

Signorelli, Luca, 1441?-1523, *Anointing the Feet of Jesus in the House of Simon, the Pharisee*. Originally part of an altarpiece from the Bichi Chapel in Sant'Agostino, Siena. The depiction is a conflation of the Matthew, Mark, Luke and John passages, but most closely associated with the Matthew passage because of the head anointing.

Greetings!

Please read [John 12:1-8](#)

The great business strategist Simon Sinek suggests that organizations that flourish in creativity, missional loyalty, and success do so when they start with the question “Why?” [Sinek says in his TED Talk](#) we do this to embrace and experience –

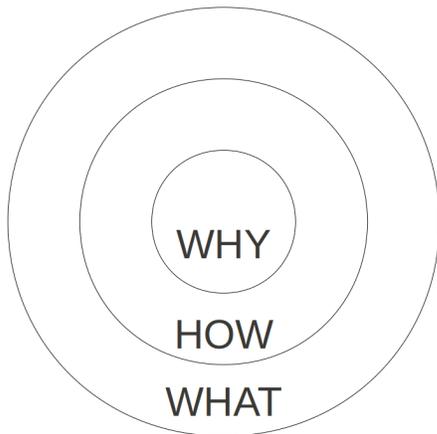
“The compelling higher purpose that inspires us and acts as the source of all we do.”

Jesus is running an organization, for fun let's call it The Kingdom of God, Inc. In this organization Jesus is casting vision and answering humanities “Why?” as it relates to a God of creation, justice, power, relationship, obedience, generosity, joy and thanksgiving. As leader of the organization, Jesus has an interesting position. Not only is he casting “Why God?,” but fulfilling with his life and ministry, “the higher purpose that inspires us and acts as the source of all we do.” Writers of the [Inclusive Bible](#) translation put it this way:

- *“I will lift my eyes up to the mountains – from where will my help come? My help comes from YHWH, who made heaven and earth.”* (Psalm 12:1-2)
- *“...for us there is only One God, Abba God from who all things come, and for whom we live; there is one Sovereign, Jesus Christ, through whom everything was made and through whom we live.”* (1 Corinthians 8: 6)
- *“In return, our God will fulfill all your needs in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only*

God can.” (Philippians 4: 19)

- “...every worthwhile gift, every generous benefit comes from above, descending from the Creator of the heavenly luminaries, who cannot change and is never in shadow. God willingly gave birth to us with a word spoken in truth, so that we may be, as it were, the first fruits of God’s creatures. (James 1:17-18)



The 'golden circle' from Simon Sinek

Why?

In this 5th week of Lent I have been thinking how Sinek’s teaching is really a form of disciple making. Consider this diagram that he uses in his book. It is called the *Golden Circle* and it is a plan for answering the “Why?” To me I see the teaching style of Jesus. Peter, James and John are in the inner circle. Remember how Jesus teaches them first (first recruited) and how in Luke 9:15 they experienced the Transfiguration before Jesus with his face set towards Jerusalem?

How?

Then the other disciples are instructed, led by experiences. Experiences are the “How” of disciple making. The ultimate experience becomes the journey from Galilee towards Jerusalem. Along the way they learn how to follow Jesus as he keeps pouring “Why” into them with the words that lead to life. Those who journey along the way, both the Disciples and others who joined them for short or long stints, became our spiritual heirs to the story. After the Resurrection, Jesus created the “What” that he began in the [*Farewell Discourse*](#) in the Gospel of John.

What?

In the coming weeks we will learn of the Holy Spirit falling upon the disciples gathered in the Upper Room on Pentecost to give birth to the Church. For over twenty centuries we have been trying to live in to our “what-ness” as disciples of Jesus. The Church is the “What”, the vehicle for spreading Jesus’ “Why” and using “How” to spread the Gospel. If you and your church are looking for a Disciple Making template, I offer this three-pronged approach. As a person in leadership, you must start with “Why” and lead from that place of integrity. If you don’t know “Why” no one else will either.

Jesus led with “Why” in his training of Peter, James and John, and with them demonstrated the “How” of disciple making (think sending out the 70 and similar stories), culminating in the “What” – which is community - the Church - so we don’t have to be alone in our belief or practice of Discipleship.

In the John passage for this Sunday we have a classic misunderstanding. Judas thinks that the “Why” is money but covers himself by using the poor for his deflection. He is uncomfortable with the beautiful and intimate gift that Mary offers; a gift of care and devotion offered to Jesus. In an upcoming vignette Judas will betray Jesus for what – wait



JESUS MAFA, 1973, *Jesus speaks about forgiveness*, Cameroon, Africa

for it – **money!** Often people do not talk about what they need to talk about. Have you noticed that in your relationships with others? This is surely happening with Judas. I want to shout out “Judas, just be quiet and experience this gift instead of feeling the need to justify yourself before Jesus! “

In his usual way, Jesus sticks to His “Why” and compliments Mary for getting it.

Do you get it?

Lent is a time for us to consider getting it.

So beloved,

- Do you know Why?
- Do you know How?
- Do you know What?

If it is all about you – go back to “Why” and begin again.

Prayer

God of the living,
through baptism we pass from the shadow of death
to the light of the resurrection.
Remain with us and give us hope
that, rejoicing in the gift of the Spirit
who gives life to our mortal flesh,
we may be clothed with the garment of immortality,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Todd D. Anderson, West Ohio Superintendent
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