

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
 Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
 Guard the sharing

Male Call

January 8, 2010—Disciples & Laborers—The Jesus Way

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts—Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” —Jesus (John 14:6)</p> <p><u>Review from December</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Two Ways¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Deuteronomy 30:15-16 There are two ways: one of life and one of death! And there is a great difference between the two ways.² 2) One Way: The Jesus Way—Leads To Life Abundantly <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) John 10:10 The disciples called their new movement “The Way,” emphasizing their belief that Jesus would lead his followers to the kingdom of God [e.g., Acts 9:2].³ 3) Other Way: The World’s Way—At Best Leads Us To Stunted Growth <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1Corinthians 3:1 4) The Challenge For Us As Christian Men—Following Jesus The Jesus way wedded to the Jesus truth brings about the Jesus life. But Jesus as truth gets far more attention than Jesus as the way. Jesus as the way is the most frequently evaded metaphor among the Christians with whom I have worked for fifty years as a North American pastor. In the text that Jesus sets before us so clearly and definitively, way comes first [John 14:6]. The way of Jesus is the way that we practice and come to understand the truth of Jesus, living Jesus in our homes and workplaces, with our friends and family. (4) <p><u>Myth Busting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Laity Myth I have spent much of my life attempting to expose that ‘laity myth’ for the lie that it is...Within the Christian community there are few words that are more disabling than “layperson” and

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the following material is from *The Jesus Way*, Introduction.

² *The Didache*. 1:1.

³ *Church History in Plain Language*. 16.

“laity.” The words convey the impression—an impression that quickly solidifies into a lie—that there is a two-level hierarchy among men and women who follow Jesus. There are those who are trained, sometimes referred to as “the called,” the professionals who are paid to preach, teach, and provide guidance, occupying the “upper level.” The lower level is made up of everyone else, those whom God assigned jobs as storekeepers, lawyers, journalists, parents, and computer programmers. (10-11)

a) Priesthood of all believers

i) Exodus 19:5-21

ii) 1Peter 2:4-10

The Reformation principle that declares that the privilege and freedom of all believing Christians is to stand before God in personal communion through Christ, directly receiving forgiveness without the necessary recourse to human intermediaries. As priests, believers directly offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God and minister to the needs of others. Ordained pastors, in turn, are not different from other believers in spiritual status but only in function and appointment.⁴

iii) Ephesians 4:11-14

iv) Example: Which hat?

(1) Preaching vs. Hospital visit

b) Cultural influence

i) We carry the “trained expert” imagery into our churches; we expect that to be effective for God we must have special training.

We are now at a great distance—not only in practice but even in theory—from the fellowship of universal witness. Millions are merely back-seat Christians, willing to be observers of a performance which the professionals put on, ready to criticize or applaud, but not willing to even consider the reality of real participation.⁵

(1) The story of a has-been:

(a) Exodus 3:1-4-17

(2) The story of a youngster:

(a) Jeremiah 1:4-7

(3) The story of a brand new believer:

(a) John 9:1-34

2) The Jesus Way

As Christianity spread [in the mid-300s as Christianity became the “state” religion], and the church became more secularized, this realization of the costliness of grace faded ...The world was Christianized, and grace became its common property...On the outer fringe of the church was a place where the older vision was kept alive. Here men still remembered that grace costs, and that grace meant following Christ...Monastic life thus became a living

⁴ Grenz, S., Guretzki, D., & Nordling, C. F. (1999). *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (95). Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press.

⁵ Elton Trueblood. Quoted in *A Table of Inwardness*. 78.

⁶ *The Cost of Discipleship*. 46-47.

	<p>protest against the secularization of Christianity, against the cheapening of grace...But the church was wise enough to tolerate this protest, to prevent it from developing to its logical conclusion. It this succeeded in relativizing it, even using it to justify the secularization of its own life. Monasticism was represented as an individual achievement which the mass of laity could not be expected to emulate...the church evolved the fatal conception of the double standard—a maximum and a minimum standard of Christian obedience.⁶</p> <p>3) Where to Begin the Jesus Way?—With Jesus Questions</p> <p>a) Matthew 16:15</p> <p> i) Who is Jesus to you?</p> <p> ii) Shift in thinking</p> <p> (1) Christ in my life, <i>or</i></p> <p> (2) My life in Christ</p> <p>b) Matthew 20:32</p>
	Closing Prayer
7:00 – ??	If you would like prayer, please come up front and one or more of us will remain to pray with you.

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. Simon & Schuster. 1995.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways that Jesus is the Way*. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 2007.
- Nouwen, Henri. *The Way of the Heart: Connecting with God Through Prayer, Wisdom, and Silence*. Ballantine Books. 1981.
- Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*. Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1995.