

## **Sermon Guide: Rediscovering the Good News of Jesus: “Closing The Gap”**

**Samuel Voo | Feb. 11th, 2024**

In this sermon, Samuel Voo continues in the series on the good news of Jesus as king, focussing specifically today on the implications that this gospel message has for discipleship. Part of the challenge of our churches today is that there exists a gap between our “salvation” and our discipleship. A good and right understanding of the gospel closes that gap because it helps us realize that the focus of the message is on Jesus, who is at once both the one through whom we’re saved as well as the one who calls us to follow him.

It would have been easy for Jesus to come as a powerful, reigning king, exercising political power and military might. In fact, in many ways the Jewish nation of the first century was primed to receive such a messiah. Instead, when Jesus arrived on the scene, he did not look like a typical king, but more like a teacher and rabbi. Rather than amass an army, he called students to himself to teach them and show them a new way of life. He taught them, led them, guided them, healed them, lived with them, and loved them. Eventually, he gave his life for them, was raised from the dead for them, and then commanded them to do for each other and for the world what he showed them and taught them to do.

We are all looking for teachers, guides, and mentors in life. Sam shared some personal examples of his life when he was looking for such a role model. The wonderful thing about the Christian journey is that Jesus is constantly calling out to us to let him lead us. He wants to be our guide and mentor in life – our leader, the one whom we will follow and obey. This is not a passive existence but an active pursuit of aligning our lives with His teachings and example. Seeing our faith as such a journey, the Christian life never grows old or stale. It is a constant adventure full of discovery and excitement, for Jesus leads us forward one step at a time, whether that is to grow in Christlike character, or to learn to discern his voice, or to discover our vocation and mission in life.

Sam closes the message by suggesting three practical ways we can live out this discipleship. First, press in to discipleship, no matter what stage of life and faith you are in. Resolve to follow Jesus no matter how difficult the circumstances you face. Second, be completely honest with Jesus, and know that he can receive your questions, doubts, angers, and fears. Third, seek out community and relationship. Discipleship to Jesus usually happens through relationship and the church. Be proactive in our community and see where you can commit to finding deeper connection with others.

## Key Takeaways:

- Discipleship is an active, lifelong journey that requires us to press into our relationship with Jesus, regardless of our stage in the faith journey. It is about growth, excitement, and the adventure of becoming more like Christ in character and purpose. [28:35]
- Honesty with the Lord is essential in discipleship. We must be willing to bring our toughest questions and deepest emotions to Jesus, trusting in His compassion and patience to guide us through our struggles and doubts. [30:54]
- Community is crucial in the Christian life. We are not designed to follow Jesus in isolation. By pressing into relationships and committing to steady, meaningful community, we find support, accountability, and the means to grow in our walk with Christ. [33:27]
- Salvation and discipleship are inseparable. As we follow Jesus, we experience the fullness of salvation, not just as a future hope but as a present reality that shapes how we live, love, and serve in this world. [37:41]

## Scripture Reading:

1. Mark 3:13-19 (ESV)

2. John 6:68-69 (ESV)

"Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.'"

3. Matthew 4:19-22 (ESV)

"And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.'" 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.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Sam mentioned some examples of seeking mentors in his life. What are some other ways that you or people around you are looking for guidance and leadership?
2. The speaker mentions the gap between the subway and the platform as a dangerous space. How do you think a gap between our salvation and discipleship can be "dangerous"?
3. In Mark 3:13-19, who initiates the relationship of discipleship, and why might this be significant?

### **Going Deeper**

1. Reflect on a recent difficult situation. How can you apply Peter's resolve to follow Jesus as seen in John 6:68-69 to your own circumstances?
2. Reflect on an area of life that you find difficult to be completely honest with Jesus in your following of him. What steps can you take this week to bring light and truth to this area of your discipleship?
3. What is one specific distraction in your life preventing you from focusing on Jesus, and how can you minimize it this week?
4. Consider your current involvement at Granville. What is one way you can contribute to or be increasingly involved in community and relationship at Granville?