

# 1. DISCIPLESHIP

## Introduction

° Jesus said of His gathering of disciples: where two or three are gathered together 'in My Name', He is in the midst. That is sufficient. We are not to be called rabbi or leader or pastor, for we have One Teacher and Leader and Shepherd - Jesus of Nazareth - and we are all brothers or sisters. The only authority that exists in Jesus' Church is His Words. Men and women can only represent His authority by presenting His Word and doing His works. He is the Head, and every disciple is to be connected directly to Him.

° Our task is witnessing the Message and Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and making disciples.

° All who are walking in obedient faith to Jesus Christ and are born of His Spirit are members of His Church. Therefore, membership in an organization is irrelevant. Staying in fellowship with Christ, obeying His Words and being directly accountable to Him is the essence of *being* the church.

### A. The Nature of Discipleship

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.

Follow me. Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.

### B. Requirements of Discipleship

If any one comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and

follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels, and then he will repay every man for what he has done.

### **C. The Price of Discipleship**

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'

Or what king, going to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an embassy and asks terms of peace.

So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill; men throw it away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

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## 2.

## WORD STUDY OF DISCIPLE

Matt 10:24-25

"A **disciple** is not above his **teacher**, nor a **slave** above his **master**. "It is enough for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the slave as his master.

**disciple** NT:3101 matheetees, matheetou, ho (manthano),

a learner, pupil, disciple:

universally, opposed to **didaskalos**, Matt 10:24; Luke 6:40;

tinou, one who follows one's teaching:

Iooannou, Matt 9:14; Luke 7:18 (19); John 3:25;

toon Farisaion, Matt 22:16; Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33;

Moouseos, John 9:28; used of Jesus -- in a wide sense, in the Gospels, those among the Jews who favored him, joined his party, became his adherents: John 6:66; 7:3; 19:38;

ochlos matheetoon autou, Luke 6:17;

hoi matheetoi autou hikanoi, Luke 7:11;

hapan to pleethos toon matheetoon, Luke 19:31;

but especially the twelve apostles: Matt 10:1; 11:1; 12:1; Mark 8:27; Luke 8:9; John 2:2; 3:22, and very often;

also simply hoi matheetai, Matt 13:10; 14:19; Mark 10:24; Luke 9:16; John 6:11 (the Textus Receptus), etc.;

in the Acts hoi matheetai are all those who confess Jesus as the Messiah, Christians:

Acts 6:1 f,7; 9:19; 11:26, and often;

with tou kuriou added, Acts 9:1.

The word is not found in the Old Testament, nor in the Epistles of the New Testament, nor in the Apocalypse;

in Greek writings from (Herodotus (484-408 B.C.)), Aristophanes, Xenophon (430?-355? B.C.), Plato (428-348 B.C.) down. (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

**teacher** NT:1320 didaskalos, didaskalou, ho

a teacher

1. used of one who is fitted to teach, or thinks himself so: Heb 5:12; Rom 2:20

2. used of the teachers of the Jewish religion: Luke 2:46; John 3:10

3. used of those who by their great power as teachers drew crowds about them

a. used of John the Baptist: Luke 3:12

b. used of Jesus: John 1:38 (39)

4. by preeminence used of Jesus by himself, as the one who showed men the way of salvation: Matt 23:8

5. used of the apostles: 1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11

6. used of those who in the religious assemblies of Christians undertake the work of teaching, with the special assistance of the Holy Spirit: 1 Cor 12:28 f

7. used of false teachers among Christians: 2 Tim 4:3 (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

**slave** NT:1401 doulos, doulee, doulon

serving, subject to: Rom 6:19

1. a slave, bondman, man of servile condition

a. properly: opposed to eleutheros, 1 Cor 7:21

b. metaphorically,

a. one who gives himself up wholly to another's will, 1 Cor 7:23

b. those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men: used of the apostles, Rom 1:1

**g.** devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests: Matt 20:27; Mark 10:44

2. a servant, attendant, (of a king): Matt 18:23,26 ff  
(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

**master** NT:2962 kurios, kuriou, ho

he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has the power of deciding; master, lord

1. used universally, of the possessor and disposer of a thing, the owner Matt 20:8
2. kurios is a title of honor, expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants salute their master, Matt 3:27; 25:20,22; Luke 13:8; 14:22, etc.;
3. this title is given:

**a.** to God, the ruler of the universe Matt 1:22

**b.** to the Messiah; and that:

**aa.** to the Messiah regarded universally: Luke 1:43

**bb.** to Jesus as the Messiah, Acts 10:36

4. of Christ (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

Matt 13:52

And He said to them, "Therefore every **scribe** who **has become a disciple** of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old."

**scribe** NT:1122 grammateus, grammateos

1. a public scribe, secretary, recorder, whose office and influence differed in different states: Acts 19:35
2. in the Bible, a man learned in the Mosaic law and in the sacred writings, an interpreter, teacher: Matt 23:34
3. **universally, a religious teacher:** Matt 13:52  
(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

**has become a disciple** NT:3100 matheeteuoo: 1 aorist ematheeteusa;

1. aorist passive ematheeteutheen;  
(matheetees);

a. intransitive, tini, to be the disciple of one; to follow his precepts and instruction: Matt 27:57, the Textus Receptus, Griesbach, Westcott-Hort's marginal reading, compare John 19:38 (so Plutarch (died 120 A.D.), mor., pp. 832 - (vit. Antiph. 1), 837 -. (vit. Isocrates (436-338 B.C.) 10); Jamblichus (300 A.D.), vit. Pythag. c. 23).

b. transitive (compare Winer Grammar (1883), p. 23 and sec. 38, 1; (Buttmann, sec. 131, 4)) to make a disciple; to teach, instruct: tina, Matt 28:19; Acts 14:21;

2. passive with a dative of the person whose disciple one is made, Matt 27:57, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-Hort text;

3. matheeteutheis eis teen basileian toon ouranou (see grammateus, 3), Matt 13:52, the Textus Receptus, where long since the more correct reading, tee basileia toon ouranoon, was adopted, but without changing the sense; (yet Lachmann inserts en). \* (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

### 3. Characteristics of a Disciple

A Disciple **must** put his walk with Christ ahead of EVERYTHING else.

Luke 14:26-27

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not **hate** his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he **cannot** be My disciple.

"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me **cannot** be My disciple.

**hate** NT:3404 miseoo, misoo;

to hate, pursue with hatred, detest Matt 5:43 (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblesoft)

**cannot** ou dunatai ((ou dunatai )

ou—NT:3756

ou (oo); also (before a vowel) ouk (ook); and (before an aspirate) ouch (ookh); a primary word; the absolute negative [compare NT:3361] adverb; no or not:

KJV - long, nay, neither, never, no (X man), none, [can-] not, nothing, special, un ([-worthy]), when, without, yet but. See also NT:3364, NT:3372.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

NT:1410 dunamai,

to be able, have power,

1. followed by an infinitive

a. followed by a present infinitive: Matt 6:24

b. followed by an aorist infinitive: Matt 3:9

2. with an infinitive omitted, as being easily supplied from the context: Matt 16:3

3. joined with an accusative, to be able to do something Mark 9:22

4. absolutely, 1 Cor 3:2 (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblesoft)

#### A Disciple is known for good works

Matt 5:16

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

This verse is closely related to verses 13-15. Before men echoes "by men" of verse 13, while light is a central theme both here and in verses 14-15.

Let your light so shine translates a third person imperative, which is difficult to express in many languages. Most contemporary English translations use some structure with "must" (see TEV "your light must shine") rather than the traditional Let of KJV and RSV. In many languages it may be necessary to switch either to a second person imperative ("Shine your light") or to some other less difficult form (for example, "Be sure that your light shines").

Your light may be "the light you produce," "the light that shines from you," or "the light you are."

So means "in such a way." Here it refers back to the lamp on the lampstand in verse 15. TEV makes this clear with "In the same way." Translators can also say "Similarly," "Just so," or "The light you produce should also be like that. Let it shine before people ...."

Before men can be translated "so everyone can see it" or "for all to see."

That they may see is the purpose of letting your light shine before people. Translations may use "so that" or "in order that people can see."

The Greek noun construction your good works is represented as a verb construction by TEV: "the good things you do." The focus now shifts from the character of the disciples to their good works which result from this character. What the disciples are must be evident to all, but in such a way that it reveals the true origin of the good works that they do. These works may be characterized as deeds of mercy and of reconciliation, a conclusion supported both by the Gospel itself (see Matt 5:38-48; 25:31-46) and by the Jewish concept of good works. The phrase good works is found only one other time in Matthew's Gospel; it appears in 26:10 in the singular "good work." More frequently the expression "good fruit" is used (3:10; 7:17-19; 12:33). Your good works may be translated "your good actions" or "your good deeds." Brc has translated "the lovely things you do."

Give glory to (TEV "praise") is similar to the expression used in Matt 9:8 and 15:31, where the meaning is clearly "give praise to." The thought is parallel to Isa 49:3 ("Israel, you are my servant; because of you, people will praise me") and to the Testament of Naphtali Matt 8:1 ("Do what is good, my children. Then men and angels will praise you, and God will be honored among the heathen"). But it contrasts with the thinking of the hypocrites, who perform their religious duties to receive praise from people (6:2).

When men see your good actions, they will give glory to your Father who is in heaven. "Men will see the good things you do and therefore praise your Father in heaven." If there is not a good way of saying give glory to or "praise" in a language, it may be necessary to say "so that men will say good things about (or, will honor) your Father in heaven."

Your Father who is in heaven and related expressions with "my" or "our" is used some twenty times in Matthew, but only once in (Mark 11:25) and not at all in Luke. Evidently this reflects a common usage in Jewish rabbinical literature, as the commentators note (from the UBS Handbook Series. Copyright (c) 1961-1997, by United Bible Societies)

Eph 2:10

For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**created** NT:2936 ktizoo:

to make habitable, to people, a place, region, island (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

## A Disciple is humble

Matt 11:29

"Take My yoke upon you, and **learn from Me**, for I am gentle and **humble** in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.

**humble** NT:5011 tapeinos, tapeinee tapeinon,  
low,

1. properly, not rising far from the ground:
2. metaphorically,

**a.** as to condition, lowly, of low degree:

b. lowly in spirit, humble: (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

1 Peter 3:8-9

To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

Eph 4:1-3

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

Phil 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

### **A Disciple prays**

Luke 18:1

Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,

Eph 6:18

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

1 Thess 5:16-19

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**A Disciple will not be consumed with fear and worry**

Luke 12:22-33

And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. "For life is more than food, and the body than clothing. "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; and they have no storeroom nor barn; and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span? "If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why are you anxious about other matters? "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. "But if God so arrays the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you, O men of little faith! "And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying. "For all

these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. "But seek for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Phil 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Heb 13:5-6

Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," so that we confidently say,

"The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.  
What shall man do to me?"

Phil 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### **A Disciple is accountable**

Rom 14:12

So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Matt 18:15-17

"And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. "And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

### **A Disciple loves sacrificially**

John 13:33-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you **love** one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**love** NT:25 agapaoo, agapoo;

1. to love, to be full of good-will and exhibit the same: Luke 7:47; 1 John 4:7 f;
2. with the accusative of the person, to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of
3. used often in the First Epistle of John of the love of Christians toward one another;



4. used of the benevolence which God, in providing salvation for men, has exhibited by sending his Son to them and giving him up to death
5. used of the love which led Christ, in procuring human salvation, to undergo sufferings and death, Gal 2:20; Eph 5:2;
6. used of the love with which God regards Christ, John 3:35;
7. When used of love to a master, God or Christ, the word involves the idea of affectionate reverence, prompt obedience, grateful recognition of benefits received
8. With an accusative of the thing agapaoo denotes to take pleasure in the thing, prize it above other things, be unwilling to abandon it or do without it
9. to welcome with desire, long for 2 Tim 4:8
10. Concerning the unique proof of love which Jesus gave the apostles by washing their feet, John 13:1
11. John 17:26; Eph 2:4 (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by BibleSoft)

Rom 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

1 Cor 13:1-3

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

1 John 3:14-19

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him,

### **A Disciple seeks always to obey God's Word**

John 14:15

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

James 1:22

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

**2 Cor 10:5**

**We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**

## **A Disciple bears fruit**

Matt 7:17-21

"Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "So then, you will know them by their fruits. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

John 15:1-5

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing

Col 1:9-10

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

## **A Disciple tries at all times to live a life separated from the world**

2 Cor 6:14-17

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said,

"I will dwell in them and walk among them;

And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord.

James 4:4

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 Tim 6:11

But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

### **A Disciple is concerned about truth and sound doctrine**

1 Tim 4:6

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

1 Thess 5:21-22

But **examine** everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.

**examine** NT:1381 dokimazoo;  
to try

1. to test, examine, prove, scrutinize 1 Peter 1:7
2. to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy: 1 Cor 16:3  
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Heb 5:13

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to **discern** good and evil.

**discern** NT:1253 diakrisis, diakriseoos, hee  
a distinguishing, discerning, judging: 1 Cor 12:10 (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database.  
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Phil 1:9-11

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all **discernment**, so that you may **approve** the things that are **excellent**, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

**discernment** NT:144 aistheesis, aistheeseoos, hee (aisthanomai) (from Euripides (480-406 B.C.) down),  
perception, not only by the senses but also by the intellect; cognition, discernment; (in the Septuagint (LXX), Prov 1:22; 2:10, etc., equivalent to da`at): Phil 1:9, of moral discernment, the understanding of ethical matters, as is plain from what is added in Phil 1:10. \* (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblosoft)

**approve** NT:1381 dokimazoo;  
to try

1. to test, examine, prove, scrutinize 1 Peter 1:7
2. to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy: 1 Cor 16:3  
(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblosoft)

**excellent** NT:1308 diaphero (dee-af-er'-o); from NT:1223 and NT:5342; to bear through, i.e. (literally) transport; usually to bear apart, i.e. (objectively) to toss about (figuratively, report); subjectively, to "differ", or (by implication) surpass:  
KJV - be better, carry, differ from, drive up and down, be (more) excellent, make matter, publish, be of more value.  
(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

## **A Disciple is growing**

Heb 6:1

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

2 Peter 3:17-18

You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Eph 4:14-15

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,

## 4. How to become a Disciple

1st—There must be a change of allegiances

Rom 5:8

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Eph 2:1-3

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Eph 4:17-19

This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Rom 11:30

For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

1 John 3:7-9

Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Eph 2:19-20

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

2nd—**You must accept Christ's free gift**

Rom 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom 5:8-10

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved

from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Acts 16:27-32

And when the jailer had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!" And he called for lights and rushed in and, trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.

Rom 10:13-14

for "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?

Eph 2:4-9

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.

### **3rd—You must study the Word**

2 Tim 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

1 Peter 3:15

but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

### **4th—Pray, think about the Word, seek truth**

Eph 1:18-19

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

Rom 8:26-27

And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Ps 119:27-29

Make me understand the way of Thy precepts,  
So I will meditate on Thy wonders.  
My soul weeps because of grief;  
Strengthen me according to Thy word.  
Remove the false way from me

Heb 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

## 5. WHAT IS BIBLE BASED DISCIPLESHIP?

### PARTIAL TRUTH:

To most Christians the term “Discipleship” simply equates to “Presenting Biblical Truth”.

MORE ACCURATELY: We believe the concept of “Spiritual Parenting” more accurately reflects the Biblical meaning.

### TEACHING BIBLICAL TRUTH MODELING

A SPIRITUAL WALK WITH THE LORD COMMITMENT TO RAISING UP MATURING BELIEVERS WHO WILL SPIRITUALLY REPRODUCE PERSONAL ATTENTION TO HELP EACH ONE WITH UNIQUE NEEDS

### “Biblical Model for Spiritual Parenting” (Discipleship)

1 Thessalonians 2:3-13 includes all the components of spiritual parenting. (from Paul, with Silas and Timothy)

#### 1. THEY WERE SINGLE-MINDED IN PURPOSE

:3-6 ... we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed — God is witness — nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

#### 2. THEY CARED FOR THE BELIEVERS AS A MOTHER CARES FOR HER CHILDREN

:7-8 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing MOTHER tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

#### 3. THEY BECAME “ROLE MODELS” TO THE NEW BELIEVERS

:9-10 you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;

#### 4. THEY GAVE INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION AND INSTRUCTION AS A FATHER

:11-12 just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring EACH ONE of you as a FATHER would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

#### 5. THE WORD OF GOD WAS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF DISCIPLESHIP

:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

#### 2. Biblical truth is an essential component of Biblical discipleship.

A. A Christian cannot be spiritually mature without Biblical understanding, but a Christian may have much Biblical knowledge and yet not be spiritually mature.

1 Cor. 8:1-2 ... Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies. If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know;

Eph. 4:11-16 ... for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, ...

Col. 1:28-29 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete (mature) in Christ.



1 Thess. 2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

B. There are inherent problems with the commonly held belief that “presenting Biblical knowledge” equates to discipleship, and that the other components are “optional”. If the other components are not given proper importance in the nurturing process, the Christian being mentored will typically have a difficult time growing to a reproductive spiritual maturity.

1. If “Biblical Knowledge” by itself were the key to spirituality, we should have the most spiritual generation of Christians in history. Christian Book Stores are filled with books on every Biblical subject imaginable.

2. A Christian teacher can present “Biblical knowledge” and at the same time be completely detached from the person(s) to whom he is ministering. There is no prerequisite for a commitment to the spiritual welfare of the person to whom truth is being presented.

3. To propose that “Biblical knowledge” alone is the key to spirituality is akin to saying that “food” alone is the most important need of a child. Undeniably food is essential, but would it be accurate to convey to potential parents that love, commitment, nurturing, modeling, personal attention, etc. are somehow optional? Has God given us the process of raising a physical child as a model for raising a spiritual child? If so, should I not then ask, “how would a physical infant fare if left to tend for itself as the typical new spiritual child is?”

4. Most Christians would agree that as the Holy Spirit draws unbelievers to Himself, He typically uses Christians somewhere in the birthing process. How can the same Christians then conclude that their primary involvement in the new baby Christian’s growth is mostly limited to setting spiritual food on the table, and that the Holy Spirit now prefers to work alone in the other areas where the new believer needs help to grow?

Making Disciples is more than a “Transfer of Biblical Knowledge”, it is a “Commitment to Spiritual Parenting”

3. A discipler is a “model” (real, transparent) for the disciple. The goal is for the disciple to emulate the convictions and passion of the discipler.

1 Cor. 4:15-16 (Paul to the Corinthian believers) For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.

1 Cor. 11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Phil. 3:17 (Paul to the Philippians) Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

Phil. 4:9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

1 Thess. 1:6-7 (Paul to the Thessalonian believers) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

2 Thess. 3:7-9 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, ... in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.

1 Tim. 4:12 (Paul to Timothy) in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

2 Tim. 3:10-11 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, ...

Titus 2:7-8 (Paul to Titus) in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with

purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Jesus commanded us to make “disciples”, not just converts. In the Christian community there are many immature “converts”, but very few disciples.

Matt. 28:18-20 (Jesus said) “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, ...

Luke 6:40 (Jesus said) “A pupil (disciple, apprentice) is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

4. A newborn child requires an extra amount of individual attention. As the child matures guidance can increasingly take place in a group setting. Since each child is unique, it should be expected that both group and personal attention would be needed on the road to maturity.

When you bring a newborn baby home from the hospital, you don't just set them down and say, “Welcome to the family, Johnny. Make yourself at home. The towels are in the hall closet upstairs, the pantry is right here, the can opener is in this drawer. No crying after 10 p.m. If you have any questions there are lots of people in the family who would love to help you so don't be afraid to ask.” You laugh and say that is ridiculous, but that is what usually happens to new Christians. Someone gets saved and starts going to church services, but never gets much personal attention. We devote 18 years to raising our children, but don't even spend six months helping a new Christian get started in understanding the spiritual world. As a result, many people have been Christians for many years, but have not grown very much. Hebrews 5:12 refers to this phenomenon. So, new believers need someone to give them guidance and help them grow. “Until others learn to draw on the life of the Lord Jesus directly, they will have to draw on His life through you. You must literally be their source of supply, until they learn to take their nourishment from God. ...”

Notice what Paul states in 1 Thess. 2:7 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Some believe that a new Christian is not in need of individual special attention. If the Holy Spirit had not led Paul to include the idea of nursing it could be argued that this Scripture was referring to spiritual toddlers or even older spiritual children. But one must honestly ask, “How soon after birth does a typical baby need to be nursed?” When a baby nurses, as Oswald Chambers has correctly expressed, it is drawing nourishment through its mother. This would normally be expected to continue until which time it is weaned.

Paul recognized that each believer is unique and needs individual attention.

Acts 20:31 (Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus) “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

Col. 1:28-29 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete (mature) in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

1 Thess. 2:11 ... you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children...

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## **6. WHO IS A BIBLE OBEYING DISCIPLE?**

1. TO MANY CHRISTIANS THE TERM "DISCIPLE" SPEAKS OF A BELIEVER WHO EXHIBITS AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF OBSERVABLE CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR. SINCE ONE'S BEHAVIOR IS A PRODUCT OF ONE'S VALUES, WE BELIEVE BEING A "PRACTICING DISCIPLE" SHOULD MORE ACCURATELY BE UNDERSTOOD TO REFLECT A BELIEVER'S ATTITUDE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD. IN THIS LESSON WE SEEK TO FOCUS ON A DISCIPLE'S HEART ATTITUDE, RATHER THAN JUST WHAT A DISCIPLE "DOES".

... for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7)

**GODLY BEHAVIOR IS AN OUTCOME OF GODLY VALUES.**

2. THE PIVOTAL ISSUE THAT A DISCIPLE HAS DEALT WITH IS THAT OF CHRIST'S LORDSHIP OVER HIS LIFE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BELIEVER HAS CONSIDERED THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST, AND HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE BEST WORKABLE RELATIONSHIP IS FOR THE LORD TO BE IN CHARGE. ONE OF CHRIST'S CLAIMS IS THAT OF OWNERSHIP.

1 Cor. 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

1 Cor. 7:23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

God's ownership of the Christian is a factual truth, which is not dependent on the believer's acknowledgment of it. I do not bestow ownership, I can only acknowledge and act upon what He states to be already true. New believers will typically not be resistant to this truth, because they don't have preconceived ideas of God's expectations. In contrast, older believers tend to accept this truth intellectually, but be resistant to the implications. What are the implications of ownership? What rights or authority are generally understood to be conveyed by ownership?

**HE OWNS ME (WHETHER I BELIEVE IT OR NOT).**

**HIS OWNERSHIP IS NOT DEPENDENT ON MY ACCEPTANCE.**

It (being a disciple) involved personal allegiance to Him, expressed in following Him and giving Him an exclusive loyalty. In at least some cases it meant literal abandonment of home, business ties and possessions, but in every case readiness to put the claims of Jesus first, whatever the cost, was demanded. Such an attitude went well beyond the normal pupil-teacher relationship and gave the word 'disciple' a new sense. (The New Bible Dictionary)

**EVERY DISCIPLE IS A CONVERT, BUT NOT EVERY CONVERT IS A PRACTICING DISCIPLE.**

3. ANOTHER ISSUE THAT A DISCIPLE HAS DEALT WITH IS THAT OF CHRIST'S COMMAND FOR HIS FOLLOWERS TO ACCEPT A MASTER-SERVANT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

Luke 14:25-33 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ... "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. (see NOTE below.)

Rom. 6:19 ... so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

1 Cor. 7:22 ... he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

1 Peter 2:16 act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

NOTE ON LUKE 14:25-33 The stress here is on the priority of love (cf. Matt. 10:37 - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.) One's loyalty to Jesus must come before his loyalty to his family or even to life itself. Indeed, those who did follow Jesus against their families' desires were probably thought of as hating their families.

#### 4. A PRACTICING DISCIPLE IS MORE THAN JUST A STUDENT, HE IS AN APPRENTICE.

Unfortunately, many in the Western Hemisphere have adopted the secular teacher-student method for growing believers. There are significant factors that favor this approach, such as busyness and perceived efficiency. However, what appears to be most efficient is not necessarily what is most effective.

The teacher-disciple model demands a greater commitment, and much more personal attention, but we believe it is the Biblical method as modeled by Jesus Himself, and the model that will result in the greatest individual spiritual growth and impact on the world.

A Student – Typically the goal of a student is to learn knowledge (information), that is, to learn what the teacher knows. The student may not even respect or like his teacher.

A Disciple – A disciple on the other hand is a student who has the goal of becoming like his teacher. This model requires personal interaction, and a personal commitment by the teacher (mentor, spiritual parent) on behalf of the apprentice learner.

A STUDENT WANTS TO KNOW WHAT THE TEACHER KNOWS,

A DISCIPLE WANTS TO BECOME LIKE THE TEACHER.

Luke 6:40 (Jesus said) "A pupil (apprentice learner) is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

Matthew 10:24-25 (Jesus said) "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. "It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. ...

ALL DISCIPLES ARE STUDENTS, BUT NOT ALL STUDENTS ARE DISCIPLES.

#### 5. A DISCIPLE HAS A DESIRE TO KNOW GOD, NOT JUST KNOW ABOUT HIM.

Jer. 9:23-24 Thus says the Lord, ... let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord.

Luke 10:38-42 ... He (Jesus) entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Romans 12:2 ... do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

#### 6. A DISCIPLE HAS THE ATTITUDE OF ONE WHO FOLLOWS THE LORD, NOT ONE WHO LEADS THE LORD.

Luke 5:10-11 ... And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men."

When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

Luke 9:23-24 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. John 12:24-26 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

#### 7. WHAT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED IN THE POINTS ABOVE SHOULD NOT IMPLY THAT A PRACTICING DISCIPLE IS SUPER SPIRITUAL OR BEYOND THE CAPACITY TO SIN. ALTHOUGH THE DISCIPLE'S ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST'S YOKE HAS GIVEN THE HOLY SPIRIT THE FREEDOM TO MOLD HIM, HE STILL HAS A CAPACITY TO DISOBEY, AND HE CAN SUBMIT TO THE SINFUL HUMAN NATURE FOR VARYING LENGTHS OF TIME.

The fact that the disciple has made the choice to acknowledge the lordship of Christ over his life has set the general direction of his Christian life, but the everyday application of learned convictions will depend on the disciple's continual willingness to yield up areas of his life to His authority. The battle has been won, but there are many skirmishes. Because being a practicing disciple has more to do with attitude than with behavior, even a wholehearted disciple can find himself in a quagmire of defeat if he does not understand how to consistently abide in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

### **THE AIM OF DISCIPLESHIP**

To help a believer through the transition from the habit of daily living in "self-reliance" to the habit of daily living in "God- reliance". In other words, to make the transition from "leaning on one's own understanding" to "trusting in the Lord with all one's heart and in all ways acknowledging Him". (Prov. 3: 5- 6)

Heaven Rewards based on what I, by faith, allow the Holy Spirit to do through my life (His fruit)

“death” Represents the “unsaved” period of time (spiritually dead to God) in a person’s life, from physical birth to spiritual birth.

During this period “self- reliance ” becomes a habit of everyday living, a way of life.

Represents the “Evangelism” stage, culminating in the event of salvation, at which time a person passes from being

spiritually dead to being spiritually alive to God.

Represents the “Discipleship” stage, that is, the critical formative period of time in which a Christian needs to be

“spiritually parented” (discipled) through the first steps of learning to increasingly live in daily reliance on the Holy Spirit.

Represents the process of “sanctification”, i. e. having been discipled, the believer now has a basic understanding of the

Master- servant relationship and the need to follow the Holy Spirit, so as to continue being led and transformed by Him.

ANTICIPATED RESULT OF DISCIPLESHIP = SPIRITUAL MATURITY, FRUITFULNESS and SPIRITUAL REPRODUCTION.

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## 7. THE GOALS OF DISCIPLESHIP

### 1. Study the Word of Jesus

First, read the Words of Jesus all the way through: The Message Of Jesus Christ

Read all the way through in a short period of time .. you can easily do this in one week. The question is **will you?**

This is one challenge that very, very few people complete, even though they claim to *love Jesus*. In order to love Jesus we must know Who He is. And, **how** can we know Him if we have not read His Words, and studied them, and obey them?

How can people claim to love the Lord and be so busy doing churchianity things, yet never read and study and do what Jesus says? If you believe that Jesus is God in the flesh, then you will read His Words and do them. If you don't believe He is God, and if you don't read His Words, then stop pretending! Your faith is a fantasy if you will not read and study the of Jesus and do His Words!!!

### 2 Listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit

"My sheep listen to my voice: I know them, and they follow me." John 10.27

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you." John 16.13-15

There is a huge, unresolvable difference between doing the things in a book and knowing and following the author of that book!

If Jesus said that His sheep know His voice and listen to His voice; and if He said that the Holy Spirit speaks to those who believe in Him, then should we not make it a major priority to get to know the voice of the Holy Spirit? In fact, if we do *not* get to know the voice of the Holy Spirit, and listen to His guidance, is this not close to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? If the Holy Spirit is God's promised Gift (John 14:15) and He is the provision of the Covenant of Jesus Christ, then should we not get to know Him intimately that we might truly follow Jesus?

Our carnal impulses and "common sense" and "intuition" are not the same as the voice of the Holy Spirit. It requires renewing of the mind and training in righteousness in order for us to learn to discern between the "louder" voice of our carnal nature (which is primarily influenced by self and worldly values) and the "quieter" voice of the Spirit. There is no instant maturity in this. We *must* be willing to die daily and grow in Christ, that we will learn to keep in step with His Spirit.

### 3 Practice Repentance and Renew the Mind

"I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." Luke 13.1 (NIV)

There is no doubt that our environment and society shapes our thinking and values and choices. We are not to be shaped by the **pattern** of this world!

Many religious efforts to please God focus upon externals and aesthetics. Some people dress radically different as an attempt to show they are not following the patterns of this world. Others live in extreme spartan conditions and self-imposed poverty to prove that they are not being shaped by this world's pattern and ways.

However, the real battleground is the battleground of the mind. We are brainwashed by our society's values. In the wealthy Western nations, the primary values are: hedonism ("if it feels good, do it"); subjectivism ("everyone is entitled to their opinion" ... which has led to the elevation of personal opinion to being considered authoritative!!!); tolerance (tolerance that is, of anything except absolutes ... any suggestion of absolute moral principles is met with extreme hostility by today's society); relativity (this is the "authority" which "proves" that absolutes are irrelevant and even dangerous), etc.

The shame is that these very ideas are heard in the talk and values of people who say they are followers of Christ ! Repentance from worldiness and submitting to the transforming of our mind - the purging of the mental indoctrination of these sinful values of our society - is seldom preached or practiced by Christians in the Western world.

In fact, Christians now follow the sinful worldly idea that self must be elevated. Jesus said we are to deny our self. One who refuses to accept this teaching by Jesus has not repented.

I feel obligated, to the Lord and to Scriptures, to keep taking exception with the concept of "free gift salvation". Let me explain. In the first place, Jesus preceded His message with "Repent". It is an absolute certainty, from a position of simple observation of Christianity, that "free gift salvation" is totally leaving out repentance. And, the fruit of repentance and discipleship is missing from far too many who claim to be "saved".

There is a huge difference between sentiment and love. Love is unconditional. Love includes loyalty. Most of the "love" for Jesus that flows from Evangelical and charismatic adherents is just plain old sentiment. And, it is a loyal as the next paycheck, catastrophe, sports event or TV show.

In a healthy human family, children love their parents AND obey them. Which comes first? Seems to me that the two concepts are indivisible. Those who love, obey. And, many who obey learn love, or are demonstrating their love. James wrote "faith without works is dead". Ephesians 2.10 says "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" Luke 6.49 (words of Jesus)

Mat 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 4.17)

Lu 15:7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. (Luke 15.7)

Ac 20:21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 20.21)

metanoia {met-an'-oy-ah} μετανοια: Word Usage in KJV, repentance 24; 24  
Definition: a change of mind, as it appears to one who repents, of a purpose he has formed or of something he has done. Vine's Expository Dictionary adds a couple of notes. These notes indicate that in the OT repentance is primarily concerned with change of mind or purpose out of pity for those who have been affected by one's actions, or in whom the results of the action have



not fulfilled expectations. In the NT repentance is primarily from sin, and this change of mind involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God.

Perhaps what we need, in order to bring us to a point of recognizing how far from repentance we are in many areas of our life, is to do a values inventory.

First, we would write down what we say are our major values and priorities in life. Then, we would write down the things we do in our life that indicate we are making decisions in accord with those values and priorities. Then, we would write down all the other decisions and priorities in our behavior and lifestyle, and compare them with our stated values and priorities.

(This takes a real strong dose of honesty in order for this to work, and for the Holy Spirit to be able to speak to us and show us of our own hypocrisies.)

Next, we would do a very careful study of the values and priorities which Jesus taught for His followers to live by. With this as a standard of comparison, we would have to take an honest look and compare the differences between our stated values, and the values Jesus taught. Then, we would have to admit that we don't even live up to our own stated values, let alone Jesus' values.

From this, if we are honest with ourselves and God, we would have to submit ourselves to the renewing of our minds, to be "re-taught" according to Jesus' will and Word. And, then we are driven to our knees to cry out to the Holy Spirit to empower us to live what we profess. That process then becomes a lifestyle, or else we will fall right back into carnality, sin, worldliness and hypocrisy.

#### 4. Discipleship Values

This is a self inventory, not a quiz or test.

- a. How do I believe I should use my time? a) at work; b) at home; c) on weekends and holidays
- b. How do I actually use my time? a) at work; b) at home; c) on weekends and holidays
- c. What does God's Word teach should be the priorities in my time management?
  1. a. What are my beliefs and values on how I should use my talents? a) at work; b) at home; c) in the community; d) to glorify God
  - b. How do I actually use my talents? a) at work; b) at home; c) in the community; d) to glorify God?
  - c. What does God's Word teach should be my priorities in using my talents/
  2. a. What are my beliefs and values in how I should use my money and valuable possessions? a) in giving; b) in saving; c) for my family; d) for myself; e) for the poor and needy; f) for the Kingdom of God.
  - b. How do I actually use my money and valuable possessions? a) in giving; b) in saving; c) for my family; d) for myself; e) for the poor and needy; f) for the Kingdom of God.
  - c. What does God's Word teach should be my attitude and priorities for using my money and valuable possessions?
  3. Am I honest? If I were my own employer, would I trust me?
  4. Am I truthful? Can people rely upon my word?
  5. Am I a servant, or am I self-centered?  
Follow-up: If I think I am a servant, do I only serve at my convenience, and in those things that I enjoy and am comfortable with?
  6. Do I worship God in all I do, or are there other things that I am giving more attention and importance than Him?

7. Am I harboring adultery in my heart?
8. Am I harboring unforgiveness and anger in my heart?
9. If I were found in a country today where it is illegal to be a follower of Jesus, and if I were arrested for being His disciple, would there be enough evidence (from my lifestyle) to convict me of my professed faith in Him? And, in truth, would I plead guilty to the charges, because I really have made Him Lord of my life?

## 5 Loyalty

"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.'" Matthew 22.37,38

Traveling to Colorado and back, God kept dealing with me about the issue of undivided loyalty to Him. One afternoon I called a Christian radio talk show and stated one of these loyalty issues to the host. The reactions were discouraging and predictable. We get pretty used to our religious ideas, and very defensive of them when anything comes along to challenge them.

God only knows two nations of people: the citizens of the kingdom of God; and the citizens of the kingdom of the world (satan's followers). God only knows two races of people: the children of God; and the citizens of this world (satans' followers). All that is required to be part of the citizens of this world is to not actively be citizens of the kingdom of God.

Anyway, adhering to human standards of earthly citizenship distracts from the Gospel and the Great Go-Mission to make disciples of all nations (people groups). Nationalism focuses upon self-serving concerns rather than upon God's heart for the entire world. Nationalism can and often does lead to racism, and elevation of one's own culture, interests, race, and other divisive concepts.

The more I read and study God's Word, the more convinced I am that God has made it plain that all human governments are under His judgement. "The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath. He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth." Psalm 110.5,6 (NIV) Even democracy is a servant of the people and their carnal, selfish interests, not the will of God. Thus, nationalism brings divided loyalties at best, and displaces our rightful loyalty to God in most cases. Nationalism places a government in the place of God. "The President is my shepherd, I shall not want!" becomes the mantra of those who seek political solutions to the problems of society, which are rooted in sin.

Before you jump on that band wagon and accuse me of "copping out" of social responsibility, let me forewarn you that Jesus taught us to be "salt and light", not a political action committee. Jesus never involved Himself in the political process, and never encouraged His followers to be politically active. In fact, He prohibited it specifically by placing the emphasis upon our spiritual loyalty to God and His will. His agenda of social concerns was given to individual believers and the church corporately. He never taught that we are to seek solutions for the poor through governments and politics. He taught that social change can only come through a change of heart. So, political action to "combat" sin is wasteful and distracting, disloyal and disobedient, for followers of Christ.

If we focus our loyalties totally upon God, then we will become "World Christians", not American Christians, or European Christians, or Asian Christians, etc. We will be concerned about the unreached people groups, and will pray for them and train missionaries to reach them. We will be concerned about the starving and dying people in poverty stricken countries, and will do all we can for them, rather than channeling our resources through wasteful governmental bureaucracies which are often controlled by unbelievers with ungodly values.

God calls His people to be in the world, but not of the world. When we attempt to fight for

"righteousness" in confrontational political tactics, we should not be surprised when satan beats us up and smears our reputation: we are playing in his game, by his rules. It is time for the People of God to stand up and be the People of God, not people with divided loyalties.

Disciples should be members of only one political party: the kingdom of God.

Disciples should only support one candidate for office of any kind: the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Disciples should only work for one political agenda: the agenda of the kingdom of God, making disciples and helping the poor and disenfranchised as Jesus helped them.

Disciples should only trust in the Lord for their needs: not governments; not social security; not welfare; not government health programs; etc.

Disciples obey the law of the land as well as any citizen can, and with the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, unless the law and the government require them to do anything against the moral law of God. However, since God requires us to pay taxes unto "Caesar", what Caesar does with those taxes are not of our concern, for the government is under God's judgement!

Disciples should not participate in any governmental activity which divides our loyalties, or which violate God's law of peace.

While it is part of our mandate to cry out against injustice, we should not be wasting time and God's resources in seeking redress for injustice through political action. We should not interfere with God's judgement upon the unrighteous. There is something deeply disturbing about the form of Christianity which is more concerned about gaining political strength to protect the "freedoms" of Christians, and to make non-believers behave like we think they should, while we continue to live in worldliness and materialistic pursuit of security. It is disturbing because it is not biblical and is the opposite of discipleship. Those who follow Jesus seek neither power nor self-protection. We are to deny self, not seek security for self. We are to be loyal to God, not active nationalists who promote righteousness through legislation

## 6 Walk In The Spirit

Most Christians try to be like Christ through imitation or pursuing performance objectives or legalism or religious traditions or through "right beliefs (ie, right doctrines)". However, it is impossible to walk in righteousness through our own strength and wisdom. The Law tutored us in the reality that we cannot fulfill God's standard of righteousness ourselves.

We all struggle with our culture's indoctrination and brainwashing, wherein we believe that we have to be productive in order to be a "good person". We are a results-oriented society. Discipleship is NOT results-oriented, it is obedience-oriented, based entirely upon relationship with Jesus, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We don't have to work up the obedience, we just have to die to self and surrender totally to the Spirit, moment by moment.

We can never walk in the Spirit so long as we are in control. We must surrender to the leading of the Spirit, step by step and moment by moment. Life in the Spirit cannot commence without repentance and self-denial. A total surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ is essential to living in the Spirit.

Those who attempt to characterize the work of the Holy Spirit as a "takeover" or "possession" by the Spirit are wrong. The Scriptures never indicate in any way that the Holy Spirit overpowers our will. The context of experiencing the work of the Holy Spirit is always "receive" or "surrender". We

must submit and choose the work of the Holy Spirit before we can experience His indwelling empowerment.

Faith is non-existent without relationship with God, for faith is a response to knowing God and Who He is and What He will and will not do, don't you think? Our "contribution" to our sanctification is obedience, crucifying the carnal nature, and learning to know the voice of the Spirit, thus growing in our ability to keep in step with Him. However, none of those actions sanctify us, it is the cleansing of the Spirit that sanctifies us.

Walking in the Spirit is progressive sanctification. If we are walking in the Spirit, we do not become disobedient. We become disobedient because we =choose= to NOT walk in the Spirit, but to walk after the flesh ... for whatever period of time ... which happens more often than walking in the Spirit does. BUT, it does not have to be that way. We can learn to walk in the Spirit more and more consistently. It has to do with hungering and thirsting after righteousness, don't you think? Matthew 6:33

Which comes first? The enabling or the obedience? **Answer:** The enabling of the Holy Spirit.

Which makes the continuing empowerment of the Holy Spirit possible: His enablement, or our obedience? **Answer:** Both.

What makes our ongoing obedience possible? Our works or the empowerment of the Holy Spirit? **Answer:** The empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

To what is the empowerment of the Holy Spirit applied by the Holy Spirit? ... only one **answer:** The will of God.

There are a lot of reasons why these faith realities have gotten so twisted and confused by modern Christianity. People have, because of professional theology and organizational apologetics, focused upon parts, rather than the whole of being "in Christ" through life in the Spirit. Biblical concepts have been interpreted from our own autobiographical carnal experiences and usage of terminology, rather than permitting these concepts to correct our ideas and values, and rather than understanding how the terminology was understood in its original context.

Salvation is not about preserving self and comforting self and "being all we can be"! No. No, we are called and empowered (by grace through the indwelling Holy Spirit) to be what we were created to be, and to do what we were created to do. Those who seek to develop self-esteem are merely feeding the carnal nature / flesh. If we want peace and joy (quite different from comfort and happiness according to this materialistic, selfish world we live in), we must surrender to God's will by the indwelling empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

One CANNOT become "saved" by doing the discipleship thing. We are only "saved" by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, because of the substitutional work of Jesus Christ, and after being drawn by the Father to a point of repentance! Salvation is NOT initiated by a decision and a magic prayer. But, how can one be "saved" and not follow Jesus? And how can one follow Jesus apart from life in the Spirit and keeping in step with the Spirit?

## 7 Do the Works of Jesus Christ

"As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." John 9.4 (NIV)

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."  
John 14.12 (NIV)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4.18,19 (NIV)

Jesus' anointing sent Him to the poor, the prisoner, the blind and the oppressed. Our agenda is the same as His.

We do not do Jesus' works in our own strength and wisdom, but through the empowerment and leading of the Holy Spirit.

We do not do Jesus' works through worldly institutions, values nor methods. We are called and commissioned to do Jesus works totally within the context of the Kingdom of God and the Gospel.

To reduce Jesus' works into political programs or social programs, apart from Him as the Center of our outreach to the poor and oppressed, is to defame Him.

We are called to "hands on" application of this commission, first in our own community. To simply participate in Jesus' works by "proxy" (giving finances for someone else to do these works) is not fulfillment of His call and commission to each disciple. On the other hand, to simply be focused upon doing Jesus works locally, without supporting needs in other parts of the world, is incomplete and denies God's missionary plan.

Ways to do Jesus' works:

- ° Set aside at least one hour per week to reach out and be Jesus to the needy:
- ° Look for opportunities to help the poor in your neighborhood. Give food, furniture, clothing, and time, rather than money. Help with babysitting and housecleaning and repairs.
- ° Visit a blind person and read for them.
- ° Visit the prisons and pray with the prisoners.
- ° Help in a homeless shelter.
- ° Participate in a literacy program to help adults learn to read and write. Use the Bible as a textbook.

## 8. THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Christian discipleship is a concept that was born when Jesus Christ hand-selected His first followers. A disciple, by definition, is a convinced adherent of a school or individual. In the case of Jesus, His disciples were those who followed Him while He was on earth, as well as those who continue to follow He and His teachings today.

Christian discipleship began, according to John's Gospel, the day after Jesus was baptized (John 1:35-39). According to this passage, the first two men to follow Him heard John the Baptist declare that Jesus was the Lamb of God. Andrew and his friend (most likely John) believed what they heard and followed Jesus. Before long, they were telling others about this amazing Man of God!

Andrew recruited his brother Simon (whom Jesus called Peter); the next day Jesus found Philip in Galilee; Philip found Nathaniel and soon a movement was born. Not everyone came easily or willingly at first. However, before long, Jesus had twelve disciples. Why only twelve? We don't really know that answer, but twelve has become a symbolic number of completion in Scripture. From Jacob came the twelve tribes of Israel, so it's possible this number was intended to represent each tribe.

### **Christian Discipleship - Fulfilling the Great Commission**

Christian discipleship is summed up in the Great Commission. After the resurrection and before He ascended into heaven, Jesus appeared one last time to His disciples (they were eleven in number at that time, since Judas Iscariot had betrayed Jesus and hanged himself). This is the moment that He delivered the famous calling for disciples known as The Great Commission:

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

Christian discipleship continued to grow when the followers of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem and Peter outlined criteria for selecting a twelfth disciple to replace Judas Iscariot. The Scripture says they drew lots and the lot fell to Matthias. These men, who had previously been disciples, or followers of Jesus, were now to become apostles, or messengers. Their intention was to spread the Word, and beginning with Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came and indwelt them for the first time, they did! (See Acts 1 and 2)

### **Christian Discipleship - The Transformation Process**

Christian discipleship is more than being a believer - it's about being a follower! Once we make a decision for Christ, then just like Andrew, John and Peter, we must become His disciples and follow Him. Have you chosen to follow Christ? If so, then you are a modern-day Christian disciple! "But I can't learn personally from Jesus like they did!" you might say. Oh, but you can!

Thanks to the faithfulness of those apostles, who clearly understood their role as messengers of Christ, we have their gospels and letters to go by. Later, when Paul was added to their number (by virtue of his Road to Damascus encounter with the risen Christ), he wrote letters to all the churches he helped create. These books and letters became the New Testament of God's Word, and unlike those first disciples, we have all of Christ's instructions at our fingertips!

### **Christian Discipleship - The Short Course in a Long Journey**

Christian discipleship begins when you make an active choice to get to know Jesus better. By God's grace, it is then accomplished in several ways:

- You can study His Word daily and spend time alone with Him in prayer.
- You can become a member of a Bible-teaching church fellowship.

- You can seek out the companionship of other Christians who are growing with Christ.
- You can participate in ministry and meet the needs of other believers.
- You can share what you're learning about Christ with others, just like Andrew, James, John, Luke, Matthew, Peter, Paul and all the original disciples did.

Like those first twelve, you too can be a believer who becomes a follower and messenger!

### **Disciple of Christ - What Does It Mean to be a True Christian?**

Do you consider yourself to be a disciple of Christ? *"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -- unless indeed you are disqualified"* (2 Corinthians 13:5).

The Bible declares, *"It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment"* (Hebrews 9:27). The Bible also says, *"That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Romans 10:9).

Therefore, to be saved from our sins, and thus from the sting of death, we must: (1) confess Jesus as Lord, and (2) believe that after He died upon the cross for our sins, He was raised from the dead. It goes without saying, that Jesus will not be our Savior apart from us proclaiming Him as sovereign Lord. Part of salvation includes believing in our heart that Jesus Christ is truly Lord over life and death.

### **Disciple of Christ - What Does it Mean to Make Jesus our Sovereign Lord?**

Part of being a disciple of Christ is stewardship and repentance. If God is sovereign, He owns everything. If God owns everything, we own nothing. We don't so much as own the bodies we possess. The Bible says, *"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1 Corinthians 6:20). *"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ?"* (1 Peter 1:18-19).

We don't have ownership rights -- we have management responsibilities. This basic realization is the foundation for Christian stewardship. Good stewardship is the wise management of God's property (you, your health, your money, your time, etc.), including how you invest it as His steward.

One fundamental lesson we as Christians must learn is: God knows best! God knows everything! He loves us as children (adopted into the family through Christ) and has set principles for us to live by in His Word, the Bible. We must follow God's principles. They are for our own protection. We live in a hostile world that has willfully rejected its Creator God, and we, as His children, are not immune to the world's trials, tribulations and temptations. Once we learn this hard lesson, and we outgrow the childish notion that we know better than God, then it's easier to submit to Him and say, "Lord, forgive me, I was wrong... I've been living a life you disapprove of and I want to change. Help me to live the life you approve of." This is the essence of repentance. To repent is to regret your sin, denounce your sin, turn from your sin, and turn to God.

Jesus said, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel"* (Mark 1:15). The Apostles *"went out and preached that people should repent"* (Mark 6:12). Jesus declared, *"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish"* (Luke 13:3,5). *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord..."* (Acts 3:19).

We all want a Savior. To be a disciple of Christ, we need a sovereign Lord. How do we accept Jesus Christ as sovereign Lord? We need to give Him the place in our lives that He deserves and requires, and repent of our old ways. We must be born-again. We all have a choice. We can either live our life the way we please, obeying God and disobeying God as we feel is best, or we

can recognize that Christ alone offers salvation. Christ alone offers a relationship with God. Christ alone offers significance and purpose to life that we can never achieve by our own wisdom or might -- a significance and purpose the world cannot offer. Trust in Jesus Christ for your eternal salvation, and trust that He is truly worthy of first place in your life.

### **Disciple of Christ - So What's a Born-again Christian?**

A disciple of Christ has truly been reborn. A born-again Christian is one who both believes in God AND receives Him. As a result, the believer/receiver is born again into the family of God. "*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*" (John 1:12-13).

### **Disciple of Christ - Test Your Heart!**

A disciple of Christ should constantly check his heart. The Bible warns us, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?*" (Jeremiah 17:9) We are warned about false conversion. How can we be certain we have accepted salvation and surrendered our lives to the Lord? The Bible tells us, "*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -- unless indeed you are disqualified*" (2 Corinthians 13:5).

There are signs -- warning signs to look for -- to determine whether or not we've done what ultimately every born-again Christian has done: surrendered our will to God... not only in our head but also in our heart. Think of it this way, "What is my driving purpose?" Everybody has a driving purpose in life. It's that thing that is tied to how we spend our most valuable commodity -- time. It's that area in our life where, when we're successful we're the most exhilarated, and when we have a set back, we're the most frustrated, even depressed. Take inventory of your life and examine the areas that trigger these highs and lows. You'll discover that these areas are closely tied to your driving purpose. True born-again Christians recognize that Jesus Christ needs to be our driving purpose. While false Christians proclaim Jesus is Lord with their mouths, true Christians proclaim Jesus is Lord with their lives.

As disciples of Christ, we need to surrender all of our lives to Him so that He is central, not just one of many fancies competing for our attention. Once we make the decision to put Christ first, and once we begin making the necessary adjustments to our routine to accommodate this decision, He is faithful to bring about the heart changes. Don't be discouraged immediately when the wicked imaginations of your heart continue to manifest themselves in your mind. Don't think that somehow you're going to change your heart overnight. That's what God does - over time. We can't do it for ourselves. We just submit to Him and ask Him to do that for us. It's called the process of "sanctification," and it continues throughout our entire lives. It becomes a source of great joy in our life as we witness the tremendous changes God makes in our heart. The way we see people and situations will change as God gives us "*the mind of Christ*." (1 Corinthians 2:16)

Romans 7:18 -- 8:14 tells us that while we can't change our hearts ourselves, we can and should ignore our carnal lusts, choosing instead to live for the things of God. "*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:19-25). "*If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ...put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness*" (Ephesians 4:21-24).



### **Disciple of Christ - The Fruit of the Spirit**

For the disciple of Christ, there is a huge difference between just knowing God, and actually submitting ourselves to God for the saving of our souls and the renewing of our minds. The Bible says, *"But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.' You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"* (James 2:18-20) Does this mean we are saved by our works and not by grace of Jesus Christ? Absolutely not. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast"* (Ephesians 2:8-9). No, James is saying that there is a difference between knowing about God and submitting to God. The demons know of God, but they won't willingly submit to Him. On the other hand, Christians both know and willingly submit to God. The good works -- the fruit of the Spirit -- manifests itself in the life of a true believer. If we read the rest of the Ephesians passage about grace we see, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them"* (Ephesians 2:10).

### **Disciple of Christ - How Do I Know That I Am Truly Saved?**

*"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another"* (John 13:35). *"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death"* (1 John 3:14). *"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome"* (1 John 5:2-3).

What are God's commandments for His disciples? In a nutshell - Love!

*"And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these"* (Mark 12:30-31). *"On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets"* (Matthew 22:40).

*"Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law"* (Romans 13:8-10).

Choose God by believing in His Son, Jesus Christ; love God by putting Him first in your life; and love your neighbor by placing his needs over your own. This is the fulfillment of God's Law.

### **Disciple of Christ - A Warning to All of Us!**

Dear disciples of Christ, *"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." And He said to them, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'"* (Mark 4:3-9)

Jesus spoke this parable to the crowd that had gathered. He explains the idioms to His disciples in private: *"And He said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they*

*hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred" (Mark 4:13-20).*

The Devil is intent upon steering you away from faith in God. He wants very much to cause you to doubt your salvation and limit any type of growth in your Christian life. He does this in four obvious ways:

1. Propose teachings and philosophies to deny God even exists (ex. evolutionary theory).
2. Make Christianity look hypocritical and divisive.
3. Supply plenty of false religions and vain philosophies to fill the apparent voids.
4. Distract you with the "lust of the flesh," "the lust of the eyes," and "the pride of life." (1 John 2:16)

We are warned, "*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8). "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18). "Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.' But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the son;" (Hebrews 10:38-39).*

The Bible was written to lead the sinner to repentance and to give the believer encouragement. READ YOUR BIBLE OFTEN! "*These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13). Never doubt in darkness what God has shown you in the light!*

### **Disciple of Christ - Remember the Unique Claims of the Lord**

A disciple of Christ sometimes needs to remind himself of Who his Lord really is. C.S. Lewis and other great Christian thinkers have summed it up well. Jesus Christ made unique and outrageous claims...

***Jesus claimed the right to receive worship from men and angels*** (Matthew 2:2, 2:8, 2:11, 8:2, 9:18, 14:33, 15:25, 28:9, Mark 5:6, Luke 24:52, John 9:38, and Hebrews 1:6); while the Word of God commands us not to worship man or angel, but God alone (Matthew 4:10, Luke 4:6-8, Acts 10:25-26, 12:20-23, 14:11-16, and Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9).

***Jesus claimed to be sinless*** (John 8:46); while the Word of God tells us that no mere man is without sin (Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Romans 3:10,23).

***Jesus claimed the power to forgive sins*** (Mark 2:5-12; Luke 7:46-50); but the Word of God tells us that only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7).

***Jesus claimed to be higher than all other ties, including family ties*** -- He claimed the right to a greater allegiance (Matthew 10:37; Luke 14:26).

***Jesus claimed that He would judge the world*** (John 5:17-23; Matthew 7:21-23; 25:31-32).

***Jesus claimed to give eternal life*** (John 6:47-51,58).

**Jesus claimed to be Almighty God, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End** (John 8:58, 14:8-9; 20:26-29; Also compare, Revelation 1:8,13-18, 21:4-7; 22:6-7,12-16,20).

These claims do not prove that Jesus Christ is God. That's only one of three legitimate options:

1. Jesus was a LIAR (He wanted people to think He was God though He really wasn't); or
2. Jesus was a LUNATIC (He honestly thought He was God though He really wasn't); or
3. Jesus was, and is, sovereign LORD (He was who He claimed to be, God the Son -- God Almighty).

These claims logically rule out the following options:

1. Jesus was a good man but not God (if He wasn't God, He was either crazy or a relentless liar).
2. Jesus was a great teacher but not God (if He wasn't teaching the truth, He was either crazy or a relentless liar).
3. Jesus was a profound prophet but not God (if His claims weren't true, and He was merely a lunatic or a liar, He was certainly nothing more than a false prophet).

### **Disciple of Christ - Remember the Power of Your Decision for Christ!**

Disciples of Christ: If you decide Jesus is worth anything, then you must decide Jesus is worth everything! Being worth everything, Jesus is worthy of being first in your life! As such, be very careful whose authority you submit to. Be very careful about which "Bible teachers" you listen to. The Bible warns us, "*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit*" (Matthew 7:15-17). Further, we read, "*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves*" (Acts 20:28-30).

Disciples of Christ: How can you tell right from wrong? **READ YOUR BIBLE!** "*To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*" (Isaiah 8:20).

### **Summarizing: What is Christian Discipleship?**

By definition, discipleship is a follower, one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. A Christian disciple is a person who accepts and assist in the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is a process which enables a person to grow in the Lord Jesus Christ and equips them to overcome joyfully the pressures and trials of this present life. This process requires believers to constantly examine their thoughts, words and actions in accordance with the Word of God. We should always be ready to give testimony for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15) and disciple others to walk in His way.

According to Scripture, being a Christian discipleship involves personal growth characterized by the following:

1. Putting Jesus first in all things (Mark 8:34-38).

This requires a change in our lives and choices that may be difficult at times. We need and should be set apart from the world. Our focus needs to be on our Lord and pleasing Him in every area of our life. We must put off self-centeredness and put on Christ-centeredness.

2. By following Jesus' teachings (John 8:31-32).

We must be obedient children and doers of the Word. Obedience is the supreme test of faith in God (1 Samuel 28:18) and Jesus is the perfect example of obedience as he lived a life on earth of complete obedience to the Father even to the point of death (Philippians 3:6-8).

3. By fruitfulness (John 15:5-8).

While our job is not producing fruit but is to abide in Christ and the Holy Spirit produces the fruit, this fruit is the result of our obedience. As we become more obedient to the Lord and learn to walk in His ways, our life will change. The biggest change will take place in our hearts and the overflow of this will be new conduct (thoughts, words and actions) representative of these changes.

4. By love for other disciples (John 13:34-35).

We are told that love of other believers is the evidence of our being a member of God's family (1 John 3:10). Love is defined and elaborated on in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. In examining these verses, we see that love is not an emotion; it is action. We must be doing something and involved in the process. Furthermore, we are told to think more highly of others than ourselves and to look out for their interests (Philippians 2:3,4). If we go on to look at the next verse in Philippians (verse 5) this really sums up what we are to do when it comes to everything - "our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus". What a perfect example He is to us for everything we are to do in our Christian walk.

5. Evangelism - Making disciples of others (Matthew 28:18-20).

We are to share our faith and tell nonbelievers about the wonderful changes Jesus Christ has made in our lives. No matter what our maturity level is in Christ, we have something to offer. Too often, we believe the lie from Satan that we don't really know enough or haven't been a Christian long enough to make a difference. Not true! Some of the most enthusiastic representatives of the Christian life are new believers who have just discovered the awesome love of God for them. They may not know a lot of bible verses or the "accepted" way of saying things, but they have experienced the love of the living God of this world and that is exactly what we are to share.

## 9. THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is costly. The Scriptures are clear that to be a disciple in the fullest sense of the term means that a person must pay a price. There is no view of discipleship which would disagree with this conclusion. However, the disagreement comes over whether the conditions for costly discipleship are also conditions for salvation. This critical difference is the subject of this third and last article in my series on discipleship.

### **The Cost of Discipleship - "Sit Down First and Count the Cost"**

What is the cost of discipleship? Jesus said, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it - lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:28-33). "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:25-26)

### **The Cost of Discipleship - Paul Knew the Cost**

The Apostle Paul understood the cost of discipleship! He was a man who enjoyed great prominence among the Jewish elite, but forsook all for the love of Christ! Paul declared, "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith." (Philippians 3:7-9)

### **The Cost of Discipleship - From Carnal to Christian**

The cost of discipleship is this: We must each give up our old selves in order to embrace and become the person Christ has created us to be. Therefore "put off the old man with his deeds" (Colossians 3:9-10), for "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

"The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:14), rather, "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7). But even though "we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3), "You, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight" (Colossians 1:21-22). Thus, having been "reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans 5:10), you have received "exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4). Therefore, "do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16). "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor" (John 12:25-26).

### **The Cost of Discipleship – Price Paid**

The cost of discipleship is totally reasonable in light of the gift we've been given! "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Simply put, you were "bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20). "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2:11-14).

## **I. The Issue**

If the conditions of discipleship are also conditions of salvation, then every Christian is, by definition, a disciple, and salvation, by definition, is costly. If these conditions are not conditions for salvation, then the issue of discipleship must be distinguished from the issue of salvation so that discipleship is truly costly and salvation, truly free. We will now survey the two opposing views.

### **A. The "Costly Grace" View**

The view that salvation is costly received its modern impetus from the German theologian and activist Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who expressed his views in the book *The Cost of Discipleship*, first published in English in 1949. He wrote of "costly grace" as opposed to "cheap grace," which he described as "Grace without price; grace without cost," or "grace without discipleship." To him, costly grace is inseparable from discipleship:

The only man who has the right to say that he is justified by grace alone is the man who left all to follow Christ. Such a man knows that the call to discipleship is a gift of grace, and that the call is inseparable from grace.

Bonhoeffer's concept of "costly grace" has appealed to many who think it is the answer to the apathy and worldliness of contemporary Christians. The proponents of Lordship Salvation have naturally taken interest in costly discipleship as a solution to the growing number of people who profess to be Christians but who do not live up to their profession. Poe states, "The concern for discipleship did not emerge as a theoretical concept in an academic setting, rather it resulted from the phenomenon of people claiming to be Christians who have no interest in the things of Christ." Lordship proponents solve this problem by demanding that sinners pay a price for their salvation, the price of submission and obedience. J. I. Packer's statement exemplifies the Lordship position:

In our own presentation of Christ's gospel, therefore, we need to lay a similar stress on the cost of following Christ, and make sinners face it soberly before we urge them to respond to the message of free forgiveness. In common honesty, we must not conceal the fact that free forgiveness in one sense will cost everything.

In their thinking, the cost of salvation includes the many conditions laid down by Christ for becoming a disciple, since in their opinion, salvation and discipleship are one and the same.

Though Lordship proponents have no reservations about calling salvation costly, they maintain adamantly that salvation is not of works, but a free gift. The "costly but free" contradiction is explained as a theological "paradox."

## **B. The "Free Grace" View**

It is difficult for those who oppose the concept of "costly grace" to understand how its proponents do not teach works salvation, or at the least, how they are not engaging in theological double-talk. Though labeled a position of "cheap grace" by Lordship Salvation teachers, we prefer to call our position more accurately *Free Grace* because it emphasizes the freeness of salvation and the simplicity of faith.

The Free Grace position holds that salvation and discipleship are separate issues. Salvation concerns the *sinner's* acceptance of the free gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins through faith alone. Discipleship concerns the *believer's* response to the grace received by offering himself to God in submission, obedience, and sacrifice. In salvation, Christ paid the price; in discipleship, the believer pays the price. Therefore, salvation is free, but discipleship is costly. Because they are separate issues, there is no contradiction.

In the previous articles of this series, we have defended the Free Grace view that discipleship is separate from salvation. This was done by studying the terms for discipleship in the NT and by showing that the call to *salvation* is not the same as the call to *discipleship*. This article will study the conditions for becoming a disciple in the Gospels and will show that they cannot be conditions for salvation.

## **II. The Conditions of Discipleship**

The teachings of Jesus Christ make it plain that discipleship is costly. The matter to be determined is whether the passages which specify the cost of discipleship speak of the requirements for salvation or of a post-salvation commitment to our Lord. The basic conditions of discipleship were given by Christ after Peter's well-known confession and Christ's prediction of His death and resurrection and the story of His transfiguration. The focus of this section will be largely upon the parallel passages Matt 16:24-27, Mark 8:34-38, and Luke 9:23-26. Other conditions discussed are those found in Matt 10:37//Luke 14:26; Luke 14:33; and John 8:30-31.

## **A. The Conditions at Peter's Confession, Matthew 16:24-27//Mark 8:34-38//Luke 9:23-26**

Before the conditions themselves are studied, a consideration of their context will be valuable. The occasion and audience will help determine the purposes of Jesus' hard sayings about discipleship.

### 1. The Background

The Lordship interpretation of Jesus' teaching about discipleship assumes an evangelistic occasion. The context shows that the occasion of these sayings is significantly linked to the prediction of Christ's passion and resurrection and His rebuke of Peter. Matthew and Mark's account record Peter's rebuke of Christ and Christ's response: "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men" (Matt 16:23//Mark 8:33).

Jesus' rebuke demonstrates to the disciples that He must suffer and be killed as part of God's will for Him (Matt 16:21//Mark 8:31//Luke 9:22). There was, for Christ, a price to be paid in following God's will to completion and His own glorification. Peter's rebuke of Christ essentially denies that God's will requires such a price. Jesus' subsequent rebuke categorizes this perspective as satanic.

The conditions of discipleship then follow contextually ("Then" [*Tote*], Matt 16:24) as the price which must be paid to follow the will of God to completion and share in Christ's glory. In view of the Lord's imminent death, departure, and glorification, these conditions show the way by which the will of God can be fully realized in Christ's absence.

The audience is also significant. Matthew indicates that Jesus addressed His sayings to none other than the twelve disciples (Matt 16:24). Mark says that Jesus "called the people (*ochlos*) to Him, with His disciples also" (Mark 8:34). The *crowd* is not specifically identified, but in Mark's use of *ochlos*, when there is enough evidence to determine their disposition, the crowd with Jesus is presented as at least curious enough to follow Him. More often, they are characterized as enthusiastic followers, teachable, exhibiting faith in their midst, and sometimes seeming totally sympathetic to Christ as if they were believers. Luke records that Jesus spoke "to them all" (Luke 9:23), the nearest antecedent of which is the Twelve (Luke 9:18), but possibly He spoke to the Twelve *and* the multitudes. In Luke 12:1 Jesus is described as teaching His disciples "first" in the presence of an "innumerable multitude." It is therefore reasonable to assume that in the Synoptics, when Jesus spoke to the multitudes (who to various degrees were followers), He was first teaching His twelve disciples, and secondarily His other followers.

If Jesus addressed primarily His twelve disciples, who (except for Judas) were definitely saved, and the crowds who were at least sympathetic or at most contained many followers whose exact commitment to Christ is left undefined, then it is reasonable to assume these sayings should apply to the issues of a deeper relationship with Him and not



to salvation. It would be pointless for the Synoptic authors (especially Matthew) to focus on the disciples if these were conditions of salvation. We would expect such conditions to be announced when the disciples first met Jesus. A brief examination of each of these conditions will demonstrate whether they apply more appropriately to the Christian life or to salvation.

## 2. The Conditions

The conditions must be interpreted in light of the preceding prediction of Jesus' suffering and death. As it cost Jesus to follow the Father's will, so it would cost His disciples to do the same. As we shall see, sometimes there is agreement about the substance of the condition on the part of Lordship and Free Grace expositors. But the focus of the debate is on whether these are conditions for salvation or for a deeper commitment of discipleship.

Also, it should be noted that the requirements are for anyone who desires to "come after" Christ (Matt 16:24//Mark 8:34//Luke 9:23). As noted in previous articles, "come after" (*opiso elthein*) denotes discipleship. It clearly describes a process, not an event; a committed life of following *after* Jesus rather than coming to (*proselthein*) Him for salvation. The conditions for those who would "come after" Christ will be considered individually, then collectively.

"*Deny himself*" This is best interpreted by what the disciples have just heard about Christ's fate. Jesus was about to submit Himself and His own desires to the desire of the Father for Him, which was suffering and death. To deny oneself refers contextually to being mindful of the things of God, not the things of man (Matt 16:23//Mark 8:33). In Stott's understanding, one "must repudiate himself and his right to organize his own life." Gentry argues the significance in relation to salvation: "A person who truly receives Christ as Savior is in effect denying himself and his wants as nothing and Christ as everything."

While Stott and Gentry understand the substance of the saying, their application of this condition to salvation does not coincide with the real issue in salvation, which is the forgiveness of sin and justification of the sinner. But in harmony with the context, Jesus is not addressing these issues here. He speaks of denying oneself that which would obstruct the fulfillment of God's will in the course of following Him. In the passages that deal unquestionably with eternal salvation, there is no mention of self-denial, or one's "right to organize his own life," or one's "denying himself his wants" as a requirement for salvation.

"*Take up his cross.*" Stott argues that to take up the cross is to make oneself as a condemned man, apparently in the sense of living for Christ instead of self. Boice sees cross-bearing as "saying yes to something for Jesus' sake." Specifically, Boice declares that cross-bearing involves prayer, Bible study, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, receiving strangers, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, visiting prisoners, and witnessing. In light of the context, it appears that Jesus is expecting the disciples to suffer

hardships in order to do God's will just as He does by submitting to the Cross. For Him and for the disciples, it meant they were like men condemned to die, who carry their cross-beams to the place of execution in submission to a higher authority. If this is applied to unbelievers, then the Gospel message is a demand to be willing to die for Jesus.

Stott's interpretation and Gentry's practical considerations may be correct, but that they refer to a condition of salvation for unbelievers is untenable, for then salvation would be by suffering, by a willingness to die for Christ, and thus by works, as Boice's particulars demonstrate. This contradicts the Scriptures which speak of the necessity of *Jesus Christ* suffering so that sinners could be saved apart from works. The sinner's willingness to suffer is not a condition of justification. Also, the unbeliever has no cross in the sense of self-mortification (contra Stott), for he is already dead in sins (Eph. 2:1-2); nor do unbelievers, by definition, have a cross in the sense of Christian duties (contra Boice).

Furthermore, Luke adds the qualifier "daily," which shows this could not refer to salvation because it refers to something that is done repeatedly. Stott is right when he declares, "Every day the Christian is to die. Every day he renounces the sovereignty of his own will. Every day he renews his unconditional surrender to Jesus Christ." But Stott speaks here of "the Christian." If this characterizes saving faith and is a condition for salvation, as Lordship proponents insist, one must repeatedly place his faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord through daily surrender. In other words, salvation would not occur at a point in time. Such a condition is not found elsewhere in the Bible and makes both salvation and assurance impossible.

"*Follow Me.*" As discussed in both previous articles, this phrase speaks of discipleship and denotes the pupil/master relationship. Here Jesus invests the term with the significance of following Him by obeying God's will, that is, by self-denial and taking up the cross, as Stott agrees. Because following another person is a process, a progression, and requires time, this condition cannot speak of entrance into salvation. This would promote salvation by the imitation of Christ or by adherence to His example, which would be a salvation of works. It is best taken as a term that describes a continuously committed lifestyle.

"*Loses his life.*" An explanatory statement ("For") follows the three conditions. Jesus says, "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it" (Luke 9:24; cf. Matt 16:25//Mark 8:35; and Matt 10:39). To lose one's life explains in summary form what it means to deny oneself, take up one's cross, and follow Jesus Christ in submission to God's will. The background of Jesus losing His life physically (on the Cross) and thus metaphorically (to the will of God) has been observed in the previous context (Matt 16:21//Mark 8:31//Luke 9:22). Therefore, those who are to be disciples must also lose their lives to the will of God. This will involve the three conditions just mentioned: denial of one's own desires, suffering in obedience, and continuous following of Christ in the will of God.

The denial of one's own desires in order to obey the will of God is amplified by the following rhetorical question: "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world,

and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt 16:26; cf. Mark 8:36// Luke 9:25). If a man chose *not* to deny himself and *not* to pursue the will of God, but to pursue his own selfish and worldly desires, he would lose his soul (i.e., his life).

Here some point to the phrase "save his life" and "loses his own soul," and the consequence "destroyed" or "lost" (in Luke) to say that the passage speaks of eternal salvation. However, the verb *save* (*sozo*) often does not refer to eternal salvation. It is probably used here in the general sense of "rescue, preserve from danger" or "deliver," i.e., save from a life of self-denial and cross-bearing, for this thought explains ("For," *gar*) the impact of the previous conditions.

Likewise, "life" (*psyche*) does not automatically refer to the eternal soul only. The parallel in Luke 9:25 replaces Matthew and Mark's "life" with "himself" (*heauton*). The noun *psyche* is frequently used in Scripture in the sense of the essential life of man. Contrary to other Lordship proponents, Stott recognizes this meaning. Speaking of the word *psyche* he correctly observes,

The word for "life" here means neither our physical existence, nor our soul, but our self. *The psyche* is the ego, the human personality which thinks, feels, plans and chooses... The man who commits himself to Christ, therefore, loses himself, not by the absorption of his personality in Christ's personality but by the submission of his will to Christ's will.

Furthermore, unless the context is clearly proved to be soteriological, the verbs "destroyed" (*apollymi* in Matthew) and "lost" (*zemiōo*, in Matthew and Luke) should retain their respective general meanings of "ruin, destroy, lose" and "suffer damage or loss, forfeit, sustain injury." When Jesus says "whoever loses his life for My sake," the sense is certainly not eternal destruction, for He says this one will then "find it," which is something good. Conversely, it fits well that what one may lose when he tries to save his life (preserve himself from the hardships of self-denial and cross-bearing) is life in the essential qualitative sense (i.e., experiencing God's life in this life, John 17:3), not the eternal soul.

The paradox Jesus used has great meaning. What He appears to be saying is this: "Whoever desires to preserve himself from the hardships of God's will of self-denial and cross-bearing will in fact forfeit the essential quality (= true spiritual value) of the present life he is trying to preserve. On the other hand, whoever forfeits himself to God's will of self-denial and hardships will discover the greater essential quality (spiritual value) of the present life he was willing to forfeit." This interpretation would therefore not describe eternal salvation, but a higher quality of experience with God in this life, with implications for the eschatological life, as the next section will show.

"Whoever is ashamed of Me." Mark and Luke state a negative condition that if anyone is ashamed of Christ and His words, Christ will also be ashamed of that person at His coming (Mark 8:38//Luke 9:26). Matthew 16:27 does not mention shame, but can be

correlated with Matt 10:32-33, where the condition is stated in terms of confessing and denying Christ, and is claimed to be a condition of salvation by Lordship teachers.

The idea of being ashamed of Christ or denying Christ is clarified in some contexts more than in others. In Luke this saying follows a warning about one who positions himself with the world for the sake of gain (Luke 9:25). It thus explains ("For," *gar*) the eschatological consequences which face those who desire the world. The same could be said of this saying in Mark 8:38, with the exception that Jesus adds the helpful phrase "in this adulterous and sinful generation." The shame therefore seems to imply a denial of one's identification with Christ in the face of the pressure to live for and identify with the world. In Mark the "For" appears to connect v 38 with v 35, expanding the idea of one's relation to this world and its consequences.

Perhaps the greatest clarification comes from the parallel thought of Matt 10:32-33, where the context is developed more fully. There Jesus is giving instructions to the Twelve before sending them out to preach the Gospel (Matt 10:5ff.). He warns of rejection and persecution (vv 16-25) and encourages them not to fear (vv 26-31). Verses 32-33 are also followed by similar warnings about rejection (vv 34-36). In vv 32-33 Jesus is both encouraging and warning in the face of the fear of persecution. He wants the disciples to know that anyone who identifies with Him will be rewarded, while anyone who shrinks from this will be denied by Christ before the Father (explained below). Matthew's context seems a close parallel to that which is signified by Mark's phrase "in this adulterous and sinful generation" (Mark 8:38).

The consequence facing someone who is ashamed of or denies Christ is more enigmatic. Does Christ's reciprocal shame and denial of that person at His coming denote a denial of salvation? In correlating Matt 10:32-33 with 16:27, it is clear that the issue is some kind of recompense for one's works. Matthew takes care to state that at His coming, Christ "will reward (*apodosei*) each according to his works" (16:27). That Jesus makes works the basis of the recompense demands that salvation not be the issue (Eph 2:8-9). Also, the verb *apodosei* carries the idea of "recompense" with no inherent sense of whether it is good or bad, so it could speak of positive reward or negative judgment. In Mark and Luke a negative recompense is suggested: Those who were too ashamed to identify with Christ will experience Christ's shame. The effect of Christ's shame is not specified, but one could surmise that for a redeemed and now fully-enlightened believer, this would at least produce agonizing regret. In the parallel passage, Matt 10:32-33, the idea of recompense is good (v 32) or bad (v 33) accordingly. Christ's confession (or lack of it) in heaven would not relate to the judgment of our salvation, but to an acknowledgment (or lack of it) before the Father of the disciples' unity or fellowship with Christ which is recompensed in an unspecified but appropriate way. (However, one might compare 2 Tim 2:12, where reigning with Christ is the specific reward.)

### 3. The Conclusions from These Conditions

Collectively, all the conditions studied thus far in this section are summarized by Lordship advocates as demands for submission to Christ as Lord for salvation. Stott summarizes them under the concept of following Christ:

Thus, in order to follow Christ, we have to deny ourselves, to crucify ourselves, to lose ourselves. The full inexorable demand of Jesus Christ is now laid bare. He does not call us to a sloppy half-heartedness, but to a vigorous, absolute commitment. He invites us to make Him our Lord.

Likewise, MacArthur concludes,

Faith is not an experiment, but a lifelong commitment. It means taking up the cross daily, giving all for Christ each day with no reservations, no uncertainty, no hesitation. It means nothing is knowingly held back, nothing purposely shielded from His lordship, nothing stubbornly kept from His control.

Plainly, the conditions understood by Lordship advocates are absolute, all or nothing. In essence, there is little disagreement with the interpretations of the demands themselves, only with the application of them to salvation instead of the Christian life.

Lordship Salvation teachers will object to the charge that applying these conditions to unbelievers is works oriented. But their interpretation of the conditions cannot evade the charge of salvation by merit. It makes no sense to demand from unbelieving sinners a decision that assumes an understanding of the full significance of Christ's sacrifice, especially at this point in the Gospel narratives before His death. (Would Jesus ask an unbeliever to be willing to die for Him?) This would practically preclude anyone from being saved unless he understood the meanings of these conditions—meanings which can best be appreciated in light of salvation, not in prospect of it.

Jesus' teaching on discipleship took place well into His ministry and was addressed primarily to His disciples as a further revelation of the kind of commitment He desired of His already saved followers. He explained these conditions against the background of His own commitment that would lead to His death in order to invest them with the fullest significance for those who also desired to follow God's will.

## **B. Other Conditions**

Some other conditions will be considered briefly. Again, the main issue is not usually the interpretation of the condition itself, but whether it applies to Christians or non-Christians.

### **1. Hate Your Family (Matt 10:37//Luke 14:26)**

In another setting, Matthew and Luke add another condition to those already considered. In Matthew's account, Jesus says the one who "loves" family more than Him is "not worthy" of Him. In Luke, Jesus says no one can be His disciple who does not "hate" his

family and his own life. This condition is troublesome for many whether it speaks of salvation or of a deeper commitment.

As Beare asserts, Jesus was probably using a Semitic figure of speech:

This is the more Semitic manner of speaking—Luke's words are the literal translation of an Aramaic original; but the verb "hate" does not carry its full sense. It means no more than "love less", and Matthew has turned this into the positive—not that they must love the immediate family less than Jesus, but they must love Him more. Loyalty to the Master must override even the closest family ties.

Jesus must be the object of one's supreme love and devotion if one is to be His disciple. But in both Matthew and Luke, the words are applied to believers only. In Matthew, the saying is in the context of a warning about family members who will be divided over Christ (10:34-35). In such a situation, a person who is convinced that Jesus is the Messiah will have his ongoing loyalty tested by those in the family who disagree. This would present a great temptation to choose family ties and harmony over one's identity with Christ. In Luke, the saying is applied to anyone who "comes to" Jesus, which denotes those who believe in Him, as noted earlier.

Therefore, MacArthur rightly interprets the meaning of the idiom itself, "We must be unquestionably loyal to Him." However, this interpretation does not apply to the unsaved, for one more naturally learns love and loyalty on the basis of what Jesus has done in redemption and forgiveness. The Bible teaches that God offers salvation to people as sinners, that is, apart from their love and loyalty to Christ (Rom 5:6-8; I John 4:10). Even thus softened (as a Semitic figure of speech), such a devoted love for God over blood relationships would be an extraordinary demand for sinners who have had no experience of Christ's redeeming love.

Furthermore, it cannot speak of salvation because Matthew records that any loyalty that preempts loyalty to Christ makes or shows one to be "not worthy" of Christ (Matt 10:37). The statement about unworthiness seems to imply the converse, that one can be worthy of Christ. However, the unsaved are unworthy of Christ and His salvation because they do not believe, not because they are loyal to family ahead of Christ. Conversely, no amount of loyalty to God or any other form of good deed makes a sinner worthy of Christ's righteousness. One can only be worthy for rewards.

Like the previous demands, this demand cannot speak of salvation. It is truth which brings believers into a deeper relationship with Jesus as Lord through their loyalty to Him.

## 2. Forsake All (Luke 14:33)

Another condition that Jesus gives is that "Whoever does not forsake all... cannot be My disciple." It shares the same context as the condition discussed above (Luke 14:27) and is therefore addressed to believers. Following the illustrations of a builder and of a king who did not make the necessary provision to finish their commitments, this condition

demands that a believer commit or surrender whatever possessions are necessary in order for him to follow God's will. "All that he has" translates *pasi tois heautou hyparchousin* which speaks of one's property or possessions.

The condition is in absolute terms. Perhaps realizing the difficulty of making this a demand for unbelievers who wish to be saved, Lordship Salvation teachers sometimes soften this and other conditions to a *willingness* to forsake all. MacArthur says,

Do we literally have to give away everything we own to become Christians? No, but we *do* have to be willing to forsake all (Luke 14:33), meaning we cling to nothing that takes precedence over Christ (emphasis his).

But Jesus did not say one must only be *willing*. Even if one only had to be willing to do these things for salvation, salvation would be just as conditional and meritorious as if they were actual works. This negates the concept of grace (Rom 4:4). Furthermore, the subjectivity of willingness makes salvation elusive, as Zuck notes:

Willingness to do something is not the same thing as actually doing it, and it does not answer the question, "How much commitment is necessary?" If lordship proponents do not mean a person must surrender *everything* to be saved, then why do they say *all* must be surrendered?

### 3. Abide in His Word (John 8:30-31)

This passage will be considered because it is usually thought to be a condition of discipleship spoken to unbelievers. Speaking of Jesus' ministry, John writes, "As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed.'" Many commentators assign Jesus' words to those who had a counterfeit or spurious faith. For example, Morris states,

This section of discourse is addressed to those who believe, and yet do not believe. Clearly they are inclined to think that what Jesus said was true. But they were not prepared to yield Him the far-reaching allegiance that real trust in Him implies.

However, the passage is best understood as a condition of discipleship directed to true believers, as can be shown.

It is argued that "believed Him" in v 31 indicates inadequate faith by the use of *pisteuo* ("believe") without the preposition *eis* ("in"). But it is obvious that those addressed in v 31 are the same as those in v 30 who "believed in Him" (*pisteuo eis auton*), which is a strong term denoting salvation. Also, there is overwhelming evidence that *pisteuo* without the preposition does not prove that faith is inadequate for salvation. Salvation is clearly meant in v 24 where *pisteuo* with no preposition is used when Jesus states, "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

It is also argued that the hostility of these believers continues (vv 33ff.), and Jesus calls them children of the devil (v 44). This continuing hostility reflects the opposition of the Jews, which is a major motif of this section.

In light of what has been argued thus far, vv 31-32 show Jesus briefly directing His attention to those Jews who were saved as He taught in the temple. John's commentary in v 30 is inserted before Jesus' remarks to direct the reader to a change of focus by Christ before the opposition resumes in v 33 as a reaction to Christ's remarks.<sup>51</sup> As soon as He finishes His remarks to these believers, the Jews raise another objection, just as they have been doing from the start of the dialogue (cf. 8:13, 19,22,25). The objection of v 33, being totally out of character with the inclination of those mentioned in vv 31 and 32, shows that the identity of those in v 33 is assumed to be the antagonistic unbelieving Jews, not the new believers.

This interpretation is most reasonable because it prevents Christ, who says in v 45 "you do not believe Me," from contradicting John, who said they "believed in Him" and "believed Him" (vv 30-31). It also has greater exegetical and theological consistency than that view which would say these are "believers who did not really believe."

The condition for becoming disciples in v 31 should not be construed as an admonition to unbelievers. In fact, the opposite is indicated by the emphatic plural pronoun "you" (*hymeis*) which distinguishes the new believers from the rest of the Jews. Also, Jesus' admonition is not to *enter* His word, but to *abide* (*meno*) or continue in it. The assumption that they are already in His word indicates that abiding is a condition for further knowledge of the truth and freedom in Christ. Discipleship, as abiding in intimacy with Christ, is elsewhere in John made conditional on love and obedience (e.g., 13:35; 14:15, 21, 23; 15:4, 7, 10, 14).

### **III. The Difference Between Discipleship and Salvation**

Synthesizing the observations of this and the previous two articles, we find a clear distinction between committed discipleship and salvation. These differences between simple salvation and discipleship cannot be ignored: Salvation is a free gift; intimate discipleship is costly. Salvation relates primarily to Christ as Savior; discipleship relates primarily to Christ as Lord. Salvation involves the will of God in redemption and reconciliation; discipleship involves the whole will of God. Salvation's sole condition is "believe"; discipleship's conditions are abide, obey, love, deny oneself, take up the cross, follow, lose one's life, "hate" one's family, etc. Salvation is a new birth; discipleship is a lifetime of growth. Salvation depends on Christ's work on the Cross for all people; discipleship depends on a believer carrying his or her cross for Christ. Salvation is a response to Christ's death and resurrection; discipleship is a response to Christ's life. Salvation determines eternal destiny; discipleship determines eternal and temporal rewards. Salvation is obtained by faith; discipleship is obtained by faith through works.



The difference is the same as that between justification and sanctification. These realities are related, but we do not encourage sanctification before justification. Justification is through faith alone; sanctification is through a life of progressive faithful obedience. Justification can take place apart from sanctification, but sanctification cannot take place apart from justification. With justification comes the Spirit and His power to accomplish sanctification.

The sequence of justification before sanctification, salvation before discipleship, or faith before commitment is clearly taught in the Bible. Many verses appeal for commitment on the basis of grace already received (e.g., Rom 12:1; Eph 4:1; Col2:6). The teaching of Titus 2:11-12 is especially relevant because it explicitly relates grace to the believer's sanctification. This passage shows that commitment and obedience come in retrospective response to grace, not in prospective anticipation of it:

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.

The grace received in salvation is the basis of further Christian commitment, not vice versa. It is significant that Paul uses a verb to express the idea of training that is different from the idea usually related to discipleship expressed by *matheteuo*. The verb he chooses (*paideuo*, "teach") is rooted in the Greek idea of training a child (*paidion*). Grace, when received, takes an immature person and trains him toward godliness. This and other NT admonitions to commit one's life to godly principles on the basis of grace received would seem superfluous if such a commitment was understood and made before salvation. The commitment of discipleship is expected of Christians only.

The difference between discipleship and salvation cannot, therefore, be called a paradox. If salvation could somehow be free but costly, then this might be called a paradox. But this attempt by the Lordship Salvation position to maintain theological orthodoxy (justification by faith alone) while demanding a price from the sinner (costly grace) cannot be biblically justified. Romans 11:6 makes works and grace mutually exclusive, as does Rom 4:5: "Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt" (cf. Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7). It may cost to *be* or continue as a Christian, but not to *become* a Christian. To cite biblical examples where the Gospel is presented without cost would be superfluous.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Our examination of the conditions of discipleship given in the Gospels show that they are directed toward challenging believers to live lives of obedience, surrender, sacrifice, and self-denial. There is not the slightest evidence that they are intended for unbelievers. To make them so confuses the freeness of the Gospel and nullifies the grace of God in salvation.

Discipleship is indeed costly, but the cost can only be paid in response to the grace received at salvation. As a believer understands the sacrifice of God for his redemption, he will want to respond to the grace given with a reciprocal commitment. As he learns to also sacrifice, obey, and deny himself, he will become more like the Savior who exemplifies these things.

Salvation is by grace; discipleship is costly. The popularized term "costly grace" does *not* present a paradox, but an *absurdity*. It is as much a misnomer as "cheap grace."

There is only one kind of grace, and by definition it is absolutely free! The only sense in which salvation is costly is in the fact that Jesus Christ paid the supreme price, His life, for the sinner's redemption. Unfortunately, this is not the focus of Lordship teaching, which finds cost in the human conditions for salvation. To the sinner, salvation is absolutely free. If it were costly to him in any sense, then it could no longer be of grace and Christianity would take its place alongside the rest of the world's religions.

## **10. New Testament Terms for Discipleship**

Two primary Greek words refer to the concept of discipleship in the New Testament, i.e., the verb and the noun . Two secondary Greek words add to the basic concept, i.e., the noun and the verb . These four words provide the basic information from which the concept of discipleship is built from the New Testament. As an inductive study of their historical and Biblical contexts will prove, the concept of discipleship is radically different than most contemporary models.

### **To Follow After**

The Greek word occurs 90 times in the New Testament: 79 in the Gospels, 4 in Acts, 1 in First Corinthians and 6 times in Revelation, usually translated "to follow after." This term most often denotes the action of someone answering the call of Jesus, whose whole life is redirected in obedience.

Sometimes in the New Testament, the term is used in the plural and indicative mood of statement (e.g., ) to refer to crowds of people who followed Jesus without conviction or commitment. This is simply a physical following, without personal dedication. They may have followed out of curiosity or for the purpose of investigating His claims to be the Christ, but they had not as yet made a crisis commitment to His lordship. For example...

And there *followed him* great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan. (cf. Matthew 4:25)

When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes *followed him*. (cf. Matthew 8:1)

And the multitudes that went before, and that *followed*, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. (cf. Matthew 21:9)

And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they *followed*, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him. (cf. Mark 10:32)

When the term is used of individuals (i.e., in the singular) and especially in the imperative mood as a command (e.g., Jesus says, ) the term refers to at least the initial stages of conviction and commitment. Some examples from the Gospel of Matthew include:

And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, *Follow me*; and let the dead bury their dead. (cf. Matthew 8:21-22)

And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, *Follow me*. And he arose, and *followed him*. (cf. Matthew 9:9)

And he that taketh not his cross, and *followeth* after me, is not worthy of me. (cf. Matthew 10:38)

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and *follow me*. (cf. Matthew 16:24)

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and *follow me*. (cf. Matthew 19:21)

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and *followed* thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have *followed me*, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

We have selected these examples from the Gospel of Matthew in particular, for discipleship is there given special emphasis. Not only does Matthew conclude with the Great Commission of disciple making (cf. 28:19-20), but anchors the content of its teaching to the words of Jesus Christ, i.e., the five major sermons recorded in Matthew. cf. Matt. 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 24-25. If there it at least includes these specific words of Jesus. Wilkins concludes:

Matthew's gospel is at least in part a manual on discipleship. With all of the major discourses directed at least in part to the mathetai [i.e., *disciples*], with the term arranged in such a way that most of the sayings directed to the disciples have become teachings on discipleship, with the positive yet realistic enhancement of the picture of the disciples, and with disciples called and trained and commissioned to carry out the climactic mandates to "make disciples" in the conclusion of the gospel, Matthew has constructed a gospel that will equip the disciples in the making of disciples .

As a general rule, one who takes up the new calling to follow Jesus Christ is likewise called to give up the old way of life. cf. Mark 1:16ff.; 10:17ff.; Matt. 9:9. Hence, there is both a turning away from something and a turning toward something, i.e., a turning from sin, self and a life of disobedience with a turning toward righteousness, the Lord and life of obedience to God.

Central to the Gospel command of Jesus was His call to , which involved both self-denial and the willingness to suffer. cf. Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23;14:27, 33; and Matt. 10:38; 16:24. This metaphorical refers to the participation in salvation offered by Jesus, the participation of obedient living and the participation to suffer persecution for the Gospel sake. The one following Jesus must be willing to suffer anything for the advancement of the Kingdom. And as Luke adds, this willingness to suffer is . (cf. Luke 9:23) Disciples must realize that the commitment is a daily willingness to follow Christ, not simply an occasional or sporadic act of devotion.

But readiness to suffer is only made possible through the "self-denial" which consists in perfect freedom from oneself and all forms of personal security. Such self-denial is possible only when man gives himself to God in unconditional discipleship . In summary, suggests, discipleship is a following after the Lord or one's master, especially initiated at the call of Christ for salvation but continuing throughout the person's experience. We spiritually and mentally, follow the example of the Lord as the Twelve also followed after Jesus physically, doing what He would do and obeying what He says to do. The term refers to the life of committed obedience. As the aged Apostle John wrote, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought (i.e., a moral obligation or debt) himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (cf. 1 John 2:6) This speaks of a following and imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we do this realizing that His will for our lives will lead to daily suffering for our identification with

Christ. This primary Greek term, as used in historical and Biblical contexts, contributes to the following four principles in the concept of discipleship:

The command to follow Jesus Christ results in the initial stages of dedication and ongoing commitment of the direction of ones spiritual life.

The command to follow Jesus Christ results in a turning away from living for ones self and turning away from indulging in lawlessness.

The command to follow Jesus Christ results in a turning toward God and turning toward a life of sacrificial obedience.

The command to follow Jesus Christ results in personal self-denial and the willingness to daily suffer for His sake.

### ***Disciple***

The Greek term is found only in the Gospels and Book of Acts, as many as 264 times. Of these instances of the term in the NT, about 230 appear in the Gospels. Specifically, we find not only the disciples of Jesus, but also the disciples of Moses (Jn. 9:28), the disciples of the Pharisees (Matt. 22:16), the disciples of John the Baptist (Mk. 2:18; Lk. 11:1), and even the disciples of Paul (Acts 9:25). Basically, the term refers to someone who attaches themselves to someone for the purpose of learning, with a view to committing themselves to what the person says.

From early Greek usage, the term was used for someone who studied and learned according to a set plan, with a view to obeying what their master, teacher or mentor taught or commanded. A good summary of the early usage of the term in classical Greek is given by Rengstorf:

The emphasis is not so much on the incompleteness or even deficiency of education as on the fact that the one thus designated is engaged in learning, that his education consists in the appropriation or adoption of specific knowledge or conduct, and that it proceeds deliberately and according to a set plan. There is thus no mathetes [i.e., *disciple*] without a didaskalos [i.e., *teacher*]. The process involves a corresponding personal relation.

From early Greek literature the was one who another person, not simply learned from him. As Rengstorf points out ( *TDNT*, pp. 406-7), the verbal companion of or was not a (i.e., a learner or listener) but a (i.e., a follower). For example, the Greek philosopher Pythagorus had a complex and demanding procedure for anyone to become his disciple.

According to *Timaeus*, he [Pythagoras] was the first to say, "Friends have all things in common" and "Friendship is equality"; indeed, his disciples did put all their possessions into one common stock. For five whole years they had to keep silence, merely listening to his discourses without seeing him [because he spoke at night], until they pass an examination, and thenceforward they were admitted to his house and allowed to see him...Indeed, his bearing is said to have been most dignified, and his disciples held the opinion about him that he was Apollo come down from the far north.

By NT times the term had the customary concept of a or master, drawn from both Jewish and Greek/Roman culture, when used in secular or religious literature. The student would attach himself to a teacher or master, to learn his teaching, life and even method of instruction. This would take place in both formal and informal contexts, with the student learning by oral question and answers, along with memorization, which was the primary means of teaching. Discipleship ministry at Grace Bible Church should be seen as coming from the public gathering of the local body to hear the preaching of the Word of God and the more private gatherings of individuals, making the Scripture personalized to meet specific needs. Mentoring is to be formal and spontaneous, not limited to a classroom setting.

What is emphasized is that the " mathetes always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole life of the one described as ." (Kittel, vol. 4, p. 441) They were controlled by the man to whom they had committed themselves, extending to all areas of the inner life. This was not simply a loose casual friendship or even relationship among peers. It suggests a definite leader and an obedient follower, i.e., a relationship, or as we would say today, a relationship. This is why true New Testament discipleship is often radically different than the American model, where egalitarianism has eliminated the possibility of a human mentor with authority. To commit oneself to a mentor is to follow what he/she says!

A distinction between of the Jews and of Jesus during NT times, is the uniform emphasis given to the Lord's initiating the process. The Jewish rabbis taught that their [i.e., ] were responsible to link up with them but Jesus called others to be His disciples. cf. Mark 1:17; 2:14; 10:21; Matt. 4:19; Luke 9:59; John 1:43, etc. This emphasize on the master the process of discipleship is continued in the Great Commission of Jesus when He commands all believers to, *make disciples of all nations* . cf. Matt. 28:19-20. All believers at Grace Bible Church should initiate vital mentoring relationships with others and not simply wait until asked by someone.

In the pages of the New Testament a significant turning point comes with Jesus' definition of a disciple (cf. John 8:32). From this point on, the concept of discipleship was cemented with a definite element of instead of being limited to simply learning.

As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* (cf. John 8:30-36)

From this point on, the usage of in the NT seems limited to a learner who is committed to follow the master. The tension since John 6:66, where a number of superficially attached disciples turned away from Jesus reached its climax with Jesus' definition of .

If a Christian was simply a person who learned from Jesus Christ, then the Greek term translated would have been used instead of disciple. From John 8 following, a disciple is

the Lord Jesus Christ. Only those who are dedicated to a life of obedience to the Lord Jesus can thus be called a true disciple. By the time Luke wrote the Book of Acts, the term was used in the general sense of a Christian. It could properly be said that a believer or a Christian, as a disciple, is a learner of Christ with a commitment to follow Him. Although some suggest that a disciple is a dedicated Christian, the statement is misleading. All Christians are dedicated; all Christians are disciples; all believers are learners with a commitment to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, without which there is no claim to salvation.

Another observation of an inductive study of New Testament discipleship is the obvious concept of . Jesus departed from the customary master/disciple classroom approach and cultivated discipleship by vital living relationships, where they watched Jesus walk through life and followed his example. Jesus' instruction was born from the teachable moments of everyday experiences, although He didn't neglect formal times of structured teaching. This is seen at the inception of the calling of the Twelve (cf. Mark 3:13-19), the examples of His retreats with them (e.g., Mark 6:30-32; Luke 9:10) and the extended times of teaching them while enjoying personal relationships (e.g., Matt. 13; 24-25; John 13-17). They spent significant time together in personal relationships. This relational emphasis is further illustrated by the ministry of the Apostle Paul, who worked, traveled, ministered and suffered while physically spending significant time with other men. Rarely did he ever travel alone (e.g., Acts 17:15-16) as his practice was the sharing of ministry and life with others. Illustrative of the Apostle Paul's relational ministry is his summary defense to the Thessalonians:

But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. (cf. 1 Thess. 2:7-12)

Following NT times the term contained not only the aspect of a learner and committed follower but added to it the concept of imitation of Jesus' life and sufferings. As Rengstorf summarizes its usage in the early church:

This is marked by the incursion of the Greek and Hellenistic use of mathetes for intellectual adherence without direct commitment, and in close relation to this by the inevitable emergence of the idea of imitating Christ. This is already so strong in Ignatius [early church father] that only the martyr is the true mathetes of Christ .

In summary, is a person who attaches himself to a master, with a commitment to follow his teaching and imitate his life, in a specific curriculum of learning and life. There are spurious disciples who are offended by some things Jesus says and do not obey the Word of God; and there are genuine disciples who humbly and happily submit to what Jesus says and continue in the Word of God. The is willing to suffer for his master,

subordinating himself to his will. This primary Greek term as used in its historical and Biblical contexts, contributes four principles to the concept of discipleship:

A disciple attaches himself to a mentor for the purpose of both learning and obeying what is taught or illustrated by the mentor's life.

A disciple has been invited into this relationship by his Master the Lord Jesus Christ and an earthly mentor.

A disciple is genuine to his calling only when there is a definite observing of the Words of Christ and the words of the earthly mentor.

A disciple is involved in both structured teaching sessions and spontaneous teaching sessions, while building a life oriented relationship with his earthly mentor.

### ***To Imitate***

The Greek term is found 4 times in the NT (cf. 2 Thess. 3:7, 9; Heb. 13:7; 3 Jn. 11) and 6 times (cf. 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; Heb. 6:12). The term is used in Phil. 3:17. Each of these terms refer to either another person, Christ or in Eph. 5:1 even God Himself. We get our English word from this Greek term, which refers to a copy of one's personality, behavior and external characteristics.

Striking with this secondary Greek term, as used in the New Testament, is the command of the Apostle Paul to others to

Wherefore I beseech you, be ye *followers* of me. (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:16)

Be ye *followers* of me, even as I also am of Christ. (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:1)

And ye became *followers* of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. (cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:6)

For yourselves know how ye ought to *follow* us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you. (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:7)

Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to *follow* us. (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:9)

In summary, is to imitate Christ by imitating an earthly spiritual mentor. The master calls the disciple to examine his/her life not only the teaching, with a view to imitating it so as to better follow the Lord Jesus Christ. It is right to call others to follow us as we also follow Christ, implying that our lives are credible examples worthy of being emulated. This secondary Greek term used in its historical and Biblical contexts, contributes two principles to the concept of discipleship:

A disciple is called by an earthly mentor to imitate the whole of his life: character, work ethic, attitudes and spiritual ministry.



A disciple must see a credible life of integrity in his earthly mentor, that is worthy of being imitated in the whole of life.

### ***To Come After***

The Greek term is used 36 times in the New Testament and means to or someone. In Rabbinic Judaism the term would refer to someone following behind a person of respect in a subordination relationship.

In the New Testament there are three points of interest with this term: 1.) the call to come behind or follow after comes from Jesus Himself; 2.) the call is a definite call to service in the kingdom; and, 3.) the call is one to obedience, which entails forsaking old ties. e.g., Matt. 10:38; 16:23-24; Mark 1:17; Luke 23:26. It is primarily used of sharing of Christ's fellowship, life and suffering. It was precisely this coming after Jesus in suffering that Peter didn't understand as essential for Jesus' experience. cf. Matt. 16:23-24.

Connected to this idea of is the prohibiting of looking back, so as to consider going back to the old life. Hence, in the NT there are serious warnings concerning terminating a previous commitment to the Lordship of Christ.

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. (cf. Luke 9:62)

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. (cf. Philippians 3:13)

Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. (cf. Hebrews 10:38-39)

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways. (cf. James 1:6-8)

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. (cf. 2 Peter 2:20-22)

In Summary, is the coming behind in humble following of a master. This is a definite call from Jesus Himself resulting in spiritual service and demanding a total break with the past, with a commitment not to look back. This secondary Greek term is used in its historical and Biblical contexts, contributes three principles to the concept of discipleship:

A disciple is called by Jesus Christ to follow His lead into specific areas of ministry to advance the kingdom of God.

A disciple is called by Jesus Christ to break with old loyalties and to share in Christ's fellowship, life and sufferings.

A disciple is called by the Jesus Christ to change the direction of his life and not look back so as to consider returning to his former way of life.

## ***The Personal Cost of Discipleship***

The Lord's call to discipleship is His summons to salvation. To place ones faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is to become His disciple. This is not a second level commitment but the foundation commitment of saving faith. All Christians are disciples of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, today there is confusion as to the identification of a disciple. Some suggest that a disciple is simply a dedicated Christian but a Christian may not be willing to be a disciple. Charles Ryrie did much to popularize this recent and misleading concept.

Actually to teach that Christ must be Lord of life in order to be Savior is to confuse aspects of discipleship. A disciple is one who receives instruction from another; he is a learner.

However, it is demonstrated convincingly, especially from the Book of Acts, that a believer is a disciple and the process of making a disciple, involves the person's commitment to obey the words of Christ. This is demonstrated, not only by the primary and secondary terms for disciple in the New Testament, but also the intent of the Great Commission itself.

Go therefore and *make disciples* of all the nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, *teaching* them *to observe* all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matt. 28:19-20; NASB)

Basically, the central command of this Great Commission is to , i.e., make dedicated learners and followers of Jesus Christ. And this making of disciples will be accomplished by a threefold ministry, suggested by the three participles.

First, making disciples involves the act of . This is an aorist participle and because participles do not have mood (i.e., imperative command) two views have been suggested as to the relationship of going to the main verb of making disciples. 1.) has a non-imperative force and is not a command i.e., "as you go and wherever you may be." 2.) going has an imperative force and is a command, i.e., "make disciples by going, baptizing and teaching." This is suggested by the many clear passages in the OT and NT where a verb being preceded by a participle, the participle still has a definite imperative force. Perhaps both are contained in the participle, i.e., as Christians go through life they are commissioned to continually look for opportunity to disciple others by persuading men and women concerning the Gospel and the commands of Jesus Christ.

Second, making disciples involves the act of , which actually was a placing of that person into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit or becoming a disciple by renouncing the old life of sin and surrendering allegiance to the Lordship of the Triune God. Hence, baptism immediately follows believing, which was functionally the same thing as

becoming a disciple of Jesus. cf. Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12-13, 38; 10:47; 16:15, 33; 1 Cor. 1:13-17.

As a part of a new believer's incorporation into the Christian community he or she must be baptized. It would not occur to them that there could be a Christian in the local church who had not been baptized. In effect, the initiate, by his submission to baptism, declared himself a disciple of Christ and committed himself to the kind of lifestyle pertinent to that declaration...It implies that they could not conceive of a true Christian who was not willing to express commitment to our Lord. This was not one of the options given to the person being evangelized. He either trusted Christ and was baptized, knowing the implications in terms of commitment and lifestyle, or he rejected the truth.

Thirdly, making disciples involves the ongoing process of But notice the teaching is not limited to content or understanding truth but to the observance or life of obedience, which is demanded of a genuine disciple. Christ could just as well have command, make by baptizing and teaching; or make , by baptizing and teaching. A Christian is a disciple; a believer is a disciple; a saved person is a disciple of Jesus Christ, committed to the ongoing process of learning and following Jesus Christ!

Hence, to obey the Great Commission mandate is to bring someone from where they are, to learning from and following the Lord Jesus Christ, including their conversion, baptism and Christian maturity, in a life of obedience. To make disciples does not necessarily start at a person's conversion but may include pre-conversion ministry toward the completed goal of their commitment to and understanding of the will of Jesus Christ.

The term is what the saved are called in the NT most often. The term is only used three times in the NT (cf. Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16); the term is only used twice in the NT (Acts 5:14; 1 Tim. 4:12); the term is used 92 times in the NT; and the term is used 328 times in the NT, but many of the references refer to natural brothers or racial brothers; but is used 260 times in NT. These three primary terms best describe the people of God: a is a learner and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ; a is one placed into a spiritual bond of commitment to other people of God; and a is one set apart for God and separated from the world and sin.

Unfortunately, all three terms have been robbed of their Biblical meaning. A has unfortunately come to mean to many, a Christian who is really dedicated as contrasted to a Christian who is not dedicated; a has become a trivial term of greeting, without any commitment for the well being of other people of God; and a has come to mean a Christian who has been canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. We don't even know who we are any more!

Jesus Himself recommended a careful consideration of the personal cost of discipleship before a person commits to it.

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it*? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to

make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Three times in these verses Jesus mentions *he cannot be my disciple*, which is the only record of Jesus talking about someone actually being "my disciple." Each of the three is a warning about the high cost of being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, used here to sift the crowds similar to what He did in John 6:60-66. It is not that Jesus did not want followers, but he only wanted them to follow based on their awareness of what following would entail. It was if Jesus was saying, "Don't follow me unless..." John R. W. Stott has accurately written on these verses, pointing out what he calls the "great scandal of Christianity today, the mistaken belief in nominal Christianity."

The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, half-built towers - the ruins of those who began to build and were unable to finish. For thousands of people still ignore Christ's warning and undertake to follow him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. The result is the great scandal of Christendom today, so-called *nominal Christianity*. In countries to which Christian civilization has spread, large numbers of people have covered themselves with a decent, but thin, veneer of Christianity. They have allowed themselves to become somewhat involved; enough to be respectable but not enough to be uncomfortable. Their religion is a great, soft cushion. It protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life, while changing its place and shape to suit their convenience. No wonder the cynics speak of hypocrites in the church and dismiss religion as escapism. Regardless of the surface commitment of discipleship among Jewish rabbis, Jesus demanded people to carefully consider the high cost of commitment in being one of His disciples. The cost was to place dedication and loyalty to Christ above even family members, along with the rejecting of one's own life. In essence the cost involved everything, i.e., a total surrender of the life, without condition or exception. Evangelism should be accompanied by admonishing people to consider the high cost of becoming a Christian, not simply limiting the message to the salvation from sin and promise of heaven.

### ***Summarization***

Discipleship according to the New Testament demands calculated cost and full commitment of time, effort and reflection. It involves a crisis decision whereby we turn from sin and self-serving to a life committed to the glory of God and the expansion of His Kingdom. In a word, this is what it means to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. Along with this core commitment is the willingness to daily suffer for the Name of Christ. With such a sacrifice, as it matures, is the giving of one's self to a human spiritual mentor, where we with honest transparency place ourselves into a close relationship of personal accountability toward a definite goal, i.e., Christlike thinking, attitudes and behavior. The disciple is called to imitate his/her spiritual mentor, as they follow Christ in all areas. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who suffered martyrdom under Hitler's Nazi era stated:

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price, to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at

which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him. Costly grace is the gospel which must be again and again, the gift which must be for, the door at which a man must . Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow and it is because it calls us to follow .

Discipleship is not a peer relationship, where we simply talk about general issues of life, specific concerns that we may have or current events such as politics or football. Those may have their place in enjoying personal relationships but have little to do with the New Testament concept of discipleship. Mentoring is one of the primary means of God's grace, whereby His people are challenged on a regular basis to make observable growth toward Christlike behavior, attitudes and thinking. It is not relaxed conversations of trivial pursuits where we mask the real struggles of life and simply reinforce the status quo of personal character. Central to discipleship is and if change is not taking place then mentoring, in the New Testament sense, is not happening and we should reexamine our motives, investment of time and purpose of getting together.

On the pages of the New Testament, discipleship might take place in a one-on-one relationship or small group context and should be as creative as individual needs demand. The only core curriculum directly mentioned are the words or commands of Christ (cf. Matt. 28:19-20 and John 8:31) but this would obviously broaden to include the entire Word of God. Because of this, discipleship curriculum should be varied. The goal to keep in mind is not simply to study together but to transform each life by the Spirit of God working in a mentoring relationship. The ideal context of balanced discipleship is both public (i. e., the regular exposure to the preaching of the Bible in a local church) and private (i. e., a mentored relationship with focus on individual needs). This is where genuine accountability is realized and progress is made in harnessing the necessary motivation for the high calling of God in Christ.

Because ministry mentoring on the pages of the New Testament sometimes started in teen years (e.g., the Apostle John; Timothy, etc.) it is good to imply that by high school age, Youth should be placed within the flow of personal mentoring relationships. By Adult years, it is wise to be mentoring one or more persons, while meeting with another older or spiritually mature Christian, to be mentored by them.

It can't be stressed enough, that the mentoring relationship on the pages of the New Testament is relational and ministry oriented. There may be times when discipleship is limited to a study goal but if that does not result in a shared practice of ministry, then the New Testament model fails to come to fruition. Christ mentored men by teaching them, along challenging them with specific ministry, in which they would observe him and practice themselves. The example of the Apostle Paul was to take men with him on ministry, where they were mentored to exercise their spiritual gifts and learn what he taught in preaching. For example, at the end of his ministry he was able to remind Timothy of an eight-fold relational example he lived out.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions [and] afflictions. (cf. 2 Timothy 3:10-11)

Mentoring is a significant investment of our time. This flags one of the central weaknesses of the American model of discipleship because culturally we reject prolonged times of relationships. Other cultures, like the culture of Palestine or even Greco-Roman culture during Biblical days, were relationally oriented not task oriented. That is, they gave priority to spending personal time talking with one another. Americans generally have created a culture where we isolate from each other and tend toward individualism. This may offer some cultural strengths of focus, productivity, etc., but it gives challenge to our attempts of following the New Testament pattern. At Grace Bible Church we must counter our culture with resolve to become more relational in a true mentoring commitment. And we admit that this will take creativity and the model of some outstanding examples in our local church who break with the convention of culture to pioneer sacrificial commitment to relational discipleship.

Finally, discipleship may begin with pre-conversion mentoring, where a relationship is established to guide someone to trust in Christ as their Lord and Savior. Obviously, when conversion takes place, it is then possible to initiate a real commitment in the mentoring relationship. In this sense, not all disciples are Christians but all Christians are disciples. There is no such thing as a genuine believer who is not a disciple of Jesus Christ but there may be men and women who have yet to be converted, who show a genuine interest in Christianity. Attaching themselves to other Christians or a local church in order to learn, as they investigate and count the cost of following Christ, should be welcomed. Such an interest should be helped by a spiritual mentor who guides them in understanding the nature of God's holiness, the sinfulness of man, the eternal punishment of sin, the Person of the Savior, the work of His sacrificial Atonement and the human requirement of faith alone for salvation.

## DISCIPLESHIP

### Assignment Questions

#### Lesson 1

- 1 What is the draw back of substituting Churchianity for discipleship?
- 2 What different beliefs about Jesus Christ does a Disciple have?
- 3 Briefly state what are the requirements of Discipleship?

#### Lesson 2

- 1 Give the different meanings of word 'Disciple' in English. Which is the main word for it in Greek and how many times does it appear in the New Testament (NT) ?
- 2 What are the various Biblical uses of the word 'Teacher'?
- 3 What are the characteristics of a slave?
- 4 Which is the Greek word for Master and describe its various uses in the New Testament?

#### Lesson 3

- 1 In what manner does the good works of a disciple shine like light?
- 2 In what ways is the humbleness of a disciple displayed?
- 3 How does a Disciple love sacrificially?
- 4 What things does a disciple do to live a life separated from the world?

## Lesson 4

- 1 To become a disciple, why there is a need to change allegiances?
- 2 What is the Christ's Free Gift and how can you accept it?
- 3 Why is the Word of God very important in becoming a disciple?

## Lesson 5

- 1 What are the various components of spiritual parenting for the discipleship of new believers?
- 2 Why the giving of just Biblical Knowledge to a believer is not enough in Biblical Discipleship?
- 3 In what ways can a Discipler become a model of the developing disciple?

## Lesson 6

- 1 What is the pivotal issue that a disciple has to deal with in his own life?
- 2 How can a disciple enter into Master-servant relationship with the Lord Jesus ?
- 3 What are the differences between being a student and being a disciple?
- 4 Why should a disciple must intimately and personally know Lord Jesus?
- 5 What do you understand by having an attitude of following Lord Jesus as a disciple?
- 6 What are the results of discipleship?



## Lesson 7

- 1 Why daily renewal of mind and repentance are basic necessity for discipleship?
- 2 Which self-inventory questions do you need to ask yourself daily to keep yourself on the right track of discipleship?
- 3 In what ways disciples must display the loyalty to Kingdom of God?
- 4 What are the requirements of walking in the Spirit?

## Lesson 8

- 1 How can a disciple make Lord Jesus as his/her sovereign Lord?
- 2 How can a disciple of Christ constantly check his heart?
- 3 Which are unique claims of the Lord that a disciple should remember?
- 4 How can you personally grow as a disciple of Christ? State the 5 growth factors.

## Lesson 9

- 1 What is meant by cost of Discipleship?
- 2 What does it mean 'to deny oneself' as a disciple?
- 3 How can a disciple daily take up his cross to follow after Jesus?
- 4 In what ways a disciple can lose his life for Jesus' sake and what is the reward for it? Explain.
- 5 What does it mean to be ashamed of Christ?
- 6 In what sense is it implied to hate one's family?

7 State the various differences between Salvation and Discipleship?

#### Lesson 10

1 What is involved in Call to discipleship regarding following Jesus?

2 How did Jesus cultivate discipleship by vital living relationships?

3 What are the four principles of the concept of discipleship?

4 In what ways does a disciple imitate?

5 What involves in the Call to 'Come after' and write down the warning concerning terminating a commitment to the Lordship of Christ ?

6 What is the Great Commission and in light of it explain the various acts involved in making disciples as an ongoing process ?