

## COURAGEOUS OBEDIENCE

### 1. COURAGEOUS

*“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land, which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”* **Joshua 1:2-9**

- A. Joshua was instructed by the Lord three times to be courageous and by the elders a fourth time.
  - I. *Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage.* **Joshua 1:18**
  - II. Why was he so encouraged? Probably because where he was going He needed to very courageous.

### 2. CONVERSATIONS WITH RANDEEP

- A. Randeep was sharing about church planting and began to emphasize the importance of discipleship.
- B. Discipleship has been one of my passions for about 21 years.
  - I. Personally, I would rather disciple 3 or 4 hungry people than lead a whole church.
  - II. I have wrestled with discipleship for years. I have had many successes and failed miserably too.
  - III. How many of you have a passion for or feel like they might be called to disciple other people?
- C. So I asked Randeep for his top 5 keys for discipling people.
  - I. He said one through five are all the same. Teach them how to obey!
  - II. He asked me, “How do you teach people how to obey?”
  - III. How do you answer a pastor of 500,000? Feeling like Ezekiel in the valley of dry bones, I think I mumbled something to the effect of, “You alone know.” He responded, “You obey.”

### 3. IF YOU LOVE ME YOU’LL OBEY ME (JOHN 14)

- A. In Jesus’ discussion of the Father and the coming Holy Spirit, he shares about those who love Him.
  - I. *If you love Me, keep My commandments.* **John 14:15**
  - II. *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.* **John 14:21**
  - III. *If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word.* **John 14:23**
  - IV. *“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.”* **John 14:23 NIV**
- B. Why has obedience gained such a bad rap?
  - I. The underlying faulty belief is God isn’t good and therefore can’t be trusted; let alone obeyed.
  - II. This belief causes us to fabricate the idea that I don’t have to obey God to be blessed.
  - III. We see plenty of successful, wealthy, powerful, beautiful and famous people who don’t obey.
  - IV. We equate their success to blessing.
  - V. God’s economy is different, “What does it matter if you gain the whole and lose your soul?”

### 4. GREAT COMMISSION

- A. I’ve been feeling the urgency of taking Jesus’ commission seriously. To courageously obey it!!
- B. *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* **Matthew 28:18-20**
- C. The thing about discipleship is that you have to be a disciple.

## 5. DISCIPLESHIP

- A. The transition from believer to disciple means to literally give Him our lives.
  - I. In this great commission, Jesus didn't instruct us to go into the whole world and make believers.
  - II. He said, "Go into the world and make disciples. Teach them to do the things I taught you."
- B. Jesus didn't say follow me and I will make you a success.
  - I. Instead He invited them into purpose, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."
- C. What makes disciples isn't their potential; it's the call's power & their choice to immediately follow.

## 6. THE CHURCH IS THE FERTILE GROUND

- A. I have realized that the church (biblical church) is most amazingly fertile environment for discipleship.
- B. What we do on a Sunday morning is a part of this, but there is a reason we don't see discipleship happening on a consistent basis on a Sunday morning.
- C. Perhaps you've though the following:
  - I. "I've gone to church 52 times this year and heard 52 life-changing sermons and haven't changed"
  - II. We are trying to fit a whole weeks worth of following Jesus into 2 hours on a Sunday morning.
- D. Sunday morning is an incredible time to express our hearts to God, enjoy the corporate anointing, celebrate what God accomplished throughout the week and envision each other for the next week.
  - I. It's not that what we are doing on a Sunday morning is wrong. It's just not the whole picture.
  - II. It's the icing on the cake? But if you don't have the cake, the icing doesn't have much substance.
- E. Many times Church becomes irrelevant to our lives (even boring) when we cease to follow Jesus.
  - I. When you're not applying the things you're learning, you're training yourself to be educated.
  - II. We all have a choice. We can choose to be educated believers or passionate disciples.
- F. So where does discipleship occur? How should we do church so that we don't neglect this essential?
  - I. Discipleship is about following Jesus. It is about obedience and about change.
  - II. This change occurs as a result of changing the way we think; but we have to actually apply it.

## 7. BIBLICAL CHURCH

- A. In the age where kid's club sports or hobbies, the county fair, watching football, having a family day, going on vacation, family birthdays and celebrations take priority over church I thought it would be good to ask the question, "Why Church?"
- B. What is the purpose of the Church? What does church have to do with following Jesus?
- C. Why did the author of Hebrews share, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day (of His return) approaching." **Hebrews 10:24-25**
- D. Most of us know people who given up on the church and have decided to follow Jesus by themselves.
  - I. And general most of us know how successful these people have been at this endeavor.
  - II. It doesn't work! Why? Because Jesus never intended that we pursue Him alone on this race.
  - III. The Church is vital for the life of the disciple.
  - IV. Discipleship happens when we are activated and doing our part. When we are part of the body.
  - V. I am the vine you are the branches, if you abide in me you will bear much fruit. **John 15.**
  - VI. He is the head of the body, the church. **Col 1:18.** We are the body.
  - VII. As Paul so eloquently conveys to the Corinthians.
    - For in fact the body is not one member but many. **1 Cor 12:14**
    - And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? **vs. 16**
    - But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. **vs. 18**
    - Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. **vs. 27**
  - VIII. God has fit us in a family and it's in that family that we grow.
    - A family eats together, plays together and prays together.
    - It's next to impossible to be a family over the Internet, TV, podcasts or the latest book.
  - IX. As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a (intimate) friend. **Proverbs 27:17**

## 8. BIBLICAL CHURCH AND THE PURPOSE OF THE BODY

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:11-16*

- A. I was listening to a message by Francis Chan called Rethinking Church
  - I. Essentially, he was sharing that if we are going to do church we should do it by the book.
  - II. Otherwise, we are going to start creating things that we like or things we want in the church.
  - III. It would be like making a great bowl spaghetti only to find out that God ordered steak.
  - IV. That phrase hit me, I had just read Cliff Baker sharing about Mary and Martha and commenting, “It’s tragic to think we can go through our whole lives preparing a beautiful meal for God only to discover that He never ordered it.”
- B. Consider for a moment if we were to plant a new church next year?
  - I. What do we think that new church would need to succeed?
  - II. A good preacher or a salaried pastor, a youth pastor, a building, a great band?
- C. Let also consider for a moment how churches in America grow or rather pursue church growth?
  - I. Have a great children’s program (because parents don’t know how to equip their children.)
  - II. Have an engaging speaker that preaches positive, practical and relevant messages (because people are self centered and want to know they can be successful and improve their own lives.)
  - III. Have a dynamic worship team (because unless it has an infectious beat, people won’t sing to God.)
  - IV. Have a big parking lot (so people don’t have to walk more than a couple of blocks to church.)
  - V. Make sure you have 20 percent extra seats (because Americans don’t like sitting next to each other.)
  - VI. Have a shorter meeting time (because people have busy lives and if we can condense a whole week of following Jesus into 2 hours, surely we can condense it into 55 or even 45 minutes.)
  - VII. These are all really practical ideas, some of them great ideas. None of them are in the bible!
- D. So what is biblical church? Let’s take a look.
  - I. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. **Acts 2:42-47**
  - II. Teaching, encouraging, sharing testimonies, prayer, meeting in homes, Lord’s Supper, gift of HS
- E. Back to Francis Chan? How would you describe the church just using the bible?
  - I. Loving each other. Living life together as a community (a family) and caring for each other’s needs.
  - II. Compelled to get the message out. On mission to share the message of Jesus.
  - III. They gathered together. Their meeting focused on the Lord’s Supper, prayer & studied God’s word.
  - IV. There were leaders who were present who equipped the church. .
  - V. My thoughts: Loving God together, prayer and caring for the poor. The church disciplined each other.
- F. Are we experiencing this in church? So, what can we do so that we do church by the book?

## 9. FOLLOWING JESUS REQUIRES THAT WE TAKE RISKS

- A. At the heart of following Jesus is trust. It takes trust to follow Jesus into uncertainty.
- B. Disciples aren’t permitted to live their lives theoretically. Disciples are called to action.
  - I. Disciples are called to put hands and feet to the gospel. And that means risk.
- C. I want to take a leap of faith to do church a little different.
- D. What would it look like to courageously obey Jesus in the way that we do church?

## **SCRIPTURE**

### **THEY MET DAILY, IN EVERY HOUSE, TEACHING AND PREACHING**

*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. Acts 5:42*

*They assembled with the church and taught a great many people. Acts 11:26*

*For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. 1 Corinthians 4:17*

### **THEY MADE ROOM FOR THOSE COMING TO CHRIST**

*And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:47*

### **THEY SENT PEOPLE OUT**

*News of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. Act 11:22*

### **THEY PRAYED**

*Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. Acts 12:5*

*So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. Acts 12:12*

### **THEY APPOINTED ELDERS, PRAYED AND FASTED**

*So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting. Acts 14:23*

### **THEY SHARED TESTIMONIES**

*Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them. Acts 14:27*

### **THEY MET IN HOUSES**

*(Of Aquila and Priscilla). Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Romans 16:5*

*Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house. Col 4:15*

*Paul," how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:20-21*

### **THEY ENCOURAGED ONE OTHER WITH TEACHING, SONGS, PROPHECY, AND OTHER GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

*He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 1 Co 14:4*

*Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel. 1 Co 14:12*

*How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 1 Co 14:26*