

# Sermon Manuscript for “The Way of Jesus – Part 6 – We’re a Mess But At Least We’ve Got Each Other



## **WOJ Recap**

**#1. I have begun following Jesus, and am depending on the Spirit of Jesus in my journey.**

We are Christ followers on a journey. We rely on the constant infilling of the Holy Spirit for supernatural power to be overcomers and servants of Christ.

**#2. I have been sent by Jesus to bless others and to invite them to follow Him.** We find our significance in obeying the Great Commandment – to love God and others. We define our success in fulfilling the Great Commission – to Go and make disciple-makers.

**#3. I am learning to be like Jesus in my Attitudes, Behaviours, Character.**

Developing Jesus’ attitude, behavior and character is a life-long journey between learning God’s word, listening to his Spirit, and trusting in His provision and work for our holiness.

**#4. I am learning to love God and to love others.**

We love God by obeying him and seeking his presence. We love others by choosing to seek their best interests as we would our own.

**#5 I am learning the teachings of Jesus.** Learning to trust and obey the “red letters” of the Bible are the foundation for your life as a Christ follower.

**#6. I am helping someone and someone is helping me to be a growing follower of Jesus.**

GOD is on mission to save this world.

God has been pursuing humans since the foundation of the earth.

*Isa 65:1 “I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’”*

*Mt 4:16 “...the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”*

God loved us first, and he revealed himself to us.

Even more, we who follow Jesus are on mission TOGETHER with God.

We are on a journey together and we are to help each other out – everyone has a role to play.

## **Shrinking or Expanding**

Do you feel like your Christian walk is shrinking or expanding?

When we open ourselves up and involve ourselves in the lives of others with the intention to follow Jesus together, we grow.

Many of us are missing this human/spiritual dimension in our lives, and it keeps us from maturing.

*Charles Stanley said the first thing he does when he gets to a new church is find a group of men to walk with him in prayer and accountability.*

*He said it’s one of the most rewarding things he has experienced in his ministry, to have a group of guys supporting him in the tough times.*

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It's interesting that the first thing he does isn't a demographics survey, a budget review, a program evaluation or anything like that.

It's more than a Bible Study; a bunch of over-fed Christians assimilating knowledge.

It's more than just a bunch of fishing buddies talking about the weather.

The first thing he develops is a network of brothers for prayer, mission and accountability.

So what if we began to do just that?

Stopped making excuses and stopped begging off busy.

Stopped being satisfied with an hour on Sunday and no other community or accountability than that.

But let me warn you, it won't always be squeaky clean or comfortable.

Because walking in accountability can get downright messy.

## **Welcome to the Mess.**

Just because you are a Christian it doesn't mean you automatically get an easy ride.

*A recent survey of Discipleship Journal readers ranked areas of greatest spiritual challenge to them: 1. Materialism. 2. Pride. 3. Self-centeredness. 4. Laziness. 5. (Tie) Anger/Bitterness. 5. (Tie) Sexual lust. 7. Envy. 8. Gluttony. 9. Lying.*

*Survey respondents noted temptations were more potent when they had:*

*-neglected their time with God (81 percent) and*

*-when they were physically tired (57 percent).*

*Resisting temptation was accomplished by*

*-prayer (84 percent),*

*-avoiding compromising situations (76 percent),*

*-Bible study (66 percent),*

*-being accountable to someone (52 percent).*

Even devoted, sincere believers can find themselves in a mess.

Helping someone grow and allowing someone to help you to grow is a messy business.

You have to open up yourself to someone else, be vulnerable and transparent.

Then at the same time you get put in position of trust with other people.

You have to deal with some awkward conversations or deal with some big emotions

You might feel the heartache of watching people you love struggle.

Everything within us wants to cling to that Lone Ranger privacy but God is calling us to something deeper and more powerful.

*If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will **find it**.*

*Matthew 10:39*

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*Phil 2:5-7 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the **very nature of a servant**, being made in human likeness.*

Jesus entered into our human mess to show the way to salvation and to harmony with God. He came alongside and shepherded us through to new life.

He also calls us to do the same with one another- because after all, the fruit of a disciple maker should be more disciple makers.

## **Losers and Winners**

We have to lose the Lone Ranger mentality, where our own mind is the only voice of temperance.

When we live like the lone ranger the only voice of reason we hear is our own point of view. We can be at risk of even messing up the Holy Spirit's direction.

It's what the Bible calls "leaning on your own understanding"

*Pr 3:5-7 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.*

The danger is that we have a tendency to read everything that comes through our lives through our filter of self.

I know myself enough to know that I have a big ego but poor self esteem and poor self control. I don't think that my own mind, my own headspace, is enough to guide me when things get heavy.

The exhortation of scripture is to "Acknowledge God in all your ways."

That word "acknowledge" is awesome.

It means "To allow, accept, concede, and grant permission"

We acknowledge God when we grant other brothers and sisters access into our personal journey and permission to encourage us and be accountable.

We also win some great things when we develop healthy mentoring relationships.

-A greater appreciation for how our day to day conduct forms our character.

-Respect for the authority of God in our lives through our brethren.

-Joy of seeing someone we love grow and thrive through our prayer and encouragement.

-Blessing and honor of recognizing the priesthood that all believers have - a call to exhort, pray, encourage and counsel one another.

## **Paul, Barnabas & Timothy**

Paul had Barnabas as a brother and partner in crime.

They travelled and worked in the Gospel together.

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They ministered side by side as equals.

Speaking of messes, Paul and Barnabas ended up in theological disputes with Pharisees, were called before government leaders, and even parted ways in less than a pleasant manner. Paul also had Timothy, a young man, who he mentored and disciplined to become a disciple maker in his own ministry.

In Paul's first letter to Timothy, the first thing he exhorts Timothy to do is oppose and call out the guys who were making a mess by teaching false doctrines.

Paul wrote his letter to Timothy from prison.

What a mess if your mentor is writing you from jail!

Small groups of men, two and threes, but they were devoted to the gospel and to each other.

They were devoted to messy, life changing ministry.

These men turned the world upside down.

Who is your Paul? Your Barnabas? Your Timothy?

Maybe you can be one of these to someone else.

Let's make sure we are helping someone and someone is helping us to be a growing follower of Jesus.

Together we can turn the world upside down.

**Let's pray.**