

Faith Outreach Christian Life Center
Hephzibah, Georgia
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Understanding Discipleship

Introduction: This lesson is designed to provide the Ministers of Faith Outreach Christian Life Center a biblical understanding of Discipleship; enabling them to help fulfill God's Great Commission.

Disciple: A learner, follower, pupil, or student. One who learns by active participation. One who embraces and assists in spreading the teachings of another.

A disciple (follower) is nothing without someone to follow. As Born-Again believers, we are disciples of Jesus the Christ. To understand then, what we must follow, we must understand what He did.

The Mission of Jesus – God Incarnate: To better understand what our mission should be, we need to understand what His mission was. What was Jesus' Mission?

1. **To seek and save that which was lost:** (Luke 19:10) *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
 - a. What was lost? Dominion, authority, power, and rulership in the earth realm.
 - b. Adam's sin created a breach between fallen man and a Holy God.
 - c. This verse connotes a two fold mission:
 - i. The restoration of the Kingdom of God in the earth
 - ii. The desire to offer this Kingdom to all humanity.
2. **To Establish His Government (Church) on the earth:** (Matthew 3:2) *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 16:18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
 - a. Jesus came to re-establish His Kingdom Dominion in the earth – through the vehicle of substitutionary death.
 - b. He put down His righteousness and clothes Himself with our sin, that we might put down our sin and clothe ourselves in His Righteousness! **Trading Places!**
3. **To offer Godly life to Dead Men Walking:** (John 10:10) *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*
 - a. There is no life outside of Christ. Without Christ we can exist, but we will never really live.
 - b. Jesus came to offer a Godly-vibrant and eternal life to all mankind.

- This was what He (Jesus) came to do
- He wanted to leave a legacy after He was gone
- He needed His mission to continue after His death
- He chose disciples (learners, followers, and pupils) to be the ones who would learn from the Master – first hand

Who were the ones selected? (Luke 6:14-16 KJV) *Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.*

There was nothing really special about these men. They ran the gamut from gentle and loving (John) to political fanatics (Simon the Zealot). Judas betrayed Him, Thomas questioned Him, and

Our Vision is to identify, win and train brothers and sisters of all nationalities and denominations into one body of Christ, who in turn will carry the ministry of this church into all the world.

Peter denied Him. These were the Dirty Dozen on Biblical Times. They were not perfect, but they followed Jesus and learned from the Master.

Application: We don't have to be perfect to be disciples. We serve a God who is in the business of making Holy Garments out of flawed materials. God can work with our inadequacies and inabilities; just as long as we make ourselves AVAILABLE to Him.

- This month our focus is one Discipleship and the Word will challenge you to act out what is it that you say you believe.
- You may not be able to quote scriptures from Genesis to Revelation.
- You may not be able to preach like Pastor Peoples.
- You may not be able to teach like Elder Alexander.
- All God is looking for you to be is YOU! As long as you submit YOU to Him, He can work through you for His glory!

What would be their mission? (Mark 3:13-15 KJV) *And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. and he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.*

- God knows the end from the beginning (Is 46:10).
- Jesus established their mission right off the bat. Their mission was directly tied to His mission.
- He came to start the work and they would have to continue the work.
- They became and we are today THE CONTINUATION OF HIS INCARNATION!
- They did not have – neither do we – any mission outside of carrying out the will of God in the earth.
- What were they called and separated to do?
 - **Spend time with Jesus:** You cannot be a disciple (follower and learner) if you do not spend time with the one that you are supposed to learn from and follow.
 - **Go forth and preach:** You don't have to wear a collar, nor have a title to be a preacher. The word here is to proclaim. Proclaim what? The same message that He came proclaiming! Repent – the Kingdom of God is at hand!
 - **Minister healing to the sick:** As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to take His message into the world. Whatever the problem is – sickness, disease, addiction, obsession, etc.; – Christ is the answer and that should be our message!
 - **Minister deliverance to the bound:** God gave His disciples (and us) both power and authority over the enemy. (Luke 9:1,2 KJV) *Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.*
 - All of which was described in this text.

What were His final instructions to them? (Mat 28:18-20 KJV) *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

1. **Mission:** *Go ye therefore.* Based upon His power, they were and we are to 'Go.' I call this 'Go' in the gospel. God did not redeem you into His kingdom to be idle. God has a purpose for each and every one of us. The mere fact that you are still breathing and that blood is still flowing through your veins is evidence that God is not done with you. He wants to use you to share with someone else, the 'Good News' that was shared with you. Thank God for the 'Grow,' but never neglect the 'Go!'

2. **Method:** *Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Jesus instructed His disciples to teach and baptize -- in that order. Teaching the lost first of 'all' the things that He had commanded them. Sharing the gospel message with a dying and decaying world. Leading the Lost to Jesus and then baptizing them as an outward expression of an inward change.

3. **Motivation:** *And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* Jesus would not leave them (nor us) a task that they could not perform. He gave them the power (access and authority) and now reassures them (and us) with His presence. He wants us to 'Go,' but we must not 'Go' by ourselves. We are to 'Go' with his presence, under His leadership, and preaching His Word!

Did they listen? Let's look at the evidence in Acts:

1. (Acts 2:41) **Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.**
 - a. Peter preached the Word and those that received the Word were saved. On the first day, 3,000 were added to the church.
2. (Acts 2:47) **Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**
 - a. Anything that is living ought to be growing! The church is a Living Organism, not an institution, not an organization, but rather a living being. The Church is Alive and must grow to continue to be so. Anything that is not growing is Dead! We are members of God's church and we must seek to be used to continue its growth and Dominion in the earth!
3. (Acts 5:42) **And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.**
 - a. The teaching and preaching of Jesus Christ and the message of salvation was a daily experience in the early church. We would do well in remembering to do the same. Not that we have to meet everyday, but we should teach and preach as we go through our daily routines. We are the church and not just this location. How are you fulfilling the mission of the church in your life?
4. (Acts 8: 4) **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.**
 - a. We received the gospel in our own countries because of what the early church did. They shared the gospel everywhere they went and it spread all around the world. What are we doing to spread it in our community?

We have a Responsibility to listen as well

1. (Dan 12:1-3 NIV) **"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people-everyone whose name is found written in the book-will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**
 - a. Do you want to stand before God fruitless? Do you want your testimony to be, "Lord, I attended every worship, every bible study, I came to prayer meetings on Saturdays and studied Your Word Daily! Lord, I strived with all my heart to grow in YOU!" And then for Him to replay to you every lost person He sent into your path and you ignored. What is the purpose of Discipleship, if not to lead others into the same?
2. (Proverbs 11:30) **The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.**
 - a. The Bible promises God's wisdom to those who ask (Jas 1:5). We have a responsibility to be used of God, under His wisdom, to lead the lost to HIM!

3. (1 Cor 1:21) For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.
 - a. The proclamation of the gospel and the leading of the Holy Spirit are the only ways that souls will be saved. It does no good to point out a weakness if we are not resolved to do something about it. Just like we were saved by the proclamation of the Word, the world is standing in need of the same. You may feel ill-equipped, unprepared, and unqualified for the task; but the Holy Spirit and an ear to hear is all we need. The Holy Spirit Equips, Enables, Empowers, and Employs the believers to proclaim His Word to a dying and decaying world. Do you have the Holy Spirit? Do you have an ear to hear? Are you willing to be used?
4. (Ro 1:16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
 - a. Some people are ashamed to bring up Jesus in a conversation. They can talk about God all day and folks not get upset, but they know that the mention of the name "Jesus" turns heads and repels devils. Because of this, many are afraid that they will be labeled as 'Jesus Freaks' or 'Christian Fanatics.' They know the gospel and come in contact with the lost, but never mention Jesus, in an attempt to not make any waves.
 - b. Are you ashamed of the gospel? Are you ashamed of what God has done in your life? You may say you are not, but are your actions lining up with your words?

So where do we go from here?

1. **Overcome Fear:**
 - a. Many are afraid to share the gospel message out of fear of ridicule.
 - b. Others are afraid that they will say something wrong.
 - c. Simply come to God as an available vessel and allow Him to do the work!
2. **Grow in Knowledge:**
 - a. Continue to come to Bible Study.
 - b. Study the Word to show yourself approved (2 Tim 2:15).
 - c. You cannot give what you do not have, nor lead where you have not been.
3. **Gain Experience:**
 - a. The only way you can experience Evangelism is by doing it.
 - b. Determine to be used of God to lead souls to Him.
 - c. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone, and then -- talk to them about Jesus!
 - d. As you share with others, you will also find yourself growing and becoming less afraid.
4. **Put away your Excuses:**
 - a. You can always come up with reasons why not to talk to someone about Jesus.
 - b. If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got!
 - c. Determine to be a witness for Christ!
5. **Put away Laziness:**
 - a. Most of us are very busy in other things, but we are lazy when it comes to the work of God. We must make the effort to Evangelize.
 - b. We will never succeed, if we don't try.
 - i. In baseball, the batter will not hit, unless he swings.
 - ii. In basketball, the player will not score, unless he shoots.
 - iii. In Christ, the Christian will never lead a soul to Him, unless he witnesses!

I have heard it said, *"Everyone wants to tell you how to do evangelism, but no one wants to do it!"*