**This Changes Everything – Week 5 – Live Like Jesus**

**Message Big Idea**: An apprentice of Jesus is learning to live like Jesus.

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:23-5:2, 9:9-13, 10:1-8, 28:16-20, John 14:8-21

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**Introduction: “Nailed It!”**

*(Series Graphic)* I recently stumbled across a show called *(Picture)* **“Nailed It.”** It’s a cooking show, and even though I cook very little and not very well, this show looked pretty fun.

I think the idea came from people proudly posting pictures on Pinterest of their baking **failures** with the phrase “Nailed It!” In the show, they have professional bakers making amazing and elaborate cakes; and then they ask amateur bakers, like you and me, to recreate them. And when the amateur’s creation is revealed . . . That is the “**Nailed It!”** moment.

For example, here is a cake one of the **REAL** bakers made: *(first image)* Very cool Unicorn cake…if you’re in to unicorn cakes.

And here is how it turned out when one of their amateur bakers gave it a go. *(second image)* Looks more like Unicorn soup. I would definitely say they . . . “**Nailed** It!”



Or how about this one… Here is what the professional baker made: A fun little smiley face emoji cake… *(first image)*

And here is what the not-so-professional produced… *(second image)* In their defense we would’ve said this was a near exact replica if a 3 yr old had baked it... I think we can all agree this guy “**Nailed** it!”



**Alright, let’s try one last one… How about this Jack-in-the-Box cake the professionals created? *(first image)*

**And here is the WINNING Cake… *(second image)* I think it won because it was the only one that didn't look like a puddle of nothing-ness! ☺ -- I’d say they definitely…say it with me… “**Nailed** it!”

Each of these bakers had the **best** of intentions, but didn’t end up with the desired result.

We have all been there, haven’t we? Doing our best to accomplish something:

* Change our **diet**,
* Begin an **exercise routine**, or
* Complete a **do-it-yourself project** of some kind

But we were never get it just right or it never turns out how we truly envisioned it from the start.

And even though we start with the best of intentions, we just don’t have what it takes to **get** to where we want to **go** or to **do** what we want to **do**.

And the truth is… it can happen on our journey as apprentices with Jesus as well.

Dallas Willard writes:

**“The general human failing is to want what is right and important, but at the same time not to commit to the kind of life that will produce the action we know to be right and the condition we want to enjoy. This is the feature of human character that explains why the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We intend what is right, but we avoid the life that would make it a reality.”** (Ouch!) **– Dallas Willard**

Think about it…

* If you want to be become a **baker**, you need to practice baking.
* If you want to be a **runner**, you have to live the lifestyle of a runner.
* If you want to be a **musician**, you have to adopt the practices of a musician.

And in the same way, apprentices of Jesus **adopt the lifestyle of Jesus**. If we want to experience life in the Kingdom of God, the eternal kind of life that Jesus models and offers, we have to learn to **live – like - Jesus.**

**Series Recap**

We are in the final week of our series, **“This Changes Everything.”** This series is all about the good news Jesus came to proclaim:

***“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news****!” (Mark 1:15)*

When Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was **here** - he was saying that heaven was breaking through to earth. There was now a new and eternal way of living filled with love, purpose and meaning that we can experience right now!

And Jesus offers **himself** as the way to experience this eternal kind of life, when he says:

***“Come, follow me…”*** *(Mark 1:17)*

You and I are invited…

* not to just ***believe*** some things about Jesus,
* not to just ***learn*** some things about Jesus,

but to be active participants in ***following*** him – being his **apprentice**.

Jesus wants to show us how to experience an eternal kind of life in the Kingdom of God that you don’t begin when you die. -- **This eternal life can start right now!**

Two weeks ago we talked about how apprenticeship starts by **Being WITH Jesus.** And this is about living with an awareness through the Holy Spirit he is with us – every moment of every day.

Last week we discovered that apprentices of Jesus also learjn **LOVE like Jesus as they live in community with other apprentices.** In fact, Jesus said LOVE would be a defining mark of his followers.

Today we’re going see that apprentices of Jesus are learn to **Live like Jesus**. Simply put… we learn to do the things Jesus did.

**Doing What Jesus Did**

In fact, Jesus, himself, says his apprentices will do the things he did. John, one of his closest friends, records Jesus’ words:

***“Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”*** *(John 14:11-14)*

Following Jesus means learning **to do what Jesus did.** When Jesus says, “Follow me,” it is an invitation to not just **watch** what he does, but to **learn** to **do** what we see him doing.

* For example, when we see that Jesus loves the “down-and-outers” not just the “up-and-comers,” we too will love the “down-and-outers”
* When we see Jesus choosing to serve others, we too will learn to humbly serve …just like Jesus did.

And I think we **get** that…it makes sense. Easy to understand? Yes. -- But **not** so easy to live out.

Well, here is the good news: Jesus did not expect his first apprentices, the disciples, to get everything right away. He took them one step at a time. He apprenticed them. And let me show you what that looked like…

**Apprenticing the Disciples**

When Jesus walked this earth, he apprenticed his disciples to do the things he did…to live the way he lived. He was always helping them take a next step. And one next-step connecting to another next-step in the context of relationship is really what apprenticeship is all about.

1. *(Matthew 4:21-23)* – First, the disciples were called to simply **follow**. And as they follow, they **watch** Jesus teach and heal people. This is the first step of apprenticeship: ***I do, you watch****.* Jesus did, and the disciples **watched**.
2. *(Matthew 9:9-10)* – The next step was for the disciples to start **helping** Jesus in his mission. One time Matthew gathered friends in his house so that they too could get to know Jesus. This is the second step of apprenticeship*:* ***I do, you help.*** Jesus teaches and heals, and Matthew **helps** by hosting a dinner.
3. *(Matthew 10:1, 5-8)* – Then. the next step was Jesus sending out his apprentices to further the mission. He tells them to let people know that “the kingdom of heaven has come near,” and to heal. This is the third step of apprenticeship: ***You do, I help****.* Jesus coaches and equips them – **helps** them, but now the **disciples** are actually teaching and healing.
4. *(Matthew 28:18-20)* – And finally, Jesus entrusts the mission to his apprentices. He calls them to pick up the baton and run with it themselves. And this is the fourth step of apprenticeship: ***You do, I watch.***

These are the steps of apprenticeship:

**I do, you watch.**

**I do, you help.**

**You do, I help.**

**You do, I watch.**

That’s how Jesus apprenticed his disciples.

(HIT THIS HARD)

And here’s the really powerful part: When Jesus released his apprentices to carry out his mission, what we see God doing through them is nothing short of **amazing**.

* We see **thousands of people finding their way back to God.**
* We see **breakthroughs happening in people’s lives**: spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and physically.

The mission of Jesus explodes as his apprentices bring his love and good news to the ends of the earth.

All of this happened because a small group of people accepted Jesus’ invitation to “Follow me,” and he apprenticed them to do the things he did.

**“Greater Things”**

*(John 14:11-14)* Apprentices learn to do what Jesus did.

AND let me remind you of Jesus’ words: *(highlight)*

***“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”***

Let’s take a closer look at what Jesus is saying here. I think we get that we are to do the things Jesus did when it comes to **loving** people and **serving** people. But Jesus doesn’t just say we will **do** the things he **did**, he takes it a step further. He says we will do even **greater** things! *(Highlight just “even greater things”)*

Now, can I be super honest with you? I think this is where Jesus loses many of us. Maybe me too…

This feels a little like Michael Jordan walking in the room and saying “You’re gonna basketball like I played basketball. Actually, you’re gonna play even better than me!” I seems a little ridiculous!

Jesus did all sorts of things that are off the map of our typical everyday experience…the seemingly impossible…the miraculous. He…

* Healing the sick!
* Casting out demons!
* Raising the dead!

And while I think some of us **believe** Jesus wants to apprentice us to do even **these** miraculous things, my guess is that most of us doubt these things are really possible. -- We just can’t picture it…so we don’t even follow Jesus to these places.

It’s kind of like this . . .

Author John Ortberg talks about it in this way:

**“There are things we think we believe until we get to the edge of the cliff and that belief is tested. Then there is our mental map about how things are. This is what we *actually* believe.**

**Belief is best understood as the readiness to act as if what I believe is really true. What I do—my ‘works’—reveals what it is I *really* believe, my mental map about how things are.” – John Ortberg**

And we rarely violate our mental maps, which is our belief about the way things **really** are.

So many of us read stories about Jesus and his first apprentices and we think, “Wow, that’s incredible!” But we also think that’s history and maybe the “highlight reel” for the early church. And because we **can’t** picture it, we can’t imagine Jesus wants us to do those things. We wonder, “Is that even possible anymore?”

Let me tell you. It **is** possible. It’s **more** than possible. I believe God wants to break through into our lives in the same way he broke through in the lives of those early Christ-followers. In fact, you’re gonna want to be here for our next series called “Breakthrough” that’s all about how God **wants** to break through into our lives and our church to take us to places we never thought possible.

But how, how **are** these things possible?

Only by God’s Spirit at work in us. ONLY by His Spirit. Jesus promises:

***“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will bein you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”*** *(John 14:15-18)*

The Holy Spirit is who makes the impossible possible! The Holy Spirit empowers every apprentice of Jesus to take their “next steps” in faith, whatever that might look like.

Maybe it is still hard for some of us to believe that Jesus wants us to do “greater things,” but keep in mind, most of us have already seen God, through the Holy Spirit, do things we **never** thought possible.

* For some of us in the room, you never thought you would **find yourself in church**. But here you are, empowered by the Spirit to be here.
* Others never thought you would be here, much less **join a ministry team and serve in some way**. But now you are serving, empowered by the Spirit.
* Or maybe you never thought it was possible for you to be **generous and give back to God**, but you’re doing it, empowered by the Spirit.
* Or you never would’ve dreamed that you’d be looking for ways **to connect with neighbors** to build relationships, so you can BLESS them, but here you are, empowered by the Spirit.

Apprentices of Jesus are continually allowing themselves to be open and available through the power of the Holy Spirit to do what they never thought possible. This is where we move beyond what we can do on our own, and step into a life-changing apprenticeship with the One who can do all things.

**Challenge**

So let me leave you with a few challenges today.

**Challenge #1: Become An Apprentice of Jesus**

Here’s the truth: finding your way back to God isn’t saying “yes” to a set of beliefs; it’s saying “yes” to becoming an apprentice of Jesus!

Maybe you still have doubts about this whole faith thing. -- Guess what? -- We all do. The first apprentices of Jesus had doubts. Doubts and faith are not mutually exclusive. They actually work together. What if today you decided to accept Jesus’ invitation to trust and follow him.

* Without all the **answers**,
* Without all the **experience**,
* Without knowing the **future**?

Or maybe for others, maybe at some point you said “Yes” to believing in God and Jesus, but you never really said “yes” to **following** Jesus. -- So many of us aren’t experiencing an eternal kind of life because we’ve settled for something **less** than whole-life apprenticeship to Jesus.

And I know for me, personally, I’ve had several moments in my life where I’ve had to ask the question “Am I really FOLLOWING Jesus?” And while that is a **hard** question to ask…it is a very **good** question…a **necessary** question. And each time I’ve asked it, my faith gets a little bit stronger.

Friends, the Kingdom of God is here! We can experience it right now! Jesus says to every one of us, “Come follow me.” What if today you decided to accept his invitation?

Here is Challenge #2:

**Challenge #2 – Take Your Next Steps With Jesus.**

Every apprentice to Jesus has a next step. Why? Because the Holy Spirit is continually working and prompting us to respond. It looks different for everyone, but maybe the prompting is:

* To **reach out** to that friend in grief for coffee . . . Or
* To **grow in generosity** as you give back to God
* To **commit to serving** others in some way
* To **meet a tangible need** around you
* To **share your story** of finding your way back to God with a neighbor

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, is continually leading us to step out beyond what we think is possible. The question is: Will we follow? Will we, as the Apostle Paul says:

***“…keep in step with the Spirit.”*** *(Galatians 5:25)*

The word here for “keep in step” means “to walk in line behind a leader.” So for me to take my next steps with Jesus, I have to put aside **my** agenda in favor of what the Spirit wants to do in my life. **He** has to be leading **me**, not the other way around.

Whatever that next step might be for you, I challenge you to take it today.

And one final challenge:

**Challenge #3: Apprentice Someone Else**

An apprentice of Jesus is continually inviting and investing in others. *(Put up the 4 Steps of Apprenticeship from earlier)* In fact, there’s actually one more step to the apprenticeship process we talked about earlier: *(add)* **You Do, Someone Else Watches.**

Something powerful happens when we commit to living our lives as apprentices of Jesus and invite others along for the journey. The life-changing work that the Holy Spirit does in our lives is not supposed to end with us. You’re here because someone took the time to invest in you and to help you take your next steps. If that’s true of you, don’t you want to give someone else the chance to experience what you’ve experienced? This is what an apprentice does.

**Conclusion**

If we want to experience life in the Kingdom of God, the eternal kind of life that Jesus models and offers, we have to learn to live like Jesus… to **do** what Jesus **did**.

And we’re not always going to “**Nail it**.” We will stumble and fall. There will be times we will laugh at ourselves and other times we will cry.

But Jesus is patient with us. Following him is a journey. Apprenticeship is a process.

What matters is that we take the next step, allowing the Spirit to empower us to live like Jesus -- to do what Jesus did -- and to do even “greater things.”

**Prayer (Band Come Up During Communion)**

**Communion Idea**

When it comes to living like Jesus, The Apostle Paul experienced it so profoundly that he said,

**“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”**

**- Galatians 2:20**

This is the picture of a life so connected to Jesus that it cannot be separated. It is often said of good friends that they are “joined at the hip.” Our life is meant to be lived in such closeness to Jesus that we cannot be separated from Him.

That is only made possible by Jesus and His sacrifice for us. On the cross Jesus made a way for me to have a restored relationship with God.

The bread represents his body. And the juice represents his blood.

(Instruct to come forward to one of the tables)