**LIVING THE D-LIFE (Mark 3:13-15) | Sermon Manuscript**

**SERMON INTRODUCTION:** (PowerPoint material is **Highlighted in Yellow**)

**What is your purpose in life?** Do you know? Everyone lives for something. What do you live for? What is your life’s passion? What gets you out of bed in the mornings?

Many people struggle to know what their purpose is. They travel through life without a clear sense of direction. They may be known by their profession or position in life, but they struggle to find any real meaning in it.

When you consider the brevity of life, it is extremely important to get clarity on this. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, there is only one person who can tell you what your purpose is. He is your Lord and He speaks with great authority on this matter.

According to Jesus, your purpose in life is one main thing. It is two words: **MAKE DISCIPLES.** Every follower of Christ lives under the crystal clear mandate of His Great Commission. There are no exceptions. Jesus has called you to live a lifestyle of disciple-making. No matter your age, gender, or nationality, this is your supreme purpose in life.

The problem is that disciple-making is not a strength for most Christians or churches. This should greatly concern us. With such a clear mandate, how can this be? There are a couple of thoughts to consider.

**2 Concerns:**

1) **There is a common misconception about discipleship.**

Many think of discipleship as merely evangelism. To them it is all about sharing the gospel and leading others to Christ. Without question, all forms of sincere evangelism are vitally important and greatly needed. However, evangelism alone is not discipleship. Great numbers have been led to pray “the sinner’s prayer,” but have never matured in their faith or reproduced as disciples. Many others have “made decisions for Christ” only to be rarely seen in the church again. This is a major concern.

For others, discipleship is about going deep into Bible study. To them it is all about listening to anointed teachers, reading inspired books, and participating in small groups. We would all agree that going deep into Bible study is extremely important. The problem is that many complete great studies by anointed teachers and think that discipleship consists merely of participating in the next study. Attending Bible studies alone is not discipleship. Many in our churches are more biblically literate than most third world missionaries. However, a great majority of spiritually educated believers fail to reproduce as disciple-makers and fulfill their supreme purpose in life.

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**LIVING THE D-LIFE**

**Main Thought:** Disciple-making is not a program; it’s a lifestyle.

In Mark 3:13-15, Jesus began to model for us a lifestyle of disciple-making.

1. **Disciple-making is our supreme purpose in life (v. 13).**
   - Making disciples is **Christ-like.**
   - Making disciples is **commanded.**

Matthew 4:19; 28:18-20

The Great Commission is **NOT** a great suggestion!

2. **Disciple-making has a simple process to follow (v. 14).**

Jesus modeled 6 practices of disciple-making: 1) fellowship, 2) teaching, 3) prayer, 4) ministry, 5) multiplication, & 6) accountability.

John 13:15

3. **Disciple-making has the spiritual power to transform lives (v. 15).**

John 14:12

Disciple-making is the “greater work.”

**Final Thought:** How can you live out your supreme purpose in life?

- **Believe** that you can live a lifestyle of disciple-making.
- **Be** equipped and empowered for a lifestyle of disciple-making.

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**What is your purpose in life?** Do you know? According to Jesus, it’s one main thing. It’s two words: **Make disciples.**

In His brief three years of public ministry, Jesus modeled a lifestyle of disciple-making. He literally poured His life into the discipleship of twelve men. Jesus lived the “D-Life.” Living the D-Life means living a lifestyle of disciple-making.

**Sermon Outline | Lesson 1**

- **1. Disciple-making is our supreme purpose in life (v. 13).**
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John 13:15

- **3. Disciple-making has the spiritual power to transform lives (v. 15).**
  - Disciple-making is the “greater work.”

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Let us be clear. Discipleship does involve both evangelism and teaching, but we must not separate the two. The discipling process of Jesus joined together both evangelism and teaching in a relational small group environment that also included mentoring, accountability, and, most importantly, multiplication.

These misconceptions about discipleship may seem insignificant, but their effects on the the expansion of the gospel have been devastating. And there is another thought to consider.

2) We need a simple process of multiplication for discipleship.  
Most churches today do not have a simple process for equipping believers to make and multiply disciples. Consequently, few believers today live a lifestyle of reproducing disciples. Rarely do churches have any ministries at all that are truly multiplying. For the most part, we are attempting to reach the world by addition and we simply cannot keep pace. Jesus’ plan for world evangelization was not one of addition, but one of exponential kingdom growth through the remarkable process of multiplication.

Jesus modeled this process for us. In His brief three years of ministry, Jesus literally poured His life into the discipleship of twelve men. Jesus lived the “D-Life.”

Living the D-Life means living a lifestyle of disciple-making. This is a lifestyle that will not compete with other great ministries in the church; it will complete them.

Main Thought: Disciple-Making is not a program; it’s a lifestyle.

In Mark 3:13-15, Jesus began to model for us a lifestyle of disciple-making. Here, Jesus officially began His personal journey of making disciples who would go out and make other disciples.

Mark 3:13-15 - And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve (whom He also named apostles) so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.

At the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry, He called together a rather ordinary group of men to be His first disciples. They were not highly educated or greatly gifted. Jesus chose common people to be in His discipleship group (D-Group) to show us that anyone can be equipped for a lifestyle of disciple-making.

We can learn from Jesus three great truths about disciple-making...

EXPANDED SERMON OUTLINE:

1. Disciple-making is our supreme purpose in life (v. 13)
   For Jesus, disciple-making was a first priority (v. 13). After spending all night on a mountain in prayer (Luke 6:12-13), Jesus begin to call “those whom He desired” to be His disciples.
   - Making disciples is Christ-like (v. 13).
     Disciple-making is your supreme purpose in life, because you are called to be like Jesus. Few things are more Christ-like than “making disciples.” The bulk of Jesus’ three-year public ministry was involved in His personal investment in these twelve men. He intentionally trained them to be disciples who would go out and make other disciples.
   - Making disciples is commanded (Matthew 4:19; 28:18-20).
     Second, disciple-making is your supreme purpose in life, because Jesus commanded you to “make disciples.” The first command of Christ to His followers is found in Matthew 4:19. Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” If you are not fishing for men, then you are not following Jesus. Fishing for men means making disciples. This was Jesus’ way of communicating to a group of fishermen that He was calling them to a lifestyle of disciple-making.
     The last command of Jesus to His followers is found in Matthew 28:18-20. In His resurrected body just before He ascended back into Heaven, Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
     As Jesus gave His final instructions to His followers, His words were crystal clear. In the Greek language, there is only one verb in the Great Commission. That one verb is “make.” Jesus commanded us to “make disciples.”
     The Great Commission is not a great suggestion! It’s a command. It’s the one main thing Jesus has called all of His followers to do. Our lives should involve a never-ending process of making disciples who make disciples. This is our supreme purpose in life.

2. Disciple-making has a simple process to follow (v. 14)
   For Jesus, disciple-making was a simple process (v. 14). Jesus made it so simple that this group of common men whom He called to be His first disciples could follow the plan. If they could do it, we can do it.
Jesus called His disciples to simply be “with Him.” For His three years of ministry, they did everything with Him, and Jesus literally poured His life into His discipleship group (D-Group) of twelve men.

From Jesus, we learn that the process of disciple-making works best through the caring relational environment of a small discipleship group or “D-Group.”

For us, a D-Group could be as small as three to five people who meet anytime and anywhere for the purpose of intentional discipleship. A D-Group of no more than eight is best for our success.

By reading the Gospels, we learn there are six practices of disciple-making that Jesus modeled for us with His D-Group. The six practices of D-Life are:

1) **Fellowship** – Jesus called His disciples to come and have intimate fellowship with Him.

2) **Teaching** – Jesus taught His disciples using stories and interactive group discussions.

3) **Prayer** – Jesus prayed with His disciples and taught them how to pray.

4) **Ministry** – Jesus did ministry with His disciples and sent them out for ministry and evangelism.

5) **Multiplication** – Jesus equipped His disciples to be disciple-makers and commissioned them to go and make disciples.

6) **Accountability** – Jesus held His disciples accountable to these six practices of disciple-making.

In John 13:15, Jesus said, “**For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.**” We cannot invent a better disciple-making process than that of Jesus.

For Jesus, disciple-making was a simple process. It would be wise for us to go back and make disciples just as Jesus did it.

3. **Disciple-making has the spiritual power to transform lives (v. 15).**

   **For Jesus, disciple-making was transformational (v. 15).** Mark indicates that Jesus gave His disciples “authority to cast out demons.”

   People today still battle with Satan and with personal demons. Through Christ we have authority over Satan. **Powerful spiritual transformation can occur through the loving accountability of D-Groups.**

   Spiritual strongholds related to alcohol, drugs, pornography, sexual identity issues, and many others can be conquered.

In John 14:12, Jesus said, “**Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.**”

What works is He talking about? How is it possible that we could do greater works than Jesus?

Apart from His death and resurrection, the main work of Jesus was the work of disciple-making. He literally poured out His earthly life into the discipleship of twelve men and into equipping them for a lifestyle of disciple-making. Jesus said that His followers would do these same works and that they would do even “greater works” than these.

**Disciple-making is the “greater work.”** Because of what He did for us, Jesus said that His followers would do greater works of disciple-making than He did. What a great promise to claim! But are we really seeing this? Are we doing a greater work of disciple-making than Jesus?

Think about it. What if we could successfully equip and empower everyone in our church for a lifestyle of disciple-making? What if everyone embraced disciple-making as a way of life instead of a program of the church? What if believers all over the world started living out their supreme purpose in life and started making disciples just like Jesus? Would we see revival?

Where do we begin? Let me give you an illustration.

**CLOSING ILLUSTRATION: A Father, a son, and a Zebco 33**

Going fishing with dad is a wonderful experience for children. Over the years, many loving fathers have taken their sons and daughters to a lake to teach them to fish. With much patience, fathers teach their children a very basic process for fishing that includes casting the bait, setting the hook, and reeling in a fish.

As a part of this process, Father’s will also show their children how to use a simple fishing tool like a Zebco 33. A Zebco 33 is one of the most reliable and simple fishing reels ever made. It’s easy. You push the button, hold it down, and let go of the button as you flip your wrist. Even a young child can learn to cast the bait, set the hook, and reel in a fish by using a simple tool like a Zebco 33.

How hard would it be for a child to catch a fish without the loving instruction of a father and a simple tool like a Zebco 33? It would be virtually impossible. The lake may be full of fish and there may be an eagerness to catch them, but without being taught how to fish a child would not know where to begin. He or she might dive in the lake, swim around looking for a fish, and try to catch one with their bare hands. It is
never going to happen. After many failed attempts, any child would eventually give up and conclude that fishing was just not his or her thing. No loving father would ever do this. One would never take his child fishing and not teach him or her how to fish with a simple tool like a Zebco 33. Yet, this is exactly what we have done in our churches. We talk constantly about fishing for men and making disciples. We preach passionately about reaching the lost for Christ. However, we often fail to teach our people how to fish for men and fail to provide a simple tool for disciple-making. We leave them to learn for themselves how to make disciples. After many failed attempts, they eventually give up and conclude that disciple-making is just not their thing. This is a major spiritual dilemma with immeasurable consequences.

This must change. The role of the church and its leaders is to equip believers for the work of ministry and the “greater work” of ministry is disciple-making.

It is time for us to do our job and to equip and empower God’s people for a global grassroots disciple-making movement. I want to invite you to join the movement!

Final Thoughts: What is your part? How can you join the movement? How can you live out your supreme purpose in life?

First, you must be a follower of Christ. The first two words of Jesus to His disciples were, “Follow me” (Mt. 4:19a). They immediately left their nets and followed Him. The choice to follow Jesus is the greatest choice you will ever make. If you have never repented of your sin and turned to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord, I invite you to do so right now.

Second, if you are a follower of Christ, Jesus said, “I will make you fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19b). If you are not fishing for men, you are not following Jesus. Your part is two-fold:

- **Believe** that you can live a lifestyle of disciple-making.
- **Be** equipped and empowered for a lifestyle of disciple-making.

This is the purpose for D-Life training. D-Life training will change the way you think about your life and make you believe that you can make disciples. It will equip and empower you for a lifestyle of disciple-making—anytime and anywhere. If you commit yourself to this training, I believe it will prove to be the greatest investment of time you have ever made. It will change your life and ignite a fire in your ministry. Right now, I pray that you will set aside every distraction and fully devote yourself to training for your supreme purpose in life.

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**D-LIFE BOOT CAMP TRAINING:**

If your church or ministry is hosting a D-Life Boot Camp, take a moment at the end of the message to explain how you will be using D-Life to equip and empower your people for a lifestyle of disciple-making. Challenge and invite everyone to register for your upcoming boot camp.