

2026 Behold– “Disciple-Making Mindset” – 14 Jan 2025 – Randy Thompson

Introduction

Welcome to night two of the 2026 Behold Conference. I’m so thankful to the Lord for all the servants who dedicated their time and energy to make this week possible.

Reminder, if you’re streaming, the notes are available on the website at “Teaching” then “Conferences” then you should see it listed there under “Behold”.

The title, “Behold”, for our conference comes from Psa 119:18

¹⁸Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. (Psa 119:18 ESV)

So, our prayer for this week has been that together as a church we would BEHOLD AND APPLY wonderful things from God’s Word. I trust that has been your desire this week.

Last night, Dan shared our hearts as elders to be committed to ministering the Word of God to the body. And our desire to live a disciple-making mindset. He then led us through a study of our Jesus-commanded mission to make disciples and how Jesus Himself modeled that mission. We saw how Jesus went; He was not passive, but active in the mission. Jesus actively invited people into His life to see God’s work. Jesus taught. The essence of disciple-making is teaching, and Jesus’s conversations were filled with truth. And Jesus Himself accomplished the mission and then commissioned us to live the same mission...

We’ve looked at the Master’s command and the Master’s example. But a command and example aren’t yet your own mindset. Tonight, we want to look at how to cultivate the Master’s disciple-making mindset.

So, let’s look at some truths that help us develop a disciple-making mindset. We’ll be looking primarily at Colossians 1:28-29. We’ll just work our way through the passage seeing what the HS has to say. Let’s read together...

²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (Col 1:28-29 ESV)

1. Proclaim Christ

The first thing we note is that the action here is to “proclaim”. “Proclaim” means to publicly, plainly, and openly declare truth. “Proclaim” is the main verb in this v28.

“Warning” (or admonishing if you have the NAS) and “teaching” describe how to “proclaim”. We could spend some time deep-diving “warning” and “teaching”, but for time’s sake tonight I’ll leave that to your study.

But I will say that both of those are active; both of those take your voice. You must actually say something if you’re going to proclaim. Some will say that they “proclaim” with their life. That is true. Walking well in the power of the HS demonstrates the truth of the proclamation. But there are many moral unbelievers who do not point people to the gospel. Walking well alone doesn’t point anyone to the object of the proclamation.

So, if “proclaim” is publicly, plainly, and openly declaring truth, what is that truth? What are we to proclaim? It actually isn’t a “what”, but a “whom”. We have an unidentified pronoun here in verse 28 so we need to look previously to see to whom it is referring. Let’s start in verse 24.

²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷To them God

chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is **Christ** in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:24-27)

Then it continues in v28, “Him we proclaim...”. So, we are to proclaim Christ. If we were to look back into Colossians 1, we would see that this Christ whom we are to proclaim is the infinite God-man. He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is the preeminent, all-sufficient Lord and Savior. He has first place in all things – the church and your very life. He is the Redeemer and Reconciler.

So, this truth we are to proclaim is Jesus Himself. He is the object of the proclamation. The term “proclaim” is not restricted to formal events but generally to whenever Christ is proclaimed. The usage (present tense) indicates that proclaiming is a lifestyle.

Something about me you might not know is that I like to watch YouTube videos about dogs. The most amazing are Belgin Malinois. But for me the funniest are Huskies. Huskies are just so opinionated.

You know who else is opinionated? People. Us. We are opinionated! We like to tell others, proclaim to others, what we think, especially when we feel passionate about the subject. And we like to sway people to our opinions because we are always right, of course.

There are a lot of “truths” that could be proclaimed – medical truth (cancer), historical truth, US political truth, world political truth, moral truth, self-help truth, financial truth, etc. None of that is the topic of this proclamation. Christ is!

Now, I’m not saying you can never talk about things other than Jesus. But the thing you should be most passionate about is Christ. The truth you are commanded to publicly, plainly, and openly declare; the truth you are to proclaim, is Jesus.

Q: What is your most common topic of proclamation?

So, when we proclaim, we don’t proclaim our ideas, but the “unfathomable riches of Christ.” In other places Paul says...

⁸To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the **unfathomable riches of Christ**, (Eph 3:8 NAS95)

⁵For **what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord**, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. (2 Cor 4:5 ESV)

When we proclaim Christ, it isn’t just some limited message. Christ came into the world to save sinners; to change them into worshippers of the one true God. And then to make them ever purer worshippers throughout their life; to progressively sanctify them. Our goal as the body of Christ here at VBC and our goal individually is not merely to see people saved from sin, but to see them become mature disciples of Jesus the Christ.

To the unsaved, what are the unfathomable riches of Christ? Though you are dead in your trespasses and sins, alienated and separated from God, without hope in this life and destined for hell in the next, Christ died for you to pay the penalty for your sin that God’s holiness and justice demanded. And that by grace through repentant faith you can be forgiven and given a quality and quantity of life that is eternal in nature. AMAZING!!!

To the saved, to the brethren, what are the unfathomable riches of Christ? You have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. You have been reborn. Jesus has set you free from slavery to sin and gives you access to the power to live for your ultimate purpose which is living for the glory of God. You belong to Jesus. Christ is at work in you, and He commands that you strive in His power to live in a manner worthy of Him.

“Proclaiming Christ” isn’t just to those who have yet to come to saving faith, but also believers who are on the journey to becoming a mature disciple. It is for those who have yet to come to Christ in salvation AND for those who have surrendered to Christ and are being changed by Him (Matt 28:20).

Why do we know that? Because the Holy Spirit through Paul uses the word “everyone” three times in this passage. The focus here is everyone.

2. Proclaim to Everyone

²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

This is the disciple-making mindset... Continually viewing the interactions we have with others through the lens of the great commission; of making disciples. Everyone that the Lord places before you is someone who needs to be made complete in Christ. “Mature” simply means fully developed (or “complete” in the NAS).

A disciple-making mindset things, “If a person has yet to come to Christ, how can my interaction move them along the way to salvation, to becoming a disciple?”

And, “If a person has come to Christ, how can my interaction help them move along the path of becoming more like Christ, of growing as a disciple?”

Q: Is that your mindset? How are you doing?

If that’s not your mindset at all? Then, let’s strive together to start doing that.

If that is your mindset (some or well)? Then let’s strive together to excel still more.

Let’s look at ways to cultivate that mindset. We’ll touch on three...

a. Everyone because of Command

Dan covered this well last night, but I think it’s worth repeating. As we saw last night, this is Jesus’ last command to His disciples. To us! To me and you! This is our mission.

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt 28:18-20 ESV)

Your sovereign, omnipotent Lord commands you to make disciples of all nations/peoples (all kinds of people) with the supernatural power He supplies. Therefore, every person you interact with needs to be viewed with that mission in mind.

Jesus says it simply in John 14:15, “¹⁵If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” Obeying Christ out of love for Him is part of the disciple-making mindset.

Q: How excited are you to obey Jesus’ command?

b. Everyone because of Love

Now, I know what you’re thinking... Surely, not “everyone”. There are those people that I encounter who can’t possibly be the “everyone”. They are so different than me. They look different than me or think differently than me or live differently than me. Or they are just people I don’t jive with. Maybe people I just don’t like...

Yes, everyone! In Mark 12 Jesus tells us that you are to love your neighbor as yourself.

²⁸And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another (*with the Sadducees*), and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” ²⁹Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

³⁰And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is this: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31 ESV)

There it is, love your neighbor as yourself. So then one might say, “OK, but who is my neighbor?” We’re always looking for the loophole...

Well, you aren’t the only one who asked that question. In Luke 10, someone else asked Jesus to clarify who “neighbor” referred to. You know Jesus’ story of the Good Samaritan.

²⁵And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” ²⁷And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”

²⁹But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And **who is my neighbor?**” ³⁰Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³²So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

³³But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had **compassion.** ³⁴He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’

³⁶Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” ³⁷He said, “**The one who showed him mercy.**” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.” (Luke 10:25-37 ESV)

Someone in need was presented before the Samaritan and he showed active mercy which demonstrated that he loved his neighbor.

Think of a usual day and the people you interact with – work, school, shopping, church, etc. Look to your left and right here in the auditorium, to your front and behind. Everyone the Lord places before you is in need.

Either they have yet to come to Christ for salvation and therefore have the greatest need anyone could ever have – forgiveness of sin. Or they have already come to Christ and now their need is to be moved along the path of growing as a disciple, to be moved along the path of observing all that Christ commands.

And you are the one the Lord has sovereignly placed in their life at that divine appointment to do Christ’s work of disciple-making. Loving your neighbor is part of the disciple-making mindset.

c. Everyone because of Compassion

Then you say,” ok, I’m commanded and I’m supposed to love, but I just don’t feel it.” Well, if you don’t have compassion for the people the Lord places before you, then you don’t have the mind and heart of Christ. A lack of compassion is indicative of not living Christ’s life.

Paul tells us that the life of faith is a life with Christ living thru you...

²⁰I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but **Christ who lives in me.** And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20 ESV)

We'll talk more about that in a bit...

Over and over again in the gospels we see that Jesus felt compassion for people (Matt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; 9:22; Luke 7:13).

Let's look at Matthew 9.

³⁵Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. ³⁶Seeing the people, **He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.** ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." (Matt 9:35-38 NAS)

"Compassion" describes a deep gut wrenching feeling for someone, sympathy, pity. It is a strong word and describes the compassion that moves a person to the deepest depths of their being. Nine out of the 12 uses in the NT describe Jesus' emotion.

Jesus felt compassion for the people because they were "distressed and dispirited". "Distressed" means to grievously afflicted. "Dispirited" means to be discouraged or dejected.

These people were afflicted and discouraged or dejected. The usage here (perfect tense) shows that distressed and dispirited were their enduring condition, their state. It wasn't something they were coming out of on their own.

As Jesus encountered people in their depravity and lostness, distressed because of sin and discouraged because they were without hope as dead, blind, captive, sin-slaves walking according to Satan's world system – He was moved with compassion.

Jesus knew the truth about them. And in spite of knowing the truth, He felt compassion, a deep sympathy, a deep pity. The Creator of the universe, feels compassion for people.

What is your mindset? When God presents someone before you what are your thoughts?

Do you think,

"Here is someone the Lord placed before me today?"?

"I love Jesus therefore I want to obey Him and be used by Him in this person's life."?

"Jesus loves me; therefore, I love this person and want to be used by Him in this person's life."?

"Jesus has compassion for me; therefore, I have compassion for this person and want to be used by Him in this person's life."?

Someone might say, "I just don't see these opportunities." In John, a similar teaching to here in Matthew 9, Jesus says this...

^{35b}...Behold, I say to you, **lift up your eyes and look** on the fields, that they are white for harvest. (John 4:35 NAS95)

All you have to do is "lift up your eyes and look". Just look. Opportunities abound to live with a disciple-making mindset.

Everyone the Lord places before you is someone who is need. Will you be used by God to move them along the path of knowing Christ better?

I pray that is true for each and all of us.

Biblical commands, love, and compassion must move you to action... That action is to view every person that you come across through a great commission lens, with a disciple-making mindset. Paul had this mindset. But, he also lived it with POWER!

3. A mindset with Power

Colossians 1:29 tells us how to move out with the disciple-making mindset.

Throughout the Scriptures we see a dual action described and commanded. For example, with our personal sanctification. In Philippians 2:12-13 it says this...

^{12b}...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Phil 2:12b-13 ESV)

You work and God does His work. So, what does God tell us here about disciple-making?...

²⁹For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (Col 1:29 ESV)

a. Your Part

You are to “toil” and “struggle”...

²⁹For this I **toil, struggling** with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (Col 1:29 ESV)

“Toil” (labor, NAS) means to engage in hard work, working to the point of exhaustion. The usage indicates that Paul made this a lifestyle (present tense).

“Struggling” (striving, NAS) means intensely struggling like an athlete; agonizing with great intensity, purpose, and effort (this is the root word for the English “agony”). This is **putting forth maximum effort**. Again, the usage shows that this was Paul’s continuous effort, a lifestyle (present tense).

Are you striving to the point of exhaustion? Are you putting forth maximum effort? I know for myself I wasn’t. But I’ve repented and now I’m striving to excel still more. Each of the elders have committed to strive to excel still more with this disciple-making mindset.

What might this look like? DIFFERENT FOR EACH OF US!

- Are you praying for the Lord to help you to “life up your eyes and look”?
- Are you praying for opportunities to interact with unbelievers?
- Are you intentionally putting yourself in a place to interact with unbelievers?
- Are you seeking to build relationship bridges with unbelievers to bring the gospel to them?
- When in those interactions are you praying to have the heart of Christ of love and compassion for them?
- Are you praying for ways to help them become a disciple?
- Are you inviting people along with you to come and see what Christ is doing in your life and in the life of our church?
- Are you intentionally putting yourself in a place to interact with believers? (more than just Sunday morning, but at VBC that would be primarily the GG ministry)
- Are you seeking to have the result of this interaction to be to help them to grow as a disciple?
- Are you stepping out in faith to talk about what Christ has done and is doing in your life?

But we cannot do that on our own. Paul says he toils at making disciples. But he does it with the HS’s power... That is God’s part...

b. God’s Part

²⁹For this I toil, struggling **with all his energy** that he **powerfully works** within me. (Col 1:29 ESV)

Note how Paul toils and struggles, not with any of his own energy, but with “all His energy”. With Christ’s energy by walking in the Spirit.

“Energy” (power, NAS) describes superhuman power (i.e. that power supplied by the HS).

“Powerfully” (mightily, NAS) is the root for the English “dynamite” and refers to inherent power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. The believer has this power available through the indwelling HS.

“Works” is the verb form of the previous “energy” (“power”, NAS) and means to work superhumanly, effectively to cause something to happen. Its usage indicates this is continuously occurring (present tense).

Paul abided in Christ. He walked in the Spirit. He allowed himself to be kept being filled with the Spirit. He allowed the words of Christ to richly dwell within him. Therefore, he had POWER. Power to walk worthy of the gospel AND power to make disciples. Power to proclaim with his live AND his words...

So, this is a dual effort. We must toil and strive, but it must be done in the power of the HS, filled with the HS. The supernatural results of your toil only occur when you are supernaturally energized. Paul said this in 1 Corinthians 15:10...

¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, **but the grace of God with me.** (1 Cor 15:10)

So, once we have accessed the power that is readily available to us through Christ, what do we do?

We view everyone the Lord places before us with a disciple-making mindset, and we proclaim the unfathomable riches of Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. How are you doing at viewing everyone the Lord places before you with a disciple-making mindset?
2. What are some ways to excel still more at viewing people with a disciple-making mindset?
3. Do you feel powerful or powerless to make disciples? What needs to change so you have power?

Takeaways

We pray that the Behold Conference has been a blessing to you. A good way to start the year focused on the Word and obedience to it.

Yesterday, Dan looked at the Master’s command and the Master’s method.

Today, we looked at having the Master’s disciple-making mindset. Are you continually viewing the interactions you have with others through the lens of the Master’s disciple-making mission? Everyone that the Lord places before you is someone who needs to be made complete in Christ. If a person has yet to come to Christ, how can my interaction move them along the way to salvation, to becoming a disciple? If a person has come to Christ, how can my interaction help move them along the path of becoming more like Christ, of growing as a disciple?

I pray each of us has the heart and mind of our Master!