

Week One: Introduction

Scripture references:

Matthew 13:1-9
Matthew 28:16-20
Luke 10:27
James 2:17



Points to take away:

1. We are called and commanded to be like Jesus: to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.
2. We are given the authority and the command make disciples, baptize them, and bring them fully into the family of faith and God's kingdom.
3. We cannot follow Jesus, and live out his command, simply by listening to him. Listening to Jesus, without absorbing and nurturing his teachings, is like casting seeds on rocky or barren soil: we will not bear fruit.
4. To be like Jesus, we have to live like Jesus: practicing the six marks of discipleship (prayer, worship, reading Scripture, serving, giving, and relating), and strengthening our core understanding of God and our shared history.
5. Everyone has a theology that shapes them; we need to understand and consciously shape ours if we are to have strong cores that support our discipleship.

Something to think about: The Nicene Creed, finalized in 381 C.E.

The following is a literal translation of the Greek. It varies very slightly from the Latin version in Mozart's Credo (from his Missa Solemnis in C Major, sung today by our choir), and from the contemporary version in the Book of Common Prayer, for example.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary and was made man; was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried; and the third day rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven.

Sits at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.

Of whose Kingdom there shall be no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who together with the Father and the Son is to be adored and glorified, who spoke by the Prophets.

And one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

We confess one baptism for the remission of sins, and look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

