

## “What Would Jesus Do?”

DWJD - Week 1

Matthew

9/11/22

### Introduction + R&F Recap

**Tim. Pastor. Matthew 4.** Hopping all around the gospel of Matthew tonight but that's where we'll start in just a little bit. **PRAY.**

**WWJD Bracelets.** Let me start with the obvious point of where we got the inspiration for this series.

Did anyone rock one of these at some point in their childhood? Well if you didn't, congratulations - consider yourself lucky.

This is a WWJD bracelet. For those of you that were lucky enough to avoid them the acronym WWJD stands for “What Would Jesus Do?”

These bracelets were huge in Christian youth group subculture in the 1990s and early 2000s. I feel like at one point, at least in my really ridiculously lame Christian school, it was a badge of coolness to wear like 5 of them at one time. You were a big time Jesus fanatic if you did that.

But the whole point, and now as a parent I can see why Christian parents liked them so much, is that we were supposed to wear these bracelets as reminders when you came across a situation in your life, you'd know to *pause and ask* - “*What would Jesus do?*”

- You're on the playground, someone pushes you - “what would Jesus do?”
- You're struggling on your test, you're sitting next to the smart kid and tempted to cheat - “what would Jesus do?”

And growing up this was always kind of annoying to me, because I was like half Bible-nerd, half-rebellious, great combination.

So my mom would say - “Tim, clean your room.” And I'd whine and she'd say - “what would Jesus do if Mary asked him to clean His room?”

Well mom, in Luke 9 Jesus says “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but Jesus has nowhere to lay his head. Which means Jesus didn’t own a home, so He probably doesn’t have a room to be forced to clean so I don’t know what you want from me here.”

Yeah, I hate 9-year-old me too...that’s ok...

Good news for us - these are making a comeback. Lindsay was in Brakemans on Friday morning, and someone walked in wearing a shirt with big bold letters across the front - WWJD. So here we go - everything old is new again.

But here’s the deal - for as cheesy as these bracelets were - the idea sort of makes sense. It’s meant to make us pause and ask this legitimate question - if Jesus were in my shoes, what would he do?

But here’s the beauty of our Savior - we don’t really have to wonder. Because Jesus has been in our shoes.

2,000 years ago, the Son of God, fully God Himself, became fully man. He took on flesh and entered into humanity. And for 33 some odd years Jesus lives a perfect life, not only so that he could die as the perfect sacrifice, but also to show us the best way to live.

**And so the question we get to ask, as followers of Jesus, that we’ll be exploring over the next 10 weeks is not - What would Jesus do? - but rather - “What did Jesus do?”**

Because...and here’s what I want to lay before us tonight to set up this series - **As Christians, part of following Jesus means doing what Jesus did.**

Now because a lot of us are new and those who aren’t new, like me - may be prone to forget - this series is actually a part of a larger whole.

Back in the Fall of 2020, we started a three year journey as a church called “Rhythms and Formation” that we’ve been exploring each fall building out a framework for spiritual growth, maturity, formation centered around this question - **What does it mean to follow Jesus in the everyday stuff of life?**

What does it mean, here and now in the modern secular west to follow Jesus, or what some might call discipleship, or still others apprenticeship to Jesus.

That is the question on the forefront of our minds that we've been seeking to answer over the past 2 years and will continue this fall as we explore **"Doing what Jesus Did."**

**So tonight** → is just about recapping where we've been, resetting us around these central ideas as we sort of head into the next 9 weeks.

I think it'll make sense once we get into it.

**Pray. Let's get to work.**

### Walkthrough of Jesus Calling Disciples

#### **Matthew 4.**

##### Matthew 4:18-5:1

**18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, [Jesus] saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."**

Now up until this point in Matthew's gospel we've gotten:

- The birth account of Jesus - wise men, bethlehem, manger - all that fun stuff.
- Then in chapter 3 Jesus is baptized as a sign of the inauguration of his earthly ministry.
- He's immediately led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted for 40 days and 40 nights by the devil without food and water.

He comes out of that wilderness and begins his earthly ministry. And the very first thing Jesus does is invite some folks to **follow Him.**

And He does so with a rather peculiar phrase to us as modern readers. He says to Peter and Andrew - **follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

Now, being a fisher of men is not a really clever play on words from Jesus. Like "haha - you fish for fish, I'll teach you how to fish for people!" A "fisher of men" was actually an ancient Hebrew idiom for a great teacher - one who can lead and teach others.

**20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.**

So now Jesus has 2 more disciples - first Peter and Andrew (brothers) now two more brothers James and John - who also drop everything and **follow Him.**

**23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.**

So Jesus starts His ministry on earth calling disciples to follow Him, learn His ways of ministry, which then He starts living out.

And take note of the things Jesus is doing:

- Teaching
- Preaching (proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom)
- Healing sickness and disease
- Casting out demons

**5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.**

And then what follows in chapters 5-7 is what's commonly called the Sermon on the Mount. It's Jesus' longest and greatest recorded sermon where He teaches His disciples all about life in the kingdom of God - **how to live as His people.**

Incredible teachings on suffering, holiness, generosity, anger, fasting, prayer. This difficult yet beautiful flourishing way of life Jesus invites His followers into.

**Skip down to chapter 9. Jesus is going to invite another man to follow Him...**

**9:9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth,**

Now, if you're not familiar, tax collectors were the disdain of the Jewish people. They were Jews who profited by working for the Romans, the ones who occupied the Jewish land at that time. They would collect taxes on their own countrymen on behalf of the Romans, and then pocket some for themselves. So tax collectors were basically like benedict arnolds. Traitors who would sell out their own countrymen to protect and benefit themselves.

It takes a certain level of self-protection, pride, and lack of conscience in this society to be a tax collector. So clearly, something isn't right with Matthew. He's not a good guy.

But Jesus shows up at the tax booth...

**and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.**

Same invitation, same response. **Follow me**. And the person drops everything and goes and follows Jesus.

**Alright, before we keep going on our journey through Matthew, I want to make sure we understand the weight of what's happening in these stories. What Jesus is really inviting these guys into when He says "follow me". Or "Come and be my disciple."**

### **Be With + Become Like**

To understand Jesus' invitation, you have to understand what it means in first century Judaism to be a disciple.

The word for *disciple* in Hebrew is the word **Talmidim** - "disciple, student, follower, apprentice"

A modern day secular equivalent would be like a carpenter, or electrician, or a plumber. Someone who apprentices under someone else to learn and study and imitate. That was a talmidim - someone who apprenticed under a Rabbi - a Jewish teacher of the law.

Now, before you became a talmidim, you first went through 14-15 years of intense schooling, during which you would memorize most of the Old Testament as we have it today. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus - books that are tough for us to even read, they would memorize.

And after 15 years of intense schooling and training, if a Rabbi wanted you to be his disciple, you would sit down for a sort of theological interview, where he would ask you question after question about doctrine and interpretation and all of that. And if he deemed you worthy of being his disciple he would say something like, **“Come and follow me.”** or **“Come, and be my disciple.”**

### ***Sound familiar?***

Now if you were invited to be a **Talmidim**, or disciple, to a rabbi you had three goals:

- 1) **Be with your Rabbi.** You would spend 24/7 with them. Follow them around, eat with them, sleep by their side. There’s a well-known Hebrew blessing that folks would speak over disciples which said - “May you be covered in the dust of your Rabbi.” - Meaning, may you follow so closely that the dust he kicks up from the road gets onto you. Just a closeness.
- 2) **Become like your Rabbi.** As you spend all of this time with your rabbi, you learn to be their greatest imitator. Disciples would try as hard as they could to emulate everything. The things their rabbi said and the way he said them. The way he walked, and talked. The way he dressed. Everything. Your goal was to be a carbon copy.

### **This is what Jesus is inviting these folks into in the beginning of Matthew.**

Jesus comes as a Rabbi, not obviously He’s not just a Rabbi — the Messiah, the Son of God, Savior of the world come to usher in the kingdom of God. But like an ancient Rabbi, Jesus calls disciples.

Except He doesn’t just pick the religious and moral best of the best. Jesus goes after a whole motley crew of folks - outcast, rejects, rich, poor - fishermen and tax collectors.

### **And He calls these guys to (1) be with Him.**

That they would spend time following Him from town to town, sitting under his teaching like they do in Matt 5-7, watching him perform miracles, hearing him proclaim the kingdom,

watching his interactions with others - just learning to be with Him and in His presence - how does he live, how does he talk, how does he carry himself, what does he say.

**Then after being with Him, the goal is that they would (2) become like Him.**

- As they saw Jesus love, they would learn to love.
- As they saw Jesus be patient, they would learn to be patient.
- As they saw Jesus live with joy in good and bad circumstances, they would learn to live with joy in good and bad circumstances.

### Do What Jesus Did

**Be with Him. Become like Him.**

**But there's a third step in being a talmadim, and to see that, let's look a little further down in Matthew 9...**

**9:35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.**

This is a repetition of **Matthew 4:23** - Jesus shaping his ministry around the same things. First just in Galilee, now in the surrounding cities and villages - teaching, preaching, healing, spiritual warfare.

**36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."**

That word "send" can be traced to where we get our modern day terms like "mission" or "missionary". A missionary is one who is sent out by God to join Him in His Kingdom work. Jesus becomes embodied, He takes on flesh. Though He is fully God, He also becomes fully man.

Which means He can't be everywhere all at once, but there's so much kingdom work to be done.

So Jesus says - Pray for God to send laborers into the harvest - to send out kingdom workers to carry on this work into the world. Then look at what Jesus does in response to this desire...

**10:1 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. 2 The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.**

**5 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.**

**So notice:**

- What is Jesus doing at the ends of chapter 4 and chapter 9? Teaching, Proclaiming the Kingdom of God, healing the sick, casting out demons.
- What does Jesus send his first disciples out to do at the beginning of chapter 10? Teach, proclaim the Kingdom of God, heal the sick, cast out demons.

And then I love this last line...I've got it tattooed on my arm because I'm a cool pastor...

**You received without paying; give without pay.**

Or as it's more commonly translated and quoted - **“Freely you have received, freely give.”**

Freely you have received, Jesus says. You've been following me around now, for 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 2 years → experiencing the love of God, being with me, watching and learning to live how I live → now go and give freely.

**Summary → Main Point**

**The third goal of the talmidim - after being with their rabbi and becoming like their rabbi was...**



3) **Do what your Rabbi did.** The eventual goal is that you would be sent out from your rabbi to carry his teachings and his ways to others. You would carry on his work.

Like a good plumber, or a mechanic, or a medical resident today - eventually the goal is to do the actual work you've been learning and watching and studying. To move from apprentice to worker - to one who actually does the stuff you've watched be done.

Jesus comes as a Rabbi, the Messiah, the Son of God to usher in the kingdom of God. Calls disciples → come follow me. These disciples start to follow Jesus → be with Jesus. Start to imitate his ways - reading the Scriptures, prayer, sabbath, living in community, radical hospitality and generosity → adopt the life of Jesus.

Through that they are changed, start to reflect Him and be like Him.

**And then there comes this moment in Matthew 10 where Jesus is like → Ok. Guys I think you're ready, and he sends them out:**

- Ok Peter - see that demon possessed guy over there? All you.
- Matthew - see that sick person? You're up.
- Thomas - go up to Tyre and preach the kingdom.
- James - head over to Galilee and teach the way.
- We'll meet back here in a week, or 2, or 3 and debrief.

And they do - there's this great scene in Luke 10, we don't have time to read it - we'll get to it in a few weeks, where they come back and they talk about all the ministry they did and Jesus is like - that's awesome, don't rejoice in the ministry work you just did, rejoice that your names are written in heaven. What a great scene.

### **Go and Make Disciples**

But this charge to go do what Jesus did, is not simply a charge for those 12. As you track the trajectory of Jesus' life - from there through his death and resurrection, there comes this moment, where right before He ascends to the right hand of God He gathers together His disciples one last time and this is sort of his parting words to them...

#### **Matthew 28:18-20**

**18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”**

The very last words of Jesus to His followers is that living as disciples to Jesus would not stop with them. The very call and commission He places onto the first disciples is to go make more disciples.

Go lead some folks into the way of Jesus. Go teach others who will teach others who will teach others to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did.

**And they do.** The 11 take off and the gospel spreads like wildfire and people are brought into the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus. You can track all through the book of Acts but even past there through 2,000+ years of church history as people across a whole spectrum of time and place have been caught up by the grace of God into this very same invitation of Jesus → **Come follow me.**

**That was the invitation then, and that is the invitation now.**

The call to discipleship Jesus gave to Peter, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, and Matthew (good ole tax collector Matthew) is the very same call and invitation to all of us here and now - Charlotte, NC, September 11, 2022 →

**Jesus would say to us – Come follow me.**

Come and be my disciple.

- **Be with Jesus.**

Through these spiritual practices of abiding - Bible reading, prayer, sabbath, silence and solitude, fasting and feasting - all invitations to be with Jesus. To sit and be in His presence.

- **Become like Jesus.**

Embody the very characteristics and fruit of the Spirit as Jesus did - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Live a life that mirrors Jesus and his very character.

And we've talked about these things over the past 2 years - these invitations to be and become. But it doesn't stop there.

### What Did Jesus Do?

- **We then must learn to do what Jesus did.**

This is the 3rd invitation - that as we are with Jesus and shaped more and more to become like Jesus - that in the power of the Holy Spirit - which is given to all who believe in Christ - we would do what He did.

### **Which then leads to the question - what did Jesus do?**

That's what we'll be covering over the next 9 weeks. We certainly won't hit every single thing Jesus did or all the nuances of it, but we've tried our best to kind of categorize his practices based on what we see Him doing most often and what He explicitly tells us to be about as His followers.

#### **What Did Jesus Do:**

- Eating and drinking with those far from God.
- Preaching the gospel
- Teaching the way
- Healing the sick
- Simplicity and Generosity
- Intercessory Prayer
- Standing up against religious corruption.
- Serving + Sacrificing

That's the Jesus stuff. That's what we are invited into as His disciples.

### **This is an extremely simple and yet wondrously difficult idea that many in the western church so often miss - that following Jesus:**

- While it is certainly not less than faith and belief, it is much more than that.
- While it is certainly not less than doctrine and theology, it is much more than that.

**It is also about becoming a practitioner.** About learning to live out the ways of Jesus - modeling our lives after Him and what He did on earth and His Kingdom ways.

**But the call to follow Jesus is much easier said than done, is it not? This is abundantly difficult and abundantly costly.**

### **All of Life Submission**

And Jesus Himself knows this. How difficult and costly the invitation to follow Him truly is.

We see that put on display in Matthew as well. While some, like Peter, Andrew, James, and John immediately drop everything, eager to follow Christ, others find it much more difficult and challenging.

Look with me back at Matthew 8...

**8:18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." 21 Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22 And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."**

These are not half hearted excuses. Wanting a place to sleep at night is not a ridiculous ask. "Let me go bury my father" is not a casual request.

And yet within the heart posture of these two men - as weighty and as common sense as these things may seem, keep them back from following Christ.

**You see, the text seems to indicate in Jesus' responses that these folks want a sort of "add on" discipleship, rather than an all of life reorienting.**

- Jesus + the way my life currently is.
- Jesus + these other things that I want to take care of.
- Jesus + my preferred parenting method.
- Jesus + my own career ambitions.
- Jesus + this relationship I want.
- Jesus + fill in the blank.

Maybe, like us, their intentions to follow Jesus were good, but the cares and burdens of life were just too great or the pleasures and desires of life just too enticing.

Maybe, like us, they like the helpful parts of being a disciple - the peace Christ said He brings, the easy and light yoke of Jesus, the sabbath 24-hour day of rest - these parts sound wonderful (and they are!), but the “nowhere to lay his head” or “love your enemies” parts don’t sound so fun.

But Christ is clear - ***if we are to follow Him, we must drop everything.***

That’s why He says in ch. 16...

### **Matthew 16:24-25**

**24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”**

The call to discipleship is not simply a call to come and follow, it is also a call to come and **die**.

You see there was an understanding that when a Jewish Rabbi called you as a disciple that it was an invitation not only to be with him - an incredible privilege to learn, grow, to walk and live life with a great teacher - but it was also a call to submit your life to him and his teachings.

What he taught, you now believed.

What he said, you now followed.

Where he told you to go, you went.

What he told you to do, you did.

**You were giving him the authority in your life with glad and joyful submission.**

And Jesus, the true and greatest Rabbi - Messiah, Savior of the World, the Christ and King - **would ask no less**. Discipleship is a call to come and die.

If anyone would come after me, deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me. To follow Jesus means to give up your whole life - your wants, your desires, your preferences, your direction and submit it all at his feet to what He calls you and command you to do.

What He teaches, we believe.  
What He says, we follow.  
Where He tells us to go, we go.  
What He tells us to do, we do.

**He is the authority in our life who gets our glad and joyful submission.**

We reorient everything in our lives around Him.

### **Hardware vs. Software.**

I heard Dallas Willard speak on this on a video I watched a few months ago and I just can't get it out of my brain. He was talking about the difference between the hardware and software of our lives. You know those computer terms? Hardware is the physical components of a computer - hard drive, monitor, keyboard, mouse, etc. And the software is the programs you put on it, the apps you download - safari, excel, powerpoint - the data.

Willard uses this language to address that in his mind the problem with Christian discipleship is that we want to keep the hardware and change out the software. We want to change our beliefs, thoughts, emotions - but the daily routines and practices of our lives largely stay the same.

He argues that if you were to compare the daily routines of two people in the same stage of life - one is a church-going, Bible-believing, 28-year-old accountant living in the center of a city and the second is a staunch atheist, anti-Jesus, 28-year-old accountant living in the center of the city – **90% of their daily routines and practices and lives would look the same.** Maybe the one goes to church, attends a community group, but besides that - their daily routines and practices are the exact same.

The problem is that with discipleship, we want to change the software without changing any of the hardware. We read about Jesus, listen to sermons about Jesus, go to group and talk about Jesus, and yet the way we spend our time - our habits, routines, rhythms - the way we

budget our finances, the way we live in relationships and friendships, our hobbies, our weekends - it's no different than our neighbors who want nothing to do with Jesus.

And then we wonder why in 5 years we don't really look any more like Jesus than we do now...

Are we willing to change the hardware? Are we willing to change our practices? Are we willing to rearrange the totality of our lives to where everything is different because Jesus has called us to follow Him and so I live how He lived, I do what I saw Him doing, in such a countercultural way that it costs me something - because He's worth it.

Because that's the call of discipleship - being with Him, becoming like Him, doing what He did - with all of our lives in surrender to Him.

**Gospel** – Not to earn His love, not to earn his approval, not to earn right standing with God and eternity with Him. But because we who believe are dearly loved in Christ. Because we are chosen, because we are washed clean and made new and given the Holy Spirit. We sacrifice, because Christ first sacrificed for us.

That's who invites us to **follow Him**.

**We give up our lives for the one who gave up his life for us.**

**Jesus is better than just a rabbi who calls His disciples, He's a Savior who dies for His disciples.**

So Jesus says - you want to follow me? Are you willing to die like I did for you? That's what compels us into this life of whole-hearted discipleship. A life where everything is changed as we lay down our lives to follow Him.

**So let me invite you into the journey.**

Each week as we study these various practices and ways of Jesus - asking how we learn to do what He did - let me invite you to not just engage on a software level, but a hardware level.

## ***PRACTICE GUIDES***

***This week → Habit Audit.***

**Pray. Communion.**