



**Are You a Disciple?
And of
What or Whom?**

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Preface

Jesus speaks clearly in the Scriptures on how to become His disciple. Jesus also tells us the cost of becoming His disciple. No one can be a Christian without also becoming a disciple of Jesus. Many today think if they believe in a Jesus according to their own soulish understanding, that is all there is to becoming a disciple of Jesus. They also exempt Scripture, or portions of Scripture as not being applicable for the days in which we live. For a person to follow Jesus in that way makes a believer without spiritual knowledge or obedience to the Truth (Jesus). These factors lead many to believe in a Jesus which Scripture does not teach us (2 Corinthians 11:4). The Holy Spirit cannot bring a believer into the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus with incomplete truth. The truth that is necessary is the full knowledge of God's revelation in Christ Jesus.

This booklet only touches on a small part of what it means to follow the Lord Jesus, according to the

mind of God. However, this booklet is foundational in making known the words of Jesus to all who want to become His disciple.

After the book of Acts, the word disciple is not used in the epistles that are written to the different assemblies, or individual believers. The reason is that all who have the Spirit of Jesus in them, are His disciples (Romans 8:9; 1 John 4:13). This does not mean that all exhibit the conduct of a disciple. Even Peter, in his denial of Jesus, did not cease to be his disciple. Peter, like all the disciples of the Lord Jesus, had to learn that he could not be a disciple according to his own soulish ways and ideas.

Becoming a disciple of Jesus is a work of the Holy Spirit, through revelation. It is a transforming, and learning experience for those who follow Him. This involves learning how to give up one's own life in exchange for His life.

1. **Are all who believe in Jesus disciples?**

“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him” (John 6:66).

The word disciple means “a learner.” It can also mean “a follower.” In the true sense a disciple is a learner, one without his own will or motives in learning. There are two ways to become a disciple. **First**, to be a disciple of Jesus in the true sense, is to spiritually learn to hear His voice and know His ways. This entails following Him from the heart, giving up our will for His will (John 1:12-13). The **second** pathway of a disciple is to follow Jesus with the mind. The **first** way is a work of God; the **second** way is based on natural circumstances, and will not make a true disciple. Scripture reveals to us the two ways of becoming a disciple. Reading in Romans 10:10 we learn this; “For with the heart one believes unto righteousness...” Following this pathway will make a true disciple of Jesus, by simply believing God from the heart. The **second** way, believing only with the mind, is shown in this manner, using the rich young ruler as an example in Matthew

19:16-22. This young man, thought he had done all things right morally and religiously. Jesus told him that to be His disciple, he needed to go and sell what he had, give the proceeds to the poor, and then come and follow Him. “But when the young man heard that, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” This man was a good religious man (as men judge). He looked like a man of faith and just the right prospect to be a disciple of Jesus. His outward conduct was without fault, as a religious man judges. However, his heart had not taken hold of the kingdom of God, as it’s treasure. He could not give up his religion or his possessions, not even to be a disciple of the Son of God.

In John 6:66 we are shown disciples who found that the words of Jesus were too difficult, and turned away from Him and walked with Him no more. He put before them the pathway of life and the pathway of death, just as Moses did to Israel in Deuteronomy 30:19. Jesus told them that unless they ate of His flesh and drank of His blood they would have no life in them (John 6:53). Jesus becomes the living Word

to the one eating. This means to ingest Him into our spirit and soul, by spiritually eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Jesus explains in what sense He is speaking these things, **“It is the Spirit which quickens, the flesh profits nothing: the words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life”** (John 6:63 JND). Jesus was telling them, that to have a part with Him, a man must become one with Him, as He was One with His Father (John 10:30). Those who believe on Jesus from their heart, are on the pathway to oneness with Him. This is the reward of a true disciple, oneness with Christ Jesus.

The difference between a disciple of the heart and a disciple of the mind is shown to us in this Scripture; “...Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” (John 6:70). Judas was an example of a false disciple, as he was one of the twelve disciples. However, Judas was never a disciple from his heart (John 17:12). One may believe known truth about Jesus from the mind, but continue to follow darkness from the heart. The life of Judas is an example of this fact.

In John 8:31, Jesus spoke to the Jews who believed Him. By outward appearances they were believers, and followers of Jesus. Speaking to the same Jews in verse 40, Jesus tells them they seek to kill Him. In verse 44 Jesus tells them they are of their father the devil. In other words these Jews who were called disciples did not have faith, even though they believed with the mind. In verse 59, they took up rocks to stone Him. All of this from those, whom Scripture said, believed. It is evident they did not have faith, nor believe from the heart. Their belief was not upon Jesus, but upon the works that he did.

The example of this is seen in two Scriptures. In Matthew 13:54 the works and teaching of Jesus brought astonishment to men, who were without a doubt following Him with their mind because of His works. However, when it came to following Jesus as Messiah and Lord, a rejection of him in their heart is exposed in the same people (Matthew 13:57). Verse 58 reads; “And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

A story that is illustrative of this truth is this; a man once set up a tight wire over a chasm. The distance down from the tight wire to the rocks below was four hundred feet, and certain death to anyone who fell. The man then stepped upon the tight wire and began to walk on it back and forth over the chasm. As he did this, a crowd of people gathered near the end of the tight wire to watch him. After the man had walked back and forth several times, he then put a wheelbarrow on the tight wire and repeated his actions. Coming to the end of the tight wire where the crowd was standing, he placed the wheelbarrow down in front of them. He then looked at the man in front of the crowd and said to him. “Do you think I can run the wheelbarrow across the tight wire again?” The man had just seen him do it, so he said, ‘of course, without a doubt.’ The man who walked on the tight wire then said to him, “**then get into the wheelbarrow and I will take you across!!!**”

This story portrays a man who was faced with a decision, between believing in the heart to action, or giving mental assent with the mind without action.

This is the difference between faith and mental belief. Jesus is the one operating the wheelbarrow over the chasm of death in this world (Psalms 23:4). If a professed believer never gets into the wheelbarrow, he will never enter into spiritual life. To believe something with the mind is not faith, nor is it to enter into the life of Jesus (John 3:36; 6:33-35, 63; 10:9).

2. How do I become a disciple of Jesus?

To become a disciple of Jesus, one must first see a need in his own heart to be His disciple. Without a conviction in our own heart of our lost condition, and lack of any spiritual life, we will not see a need to be a disciple of Jesus. There are men who follow their religion, their churches doctrine, good intentions, and good works. Because they are doing these things they will not see a reason to become a disciple of Jesus. They are presumptive in thinking that this will make them acceptable with God. Peter gives the correct answer to the root question of why a person

should become a disciple of Jesus. Peter was questioned on whether he would leave Jesus as other disciples had done. Peter spoke these words in answer to Jesus; “You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

To be a true disciple, a heart must be set upon the Captain of our salvation, and the Saviour of our souls (Hebrews 2:10; Titus 1:4). Jesus is eternal God speaking to the heart of the one who has an ear to hear Him.

Jesus Himself points us to the pathway of becoming His disciple. In John 8:29 Jesus said this; “For I do always those things that please Him (God).” Pleasing the Father is a disciple’s calling as well. In Ephesians 1:12 we learn God’s purpose in making a person a disciple; “**That we should be to the praise of His Glory...**” In John 8:31, Jesus instructs those who believed on Him, what is necessary to become His disciple.

First, faith is necessary to be a disciple. This faith is fully set upon the person of Jesus, integrating the heart and mind as one toward Him.

Second, Jesus instructs that in order to be His disciple, continually abiding in His word is necessary. It could be said this way. Those who have believed on Him from the heart, and continue to follow Him in whatever He teaches, will become His disciple. The Scripture and the Holy Spirit are the revelation of His Truth. This requires the simplicity of a childlike faith, and the willingness to continue to grow in the kingdom of Christ. Without this, becoming a disciple is not possible (Matthew 18:1-4). The one who hears from the heart, and follows only the voice of Jesus, will become the disciple of Jesus.

Third, this spiritual direction will bring a new life to the one who finds it (Matthew 10:39). The result of this new life will bring the seeking one to a greater desire and hunger for the Bread of Heaven, Jesus (John 6:51). The result of continual feasting on the Lord Jesus is the life of Jesus flowing into the

life of the disciple (John 4:14; 7:38; Revelation 3:20).

Fourth, John 8:32 expresses that the truth of the kingdom of God will become a reality in the heart of the follower of Jesus. In John 9:5 Jesus said; “I am the light of the world.” His light is what comes into the mind and heart of His disciple. Everyone who follows Jesus as His disciple will be like the blind man in John 9:25. Jesus healed him of his blindness, upon receiving his sight the blind man said, “...Whereas I was blind, now I see.” The blind man’s miracle healing is a metaphor, of the spiritual sight, which a disciple of Jesus will receive, and experience in his spirit and soul.

Fifth, The next thing that Jesus said would take place would be; “...the truth shall make you free.” One may ask, ‘free of what?’ Free of the power of the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). One who is not a disciple of Jesus is under bondage to sin, which results in death. This, he cannot break by himself, even though he may control the outward fruit of the law of sin and death. It takes a spiritual power, the

power of Christ to overcome man's spiritual sickness. The disciple has the life of Jesus within him to break that power of spiritual sickness, and to live in freedom through God's Spirit within him. What is required for the disciple to enter into this new life? To believe God in faith, looking to Him through the words of Jesus for help, direction and life.

3. What is the cost of becoming a disciple?

When a Christian woman marries a man, she is to come under his authority. In Ephesians 5:23, we learn that the husband is the head of the wife. In verse 24 we are told that the wife is to be subject to the husband in everything, just as the Church is subject to Christ. As the wife and husband become one flesh, so the bride and wife (Revelations 19:7; 21:9) of Christ are one in (with) Him (Galatians 3:28). In Ephesians 5:30 we learn this; "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." In other words, the Christian is one with Christ by being born of God through the work of the

Holy Spirit. Just as no Christian man would want to marry a woman who would not agree to God's terms of marriage, so it is with Christ and the Church. If the wife does not agree to put her husband before all others, they cannot become one flesh. In the mind of God, a wife who has not given a complete heart to her husband cannot fulfill her husband or herself. So it is with a disciple of Jesus who has not given Him a complete heart. Israel was guilty of this as God spoke through the prophet Isaiah; "Wherefore the Lord said, for as much as these people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me..." (Isaiah 29:13).

Jesus made discipleship very plain to those who would unite with Him. In Luke 14:26, Jesus tells us this; "If any man come to Me, and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Again, Jesus speaks of this in Luke 14:33 telling us the cost of following Him; "So likewise,

whosoever of you does not forsake all that he has, cannot be my disciple.” God has not designed a wife to have a divided heart of loyalty toward her husband, so Jesus will not have a disciple with a divided heart toward Himself.

The example of Levi, when Jesus called him to come and follow Him, is what Jesus is looking for in all who would be His disciple. We read this of Levi in Luke 5:28; “And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.” If one who is called a “Christ one” (one of Christ’s own) does not do as Levi did, he cannot be a true disciple of Jesus. This may be hard to accept, but there is no middle ground in following Jesus. All of this may sound difficult, but to simplify it, becoming a disciple is this; it is to believe God above all else. Scripture tells us this; “... let God be true, but every man a liar” (Romans 3:4).

4. What will become of Adam?

“Knowing this that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.” (Romans 6:6-7).

Scripture is very exact about the Adamic nature that lives in us. This Adamic nature with which we were born, is the spiritual D. N. A., which we inherited from Adam. Every man is born with Adam's nature, a sin nature (Romans 7:14-17). Scripture makes it clear that the Christian has a new nature, which has been given by God. The Adamic nature within us cannot be conformed to the will of God. Only the nature of God within the believer can do the will of God.

To be a true disciple of Jesus, the new nature we receive from God through our faith, must have priority in our heart. By faith our Adamic nature must be put to death. We learn from Scripture that every Christian died with Christ two thousand years ago (Romans 6:3). Now it is only for the disciple to reckon himself dead to Adam's nature in himself and

alive unto God (Romans 6:11). When we, by faith, put our Adamic nature to death, we are freed from the power of sin, because a dead man cannot sin. This is God's answer to the sin nature within us, to die to self and live unto Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

In this pathway of a true disciple, the Adamic nature will not have the power to drag a follower back into a life of sin and death. There is no place for Adam's nature in the kingdom of God. The second Adam (Christ) who lives in a true disciple will bring him into a life that cannot be lost. For Jesus said, "He who finds his life will lose it, he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39).

5. Is all of this practical or possible?

Becoming a disciple of Jesus is God's eternal thought and design for man in his lost condition. If men look at themselves, they may honestly believe that all of this is not possible for them. However, if success or failure is hinged on our human power or

abilities, failure is sure to follow. "...for by strength shall no man prevail" (1 Samuel 2:9). To the one who honestly seeks in faith to be a disciple of Jesus, that person is assured of God's power to make it happen. Jesus gives these words of hope; "But Jesus looked at them and said, with men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27). Again in 1 Samuel 2:9 the promise of God is this; "He will keep the feet of His saints..." God cannot accept anyone who will be a disciple in his own works or strength. To be a disciple of Jesus is a divine work of God through receiving His revelation and power. Because it is a work of God, only God, can do this work.

In John 1:13 we are instructed in three ways that will not bring a person into becoming a disciple of Jesus. The **first** is, born of blood. If a person is born into a Christian family it does not make that person a disciple of Jesus. God has no grandchildren, as someone once said. **Second** is, the will of the flesh. One cannot be a disciple of Jesus for the reason that one wills himself to be a disciple.

Which of the disciples of Jesus followed Him because of their own will? Jesus spoke this to His disciples in John 15:16; “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit...” In John 15:5 Jesus said, “...For without Me ye can do nothing.” So it is with everyone who is or will be a disciple of Jesus. The person who is chosen by God to be a disciple will come in faith to Jesus. **Third** is, the will of man. No man can will another into the kingdom of God. Many men have tried to will others into the kingdom of God by physical means. For example, Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire, and he is said to have marched his armies into the rivers to Christianize them through baptism. Today, others attempt to declare someone a Christian, through the following; confirmation, dedication of children, child baptism, adult baptism, taking of communion, joining a church, speaking in tongues, etc.

Fourth is, born of God. John 1:12 reveals to us that a person can only be a disciple by being born of God. This can only happen by the work of God through a person's faith in receiving Christ Jesus, into his heart.

Is this really practical for a man today? The answer to that question is, in our abilities no, because our Adamic nature being a sin nature does not receive the things of Christ. Also, the riches of God in Christ seem like foolishness, and are unimportant to a man's nature (1 Corinthians 1:14). However, for God it is the very reason Jesus died for each and every person. For God to do this work in a person is totally practical. Furthermore, God promises if He starts the work He will complete it. **“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ”** (Philippians 1:6).

The work of God in making a disciple out of a sinner is His miracle through the Holy Spirit. The learner's portion is to receive His gift. Receiving the gift is, to believe the Word of God in the mind, and receive the Spirit of God in the heart.

6. Rivers of Living Water

“... If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38).

“... But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

This living water is the Holy Spirit, bringing the life of Jesus into the disciple's spirit. This living water is the natural outcome of a true disciple following Jesus. It is what brings the joy of Christ to a disciple's spirit and soul. For a disciple to overcome a natural life, (Adamic life) and live in the life of Jesus, God's power is mandatory. This power is activated by faith as one sets his heart on Jesus. Righteousness, peace and joy in the heart are the result of this power (Romans 14:17). This joy has nothing to do with our natural circumstances; it is the joy of The Lord. The circumstances, which Jesus encountered, led Him to death on the cross, because of the joy set before Him. We read of this in

Hebrews 12:2. Jesus was never without the joy of God, even when going to death on the cross.

By beholding Jesus in the heart, the living water makes the disciple into a new creature in the kingdom of God (2 Corinthians 5:17). This cannot be accomplished by self-effort as stated earlier in chapter five. Only by becoming a child in simplicity before the Father, can this be accomplished, believing all things that the Holy Spirit and Scripture teach. A disciple will then enter into a life, which he has never experienced before. This is the very life of God. Christ came to bring this life to everyone who believes.

Jesus was one hundred percent a spiritual Man. The result of His spiritual life, was that Jesus always did His Father's will (John 8:29). This spiritual life is one in which a disciple is learning to live and walk.

Peace of spirit is a fruit of this life, as Scripture records this; "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid..." (John 14:27). Believing God will bring our souls

into continual rest and peace (Matthew 11:28-29; Hebrews 4:9-10). This rest is the result of faith, which opens the river of living water, and brings the life of Christ into the disciple's spirit. Drinking the living water, transforms the disciple into the image of Christ. This is the heritage of a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

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8-09-07

“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither a son of man, that He should repent. Shall He say and not do? And shall He speak and not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19 JND).

Praise be to God who has given us all things, above what we are able to hope or think.

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