



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

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Introduction

We have an epidemic of unhappiness in America today. We are a chronically unhappy culture.

Mother Teresa, in speaking to a joint session of congress said, “The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair and hopelessness is love. There are many in the world who are dying for a piece of bread, but there are many more dying for a little love.”

- A Conference Board survey released in 2010 found that only 45% of workers surveyed were happy with their jobs. This is the lowest in 22 years of polling.
- Depression rates today 10 times higher than in 1960.
- Every year, the age threshold of happiness sinks lower. 50 years ago, the onset of depression was 29.5 years old. Today it is almost half that at 14.5 years old.

PowerPoint of Graph

- This is a scatter-plot diagram. Each dot represent an individual, and each axis represents some variable. This diagram could represent anything—weight in relation to height; sleep in relation to energy; happiness in relation to success.
- For the researcher, this diagram would be thrilling because we can clearly see a trend happening.
- The fact that there is this one lone weird dot is not problem because, in our research we learn to just eliminate it because it is an outlier.
- It is clearly a measurement error. We know it is an error because it is confusing up our data.
- Conventional thinking ignores outliers because they do not fit the pattern.

- Conventional education, conventional psychology and even conventional religion has always looked to the average behavior and the average outcome.
- I believe this is misguided because it creates a “cult of the average” that doesn’t change anything, but rather, encourages much of the same.

Outlier-a person or thing situated away or detached from the main body or system. A person or thing differing from all other members of a particular group or set. Something that lies outside the main body or group that it is a part of, different from the herd.

Jesus Outlier

- No other person in world history has stood out, detached from the herd, held differing beliefs than the main body, than Jesus Christ.
- Jesus came to introduce and challenge us to a new way of life: a life of abundance and joy.

Luke 4:18-19 His mission

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to recover of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

- Particularly impressive to readers of Jesus throughout history has been, as one writer commented, “an admirable conjunction of diverse excellencies in Jesus Christ.”
- In other words, we see qualities and virtues we would normally consider incompatible in one person.
- We could never consider them combined in one person because, in some cases, they seem to be strikingly incompatible. Yet, in Jesus, they are beautiful.

- Jesus exhibited tenderness, yet he was masculine and strong; humility but a towering confidence; boldness without weakness; and a commitment to grace without compromising truth!

John 1:10-14

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

- Read Timothy Keller in *Making Sense of God* (p. 233)

Jesus astounded the Religious Community, confused the Political, and refused to fit into Conventional Wisdom.

Mark 12

- In **verses 13-17** The political and religious right want to know what Jesus thinks about taxes.

¹³Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words. ¹⁴When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? ¹⁵Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.” ¹⁶So they brought it. And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” ¹⁷And Jesus answered and said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
And they marveled at Him.

- In **verses 18-27** the political and religious left want to know what Jesus thinks about the resurrection.

18 Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: 19“Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man’s brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 20Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. 21And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. 22So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. 23Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.”

24Jesus answered and said to them, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 26But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? 27He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken.”

- Jesus cut through the herd mentality and becomes the ultimate outlier with one of, if not the most profound statements ever made.

Mark 12:28-31

28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?” 29Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. 31And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

I believe The Road @ Chapel Hills is called to approach our culture in a different way.

- Our vision: “Building wholehearted disciples of Jesus.”
- Building Outlier Christians—men and women who are able to engage the culture with our heart, soul, mind, strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

PowerPoint of circles

The Church is God’s main means for Changing the World

- We are the outlier family that does not quite fit in culturally, socially, religiously or educationally.
- We have 4 options as outliers: (see choco book)
 - **Accommodate the culture**—I don’t want to judge them, they can do what they want.
 - **Oppose the culture**—terrified and bold against what the culture is doing.
 - **Withdraw from the culture**—my voice means nothing. It is all too complicated.
 - ♣ In the first we lose truth.
 - ♣ In the second, lose grace and love.
 - ♣ In the third, we lose our God-given responsibility.
 - ♣ But there is a 4th way.
 - **Engage the culture**

Ephesians 2:20-22

²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Luke 4:18-19

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed;¹⁹to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

- **Engage the Culture!** We interact with truth and grace. We engage the culture with Jesus. We reach out with love to the poor, the hurting, and stand up against all forms of injustice, no matter where that falls on the political spectrum. We engage the culture.

Ephesians 3:8-10

⁸To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

- We are called to engage the 7 mountains of influence in the marketplace: education, business, politics, religion, media...
- The purpose of the Church is to build up the faith, the lives, the value of each member; to equip each member to be a witness of the kingdom of God in their particular sphere of influence.
- We change the world through changing our own lives first. It all starts in our marriages, in our families, in leisure, at work!
 - In how we handle conflict.
 - In how we handle money.
 - In how we treat people.
 - In what and who we worship.

- This all flows from the heart—how we think, how we love, how handle shame and failure.
- At The Road our vision is “**Building all in, wholehearted disciples of Jesus.**”

Ephesians 4:11-16 gives us the best description in all of the Bible as what we are doing in building disciples through the local church. Paul is explaining the purpose of the Ephesian church.

The purpose of the leadership in a local church is to equip the saints, to build up.

Ephesians 4:11

¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

- These are the main ministry leadership roles that guide a church. I have never believed that this was exhaustive. Administrators, children’s ministry directors and CPA’s are important too. But these are key in understanding the forward direction of an outlier body of believers.
 - Apostles
 - Prophets
 - Evangelists
 - Pastors
 - Teachers, some have interpreted this also as “pastor teachers”

Ephesians 4:12

¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

- Each role and responsibility has a job description: leading with “for” giving us the clear purpose of the local church.
1. “**for the equipping of the saints**” which, in Greek, equipping means “recovered wholeness” as when a broken limb is set and mends.

2. **“for the work of ministry”** means cultivating ministry within the individual and corporate body of Christ that changes the world.
3. **“for the edifying of the body of Christ”** means “building up”. We are building all in, wholehearted disciples—the reason for Outlier University.

Goals of equipping the body of Christ, goals of Outlier University:

Ephesians 4:13-16

¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

1. **Unity of the faith.**
2. **Knowledge of the Son of God**
3. **Building perfect men**—built into the stature of fullness of Christ.
 - a. No longer children tossed around with every new doctrine, trickery of men, craftiness and deceitfulness.
 - b. Learning to speak the truth in love to each other, this is how we really grow up!
 - c. Covenant of Harmony.