

## Choose Your Story

# CHOOSE TO BE - DISCIPLE-CLAY VESSEL

## ATTENTION:

- We have been working on a series – Choose Your Story - for the last 3 weeks.
  - Looked at stories - Philippian Jailer and Prodigal Brothers
- Today I want us to begin today with a bigger story.
  - The story of creation
    - The creation where God concluded:  
*God saw all that he had made,  
and it was very good indeed.*  
Genesis 1:31
  - Our specific focus is the creation of Adam/Eve.
    - In their creation there was a decision made that made them unique among God's creation.
      - They were created to be friends of God.
      - ...to give and receive love with God.
      - ...to hear and obey God
      - ...to enjoy the Eden of God's creation.
    - In order for that to happen God made the decision to give man/woman the ability to decide for themselves if they will obey God or not
      - Called: freedom to choose.
      - The ability for men/women to choose to love and serve the God who created them.
      - it was a decision, thou necessary, it has given man/woman lots of trouble.
      - It wasn't that it was a mistake for God to give them The Freedom Of Choice.
      - It was necessary for God's creation to have the ability to choose to love Him and to be loved by Him.

## ATTUNE:

- This decision impacts every human born since.
  - Adam/Eve used this ability and chose to disobey God - a decision every able human, except ONE has also made.
- This Freedom To Choose = the ability to choose our life's story.
  - Most of us here have chosen a story that includes becoming a Christian.

- That decision is a multi-layered decision.
  - It is a decision of belief that can be based on benefit or purpose.
    - Benefit: forgiveness – salvation – eternal life
    - Purpose: Obey God – serve God – Love God –follow Jesus.
  - The choice of each one of our stories includes both.
    - Salvation becomes a part of our story at the decision to believe and obey.
    - Then there are the decisions of discipleship that follow.
    - Multiple decisions that are a part of living the life of a Christian's story!
- Let's take a look at the descriptions of the Christian that will help us define the decisions we must make for our stories.
  - Our stories are shaped by the conclusions we've drawn from our knowledge of scripture
    - This allows God to be the center of our story.
    - It is our choice – our decision – Using The Freedom Of Choice!
    - We have become the Christian Story we have decided to become!
    - You have decided what it looks like for you to live a Christian Story!
    - Let's consider the choices you and I have as we choose our Christian Story.
      - We will do this by considering what Christians were call in the NT.

## BODY: Christians Were Called:

### I. Disciples

- A. Being a disciple helps us define some very important elements that are a part of the Christian Story.

1. A **Disciple** is a **Student** but much more than our image of a student.
  - a. Our image of student is all about information not a change of life.
    - 1) Change of knowledge ≠ changing life.
    - 2) IMO this is true of Church – instruction = information.
    - 3) As a **Student** – go to class, get info and leave
    - 4) The teacher's personal life does not even matter.

- 5) The relationship is based on the giving of information
2. "Disciple" is a student but much more than a student!
- a. Disciple has added ingredient of influence – example
- 1) Disciple = choosing an example to follow.

*<sup>40</sup> A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.*

Luke 6:40

- b. A faithful disciple imitates his teacher.
- c. A disciple sees the teacher's personal life – and follows it.
- d. Relationship not just based on information, but on the teacher himself.
3. As disciples of Christ, we don't just listen to teaching but we imitate Him!

*"For you have been called to this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps."*

2 Peter 2:21

*"I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you"*

John 13:15

*"For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to become conformed to the image of his Son"*

Romans 8:29

- c. People are to see Christ in us = We must be imitating the Master!

## II. Clay Vessels

- A. This emphasizes submission to God's will

*<sup>20</sup> Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also those of wood and clay; some for honorable use and some for dishonorable. <sup>21</sup> So if anyone purifies himself from anything dishonorable, he will be a special instrument, set apart, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.*

2 Timothy 2:20-21

1. God has set you aside for His special use.
2. You are to be "*prepared for every good work*"
3. You must "*cleanse yourself*" in order to be a "*vessel for honor*"

- a. You are to glorify God (worship God) in your body
- b. [1 Corinthians 6:19](#) – Your Body = Temple of Holy Spirit
- c. [6:13](#) - **Body not for immorality, but for God**

- B. If we are vessels for special use, what does God use us for?

1. **Filled with the Spirit** (Temple of Spirit)
- a. **By the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the flesh**
- b. **We produce the fruit of the Spirit**
- c. **We are filled with the Gospel**

*<sup>5</sup> For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus's sake. <sup>6</sup> For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.*

*<sup>7</sup> Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.*

2 Corinthians 4:4-7

## PROJECT:

- A Christian Story is much more than the spiritual benefits of being a Christian.
  - What makes up our identity as a Christian?
    - If you were to draw a word picture of your Christian Story what words would you employ?
    - Not just the Christian Story But **YOUR CHRISTIAN STORY!**
    - I would expect it to include words like:
      - Blessed – Forgiven – Loved – Grace – Heaven – Holy – Righteous – Growing – Bible – Disciple – Study – Church – Worship – Serve – Prayer – Singing – Communion/Lord's Supper – Fellowship – Hope – Saved – Judgement Day – Going to church – Bible Classes – Elders – Deacons – Nursery – Baptism – Crucifixion /Resurrection – Repentance – Brother/Sister – Jesus – God – Holy Spirit – Conversion – Faith/Believe – Eternal Life – Faithful – Sin – Obey - etc.

- What words would Jesus employ to draw a word picture of the Christian Story as He desires it to be?
  - I feel sure He would use the words in this list
  - What other words would He have to employ?
    - \* Sacrifice – Submission – Die to self – Surrender
    - Loose your own Life - 2<sup>nd</sup> mile etc.

## **ACTION:**

- Our understanding and experience of the Christian life is always in danger of being shaped by our culture and desires.
  - Time will almost always lesion the difficult/harder elements of commitment to a cause.
- The Christian story is a story of being a disciple of Christ – follower of Christ – imitator of Christ
- The Christian story is a story of a vessel that is used by Jesus God - filled with the Spirit of God – filled with Jesus – Filled to be poured out!
- This Brings Us Back To The Vital Truth Of This Lesson Series:

**YOU GET TO CHOOSE YOUR STORY!**

**... EVERY DAY!**

**CHOOSE WISELY!**

**MAKE THE CHOICES GOD  
WOULD HAVE YOU MAKE!**