True Disciples Of Jesus

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday December 30th, 2018

Text: Luke 9:23; 14:27; John 8:31-32

### Intro

1. Christians (“Followers of Christ”) are Disciples!
   1. Lk. 9:23: “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”
   2. Lk. 14:27: “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”
2. What is a disciple?
   1. “Disciple”: Greek word *mathetes [math-ay-tes' ] (Strong’s G3101):* “a learner or pupil.”
   2. “From *manthano (G3129),* ‘to learn,’ from a root *math*—, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor. A ‘disciple’ was not only a pupil, but an adherent; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 15:8” (Vine’s NT).
   3. This word involves more than our modern idea of a pupil or student. The Biblical concept of discipleship emphasizes the teacher-student relationship.
   4. He accepts the views of his teacher and adopts his teacher’s way of life (Mt. 10:24-25; I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1)
3. Jesus is not the only person in the Bible who had disciples:
   1. John the Baptist had disciples (Mt. 9:14; 11:2-3)
   2. The Pharisees had disciples (Mt. 22:16)
   3. Some of the Jews claimed to be disciples of Moses (Jn. 9:28)
4. As Christians, we need to be sure that we are disciples of Jesus Christ!

#### Conditions of Discipleship

* 1. Although Jesus has many followers, He makes it clear that not everyone who follows Him is a true disciple…
     1. Lk. 14:26, 33:
        1. As Jesus taught the crowds (Lk. 14:25) on counting the cost of discipleship, he made it clear that the essence of discipleship is to place all things in God's hands (Acts 4:34-37: Saints shared their possessions).
        2. Following Jesus is not a trivial matter. One is not really being a disciple if one is not fully devoted to God!
     2. Jn. 8:31-32:
        1. Not enough to say one believes in Jesus, but one must devote their life to study of His word! *(Abide in or continue in)*
  2. Only those who meet certain conditions or requirements are recognized by the Lord as being His true disciples.
  3. What are these conditions? How can we know if we are truly disciples of Jesus?

#### What are the Demands of Discipleship?

* 1. **We Must Deny Self**
     1. Lk. 9:23: “He must deny himself…”
        1. *Gal. 5:22-23; II Pet. 1:6:* Self-denial is an important quality to have.
        2. Denying self is accomplished when we put the will of Christ in the place of self (Gal. 2:20).
        3. II Cor. 5:9: To be a true disciple of Christ, one must always choose to do those things that please Him, not ourselves!
     2. Lk. 14:26-27: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters…”
        1. Mt. 10:37: “Hating” our family members is worded as, “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.”
        2. Jesus is not teaching us to hate others. He is saying that our love for Him must be greater than our love for any other person or thing.
     3. No one is to come between us and our loyalty to Christ, including ourselves!
  2. **We Must Be Willing To Suffer For Christ**
     1. Lk. 9:23: “Take up his cross daily…”
        1. Many people have shown their misunderstanding of this statement by carrying around large, wooden crosses. *This is not what the Lord meant by this statement!*
        2. The cross was not a religious symbol when Jesus spoke these words. It was not worn as a piece of jewelry or hung on the wall as a decoration. In Jesus’ day the cross was a much-feared instrument of suffering and death.
        3. Jesus told His disciples He was going to suffer and die (Luke 9:22); then He said that if one desired to come after Him, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Him (9:23).
     2. Jesus was up front with those who desired to be His disciples (Mt. 10:22).
        1. This was not a glamorous position He was offering them.
        2. It was not a means of climbing the social ladder or achieving greatness in the eyes of men. The path Jesus was walking was leading Him to death.
        3. Unless we are willing to walk the path He walked, and bear the suffering that comes with it (II Tim. 3:12), we cannot be His disciples!
  3. **We Must Learn From Christ**
     1. Mt. 11:29: “Learn from Me.”
     2. John 8:31-32: Continue/Abide in His word!
        1. Discipleship primarily denotes one who learns (II Tim. 2:15: KJV: “Study!”)
        2. Mt. 28:19-20: Jesus sent His apostles out to “make disciples of all the nations…teaching them…”
     3. Lk. 6:46: Jesus said, “Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?” ***The way we follow Christ today is by following His teachings!***
     4. To truly be a disciple of Christ one must follow His word!
  4. **We Must Bear Fruit**
     1. Jn. 15:8: “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”
        1. The vine and branches demonstrate that as we abide in the teachings of Christ, we are expected to bear much fruit (Jn. 15:4-5, 8-14)
        2. The production of this fruit is proof we are the Lord’s disciples. Without the fruit, there is no proof of discipleship and the Lord removes us and burns us in the fire! – Jn. 15:4-8.
     2. What is this fruit we are to produce?
        1. Continued spiritual growth (II Pet. 1:5-8; 3:18), good deeds (Mt. 25:34-46, Eph. 2:10), and living godly lives (Gal. 5:22-23; Phil. 2:15; Titus 2:11-14).
  5. **We Must Love Our Brethren**
     1. Jn. 13:34-35: “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 15:12)
        1. Before Jesus left His disciples, He commanded that they love one another as He loved them (Selflessly, sacrificially!)
        2. This requirement is one of the most challenging because it involves our attitude towards other people.
     2. Col. 3:12-14: Disciples of Jesus are to “put on” His traits (character attributes) of love & forgiveness!
        1. Different things can happen that will threaten the peace and unity of the local church. This is why disciples are told to “put on love, which is the bond of perfection” (Col 3:14).
     3. Jesus is no longer here in the flesh, but our love for Him is to be shown by the way that we love other disciples (I Jn. 4:12, 20-21; I Pet. 1:22; 4:8-9: “Fervently”).
        1. When we are seen biting and devouring one another (Gal. 5:14-15), the world has a hard time believing that we are truly disciples of Christ!
  6. **We Must Be Committed To Following Christ**
     1. Lk. 9:23: “Follow Me” is a daily commitment! (Lk. 14:27)
        1. Perhaps the one thing that is lacking in discipleship today is a failure to make a commitment to follow Christ in every aspect of one’s life.
        2. Being a disciple is not something we do once and it is taken care of for the rest of our life.
        3. We are faced with choices every day in which we have to deny self and do what Christ would have us to do.
        4. We are to count the cost before becoming a disciple (Lk. 14:28). Once we have made this decision, we are not to look back, but keep moving forward (Lk. 9:62).
        5. It is a lifetime commitment to be “Christ-like!” (Mt. 10:25; I Cor. 11:1)
  7. There are responsibilities in being a disciple of Jesus Christ!

## Conclusion

1. Are we really disciples of Jesus?
2. Have we put Him first in every part of our lives, and committed ourselves to following His teachings until the end?
   1. II Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10: The finish line for our faith is death *(or His return – I Thess. 4:16-18)*
3. The commitment is great, the hours of study long, and the persecution can make one weary, but the reward is great and outweighs any sacrifice one must make to follow Christ! *(Rom. 8:18)*
   1. *Mt. 10:42; Lk. 6:23, 35; Col. 3:23-24; Heb. 10:35; II Jn. 1:8; Rev. 11:18; 22:12:* No matter what we suffer in this life, if we are faithful, we will receive the great reward of eternal life in Heaven! *(Rev. 2:10)*
4. Let us be true disciples of Jesus and take up our crosses daily and follow Him!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent, be baptized, and daily follow Christ!
6. If a Christian in error, think about your example and the influence you have on others. Repent, be renewed, and daily follow Christ!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!