

## True Disciple #19 Having an Eternal Focus

Welcome to True Disciple #19. This is Rod Nichols and I apologize for the delay in this message. There were two major factors. First, our water heater began leaking and flooded our garage and my office last Tuesday and that kept me from my computer. Second, I started a new job today and so my available time to create and record messages has drastically changed. That said, the messages may be a little more sporadic than before, which is even more reason to subscribe to our email list, so you know when these message and other content is posted on the True Disciple site.

Today I'm going to talk about having an eternal focus. I find that the great percentage of people who attend church are very self-focused. It's all about them and their needs. They don't want people to be too friendly, but friendly enough. The sanctuary can't be too full and someone better not sit in their favorite seat. The music can't be too loud or too soft. They don't want any of that modern music or those old songs. The preacher better be interesting, tell good jokes and stories, and preach the Word. They don't want the church to talk too much about money and they will give what they can. Don't push them to volunteer, they live busy lives. If they kids are playing sports or their favorite football team is on, they won't be at service. If anything goes wrong, they are off to the next place to find that perfect church. Are you getting the picture?

The reality is that we all fall into this, it's all about me, trap at times. I've even left churches for some of those reasons. The good news is that, as in every part of our life, God gives us grace to make mistakes and He's hoping that through our study of His Word and through experiences, we will begin to realize that it's not at all about us and it is all about Him and eternity.

In Hebrews 10:25, the author tells believers that they are not to give up meeting together, as some have done and that we are to encourage one another, as the Day is approaching. The Day would be when Jesus returns. So often we hear preachers use this to encourage church attendance, but the author of Hebrews meant that in a much deeper meaning. It wasn't just to be there at the service, it was go looking for someone else to encourage.

Imagine, if we, instead of going to service each week thinking about our own needs, we went with the sole purpose of blessing God through our worship and finding the people He wants us to encourage? WOW! That would completely change our services. Well, that's what He expects from His true disciples.

Throughout the week, you should be investing time with God in His Word and in prayer, so that when you go to a weekly service or services, you are filled to overflow and can bless others. God didn't intend services to be like a filling station, where you are just about out of gas, running on fumes and then get your weekly filling. Rather, it should be like a hospital and you are a doctor or nurse. You're there to help those who are sick and struggling. If you are one of those who is struggling, then you find someone worse off and bless them and God will call others to encourage you.

This approach is having an eternal focus. Colossians 3:2 says, "Set your minds on things about, not on earthly things." Instead of focusing on our needs and wants, we are to focus on God's needs and wants. He wants all His children to be saved and in relationship with Him. He also wants His children to walk in peace and joy and love, even in the middle of trials and that's where we can all work together to help each other.

There are 59 one another Bible verses. If you do a Google search for Bible one another's you will find lists of them. Here are just a few:

John 13: 34, "...love one another..."

Romans 12:10, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love..." and "Honor one another above yourselves."

Romans 12:16, "Live in harmony with one another."

Galatians 5:13, "Serve one another in love."

Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind and compassionate to one another."

Ephesians 5:21, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

1 Thessalonians 4:18, "encourage one another"

1 Thessalonians 5:11, "encourage one another and build each other up"

With this many one another's in the Bible, it's clear that God wants us focused Him and other people, rather than ourselves. In fact, when Jesus was questioned by the Jewish leaders about which was the greatest of the commandments, He

gave them two that encapsulated the ten commandments. We find this in Mark 12:30-31:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

As a true disciple, God is calling you to be eternally focused. To love God and love people through your daily actions.

That’s it for message #19. As always, I hope you won’t just listen to this and say oh that’s nice. Rather, I hope you will change your focus from you to God and other people. When you go to your weekly church service(s), seek to truly worship God with all you have (a great way to show your love) and actually talk with people about their lives to see who you can encourage.

Thanks for continuing on your journey to become a true disciple. It’s a lifelong process. Watch your email for the posting of message #20. Have a blessed week!