

Dynamics of Discipleship - Part 2

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Introduction.

- A. For many people discipleship is simply a new label for an empty bottle.
- B. Jacking up old programs does not make discipleship.
- C. We need to define discipleship, for knowing what it is will determine how we do it.
- D. If I use a screwdriver as a hammer it will not accomplish my goal and will ruin the tool.
- E. Today we want to explore the second question about discipleship; what is a disciple?

I. What is a disciple?

A. A disciple is a learner.

1. We need to teach learners with a desire to learn.
2. Jesus said to come unto him not for burn our but for rest as we learn from him.
(Matthew 11:28-30)
 - a. Most Christians are not at rest, they are neurotic.
 - b. In the spiritual realm we learn as long as we live.
 - c. We never graduate as a disciple.
 - d. If we stop learning we stop impacting the future.
 - e. People in their 50s and 60s should be impacting the world instead of retiring.
 - f. I asked a university professor what keeps him studying and he said he'd rather have his students drink from his running stream than from a stagnant pool.
 - g. Are you keeping your relationship with God fresh?
 - h. Some students asked me why I'm always so excited and I wonder why people aren't excited.
 - i. If one tenth of what we believe is true we should be ten times as excited as we are.
 - j. We are not excited about the truth we are embalmed by it.
 - k. Many competent people throw their minds into neutral in church.

l. I asked a professional man if he took notes in university and he said yes. When I asked him why he didn't take notes in church he was stunned.

m. Preaching may be excellent but if there is no adequate context for the message people will not get it.

n. If they have to teach a class, however, they will realize the need to learn.

B. Learning includes three areas.

1. You need to impact the thinking of a disciple.

a. This is difficult as many people spend over 7 hours in front of the TV.

b. Jesus said if you want to save your life throw it away, yet people think you only go around once in life and you need to grab all the gusto you can.

c. Jesus prohibits sex outside of marriage yet TV promotes it.

2. You need to change the feelings of a disciple.

a. We are scared spit less of emotional wisdom, which is out of control.

b. But we need to engage the emotions in a controlled way.

c. My pagan neighbor is excited about his boat and I am frequently excited about the same things.

d. But I hope that when you get into the pulpit you're excited.

e. Spurgeon said to light yourself on fire and invite people to watch you.

f. Feelings are a process of maturation in which we learn to love what God loves—people, and hate what God hates—sin.

3. You need to change the behavior of a disciple.

a. Christians are new creations. (2 Corinthians 5;17)

b. Christ is the center of our lives, in business or elsewhere.

c. In family life Christ is the center and if Christianity doesn't work at home you shouldn't export it.

1. One man told me he thinks that when he has sex with his wife the Holy Spirit steps out of the room.

2. The Holy Spirit is not ashamed to watch what he created.

d. Finances is another area that needs to come under the control of God.

1. The sin of the rich is greed.

2. The sin of the poor is envy.

B. A disciple is also a follower.

1. Jesus called Levi to follow him. (Mark 2:13)

a. A disciple follows and imitates the life and teaching of another.

b. Jesus spent his time with sinners; where do you spend your time?

c. Physicians spend their time with the sick.

d. My son is involved with a ministry to the FBI and the CIA.

e. Many Christians have no unsaved friends.

2. Your kids remind you of yourself.

a. Paul told his disciples to imitate him; can you tell others that? (1 Corinthians 11:1)

b. Most Christians imitate the Christian community.

c. Most of us only want to be liked, and this will make us unlike Christ. (Luke 6)

C. A disciple is a reproducer.

1. In obedience. (John 8:31-32)

a. Obedience comes before knowledge.

b. If God says to do something then we do it.

c. The opposite of ignorance is not knowledge, it is obedience.

2. In loving. (John 13:34-35)

a. This is not new for the Old Testament says it too.

b. What is new is that we are to love as Christ loves us.

c. We get great students at seminary that sometimes think they don't have what it takes for ministry.

1. Some have been called dunce by their dads.

2. We need to affirm those in our ministries.

d. Men will know that we are Jesus' disciples if we love one another.

e. We should restore Christians when they stumble. (Galatians 6:1)

3. In reproducing. (John 15:5-7)

a. Without Christ we can do nothing of spiritual value.

b. With Jesus we can do anything he asks us to do.

D. Are the people in our churches disciples of Jesus, characterized by learning, following, and reproducing?

1. The Zulu tribe has a way of marking a member for life.

2. They cut three slashes across the cheeks of their children and the scars remain forever.

3. Are you marked with the three slashes of Christ; learning, following, and reproducing?