

Kingdom, Discipleship, and Generosity

Opening

- “Lord, take my lips and speak through them, take our minds and think through them, take our hearts and set them on fire with love for yourself. Lord Jesus, Amen.”
- Welcome everyone

Identity: Who We Are

- “Let me remind us who we are at St Mark’s”
- Strapline:
 - Knowing and following Jesus
 - Loving one another
 - Serving our community
- “That’s our direction, upward, inward, outward”

Values: How We Live It Out

- “And this is how we live that out”
 - All involved, everyone gets to play
 - Becoming disciples, growing to be more like Jesus
 - Creating community, deep and authentic relationships
 - Doing evangelism, intentionally sharing Jesus
 - Encountering God, expecting to meet with Him

Disciple-Making Pathway

- “So how are we becoming disciples?”
- We create spaces to:
 - Discover
 - Deliver
 - Devoted
 - Develop
 - Deploy
- “We’re not just gathering people, we’re forming disciples”

Rule of Life (Devoted Disciples)

- “How do we become devoted disciples?”
- Called to:
 - Pray
 - Read
 - Learn
- Sent to:
 - Tell
 - Serve
 - Give
- “These are the daily rhythms that shape our lives”

Bible Reading: [Matthew 13](#)

- “Let’s open our Bibles, page 980, [Matthew 13](#), verses 44 to 47”
- Read:
 - Treasure in the field
 - Pearl of great value

The Treasure

- “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field”
- If you came to faith later in life:
 - You saw something beautiful
 - Something you didn’t have before
 - And that’s why you’re here
- Key insight:
 - The man does not just take the treasure
 - He sells everything to buy the field
 - He wants it to belong to him
- “He wants the kingdom, not just a moment of it”

The Cost and the Gift

- “This free gift of Jesus Christ...”
 - Jesus died to remove the barrier of sin
 - It is freely given

- But:
 - Discipleship costs everything
- “We freely give our lives to Him because He gave His life for us”

Personal Reflection

- “When I’m in charge of my life, it doesn’t go well”
- Honest reality:
 - I’m selfish
 - I want my own way
- But:
 - When Jesus is first:
 - Decisions change
 - Relationships change
 - My heart changes
- Examples:
 - “Jesus, what do you want me to do?”
 - “How should I love this person?”
- “When Jesus is on the throne, everything changes”

The Pearl

- “The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls”
- He knows what he’s looking for
- He recognises its value immediately
- He sells everything
- “But different to the parable of the man buying the field, in this case the merchant is Jesus. And the value He sees is in us, the Church. He gives up everything for you and me. Jesus is the merchant, and the Church is the pearl, and He purchased us with His own blood.”

The Kingdom of God

- “What is the kingdom of God?”
- The kingdom of God is wherever Jesus is king
- Key truths:
 - Every ‘yes’ to Jesus grows the kingdom
 - It grows within us
 - It transforms us

- Like yeast:
 - It changes everything
- But:
 - God does not force us
 - He invites us
- “The kingdom grows where we keep saying yes”

Challenge: What Do You Value?

- “What value do you place on the kingdom of God?”
- Jesus speaks about sin because it pulls us away
- He speaks a lot about money:
 - Because it grips the heart
 - “You cannot serve both God and money” [Matt 6:24](#)
 - “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” [Matt 6:21](#)

Giving: Personal Story

- “I was taught to give ten percent from childhood”
- That continued:
 - Through student life
 - Through giving to Compassion
- “People thought it was strange, but I believed in generosity”
- A few years ago:
 - Claire and I felt called to give a full tithe to St Mark’s
- “I share this because I want you to know I am fully invested”
- Honest moment:
 - Sometimes giving feels costly
 - Even reckless
- But:
 - “When I give, I experience freedom”
 - “I place everything before God”

Invitation to Give

- “There are many good places to give”

- But:
 - “If this is your church family, I would love you to give here”
- *Be clear:*
 - No pressure
 - Take time
 - Pray about it
- *Encourage:*
 - Regular giving
 - Parish Giving Scheme for consistency
- “It helps us plan and steward well”

Legacy Giving

- “Another way to give is through legacy”
- Briefly:
 - You have rewritten your will
 - You want to leave something to St Mark’s

Vision for the Future

- “Let me tell you where we believe God is taking us”
- By 2030:
 - A church of disciples who make disciples
 - Every member discipling someone
 - A strong culture of welcome
 - Thirty young people weekly
 - Two hundred people worshipping on Sundays
- Simple challenge:
 - “If each of us invited ten people, and one stayed...”

Evidence: What God Is Already Doing

- “We are already seeing this happen”
 - Bible Course
 - TANGO
 - Food pantry
 - Youth ministry

- Families coming to faith
- “People are finding welcome, love, and purpose in Jesus”

Specific Ask: Children’s Pastor

- “We now need a children’s pastor”
- Current position:
 - £7,000 pledged
- Clear ask:
 - “I would love us to match that”
- “Imagine what God could do through that investment”

Thank You

- “Let me thank those who serve so faithfully”
 - Verna J - Treasurer
 - Simon C - Deputy treasurer
 - Carole G - Gift Aid
 - Alan B - cash
 - Richard H & wider Finance team
- “This only works because of their faithfulness”

Final Call

- “This is a church that loves the community”
- “This is a church that is growing”
- “This is a church that declares that Jesus Christ is Lord”
- “If you are with us, I invite you to give”
 - Pray
 - Respond
 - Take a step

Closing

- “We have found the treasure”
- “We have found the pearl of great value”
- “And we are ready to give everything to follow Him”