Our scripture comes from Mark 16:7. While you’re finding that, there was a pastor doing children time. He was speaking on shepherds. He explained how sheep need guidance, and that a shepherd's job is to stay close to the sheep, protect them from wild animals, and keep them from wandering off.  The pastor asked, “If the people of the church are God's sheep, who then is the shepherd?" expecting them to say the pastor. As children do, a young boy piped up with an unexpected answer: "Jesus is the shepherd!" Caught by surprise, the pastor asked, "Well, then, who am I?" The boy frowned thoughtfully.  "Well, I guess you must be the sheep dog."

**Mark 16:7 But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”**

This morning, we’re wrapping up our series on discipleship. The word disciple and the word discipline literally come from the same Greek word meaning to teach. Back in May, we started this series by realizing that a disciple is NOT just a student of Jesus or someone knowledgeable of Jesus. A disciple is a dedicated follower of Jesus seeking to copy Him in all ways. Jesus is the Hupo Grammos – Greek for Master Copy. Our life, as a disciple, is to be patterned after our Savior – reflecting Him in our speech, our walk, our compassion, our generosity, but most of all, in our relationship with the Father by loving our brothers and sisters.

 As we’ve considered discipleship, we’ve looked at how we are to respond to the Master – quickly and wholeheartedly – as Elisha responded when Elijah cast his mantle upon him. We’ve learned that we’re to come as children, seeking to learn as a child seeks to learn from a parent – trusting completely. We learned as well that it is our calling for the more mature in Christ to disciple those growing in Christ and to seek ways we might help in their walk – be they our children, neighbors, friends, fellow church members – we are called through prayer and fellowship within the church to be a witness and be in service to those outside the church – with the aim always being - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

 The scripture before us has always intrigued and encouraged me. It’s most often associated with Easter. But, remembering what Christ did for us on the Cross is not something limited to Easter. He is Risen is an appropriate thought every single morning throughout the year. He is Risen! I’m forgiven! I’m saved – Grace has come and it has found me - a sinner – an imperfect disciple seeking to become more perfect each and every day.

 **But go, tell His disciples—and Peter.** Go tell His disciples – and Peter. How often in our lives we don’t feel like we’re very good disciples… Go tell the disciples… and Richard. Go tell the disciples and… fill in your name here. Jesus calls us by name – not just once but over and over throughout our walk – never forget that He knows your name and He is calling you. He is calling you – not because He doesn’t think you’re a disciple, but because you doubt you’re one.

Think how Peter felt – He’d said – No Jesus, I will not deny you – even if it means prison or death, I’m with you. Then, standing in the courtyard, Peter denies Him with cursing and swearing – Luke 22:61 says “And the Lord turned and looked at Peter.” The Greek word emblepo is used – meaning Jesus was in a place where He could fix His stare on Peter. Peter saw Jesus and Jesus saw Peter. And Peter wept bitterly – original language means sobbed violently.

Fast forward – the angel says – Go tell the disciples and Peter. Jesus loved Peter. Jesus was looking to restore Peter. All was forgiven, but Peter needed to know that.

As we close our series on discipleship, God led me to this message this morning because someone needs to hear it. My friends – we are all imperfect disciples in need of a Perfect Savior. Jesus wants us to know that we will have times we stumble, we will have dark nights filled with shameful words, we will have times we weep bitterly. He says – come, all is forgiven. Discipleship is not about being perfect, but about improving daily, learning, being willing to change, demanding of ourselves better and forgiving ourselves when we fall short. Someone needs to hear this.

Today, if you leave this place with nothing else, leave with this - Jesus loves you. When He calls, He’s calling you. You may have never claimed Him as your Master – come today and He’s looking for you. You may have messed up. He’s looking for you. You may have denied Him many times. He’s looking for you. You may not be living His purpose for your life. He’s looking for you. There are no perfect disciples… only imperfect disciples looking to become more like our Perfect Master. How can we ever abide in Him if we separate ourselves with shame and guilt? He’s looking for you – no matter how far we fall, Jesus is always looking to bring us back into His Presence. Won’t you hear Him now and answer the call? He’s looking for you.