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Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills Blvd Church of Christ - 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd, Lakeland Florida 33805

What Does It Mean To Be A Disciple?

Matthew 10:24-37 NASB95

What does it mean to be a disciple? Since our last article explored the making of a disciple, I thought it helpful to explore what it means to **be** a disciple this week. Surely, I must believe it's important to become a disciple, and thusly necessary to learn what it means to be a disciple. We'll learn it is challenging to be a disciple and yet very rewarding, likewise suffering and rejection is a mark of discipleship as well. We must know the cost, and access the rewards. We must cultivate the desire for discipleship and prepare ourselves for temporal hardships. So, let us give serious thought to discipleship and prepare our hearts for the life of discipleship. The "Christian world has sold us a cheap and easy discipleship, and we (for the most part) have bought it. And I understand why. We, naturally and reasonably, do not enjoy pain of any kind. As humankind, we navigate our lives around avoidance of pain and suffering, striving to obtain as much temporal pleasure and comfort as possible. This is normal. God does not desire our suffering. In fact, He wants to give us blessings to enjoy life (Genesis 2), yet because man sinned (Genesis 3), pain and suffering were inevitable (Genesis 3:14-24). Jesus, the Son of God, also suffered to ensure all blessings would be restored (Ephesians 2:6). Warfare is necessary to complete all blessings the Lord will give (Ephesians 6:12-20). Therefore, with this beginning, we will examine the elemental parts of Jesus' definition of discipleship.

A disciple is not above his teacher. (v. 24)

Our place in the kingdom of our Lord is vastly important if we're going to be a successful disciple, and is necessary if we're not to fail. "The Christian world" has designated masters among men to lead disciples. I'm not referring to the authorized and functioning eldership as the Lord commanded (1Timothy 3: Titus 1; Acts 20:28), but the host of usurpers giving themselves titles that God did not. In effect, these become our masters to grant us access to Jesus the Christ and, by consequence, all access to God comes only through them. But who has God given as priests to access Him? Peter an apostle (Acts 2), an elder himself (1Peter 5:1), said we who are Christians are a royal priesthood prepared for holy worship (1Peter 2:9). I need no man to offer worshipful service for me unto God (Hebrews 4:16). So to be a humble slave is what it means to be a disciple of Christ (Romans 12:1,2). No man is above the master Christ, the Lamb, for He is declared both Lord and King of all (Revelation 17:14).

A disciple is to become like his master. (v. 25)

Not only are all below the master and thus His slaves, but we are to become like our master as well. This idea transforms that which would be unnatural to that which is supernatural because God has created us in Their image (Genesis 1:26,27). The beauty of our slave relationship with the master is that He wants us to emulate Him (John 17:19-23; 1Corinthians 11:1). The Father highly exalted Jesus because of His obedience in the flesh (Philippians 2:8,9). Notice the glory that the Father intends for us (Romans 2:9,10). What other relationship provides glory and honor, let alone one of slavery? Why wouldn't we want to be a slave to Christ (Rom. 6:22).

A disciple will be maligned and derided. (vs. 25b-27)

We will be maligned, derided, and generally hated, and we must learn this comes with the territory of discipleship. My concern is that I'm **not** hated. This causes me to question my discipleship. I know the Apostles experienced a degree of vitriol that was exceptional as this passage indicates, but the concern is still valid. Am I a true disciple if I am not persecuted in the least little bit? Paul said, *indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2Timothy 3:12)* This I need to examine in examination of my faith (2 Corinthians 13:5). But if we prepare ourselves, we have no need of fear because all we endure will be revealed (1Peter 1:3-5) and all that is dark will likewise be exposed. (Hebrews 4:13). Therefore, we must not be ashamed to own our Lord (Romans 1:16; 2Timothy 1:12). We have to be confident proclaimers of Jesus and Him crucified (1Corinthians 2:2), to awaken the invincible hope within to withstand all kinds of

persecutions with joy (Acts 16:25; James 1:2). This is what it means to be a disciple.

A disciple knows whom to fear. (v. 28)

There is fair warning that we have something worse to fear than physical death. The sober effect is to know God has power over life and death, and He will condemn the unfaithful soul to an eternity of pain and anguish (Matthew 25:31-46; 7:21-23). Let us recognize to be a disciple is to live with the regular remembrance of the power of our Lord over life.

A disciple knows his value. (vs. 29-31)

The Lord knows you dear friend, and you are more valuable than all that God has created. A disciple is one for whom the Lord is in constant concern and care (Matthew 6:32,33; 23:37; John 14:1-4). Consider Jesus care for the martyred saints (Revelation 6:11). *For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."* This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, *"THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,"* (1Peter 2:6,7)

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, (Philippians 3:7,8) Therefore, let us confess His name (vs. 32,33) because I am a disciple! CR