

Intro- Simplicity of the Simple Life

Romans 12:1-2; John 10:10, Psalm 46:10

I. Introduction:

Our study through the book of Acts - or the Acts of the Apprentices really turned into something didn't it?

We started off working through Jesus' last words to His apprentices through John 14-17 and then have been journeying with those same men through the book of Acts - we saw this group of ordinary, uneducated, in the eyes of the world misfits start off in this small pocket of Jerusalem - empowered by the Holy Spirit take the message of the gospel all the way to Rome and from there we see it go to the entire known world.

What became clear as we have been studying that the idea, the term apprentice/ship has really been resonating - this idea of following Jesus/apprenticing after Him is stirring in us as a church family.

What we are going to be doing over the next couple months - is continue where the book of Acts leaves off - Lean into this tension of How can you and I apprentice after Jesus. What does it look like for Normal, everyday people - encounter God and learn to walk with Him through life - over the course of our lives as we walk with Him become more and more like Him with each passing day - not focusing on specific outcomes or results but ENJOYING the JOURNEY.

What does it look like for you and I - practically speaking how can I apprentice after Jesus today.

We are going to call this series: The Simplicity of the Simple Life

The Way of Jesus is a lifestyle. Not some - one time prayer or set of information we mentally ascribe to. Jesus' invitation was an invitation to a life long journey - Jesus' call truly is a new WAY of life. That's why the earliest members of the Jesus movement were called followers of the Way. Because that's exactly what Jesus came to introduce: a new, more life-giving way of life.

A new way of seeing, of serving, of loving, of solving problems, of relating to people, dealing with our past and navigating our present, of doing the daily work of life. In other words, following Jesus is an all-of-life way of life.

It's a way defined by going where He goes, doing what He did, trusting what He says, and loving how He loves, day by day becoming more and more like our Lord as we journey with Him.

But to get there is to move beyond just knowing about Jesus, and deciding to actively follow in His footsteps.

Simple? Maybe. Easy? Certainly not. Worth our every effort? Absolutely!

We are going to continue to go on this journey pursuing the Simplicity of the Simple life.

II. Simple or Complex

Now that sounds great in theory: But it feels a whole lot more complex than simple.

My life is increasingly complex, there is more that I am managing at work, Have ever increasing demands at home. Money keeps getting tighter and tighter which is making me feel pressure to work more and more. There are days where I Function more like a taxi driver than mother or father - Do I need to mention the political climate - More and more of my friends and loved ones are getting sick, hurt or dying. I am barely keeping my head above water as it is - HOW On Earth am I going to add something additional to my life?

There is no time, no space, no margin. So telling me this following Jesus stuff is an invitation to a simple life makes me more frustrated and I'm tempted to disengage from the very start.

If that is you - breath and I want to thank you for your honesty. And assure you that you are not alone!

Listen this is not going to be a series where we pull out all the statistics of how you are wasting time, more distracted than ever and shame you into squeezing God Into your life. We are not going to be teaching you the Kingdom Principle of Habit staking to unlock your God given potential.

What we are going to do, for some of us for the very first time look intently at the words of Jesus. And take Him up on His invitation to Simply Follow Him - to focus our lives on being WITH Jesus. To Follow Him.

That is where we are headed: This is about each one of us personally connecting with Jesus - cultivating a growing relationship with Him - as we do day by day journey with God through our lives - and do this together in community as family- we will experience Him releasing us to walk in freedom - He will empower us to stand up and pushing back the forces of darkness - and walking in the Abundant life that God has created us to experience.

Lesson title: Where do I even begin? How do I get started?

Main Idea: There are no accidental apprentices of Jesus.

III. Romans 12:1-2

We all are being apprenticed by someone/thing

Not a matter of if we are being shaped by something/ what are we being shaped by what

Read Romans 12:1-2

DO NOT BE CONFORMED: **Concrete Imagery (no idea where I heard this from)**

To be shaped, Molded, FORMED BY or Formed WITH something.

You are being conformed - what are you being molded into? What is your life being shaped by?

1. **Family** (we love and value family here at MVC)

Good and bad shape and mold everything about us personality, temperament, values, learned behaviors patterns, defense mechanisms

2. **personal preferences / desires** [Hearts are deceitful - if we follow what we would like DANGER]

3. **Experiences** (Good experiences - embarrassing moment in a child's life - someone believed in you and empowered you to step up and take a chance - Bad experiences: relationships hurt pain trauma)

4. **Culture / society:** [There is this narrative out there which has sold for us all what "the good life" looks like and we are all chasing it and comparing each others experience of the "good life" - stuff, people, experiences, success, money, EASE.]

Bombarded with what we are being told we need or should want - Crazy is look at extreme example of this why do all the women in LA look the same? There is this mold that has shaped them and told them they need to spend 100K on surgeries for their body to have this body type - wear these brands - drive this BIG white Luxury vehicle. [That is a picture of ALL of us]

Recap all above examples - There is this mold that we are being shaped by, it is happening, don't even need to try this is the way we are being conformed. The things we are apprenticing after may be different but we are all being shaped into the same mold.

Where does this come from? The enemy!

Its this call to action - we all are being molded and shaped by things - if we are not intentionally taking a stand and following after Jesus then what IS happening is the devil is molding and shaping and using every area of your life to conform you into the image of this world.

Being presented to you as freedom and you get to do what you would like - all the while each step leading to bondage becoming enslaved to the rat race of and ways of this world.

READ JOHN 10:10

The Thief is conforming you and the truth of the matter is he is only coming to steal to kill and to destroy you. But there is another way-

Jesus promises to give you life and life to the FULLEST life Abundantly.

But be transformed - We do not need to be conformed into the mold of death. Jesus is inviting us to life.

Call to rise - A call to defy the enemy and this world which is seeking to take all It can and leave you with nothing - Its a call for us men & women to stand and to fight to lead our selves, our families our friends out of bandage and into freedom.

A call to follow Jesus and love like He does in this world that rejects Him.

IV. How do we take up Jesus on his offer of the better life? How on earth do I even start?

- **Main Idea: There are no accidental apprentices of Jesus.**
- We Can: Overwhelmed with the complexity and reality of time, responsibilities, complexities of life and allow the enemy to discourage us from the start.
- OR We can embrace the simplicity and purity of what Jesus is inviting us primarily into which is a personal relationship with Him.
- Call is to follow me - be with me - spend time with me - abide in me. (Call of the Peter - follow me - Jesus didn't tell Peter everything at the beginning - let's spend time together)

V. Simple action point for all of us?

Simple Call is to be with Jesus, Spend time with Jesus, Place yourself with Him and allow Him to mold and shape you. Grow your personal relationship with Jesus.

-Read Psalm 46:10

When we are still we see ourselves rightly - We bring God back into the center and what that does is it creates wonder and Awe that The creator has love for you!

Don't ever complicate things - you don't need to know all the steps or the destination - walk with Jesus on the journey.

The Simplicity of the Simple life truly can be boiled down to the simple thing of Cultivating your personal relationship with Jesus.

Respond

- salvation
- How many of you feel hungry for more but you feel stuck? Raise your hands? Overwhelmed by complexity invite you to come lay it all down - be still before the Lord come to Him.

Pray