

What is a Disciple?

Multiply--Week 1

May 26, 2013

DAY 1

What is a Disciple?

When I was a kid I thought I was a Christian because I attended church. I also believed the facts about Jesus and the cross. I thought that was what qualified me as a Christian. It wasn't until I was twenty years old that I realized that just because someone or something is sitting in a church doesn't make it a Christian. What does it mean to be a Christian? How does someone become one? What does it mean to be a disciple?

A Christian is one who heeds Jesus' call on us to, "*Follow Me.*" (*Matt. 4:19*)

1. In our technical world, we use the word "follow" to mean "following" ...

- Someone on Twitter
- An author
- A sports team
- A politician

2. Is that what you think Jesus meant when He said to follow Him?

3. How is what Jesus meant different than the examples in question #1?

4. To follow Jesus means to follow how He lived!

Luke 6:40 A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

5. What do you think the disciples learned by following Jesus for over three years?

6. Being a "follower" of Jesus is the same as being His "disciple."

Acts 11:26 ... and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

7. Follower and disciple and Christian were all synonymous terms in the New Testament. How are these different from "church-goer," "do-gooder," or "religious guy?"

DAY 2

How Do I Become a Disciple?

Matt. 4:17 Jesus said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"Repent" - means to turn or change directions.

1. Why would Jesus want us to change directions?

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord has laid on Him the sin of us all.

2. According to Isaiah, how are we all like sheep?

3. Which direction had we been going?

4. What were the results?

5. What remedy did God arrange?

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

6. What parallels do you see in Ephesians and Isaiah?

a. Similar "ways?"

b. Similar direction?

c. Similar results?

Summary: We become a disciple, **not** because we have a *knowledge* problem. We have a heart, will, and direction problem. The only way our heart, will, and direction problem can be changed is by God's power, through Christ.

DAY 3

We don't become disciples by trying harder, or promising to do good. That's impossible for us to do. We become Christians through a VERY different way!

Ephesians 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

1. What does Paul say was our prior condition?
2. How does Paul describe the character of God in 2:4?
3. How surprising is it that God would be this way, when we "dead in transgression?"
4. How does Paul say we were saved?
5. Grace is unmerited favor. God is *for* us when He has every reason to be *against* us! How does that strike you?
6. Grace is said to be "G.R.A.C.E." "God's Riches At Christ's Expense." What did the grace of God for us, cost Him?
7. Many people assume they will be going to heaven because of their "goodness." How would our verses from Ephesians 2:1-5 (look also at yesterday's verses) refute that notion?
8. Paul drives home the same point in the following verses...

Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
9. What strikes you from these verses?
- Rom. 10:9 If we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved.*
10. Has Jesus become your "Lord?"

DAY 4

We Love God by Obeying His Word

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

1. Can I say, "I love God," and then live any way I want to?
2. What's wrong with thinking that way?

We Love God by Loving His People

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

3. Following Jesus means learning to treat people the way He treated them. What was the driver in how He related to people (in 1 John 3:16)
4. How did Jesus lay down His life for others?
5. What is our obligation?
6. How can you lay down your life for someone today? Don't just think of the "big" things. What "small" thing can you do today?
7. In the final analysis, we will see whether or not we really are His disciples by how we treat people.

1 John 4:20 If any one says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.

Counts the Cost

Luke 14:25 Now great multitudes accompanied him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "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.

Luke 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33 So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

8. Multitudes "accompanied" Jesus. Did He pass around a clipboard and sign them up?
9. Which of these commitments is apropos for you?

DAY 5

Today we'll look at how a man became a follower, a disciple of Christ.

Luke 19:1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

1. What can you say about Zacchaeus' past? (Look at 19:1, 7-8)

2. What do you think Zacchaeus realized?

3. What did He see in Jesus?

4. What did repentance mean to Zacchaeus? What direction had he been going? What was his new direction?

5. All of what we've been studying this week happened for Zacchaeus between the encounter in the tree and by the end of lunch in Zacch's house. What strikes you about the story?

6. Have you repented from your old ways?

7. Are you following Jesus?

8. Is He your Lord?