

Rediscovering **DISCIPLESHIP**

"Give your complete attention to these matters. Throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone will see your progress."
1 Timothy 4:15 NLT

A disciple is a loving, faithful follower of Christ.

And their priority is to carry out God's will.

**Making Jesus
last words our
first priority.**

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.



"D" before "C"

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." (Acts 11:26 NIV)

How would you answer the following questions?

- Are you a born again believer?
- Have I forgotten my first love?
- Is Jesus first in my life, or am I?
- Do I trust His Word enough to live by it?
- Do I honestly deny myself for the sake of Christ?
- Do I have someone who will challenge me to grow spiritually?
- How often do I share Christ with others?
- Do I share Christ with others?
- Am I a follower of Christ, or do I drag Him along instead ?

What are some reasons why a plant doesn't grow?



10 suggested Reasons Why Believers Don't Grow

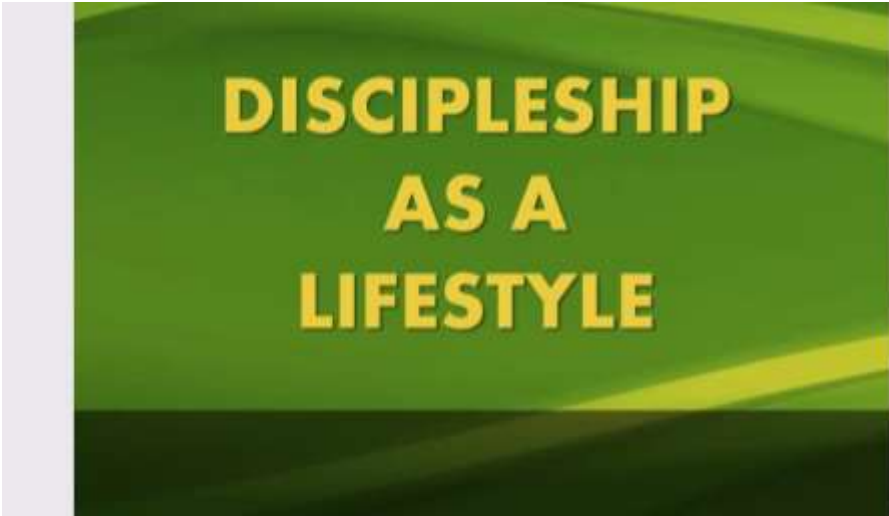
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| ○ Impoverished Soil: lifeless soil | Matthew 13:1-6 |
| ○ Soil too Hot (<i>Shallow</i>) | “ “ |
| ○ Lack of Water or too Much Water | Galatians 5:25,26 |
| ○ Over Fertilizing | Romans 12:3 |
| ○ Transplanting Shock | James 1:7,8 |
| ○ Wrong Season to Plant | Matthew 8:21,22 |
| ○ Wrong Place to Plant | 2 Corinthians 6:17 |
| ○ Wrong PH in Soil for Specific Plant | Ephesians 4:11-14 |
| ○ Lack of knowledge | Hosea 4:6 |

What discipleship is not

It's not...

a class
a seminar
a degree you earn
a program
a 12 week bible study
a 40 day home group

a quick process
a quick fix
reserved for super saints
it's not impossible
it's not an option



**DISCIPLESHIP
AS A
LIFESTYLE**

The lifestyle of a disciple

Being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ means to learn from Him and to stay close to Him.

Intentionally equipping believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Christ.



Point of first mention

“One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” And they left their nets at once and followed him.”
Matthew 4.18-20.NLT

It's begins
with a
personal
invitation
from
Christ.



No one warrants God's favor through meritorious works.

It is through a grace extended invitation from the greatest rabbi who ever lived.

The discipleship process always begins here, with a personal relationship with Jesus.

The first step in learning isn't gathering information about models and methods. Jesus doesn't start by changing our actions, what we do. He first changes our heart.

Ephesians 2:1-5



By Watching / Observing Him

Matthew 5:1,2

Mark 1:23-26

By Assisting Him

John 6:1-14
Mark 8:1-10



Discipleship begins with...



- A personal invitation from Christ
Follow Me
- A commitment to follow.
No questions asked / Surrender
- A commitment to serve
Jesus asked the disciples to assist HIM
- Looking for opportunities to be
a blessing
Jesus didn't always wait for people to ask
for a blessing.

By putting His
Word into
practice



Matthew 17:14-21



Discipleship grows into...



- A commitment to serve
Jesus asked the disciples to assist HIM

- Looking for opportunities to be a blessing

Jesus didn't always wait for people to ask for a blessing.

- Applying Christ teachings and example to your personal life.

As a disciple of Christ, when people come to you for assistance, they are expecting a carbon copy of Christ.

DEVELOP

Faith is the foundation of discipleship.

Faith is nothing more or nothing less than trusting in the character and the promises of God, to the point that you act like a disciple whether you feel like it or not.



- ❖ Without faith we can not please God.
- ❖ We can not follow Him without denying ourselves.

With radical faith you can...

**DENY
YOURSELF**

"Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."

Luke 9:23,24

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

KJV

"Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

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Luke 9:23,24

Denying oneself looks like, but is not limited to...

- Giving up your own way.
- Putting God first.
- Suppressing your flesh.
- Following God's will not yours.
- Faith over fears.
- God's priority over your desires.
- Requires special prayer.
- Take the focus off of one's self
- Check with God before doing anything.
- Must be in tune with the Holy Spirit.
- Fasting



What do I value most?

The things I won't give up for God.





Disciples have a
dedicated love
for God.

Take your emotions out of the equation



Love for God is not emotional,
it's devotional



Love is a commandment

Mark 12:29-31 NLT

29. "Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord.

30. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.'

31. The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

How does scripture teach us to love God

Biblical love demands obedience.

John 14:15 (21)

1 John 5:1-5

Biblical love is sacrificial

John 3:16

Biblical love implies action

1 John 3:18,19

Biblical love is putting God first

To love God is to put Him first. Your love and attachment to Him must be greater than any other. While husbands are commanded to love their wives, and wives their husbands, they are commanded to love the Savior more. No human relationship could be more intimate, no bond more inseparable than that of disciple and Master.

SHOW ME THE  LOVE

Student's response

Pray to Him / seek His face

Know His word

Being obedient to his word

Keeping his commandments

Meditating on His word

Tithing

Be forgiving

Fasting

Becoming His disciples

Denying yourself

Follow Him / Living a Christian life

Imitate Him

Have faith in Him

Praising Him

Worshipping Him

Reasons we don't keep His Comments

Student's response

- Lack of knowledge / Not informed
- Follow the flesh / rather than following God
- Choose to please ourselves
- Choose to please others
- Pride
- Selfishness
- Fear of the unknown

Biblical love is putting God first

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Let's get practical.

- What is the measuring stick for how well we are loving God?
- What are some of the things that God has commanded us to do?
- If we are to obey his commands, we ought to know what they are.

Luke 14:28

But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?"

COUNT THE COST

LUKE 14:25-35

Luke 14:26

If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:27

"And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:28 NLT

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For **who** would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?"

Luke 14:33 Easy English

"Jesus then said, 'It is like that for **all of you**, if you want to be my disciples. You must leave **everything** that you have behind you.'



"How do you count the cost when you don't know what's coming in your life?"



Comparing Prices. What does it cost to not follow Christ?

When Jesus calls us to count the cost, we have to count both sides of the ledger. You have to count the cost of following, but you also have to count the cost of staying behind.

Joshua 24:14,15

14. So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone.

15. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.

The cost of following Jesus

Jesus must be your greatest and top priority, above everything and everyone including yourself.

Be willing to follow him at any cost.

The cost of not following Jesus

The loss of one's soul.

The forfeiting of having a personal relationship with God The Father for eternity.



Following leads to being

- Many people hear the word *disciple* and think it means only "follower." But **genuine** discipleship is a state of **being**. This suggests more than studying and applying a list of individual attributes. Disciples live so that the characteristics of Christ are woven into the fiber of their beings, as into a spiritual tapestry.

Characteristics of Christ

Jesus knew and lived His life according to the Word.



We grow as disciples through reading, learning and applying the word of God.

Our discipleship starts and is undergirded by our knowledge of the word of God. Our growth is predicated on our knowledge, understanding and application of the word of God.

We will not live or experience God above our knowledge of His word. No matter how much you desire to experience God's influence. It's determined by your knowledge of His word.



The steps of discipleship

Step 1. We answer the call of salvation through **faith** in Jesus.

Step 2. We accept the invitation to follow Christ.

Step 3. We are directed to count the cost of following Jesus.

Step 4. We begin following Christ as He leads, teach and model for us, how to operate in **love**. (It's not emotional it's devotional)

Step 5. We begin to walk according to His Word.

Kingdom Principle:

The word of God is our primary tool of growth.

Life application:

We are to walk, apply and obey God's word.

But first, we've got to commit to reading and studying it.

1 Timothy 4:13-16

2 Timothy 2:15

2 Timothy 3:16,17

Homework

Find scripture that will help you in times of...

- Temptation
- Anger
- Grief
- Confusion
- Impatient

PASSION WEEK:

Prophecy



TRUTH

Palm Sunday:

Meaning: Commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Importance: Fulfillment of prophecy and the beginning of the end of Jesus' earthly ministry.

Bible Verses:

Zechariah 9:9

[Matthew 21:1-11](#), [Mark 11:1-11](#), [Luke 19:28-44](#), [John 12:12-19](#).

Monday of Holy Week:

Meaning: Jesus' cleansing of the Temple.

Importance: Emphasizes the purity and sanctity of God's house.

Bible Verses: [Matthew 21:12-17](#), [Mark 11:15-19](#), [Luke 19:45-48](#).





Tuesday of Holy Week:

Meaning: Teaching and parables, including the Olivet Discourse.

Importance: Jesus' preparation of His disciples for what is to come.

Bible Verses: [Matthew 21:23-26:5](#), [Mark 11:20-13:37](#), [Luke 20:1-21:36](#).

Wednesday of Holy Week

Spy Wednesday:

Meaning: Judas' agreement to betray Jesus.

Importance: The turning point towards Jesus' arrest.

Bible Verses:

Zechariah 11:12

[Matthew 26:14-16](#), [Mark 14:10-11](#), [Luke 22:1-6](#).



Maundy Thursday:

Meaning: Last Supper, washing of disciples' feet, institution of the Lord's Supper.

Importance: Establishes the sacrament of communion.

Bible Verses: [Matthew 26:17-30](#), [Mark 14:12-26](#), [Luke 22:7-39](#), [John 13:1-17:26](#).

Maundy Thursday also commemorates the night that Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, one of his closest disciples.

Bible Verses:

Zech. 11:12-13

[Matt. 26:49-50](#)).



A photograph showing Jesus being arrested by soldiers. Jesus is in the center, looking down, wearing a light-colored robe. Several soldiers in dark robes and head coverings are surrounding him, some holding him. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in similar attire.


Good Friday am.

2am: Jesus is arrested.
John 22:52,53

5am: Jesus stands before Pilate
and becomes silent

Isiah 53:7
Matthew 27:13,14

9am Crucifixion starts
Genesis 3:15
Mark 15:24,25

A photograph of Jesus on the cross. Jesus is the central figure, looking upwards with an expression of suffering. He is wearing a crown of thorns and a loincloth. His hands are nailed to the cross. The background is a soft, hazy light.

Good Friday afternoon

12 noon The sun grows dark.

Matthew 27:45

3pm Jesus's last words in
Hebrew-Aramaic

Matthew 27:46

A photograph of Jesus on the cross, identical to the one in the previous section. Jesus is the central figure, looking upwards with an expression of suffering. He is wearing a crown of thorns and a loincloth. His hands are nailed to the cross. The background is a soft, hazy light.

Good Friday afternoon

Mockery Suffered by the Messiah
Psa. 22:7-8
Psa. 109:25

Thirst of the Messiah
Psa. 69:21

Words from the Cross
Psa. 22:1

Messiah's Side is Pierced
Zech. 12:10

The Suffering of the Messiah
Isa. 53:5

Burial of the Messiah
Isa. 53:9

Kingdom Principle:

The word of God is our primary tool of growth.

Life application:

We are to walk, apply and obey God's word.

But first, we've got to commit to reading and studying it.

1 Timothy 4:13-16

2 Timothy 2:15

2 Timothy 3:16,17

God has always desired that humanity know and live by His word.

God went through extensive measures to protect and provide us a written rendition of His word. He provided His word for us to know Him, His will, His kingdom principles and to better our lives by it.

Jeremiah 31:33-35

2 Peter 1:20, 21

Psalms 119:105-112

The enemy desires to keep people from the word of God.

The Adversary has strategically implemented and choreographed different concepts and approaches in our social order to cause the word to be rejected, or become unfruitful in the life of the hearer. They are affliction, persecution, the cares of the world, deceitfulness of riches and lust for other things. They will **hinder** the word's effectiveness in our hearts, minds, faith and lives.

1 Peter 1:6,7

John 8:32

Herein is the need and the power of being disciplined through the word of God.

Discipleship anchors our soul in God. It gives us the perspective of **His** will, wisdom and intent for our lives and world. And it gives us **instructions** on how to live and navigate through life. It builds our faith and trust in God's influence and kingdom principles and it leads and **empower** us to overcome. The word of God is His light to our paths and life to strengthen us.

John 6:63,64

Psalms 119:105-107

However, knowing the word of God and being disciplined in it are two different things

To know the word of God is to have a relevant understanding of its contextual meaning. Yet, knowing alone does not impact our lives, **application** does. To be disciplined in the word is to **know it and apply it** to our lives.

Discipleship causes us to experience growth with God that leads to us being transformed from glory to glory.

James 1:21-25

This is why the disciples were called Christian in Antioch

It wasn't about a religious affiliation. It wasn't because they knew the scriptures, the religious rulers knew the scripture. It was about how they submitted to the teachings of Jesus and how it impacted, changed their lives and cause them to become Christ-like.

Acts 11:26

However, the word must have free course in our lives as Lord.

As you read or hear the word, it may lead, inform, educate, inspire, convict or uproot some things in your life.

That's the course it may take in your heart and mind. This course speaks to **who is Lord in your life**. If you obey it and allow it free course, then Jesus is Lord. If not, you're still Lord over your life.

2 Thessalonians 3:1

Colossians 3:16

Hebrews 4:12,13

Being a disciple through the word positions you to be led, receive wisdom, experience the influence of God, be blessed and be transformed into Christ-likeness. And that brings glory to God!

If Jesus is God, why did He pray?

For spiritual nourishment, Jesus relied on the very thing we rely on: prayer.

Jesus counted on prayer as a source of strength that equipped him to carry out a partnership with God, the Father on earth.



Jesus prayed because of who he is in relation to the Father.

Jesus prayed to God because God infused him with a spirit of prayer and also because of who Christ is in relation to His Father, namely, The Son of God. His identity, coupled with God's own desire to commune with His Son, explain why Jesus needed to pray.

At the same time, the arrival of the Son in the flesh provided a new way of relating to God. Prayer became a deeply intimate conversation between God, the Father and his people because of Christ Person and Work, and bringing us to such a place.

Suggested reasons why Jesus prayed

- Stay connected to The Father (Communicate)
- As an example
- For strength
- As a sign of humility
- Out of obedience (To remain obedient)
- He was dependent on The Father
- Interceding for us
- Offering Thanksgiving
- Comfort
- Acknowledgement / Praise
- Guidance / Direction

How do we
follow Jesus'
example of
praying?



Jesus began His day with prayer, and often withdrew from others

Mark 1:35

Luke 5:15,16

Jesus prayed when tempted

Luke 22:39-43

Matt 4:11

Hebrews 4:14,15

Jesus Prayed for Wisdom

John 12:49,50, 14:10

Jesus prayed for his enemies

Matt 5:43-48



HOMEWORK: April 24, 2024

Write an assessment of your prayer life for the next week.

What's the difference between someone who can work on cars...

...and someone who works on cars for a living?



**Someone who can work on cars...
For them...**

- It's a hobby
- It's optional
- Something to tinker around with
- It's casual
- Not necessary
- For leisure
- DIY'er

**Someone who works on cars for a living...
For them...**

- It's for a living
- It's sustaining their life
- It's necessary
- It's daily
- It's a must
- Devoted to it
- It's required
- Requires certification, training, education
- Provides steady income
- Provides for self and family
- Career



How not to pray
Matt 6:5

Model Prayer
Luke 11:1-

Devote yourself to prayer
Colossians 4:2-6
Hebrew 4:16

Jesus's prayer life wasn't spotty or intermittent. He prayed constantly.

Growing as a disciple is undergirded with a developed prayer life. Developing a prayer life requires an intentional choice. You've got to intentionally (Naturally) want to grow your prayer life.

In today's society and social order, our days are so full, and we can be very busy. Most are busy doing things that are necessary, and we simply are living life. This makes setting yourself apart to pray a challenge to some. However, even within our busy lives, we must find time to spend with God in prayer.

Actually, it's not about time, it's about what's **important** to you.

Most will make the time to do what they believe to be important.

If developing a prayer life is not that important, you will not prioritize it and make the time to grow in prayer. So, you probably will not develop a prayer life. We develop a prayer life by viewing prayer as an **important part of our lives**. Then we most likely will set apart the time to do it.

And it's not about how you feel. You may not feel like praying. Developing a prayer life is an intentional choice to devote time to pray. Make prayer important and set apart the time to pray.

Acts 3:1

"Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three o'clock prayer service."

We develop a prayer life by setting ourselves apart unto God to pray.

I know there are those who would say that they pray while driving or getting ready for work. While all of that is good, it's not a prayer life (Fast Food). A prayer life is us setting ourselves apart from the world and the day-to-day things that we do, and seek time to commune with God in prayer. You're quietly before God, doing nothing else but focusing only on Him.

You have determined a time and a place to shut everything down to spend that time with God. Not only will you find that this gives you an opportunity to give yourself a break from it all, but it helps to settle your world down and it reduces stress. And it helps to re-center you. It's a needed pause in everything to spend time with the one who can fix it all and who is everything. Shutting it all down in communion with God daily will absolutely change your life.

Habakkuk 2:1-2

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."

We develop a prayer life by becoming intimate and open with God.

It's in the presence of God when we tell Him about all of our cares, failures short comings and concerns. We pour it all out unto Him; withhold nothing from Him that's in our lives or hearts. These are moments of humility that develop intimacy with God. It's like baring it all with your doctor. With God, He already knows about it. He's waiting to see if you are going to humble yourself and be honest and real with Him. It's not about being religious or eloquent, but real from the heart.

[Philippians 4:6-8](#) [Luke 18:9-14](#)

When we are real in our hearts with God, He will hear us.

This open hearted intimate prayer grows your relationship with God, and positions you to experience His move in your life. You're not just talking to God; you're listening for Him and responding to Him. It's an exchange; you're in heart to heart communion with God. When done daily, you position yourself to develop a listening ear to God, grow and experience His influence in your life.

[Psalms 10:17](#) [James 4:6](#)

Homework

- Prayer is where we are intimate with God, telling Him all of our concerns. **1st Peter 5:6-7**
- Prayer is where we learn to be still and develop a listening ear for God. [Habakkuk 2:1-2](#)
- Prayer is where we are filled and renewed. [Jude 1:20](#) / **1st Corinthians 14:4**
- Prayer is where we stop the madness, and quietly settle down our souls. [Philippians 4:6-8](#)
- Prayer is where we express our thanksgiving, praise and worship towards God. **Psalms 100**

What could be a common struggle in a persons day-to-day prayer life?

What is a common struggle in your personal day-to-day prayer life?

How are you trying to grow in this area?