



## Introduction

Our series *Big Story* finishes this week with the message "Released" taken from 2 Timothy 1. We are living in the last chapter of God's big story. Everything in the Old Testament pointed to Jesus, and everything after the Resurrection is the picture of God releasing His people to be His disciples on Earth. We are released from sin and death to make disciples for His fame in our Little Iowa.

## Discussion

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.** Paul exhorts his followers to be ambassadors for Christ "as though God was making His appeal through us." Put this in your own words. What is Paul asking us to do? How can we use the three practices of a disciple - learn, include, bless - to help people in our circles reconcile with God?
2. **Read 2 Timothy 1:6,** and circle up your group. Starting with your leader, have each member share what they see as the gifts/talents the other members use to reach people for His Kingdom.
3. Which of the three practices of a disciple [learn, include, bless] is the hardest for you? Why? Have the group share ideas of how you can overcome this obstacle to become a more effective disciple.

## Think About It

"Following Jesus Christ is far more than believing. It encompasses the transforming work of God in your life and for the sake of others. It is about living attentively and responsively to God's voice, his activity, and his mission in the world. It's not enough to be a hearer. We must be doers as well." (*Protégé* by Steve Saccone) If you have not yet read this book, now is the time. It is a thought-provoking guidebook into what it looks like to be both a mentor and mentee, one who disciples others and in turn is being disciplined.

## Do Something

1. Journal about your experience with Discussion question #2. If you do not participate in a small group, ask a trusted friend or family member to go through this activity with you. What surprised you about what the other person said? Have you used your gifts to reach people for God's Kingdom?
2. Be invitational! Plan an event before the holidays to invite people from your community into your small group for some fall activity [tailgate, hike, bonfire, etc.]
3. Make plans in your family and small group to bless a family or organization over the holidays by using your gifts instead of just donating money. Be creative! Sing Christmas carols a nursing home, make and serve a meal, read to the elderly or preschoolers, etc.