

True Disciple #16 – Be Bold

Welcome to True Disciple #16. This is Rod Nichols and I'm proud of you for continuing through these messages. True disciples are those who go beyond the typical church experience and truly follow Jesus. It's not easy, but it's worth it.

Today my topic is Be Bold. In a recent LifeWay Research project showed that 61% of those who attend church regularly had not talked with anyone about Jesus in the last 6 months. Based on my interactions with church goers, I would say that this number is inaccurately low. I think that many of 39% included inviting someone to church as telling someone about Jesus (witnessing). Ask yourself, if you have talked with anyone (other than another Christian) about Jesus in the last 6 months? With this group, the percentage is probably higher, because you are the true disciples.

Jesus only gave us two commissions:

1. Preach the gospel (Mark 16:15), *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*
2. Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20), *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Wow! Only two things to do and over 61% of Christians are not doing them. I must be a bit transparent and say that I've had times in my walk with Jesus where I rarely shared Him, so I can completely understand. There are times when we don't have many opportunities and that's why I highly recommend getting out from behind the church walls (where pretty much everyone is saved) and go to where the people are – soup kitchens, food and clothing banks, missions, etc. Then there are also those times when we have the opportunity, but allow fear to stop us.

I want to shift gears a moment and share a couple of Bible stories, which will help cement my final point in this message. The first is the story of the woman with the

issue of blood, which can be found in all three gospels (Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-34, and Luke 8:43-48).

I'm going to use the Matthew version (Matthew 9:20-22):

"Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²She said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.' ²²Jesus turned and saw her. 'Take heart, daughter,' he said, 'your faith has healed you.' And the woman was healed at that moment."

This was a very bold move from a very desperate person. First, if she was bleeding, she would have been considered unclean and should not have been near anyone. Second, she, as a woman and one who was bleeding, would not have touched a rabbi, even his clothing. She could have been stoned for that act. Instead, she received grace and healing. This is the boldness of a true disciple.

The second story I want us to look at is that of Blind Bartimaeus, which is found in Mark 10:46-52:

"Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means "son of Timaeus"), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁹Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." ⁵⁰Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

⁵¹"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

⁵²"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road."

Here we see some dynamics that all true disciples can relate to. It's likely that Bartimaeus had been sitting in the same spot begging for many years. He had

been given a beggar's cloak/coat, so that people could recognize that he was a legitimate beggar.

When he heard that Jesus was coming, Bartimaeus began shouting and was immediately rebuked by the people around him. When true disciples begin talking about Jesus, they often face rebuke from the spiritually blind around them. Like true disciples, Bartimaeus didn't let the rebuke stop his boldness, he started yelling louder and it attracted the attention of Jesus.

It's interesting that when Jesus called for him to come, Bartimaeus threw off his beggar's cloak. His faith told him he would never need it again. It was his boldness that attracted Jesus and his faith, which prompted the boldness that caused the healing.

Jesus is calling His true disciples to be bold. When you encounter someone who needs healing, boldly pray for their healing. If you see someone in need of food, clothing, or shelter, seek the Holy Spirit, and if prompted, either provide what they need or take them somewhere, so their needs can be met. Most importantly, be bold in sharing your salvation testimony and how Jesus has changed your life whenever possible.

Jesus is calling all the closet Christians to come out and become bold true disciples.

That's it for message #16. I hope that you will take this message to heart and use the woman with the issue of blood and blind Bartimaeus as inspiration to boldly go where most Christians will not go.

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Tune in next week for message #17. I will send out email notification when it's posted, so make sure you are on the email list. Thanks for listening this week Have a bold and blessed week!