

I Am Victory
Moving from Believer to Disciple
February 8, 2015

Over the past month we've been celebrating 25 years as a church!
And we're taking a few weeks here to look at some of the core ideas that make up the DNA of who Victory is. So this is a perfect time to be here if you're new to the church! And it's a great REMINDER to all of us who have been a part of the family for a while.

- 1- So far we've talked about the history of Victory, how we got here.
- 2- Then we talked about our great calling, to LOVE all.
- 3- We've talked about living a life of SIGNIFICANCE instead of success.

And **TODAY** we're diving into ***another one of our calling cards*** as a church. But **this isn't exclusive to us** by any means.

TODAY we're landing on what is probably the most frequently cited reason I hear from people about why they choose to be part of the Victory family. And I don't say this pridefully b/c I know we all fall short of the glory of God... but what I hear the most from people about why they choose Victory is something to the effect of ***"because we actually teach the BIBLE!"***

In other words, we don't water it down! Even if it's tough we're going to teach it. The whole Bible... Even the hard parts! Even the controversial parts. Even the parts that make us squirm in our seats a little... that HURT!

And that truth comes down to this one word - **DISCIPLESHIP**. That we want to become DISCIPLES of Jesus!

That the heartbeat of God is for all of us ultimately to have a **life-long JOURNEY from unbeliever to believer to disciple to leader.**

How we would simply summarize that at Victory is **moving from BELIEVER to DISCIPLE.**

That you & I would move from being a Believer IN Jesus to a Disciple OF Jesus.

TRUTH - I'm not trying to get you to become a BELIEVER today. Because the truth is that almost all of us in this room are already believers.

But that word BELIEVER is a really big, vague word.

Your neighborhood & work place are full of people who are believers. A poll found that **83% of Americans call themselves Christian. But the truth is that 83% of Americans are BELIEVERS!**

But we know the HONEST TRUTH is just b/c you say a prayer doesn't mean you're a Christian (*I love prayers!*). Just because you grew up in church doesn't mean you're a Christian. Just because you listen to the FISH or have a FISH on your car doesn't mean you're a Christian. Just because you don't cuss or you do good things doesn't mean you're a Christian.

You aren't a Christian because ***"you BELIEVE in Jesus."***

James 2:19 NIV

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

Demons believe in Jesus! Demons believe Jesus is the Son of God... that He died for the sins of the World! But they aren't Christians! "*Believing in Jesus*" doesn't mean you're a Christian. **83% of Americans "BELIEVE IN JESUS."** Matthew 7:13-14 & 21-23 NKJ

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are **MANY** who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are **FEW** who find it... Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

This is what motivates me! This is what drives me forward. This is *what keeps me up at night* - a concern for you & your family & for this city that one day **MANY** will breathe their final breath assured they went to church & did good things & they'll end up hearing - "*I never knew you.*"

BUT a DISCIPLE is one who KNOWS Jesus & Jesus KNOWS them.

The call from Jesus isn't just to BELIEVE – it's to BECOME His disciple.

So what is a disciple?

Because the word "Disciple" has all these connotations behind it. A disciple is someone who enters into Scripture memorization contests & who fasts for fun & takes PRAY-cations so they can go away to pray.

Disciple // One who follows another's teachings

One who FOLLOWS another's teachings. It's not "one who **LISTENS** to another's teachings." It's not "one who **LIKES** another's teachings." It's not "one who **BELIEVES** another's teachings." A disciple is the one who **MOVES** – who **ACTS** – who **FOLLOWS** what they've heard.

A **BELIEVER** is content with praying a prayer.

A **DISCIPLE** is someone who says, "*I don't just BELIEVE it. I want to LIVE it.*"

Our ultimate goal isn't to get you to pray a prayer & then leave the room exactly the same as you came in. Because **God is in the LIFE CHANGE business!** Jesus didn't die a nice death to make us NICE people. Jesus died a horrible death to make dead people come **ALIVE** – to rescue us from the Kingdom of Darkness & Bring us into the Kingdom of Light – make us **NEW** people – to give us **BEAUTY** for our **ASHES** – change us from **SLAVES** to **SONS** – that we would then **GO** and **FOLLOW HIS TEACHINGS** and **LIVE FOR GOD!**

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BELIEVER AND A DISCIPLE:

BELIEVERS

Believe In Jesus as SAVIOR
but live to please themselves

Exalt their opinions, feelings and thoughts above the Word of God

Treat their body like it's their own.
(*Food, sex, stress*)

Treat money as 100% theirs and they might give God 10% if there's enough left.

Think of church as a place they go to HEAR what God's Word says

Get offended and stay offended

Put up with people of other cultures

Follow God as long as everything is going well

Seek to know God through RELIGION.
(*A+B=C, God is a formula, "say a prayer"*)

Content with going to Heaven one day.

DISCIPLES

Believe in Jesus as LORD and live to please God

Exalt the Word of God above their opinions, feelings and thoughts

Treat their body like it belongs to God. (*Temple of the Holy Spirit*)

Treat money as 100% God's and they're simply a steward.

Think of church as a place they learn to DO what God's Word says

Get offended but strive for reconciliation with all

Love people of other cultures

Follow God regardless of the circumstances (*martyrs*)

Seek to know God through RELATIONSHIP. (*those who love God are known by God-1 Cor 8*)

Want everything God has for them today!

You could even say that a believer wants to go to Heaven ONE DAY... But a disciple wants to bring some of Heaven here TODAY.

I believe this is the defining statement for a disciple of Jesus. ***"I may not have it all together & I may not even know how to get it all, BUT I want ANYTHING & EVERYTHING God has for me! There is a YES in my heart towards the things of God. I may not fully understand it, but if God's in it then I want it. Whatever it is, if it's God, I want it. "***

Could you say that today? ***"I want more of the Jesus life!"***

So if I learn that God has called me & given me the power to lay hands on the sick and see them recover I'm going to do it!

If I learn that Jesus called me to preach the Gospel & make disciples, I'm going to do it!

If I learn that Jesus called me to love my neighbor as I love myself, I'm going to do it!

If I learn that Jesus told me to die to my own desires so I could actually live for something infinitely better, I'm going to do it!

If I learn that I can know God truly and receive His love deeply, I want it!

Do you want everything God has for you today!?!? If you want everything God has for you then you're in a good place today!

In this movement from a BELIEVER to a DISCIPLE, Biblically we see people go through what we would call **2 BAPTISMS** as a Disciple of Jesus.
**** Baptizo – to submerge, to immerse, to be overwhelmed by ****
And, if you're ever going to really enter this life of Discipleship, you're going to have to go through these 2 baptisms.

2 Baptisms a Disciple Goes Through

1) Baptism in Water

Q // If you knew that you were leaving your friends & family and they would never see you again, what would you SAY to them? Something IMP!

Matthew 28:18-20 NIV *(here's what Jesus said...)*

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, (and what's part of being a disciple?) baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I've commanded you."

And that's exactly what they did. We see story after story in the New Testament of the disciples water baptizing those who put their faith in Jesus.

Everywhere you look in the New Testament, water baptism is the next step after someone comes to faith in Jesus Christ.

Biblically speaking, there's no such thing as an unbaptized Christian.

Maybe you grew up in a church where they only baptized babies & you never saw any adults ever be baptized, so you didn't think it was for you. So maybe you're a Christian but you've never been baptized. Or you got baptized as a child but didn't know what you were doing. And maybe you're wondering, **"What's the big deal about water baptism?"**

What's the significance of baptism?

- It symbolizes a total surrender

There's a reason why God chose the word – BAPTIZE – to totally overwhelm, immerse, submerge...

All of those are good words to describe our life with God!

In a nutshell, ***God chose water baptism as our first step after salvation b/c It's a way of pledging my WHOLE life, surrendering ALL of me to ALL of God.***

God doesn't want HALF of you. He wants **ALL of you!**

I've seen BELIEVERS get baptized with their...

WALLET out of the water – won't give God control of their MONEY.

WATCH out of the water – TIME.

BOYFRIEND out of the water – RELATIONSHIPS.

STUFF out of the water – POSSESSIONS.

But a **DISCIPLE** wants a TOTAL surrender! Holding nothing back!

What's the significance of baptism?

- It symbolizes our identification with the death, burial & resurrection of Christ

A beautiful part of baptism is that **it SHOWS the Gospel**. We SAY the Gospel many ways, but we can SHOW the Gospel through baptism.

Romans 6:3-4 NIV

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Through baptism, I am associating myself OUTWARDLY & PUBLICLY with the death (**back**), burial (**under**), & resurrection (**up**) of Jesus Christ.

Are you still struggling with the same SINS as you were 5 years ago?

Maybe you never *died* to your old life!

Or maybe you're still dealing with GUILT you did over things in the past. You need to *bury* that stuff! You need to leave it in the tank!

So **when the old life tries to come back** & the old thoughts creep back in... you can say, "*I've DIED with Christ & I've been BURIED with Him, & now I'm walking in a NEW LIFE!*"

Something TANGIBLE to look back to... it's where I left my old life.

Water Baptism always signifies a movement from one season to another – from one land to a better land.

- Noah went through the water & the earth was purified... the past was gone.
- The Israelites crossed the Red Sea as they left slavery... the past was gone.
- Joshua the Jordan River to enter into the Promised Land... the past was gone.
- The prophet Elisha crossed through the water, double portion blessing.
- Gideon took his men to the water before their great victory.
- Jesus was baptized and then entered into ministry.
- The disciples baptized 3,000 the day the church was born.

Maybe today is your day!

If you haven't been baptized as a Christian YOU NEED TO GET WATER BAPTIZED! TODAY!!!!

Should you be baptized again?

We're not about getting baptized every time you sin... But in **Acts 19**, Paul finds 12 guys who had been baptized by John the Baptist, but they didn't know who Jesus was. Paul shares the Gospel with the guys, they receive Christ & are baptized AGAIN... *with a full understanding* this time.

2 Baptisms a Disciple Goes Through

2) Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Now, before you cover your children's ears & run towards the exit doors, give me a few minutes here to clear the air.

I was raised in the Presbyterian Church. Some of you were raised as a Baptist or Methodist... and you've probably heard a lot about God the **Father** & a lot about God the **Son**, but not a lot about God the **Spirit**.

So when you hear "*Baptism of the Holy Spirit*" you're waiting for us to bring the snakes out.

And there are RUMORS that if you get baptized in the Holy Spirit that you'll **run around the sanctuary uncontrollably** yelling out "Hakuna Matata"

Some of us have seen people who have done **WEIRD** things and they said, "*It's the Holy Spirit that made me do it!*"

The Holy Spirit didn't make you weird! *Some people are just weird!*

The model of someone who's filled with the Holy Spirit is JESUS!

How we often say this is that the **greatest news to the WORLD** is John 3:16, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will never perish but have everlasting life. Best news!

And the **greatest news to the CHURCH** is that God isn't just content to save us. He isn't content to just say, "*Okay, whew, you made it! That was a close one.*" The greatest news for the church is Acts 1:8.

Acts 1:8 NIV

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

In Greek, the original language of the New Testament, there are actually **5 words for POWER**.

The Greek word for POWER here in Acts 1:8 is DUNAMIS.

Dunamis // force, miraculous power

It's where we get **DYNAMITE** from. *It's the explosive power of God!*

Acts 1:8 is saying that when the Holy Spirit comes on the disciples, they'll receive miraculous power to do the work of the ministry!

When we pray for the sick, DUNAMIS is the type of power we need.

When people are seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I pray that God would fill them with DUNAMIS!... with the explosive, miracle working, POWER of God!

In Acts 1:8, [Jesus says that when the disciples receive DUNAMIS that they'll evangelize the world.](#) That's POWER, isn't it?

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is ALWAYS linked to boldness! How many of you could use a little more boldness for Jesus in your daily life!?!?

When I got baptized in the Holy Spirit I got BOLDNESS! I had been a Christian before... but now there was **passion** & there was **BOLDNESS!**

Not only was the Spirit of God IN ME, now it was ON ME!

I remember moments after I got baptized in the Holy Spirit that I [started to PRAY for a girl who had hearing problems.](#) It was like a light-switch flipped.

Now I stand here **PREACHING** to you today! (*impossible before!*)

But **I discovered that I needed a CONSTANT FILLING** of the Holy Spirit. **It wasn't just a "one time experience."** I found that my boldness would dwindle... as I poured out the Holy Spirit, I needed to be filled again.

1- So I keep coming back to Jesus, asking Him to fill me again.

2- I wake up in the morning & say, "*Good morning Holy Spirit. Fill me today so I can do the work of the ministry & glorify Jesus.*"

3- I would have leaders pray for me after services. I still do!

[My Story] last week of having Paul Goulet pray for me & Montell.

[Luke 11:11-13 NIV](#)

[Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!](#)

I need the Baptism of Water b/c I need to empty myself of me so I can be filled with the Holy Spirit!

And I need the Baptism of the Holy Spirit so I actually have something to do after I get water baptized! **If you are bored in your faith then it's because you're not FILLED with the Holy Spirit!** If you're filled with the Holy Spirit then you're ACHING to tell someone about Jesus...You're ACHING to pray for the sick...You're ACHING to operate in the DUNAMIS power of God!

The BOTTOM LINE of all this is that the Disciple of Jesus **NEVER STOPS.**

They never settle in and get comfortable! They keep pressing forward!

And I love this because some of you are about to be saved by faith in Jesus, water baptized, & filled with the Holy Spirit... all on one day!

EXPLAIN what's about to happen.

When the disciples baptized 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, I guarantee you that they didn't go home to get changed first!

Water Baptism – Holy Spirit – Sick – Salvation