, probably two or three weeks, I think it was about two weeks, almost exactly 13 or 14 days after he had betrayed. Here's Peter getting up and preaching a bold message.

And you can say, is that hypocrisy? No, it's not. It's the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon Peter, who is not perfect by any means, but his faith had not failed. He says, Lord, I know just two weeks ago, I betrayed you and swore you, swore a, a swore that I never knew you, but I'm, I'm, I'm, you've called me for a, for a task and I'm going to, I'm going to believe that you will fulfill that.

I'm going to get up here and preach that message and God will take care of the rest. 3,000 people were born, were born again as a result of that message. So Peter was faithful and bold in his ministry.

And, um, so in all of these areas, we, we, um, have an example in both Joshua and Peter. So I come now, as I conclude this, I want to ask you, who are you? Who are you? And the certain, you know, we've all begun our, our lives in slavery to sin. We've answered Jesus' call to freedom.

And if you haven't, you can do that today, be born again, turn and give your life to the Lord Jesus and say, Lord, take control of my life. You witnessed God's power. I'm sure you have.

If you've been a part of CSU, you've seen God work miraculous things. And I'm sure he's done that in your personal life as well. Now you may be surrounded by a multitude of unbelievers.

People will say, well, well, this and that. Even Christians who are really not full of faith. But you get to have the same choices.

You get, you have the choice to observe the example of godly people around you. Observing their conduct, like it says in Hebrews 13, imitate their faith. Become a disciple.

And allow the Lord to test and approve you over the course of his time. And you don't know how long that'll take. With Joshua, it was different.

With Peter, it was different. For you, it will be different. How long that period of proving will be.

But if you're faithful, God will increasingly make you. He will do the work of making you a disciple maker. And then be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Because you can't be a disciple maker on your own strength. We can't be a disciple maker. We can't be disciple makers in our own strength.

Peter needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit before he could get up there. It was because he was filled with the Holy Spirit that his faith did not fail. And likewise with Joshua, the Holy Spirit came upon him.

That's how he could be an effective leader. And finally, take it seriously to be a disciple maker even if you are young. No matter how old you are.

If you're truly born again. If you've become a disciple. That's what it means to be born again.

To say, I'm a disciple of Jesus now. And says, well the next thing that should happen is I should become a disciple maker. Because that's the promise that we read in Mark chapter 1 verse 17 at the very beginning.

Be my disciple. You be my disciple. And I will make you a disciple maker.

The approval of, put your name there. The approval of Santosh. The approval of you, put your name there.

In these five areas, the test of priorities. God will see, do you have a hunger for a personal revelation of God? Do you have a hunger? Is that your priority more than anything else? And yes, you have to do this work and you have to do that work. You have to go to college.

You have to work your job. And you have to do all these other things. You have to maybe have a family.

Get married and have children. Raise a family. But your priority is to have that personal revelation of God.

The second area, the test of submission. Begin as a servant. That's what it means to be a true disciple.

Begin as a servant. And then even when you're rebuked or you go through times of doubt. Or you go through times of criticism.

Remain a servant. And especially when those elders who are over you have to rebuke you or correct you in a certain area. Humble yourself.

Because that's a test from God. And at the end of your life, let it be said. Even if you have done mighty works for God.

Even if your ministry, the Lord uses you in a miraculous way. Let it be said of you, the bond servant. As for me and my house, we're the Lord's servants.

The third category, the test of faith. Do not allow your failures to cause your faith to fail. No matter how much you feel like you have let down the Lord.

No matter how much you feel like I should have known better. I was born in the church and yet I've done all that. No matter how much you have failed the Lord in the past.

Determine that that will not cause your faith to fail. Think of those words that Jesus told Peter. I've prayed for you that your faith may not fail.

The test of faith. That's another test. Because God is looking for people who, despite their failures, don't allow their faith to fail.

They say, Lord, I'm still trusting you. I know I've let you down. But I'm still trusting you.

The test of obedience. Be firm in your obedience to the Word of God. And to the words that the Holy Spirit speaks to you from His Word.

Any word the Holy Spirit speaks to you will be in conjunction with God's Word. It will never be contrary to God's Word. So be firm in your obedience even if you face persecution.

And times of persecution will come where we're really tested whether we love our lives. We may be threatened with death. And there we're called to be firm in obedience even in the face of persecution.

But before it gets to that, you may face all kinds of persecution. People will laugh at you. People will make fun of you.

People will say, well, you take the Bible too literally or other things. But if you take God at His Word and say, and determine to be obedient to God, then you will prove to Him that you are prepared to be His leader. And finally, the test of diligence.

Be faithful and bold in your ministry. Be faithful and bold in your ministry. That means whatever task God has given you.

And don't think of ministry as preaching or playing music or being an evangelist or things like that. Yes, that's also ministry. But ministry includes everything that the Lord has done, has put before you today.

Today you have a ministry. Today you have a ministry. Be faithful in that ministry.

It's like Paul told Timothy, study or be diligent to be approved unto God. Be diligent. Take it seriously.

Be diligent to be approved unto God. You know, it says in Acts chapter 4 verse 13, that the Pharisees saw Peter and John and they recognized them as having been with Jesus. And let that be said of you as well.

That you have that personal revelation of God and people know, hey, that person's been around Jesus. That can be said of you as well today. A young man, a young woman, young brother, young sister, it can

be said of you.

It can be said of me. There's somebody who's been with Jesus. They'll recognize it.

They may not like it, but they'll recognize it. There's an authority there. And stand like Joshua at the tent of meeting saying, Lord, I'm not leaving here until I get a personal revelation of you.

Day by day, go into that private space, wherever that is. You could be riding in a car or on a bus and you could be at the tent of meeting in your heart and your spirit saying, Lord, I want a personal revelation of you. Like I've seen the older brothers in our church and other godly examples.

I read the story of missionaries who've gone and served you faithfully and I see that they had a personal revelation of you. That's what caused them to burn with zeal and fire. And I want that.

And so you go before God and say, Lord, I'm going to stand here in the tent of meeting. Yes, everybody else is going to go back and do what they want to do. But I'm going to stay with you until I get that personal revelation of you.

And day by day by day, if you live that life, see if the Lord doesn't make you a disciple maker. I believe a true disciple is one who is also a disciple maker. And if I call myself a disciple, but the Lord is not able to use me as a disciple maker, then something's missing.

That promise is not true. And so, folks, it's more than a command. It's more than just saying, Jesus saying, be my disciple.

Yes, that's it. It starts with us obeying that. But then it translates into saying, Lord, I'm your disciple and I'm going to allow you the proof of my being a disciple is that I allow you to approve of my life in these areas so that I can be a disciple maker.

The Lord has spoken, blessed us in many ways in CFC to hear so many good truths, given us godly examples right here in our midst. And God wants us now to be the next generation that takes up the gauntlet and says, Lord, I will be one of those that is a disciple maker as well. I know you will do it in my life.

Let that be your prayer today. Lord, I give you my life to be a disciple. Make me a disciple maker.

You will do that, Lord. Heavenly Father, I pray for each one of my brothers and sisters here that this will be this. This promise will be fulfilled in their lives and in a Christianity that has that doesn't want to have to that doesn't want to take your word literally and seriously, that this promise will be true in their lives, that as they become disciples, as they commit their lives to you, you will make them disciple makers as well, that many lives will be changed through each of these young people that are here.

They will be gripped by the gospel of the good news and you will set people free from captivity to different things on this on this earth because of the of the work that you do in each of these young people, Lord. Do that in my life as well. Thank you that you will be so.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit, Lord. Thank you that you don't promise to leave us. You promise not to leave us as orphans, but you will fill us with your Holy Spirit.

Do that again today and every day moving forward in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

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