



Becoming a People Who... Live by Vision

"Imagine More... for the Next Generation"

I Corinthians 3:1-17

Message Notes: March 24, 2019

We are exploring what it means to be **A People who LIVE BY VISION** ... rooted "in Him who is able to do exceedingly more than we can ask or *imagine*." (Eph 3:20).

Imagine the "more" that God will do in and through the upcoming generation - especially if we will give ourselves passionately to the call and privilege of DISCIPLING them. Yes, they are part of the church of today, but will they be (if we don't neglect them) **the leaders** of the church of tomorrow.

The North American church is really good at *gathering*, and this is a meaningful part of our life, but we are **not** very good at DISCIPLESHIP. Gathering (esp on Sunday mornings) is generally easy and safe, but true transformation happens in "bands of discipleship" – places of caring connection, learning, encouragement, and growth.

The fuel for passionate discipleship is rooted in **three (Trinitarian) convictions**:

1. Nothing is impossible with God. Luke 1:37
2. When a person encounters the living Christ, they are changed; they are a new creature. 2 Corinthians 5:17
3. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do things beyond our own power/ability. Acts 1:8

The more deeply we believe these three truths, the more empowered we will be to disciple others.

Why do we falter in discipleship?

1. We **aren't convinced** of the three truths above.
2. We are **fearful** of failure, of not having answers to people's questions, of being rejected, etc.
3. We have a **false view** of what discipleship is. (It does *not* require seminary education, or a masterful knowledge of the Bible, or a life of spiritual perfection. It is primarily about walking with and loving another and that we are nurturing our OWN relationship with Jesus.)

Discipleship insights from I **Corinthians 3:1-17**. Paul's letter to Christ-followers at Corinth:

1. Some of us are still on spiritual *milk* - - because that's what we want. (vss 1-4)
We want to "stay on milk" because it is safe. Pruning, stretching, and growing are uncomfortable
2. We need to see ourselves as either "planters" or "waterers". (vss 5-9)
Planters generally share, teach, impart the gospel, Godly truth.
Waterers generally nurture such "seeds" – encouraging, supporting, holding accountable, etc.
"BUT only God gives the growth"! GROWING others is not on us. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.
Our place is to share, to teach, to listen, to encourage, to walk with, to LOVE.
3. Discipleship is not ME-centric. (or pastor-centric, or teacher-centric)
It is CHRIST-centric (vs 11) The Christian life is built on the foundation of a relationship with Jesus.

Discipleship is not complicated, but it is hard, and long, and sometimes messy.

It is like planting, watering, and tending a garden - it takes time, toil, and sweat, but the fruits at harvest time are worth all the investment. What a joyful delight to feast at a harvest table!

In the same way, what a fulfilling joy to see a fellow believer, in whom you have patiently, lovingly invested, progress from spiritual "milk" to "meat", growing in their personal walk with Jesus.