

Sunday February 14, 2021 Message by Ryan Wilson



Pursuit – Questions for Further Reflection (on your own or in your community group)

What did you think about the teaching? Anything stand out in your mind? Anything you disagreed with?

Overview:

Pursuing Jesus can be complicated to understand, let alone live out. Here's a reminder of the framework that we went through.

- **Jesus is pursuing His creation.** (Romans 1:20) His invisible qualities, eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen. We don't seek out Jesus as if He was hidden or hiding. He is revealed to us and our pursuit of Him starts by responding to His calling out to us
- **Jesus makes a way for us to follow Him.** As we respond to His calling (by profession of faith) we become new creations in Christ. We are freed from the chains of sin, of our old ways and we are made into something new (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is how we begin to participate in the divine nature of God. He makes a way for us to even be able to pursue Him!
- **Following Jesus takes effort.** (2 Peter 3:5-11). Here we realize that being liberated by Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit we can therefore practice the ways of Jesus and over time become inwardly transformed more and more into His likeness. When we fail to put in the effort to follow Jesus this results in us becoming unproductive and ineffective.
- **Jesus is leading us somewhere.** Jesus preached the gospel of the Kingdom and the implications would be that the trajectory of our lives would be headed in that direction. We are moving towards Him as we wait for His return. We see every day as an opportunity to take ground in our homes, in our schools, in our workplaces, in our community. Ultimately Jesus is leading us to commune with Him forever in complete satisfaction and perfect relationship in His eternal Kingdom. (Revelation 21:1-5)

Discussion Questions:

Jesus Pursues Us First.

Read Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this; While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"

Q – What do we learn about Jesus that He would die for us while we were still sinners? (*That His love was not dependent on our ability to earn anything. That this was a sovereign choice made by Jesus to do this for us*)

Q – When we remember that our pursuit of Jesus is on the heels of Him pursuing us first, how does that help us understand our role of being given the ministry of reconciliation as referenced in 2 Corinthians 5:20-21? (*As Christ's ambassadors we represent Him by how we conduct ourselves. Since we know that Jesus pursued us first we see that our calling is to pursue the lost with the gospel message and not sit back waiting for them to come to us*)

Jesus Makes a way for us

2 Corinthians 5:17 talks about how in Christ we are a new creation.

Q – What is made new about us?

Q – What has been done away with?

Q – What part of your old self are you still holding onto?

Q – How does becoming a new creation in Christ allow us to live a new life pursuing Jesus? *(As new creations in Christ we essentially are given a new identity. When we fail to live up to the calling of Christ the world around us will want to accuse us that our failures are who we really are. But as new creations in Christ our identity is represented by Jesus. Therefore, as we fail and we grow into this new identity we become more Christ like. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ!)*

Following Jesus takes effort

We see in 2 Peter 1:5-8 that we're called to make every effort to add a number of qualities to our faith. These are goodness, knowledge, self control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection and love.

Q – As you survey your own life, which two qualities do you feel compelled to start making a more intentional effort to have increased in your faith?

Q – Discuss as a group what might be some practical ways that you could practice putting effort into each of these areas.

Q – What are some of the common distractions we face when it comes to putting in effort to pursue Jesus? *(phone, social media, email, news, work, etc)*. Discuss as a group what some strategies could be to help eliminate those distractions.

Q – What are some safeguards that we can explore to help prevent these new practices from becoming robotic or legalistic? *(ensuring that we aren't sacrificing communion with Jesus while we practice His ways)*

Jesus is leading us somewhere

Q – Why do you think it's important that we recognize that Jesus is taking us somewhere? What's at stake if we lose vision of this? *(we are prone to become distracted and jolted off course when we forget our destination)*

Q – In Revelation 21:4 it says Jesus will wipe away every tear and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore. What is the implication for our lives when we become convinced that we belong to the Eternal Kingdom of God? How might this inspire you and the ways that you pursue Jesus in your life today? *(When we realize how utterly secure we are in the eternal Kingdom of God, all of a sudden the world doesn't seem nearly as intimidating as it did before. I have a greater security knowing that I'm a citizen of heaven than I am a citizen of the world)*

Closing Benediction

May your entire being become increasingly aware that before the foundations of the earth were made, Jesus was already in love with you. He has pursued you from before time and He calls you at this very moment to pursue Him. As you are filled with His Spirit may you learn, practice and grow in His ways as He leads you towards His eternal Kingdom forever. Amen.