

# Discovering The Call To Discipleship

## Lesson 002 Teacher

### Introduction to Discipleship

#### INTRODUCTION

The scripture says in Matthew 28:19 (NIV) "go and make disciples of all nations".

The present state and condition of Christianity in general is in decline and according to statistics it will continue to be because of the lack of discipleship.

By some estimates there are over 133,000 denominations in the world today, and many, along with many churches which claim no affiliation with any group, make the Word of God of no effect by their traditions, just as the scribes and the Pharisees did as stated by Jesus in Matthew 15.

*1 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, 2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." 3 He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' 5 But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is given to God, 6 he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: 8 "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."*

Matt 15:1-9 (ESV)

*6 So for the sake of your tradition (the rules handed down by your forefathers), you have set aside the Word of God [depriving it of force and authority and making it of no effect].*

Matt 15:6 (AMP)

Teachings that water down , or explain away scriptural teaching fulfill the footnote of the AMP version where it says - [depriving it of force and authority and making it of no effect].

Jesus was offensive to many in his call to discipleship, he said in Luke 14:26-33 (AMP)

*26 If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his [own] father and mother [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters — [yes] and even his own life also — he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not persevere and carry his own cross and come after (follow) Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, wishing to build a farm building, does not first sit down and calculate the cost [to see] whether he has sufficient means to finish it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid the foundation and is unable to complete [the building], all who see it will begin to mock and jeer at him, 30 Saying, This man began to build and was not able (worth enough) to finish. 31 Or what king, going out to engage in conflict with another king, will not first sit down and consider and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand [men] to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?*

*32 And if he cannot [do so], when the other king is still a great way off, he sends an envoy and asks the terms of peace.*

*33 So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be My disciple.*

Luke 14:26-33 (AMP)

The Greek word Disciple is defined below as [*mathetes*], a learner, a pupil:

[NT:3101](#) μαθητής **mathetes** (math-ay-tes'); from [NT:3129](#); a learner, i.e. pupil:

**KJV** - disciple.

The scripture teaches in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 that in the last days there will be a great falling away:

*2 Let no one deceive or beguile you in any way, for that day will not come except the apostasy comes first [unless the predicted great falling away of those who have professed to be Christians has come], and the man of lawlessness (sin) is revealed, who is the son of doom (of perdition),*

2 Thessalonians 2:3 AMP

We see that great falling away today and people have chosen the wide gate of Matthew 7:13-14

*13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

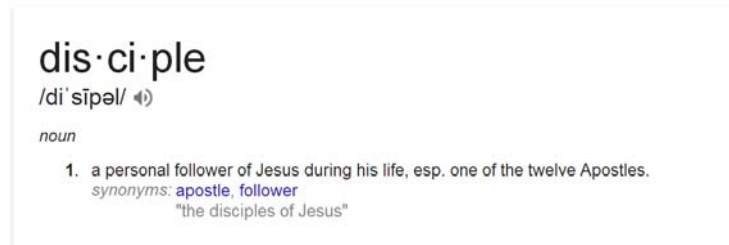
Matthew 7:13-14 (NKJV)

This "wide gate" Christianity allows a believer to continue to live a life with no change from the world, never challenging them to have a closer walk with God, and disciples them to be, at best, lukewarm Christians.

They fall into the trap of being lukewarm and Jesus said in Rev 3:15-16 (NKJV)

*15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

## What is a Disciple?



The descriptive name Disciple is used 256x before the name Christian was used. The descriptive name Christian is used ONE time in the New Testament and not until Acts 11:26. Christian is not used 1x by Jesus! It was first used by the heathens to describe Disciples devotions to Jesus!

Skip forward to today we have many "Christians" but **few Disciples**, and the heathens ( those without ) often cry hypocrite when they describe Christians!

The lack of discipleship is rearing its ugly head!

Jesus said in Matt 11:29 (KJV): *Take my yoke upon you, and learn [manthano] of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

[NT:3129](#) μαθάνω **manthano** (man-than'-o); prolongation from a primary verb, another form of which, matheo, is used as an alternate in certain tenses; to learn (in any way):

**KJV** - learn, understand.

Back in Luke 14:26-33 we read, we learned [*mathetes*] was the Disciple

[NT:3101](#) μαθητής **mathetes** (math-ay-tes'); from [NT:3129](#); a learner, i.e. pupil:

**KJV** - disciple.

So Jesus was issuing a call to be a disciple when he said *learn [manthano] of me* in Matthew 11:29!

Jesus never invited one person to be a CHRISTIAN, he invited them to be DISCIPLES

What will you find if you become a Disciple? REST FOR YOUR SOULS

Lets read Matt 11:29 in its full context now:

*28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn [manthano] from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

Matt 11:28-30 (NKJV)

Who is Jesus issuing the call to Discipleship to? ALL

## What does the Call to Discipleship mean?

### The Rich Ruler

*18 And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*19 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.*

*20 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'"*

*21 And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth."*

*22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."*

*23 But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.*

Luke 18:18-23 (ESV)

We never hear of this person again in scripture, we find various people who we called by the Lord who did not follow him.

Not all Disciples left their homes, among those examples are Mary and Martha who became disciples and served him in their own homes.

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) accepts the call to follow Jesus, but no hint is ever given, historically or scripturally, that he ever left his home or profession to serve the Lord

Not all are called to the same functions in the body of Christ ( another description for the church ).

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Cor 12:15-18

*15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.*

1 Corinthians 12:15-18 ESV

In Rom 12:4-8 (AMP) Paul again write:

*4 For as in one physical body we have many parts (organs, members) and all of these parts do not have the same function or use,*

*5 So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another [mutually dependent on one another].*

*6 Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them: [He whose gift is] prophecy, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith;*

*7 [He whose gift is] practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching;*

*8 He who exhorts (encourages), to his exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and superintends, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness.*

Rom 12:6-8 AMP

Paul doesn't list every gift and part (position) in the body here, but he gives some insight about the diversity of the body. He is though speaking of those who are specifically gifted above and beyond the norm, just as the gifts of the spirit are above and beyond the norm.

Not all are called to leave homes and lands to follow the call of the gospel. Without disciples that are home folks, no local church could exist.

Being a disciple is fully compatible with marriage, child education, and family life in general. We are just called to put Jesus first in our lives.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 we are told:

*10 for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, 11 and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, 12 so that you may live properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.*

1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 (ESV)

And in Matthew 6:31-33 we are admonished:

*31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* Matt 6:31-33 (ESV)

## How can I develop my call to be a Disciple?

Just because Jesus call you to discipleship, it does not mean you are automatically a disciple!

**Start by Developing DISCIPLINED PRACTICES.**

- "... You have **put off the old self** with its **HABITS**, and have put on the new self ... which God is continually renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself." Colossians 3:9-10

Put off what with what? OLD SELF OLD HABITS

- "Lie not one to another, having **put off the old man with his PRACTICES**,<sup>10</sup> and having put on the **new**, which is **renewed in regard to knowledge, after the image of Him who did create him...**" Colossians 3:9-10 (YLT)

Put off what with what? OLD MAN WITH HIS PRACTICES

- **A disciple puts off his old ways, behaviors, habits and practices. He changes to new ways, behaviors and practices which lead to continual renewal and spiritual growth into the image of Christ. A disciple engages in practices that lead him to becoming more and more Christ-like.**
- *Let us lay aside **every weight**, and the **sin** which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us* Heb 12:1 KJV

Lay aside what and what? WEIGHTS AND SINS

- **Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the *true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth*; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>24</sup> "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."** John 4:23-24 (NKJV).

Can you see 4 ways people worship God?

Spirit and Truth

\_\_\_ Truth NO Spirit \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Spirit NO Truth \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Neither Spirit NOR Truth \_\_\_\_\_

But only   1   way is acceptable to God!

## 7 Practices a Disciple will work to develop

### 1. BIBLE STUDY

- *"If you **continue in my Word**, then you are my disciples indeed. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* John 8:31-32 (KJV)
- *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.* John 15:4 (ESV)

### 2. PERSONAL DEVOTION

- *"The one who looks steadily at God's perfect law... **and makes that law his habit** – not listening and then forgetting, but **actively putting it into practice**, will be happy in all that he does."* James 1:25 (Ph)

### 3. PRAYER

- *"If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will **ask for anything you wish**, and you shall have it ... in this way you become my disciples."* John 15:7-8 (GN)
- *"But you, **when you pray**, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."* Matthew 6:6 (NKJV)

### 4. FASTING

- *"**But you, when you fast**, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> "so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."* Matthew 6:17-18 (NKJV)

### 5. PRAISE

- *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, **that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**" 1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)*

## 6. GIVING

- **2 Corinthians 9:7 AMP** Let each one [give] as he has made up his own mind and purposed in his heart, not reluctantly or sorrowfully or under compulsion, for God loves (He takes pleasure in, prizes above other things, and is unwilling to abandon or to do without) a cheerful (joyous, "prompt to do it") giver [whose heart is in his giving].

## 7. FELLOWSHIP

- *"Love each other just as much as I love you. Your **strong love for each other** will prove to the world that you are my disciples."* John 13:34-35 (LB)

### **DEFINITION OF A PRACTICE:**

A practice is a habitual act or action. It is a continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity acquired through frequent repetition. It is the repeated performance of an activity to perfect a skill -- or in this case Christian character and spiritual maturity.

To benefit from a practice, you must **EMBRACE IT VOLUNTARILY** – it cannot be forced on you!

*24 I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains [just one grain; it never becomes more but lives] by itself alone. But if it dies, it produces many others and yields a rich harvest.*

*25 Anyone who loves his life loses it, but anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. [Whoever has no love for, no concern for, no regard for his life here on earth, but despises it, preserves his life forever and ever.]*

*26 If anyone serves Me, he must continue to follow Me [to cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying] and wherever I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.*

John 12:24-26 (AMP)

The Apostle Paul wrote in Acts 22:3 (KJV): *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.*

One say the disciple became a teacher. There is some speculation that Gamaliel later may have converted because of Paul, because on his estate they have found the graves of Nicodemus and Stephen the martyr.

A recent statistic I heard in October 2013, was that people that just come to church, approximately 65% fall away.

When people commit to become disciples, that number drops to 10%, in other words if you commit to completing a discipleship course you have a 90% chance of not falling away from God!

Let me encourage you today, to first, like Paul commit to being be a disciple, then you will develop into a great Christian!