

HERO-MAKER WEEK 4: BLESSING LIKE A HERO-MAKER

(Preacher – Ian Simkins, Community Christian Church, Chicago – 8th March 2020)

Introduction

Community Christian Church in Chicago have produced an excellent preaching resource called 'Hero-Maker'. They have kindly allowed us to make audio copies of the sermons, so please get in contact with us at Transform Widnes if you would like a copy. There is also book 'Hero-Maker' that accompanies the series and goes into greater depth with the themes. This can be purchased at https://www.amazon.co.uk/Hero-Maker-ITPE-ExponentialFerguson/dp/0310588936/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=hero-maker&qid=1595422883&sr=8-1 if you or someone on your behalf would like to buy this.

Summary of Teaching Video – Week 4

In facing a problem or a challenge, have you ever regretted the question 'How difficult could it be?' There are some things that are better handled by 'experts' (Ikea products included!) but making apprentices of Jesus is not something we have to leave to professional people like priests, paid staff etc. Everyone of us can and is invited to do this! The passage that we've looked at quite a bit over this series is Matthew 28:

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' (*Matthew 28:16-20, N.I.V*)

This is what many have called the 'Great Commission' - Jesus' assignment to all of us who want to follow him. It's because the first followers of Jesus took this commission seriously that you are here right now reading this!

Jesus – Hero-Making through Blessing

Not only did Jesus think, see and live like a hero-maker to his apprentices, he also 'blessed' them (the words 'to bless' in the Bible mean to declare God's favour on a person and to declare a kind of 'power' for a fulfilled and fruitful life). Luke 24:50-51 is a great example of this:

'When [Jesus] had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and **blessed** them. While he was **blessing** them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.'

Another word that is related to this throughout the Bible and is implied in both Matthew 28 and Luke 24 is called '**Commission.**'

Commissioning

One of the regular practices within the Bible was to commission others for God's service, to send them out to the world with a 'blessing' to take up their part in God's assignment to the world. This happens both from God and from people on God's behalf:

Genesis 5:2 – 'He created them male and female and blessed them.'

1 Timothy 4:14 – 'Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders **laid their hands on you** (to bless).

Commissioning is a form of blessing by the 'transferring of power' by one to another so that the person being commissioned receives authority, power and confidence to do what Jesus has called them to do. What are we being called to do?

Sitting on the Side-lines?

What does that mean for us? It is easy to think that only 'professional' Christians are the ones called to do things for God, but if you are a follower of Jesus then YOU are a 'professional!' Yours is a life that Jesus wants to use to speak life over, encouragement into, healing and transformation for other people. You don't have to sit on the side-lines watching the 'experts' do ministry – you are called to ministry wherever you are; however old you are, whatever you do day-to-day. YOU are called to make apprentices to Jesus by doing life with people and letting the life of Jesus 'rub-off' on them through your life. Every conversation, action, thought we share can be used by Jesus.

Blessing Others

All of us have an opportunity to bless others! If you are a parent you can be intentional in blessing your children; if you are a manager, you can pour into and bless those who work for you. Maybe it's a friend, a colleague, a niece, a cousin, a neighbour. All of life is our mission and there are so many opportunities to bless, to speak life into and commission others.

Weekly Practice Number 4–

- It's time to Bless like a hero-maker.
- Who is God calling you to bless, to affirm, to commission for service?
- How could you make a first step to be one who brings life to others this week?