

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is a believer, but not every believer is a disciple. The biblical portrait of a true disciple is someone who lives in obedience to the Word of God, and not someone who simply believes on Him for salvation.

It must also be understood that true biblical discipleship is not solely the academic pursuit of knowledge alone. A true disciple is both a learner and a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Disciples learn of Jesus through the reading and study of God's Word, and then follow him by obeying His Word.

Luke 11:28

²⁸*But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

John 13:17

¹⁷*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

John 14:15

¹⁵*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

John 15:14

¹⁴*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

*The terms “Believer” and “Disciple” are usually viewed synonymously.
Disciple = a learner; a pupil.*

It is assumed that a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is automatically a disciple. The reality, however, is that every true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is a believer, but not every believer is a disciple. Again, the biblical portrait of a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is someone who lives in obedience to the Word of God, not simply believes on Him for salvation and then gains Bible knowledge.

The key word of this lesson is:

FOLLOW

The key questions this lesson answers:

What does it really cost to follow the Lord Jesus Christ with my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To explain the process of one-on-one discipleship and give an overview of what a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ looks like.

The key point of this lesson:

Following Jesus will cost you everything.

KEY VERSES:

Luke 14:25-26

²⁵And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, ²⁶If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33

³³So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

DISCIPLESHIP REQUIRES YOUR SALVATION THROUGH THE SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Before discipleship, we must start with addressing the problem of mankind's need for salvation because an unsaved person cannot be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. No one can claim to be a disciple of Jesus if they have not believed and called upon Him for salvation. *Why?*

A. God is holy, and mankind is not.

1. God's most prominent attribute is His holiness. He is perfect and completely set apart from sin, iniquity, and darkness.

Isaiah 6:1-3

¹In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. ²Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. ³And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Revelation 4:8

⁸And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

2. Adam and Eve were made in the image and likeness of God, but lost the image of God and died spiritually by sinning in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve's fallen nature has been passed onto all of humanity because everything reproduces after its own kind.

Romans 5:12

¹²Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Genesis 5:3

³And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

B. Jesus alone can save because mankind cannot save themselves.

1. It is impossible for sinful beings to enter into God's holy presence because they cannot satisfy the immeasurable standard of God's holiness.

Job 15:14-16

¹⁴What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? ¹⁵Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. ¹⁶How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

2. The only way to be reconciled to God, and have the assurance of spending eternity with Him in heaven is through Jesus Christ.

John 10:9

⁹I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 14:6

⁶Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 4:12

¹²Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 Corinthians 3:11

¹¹For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- A. The remedy for man's sin is **NOT** through good works.

Romans 3:10-12

¹⁰As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹²They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Romans 4:4-5

⁴Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. ⁵But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 11:6

⁶And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

- B. The remedy for man's sin is **NOT** through religion.

Isaiah 64:6

⁶But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Matthew 23:26-28

²⁶Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. ²⁷Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. ²⁸Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

C. Salvation is only through the cross of Jesus Christ.

Without receiving salvation through Jesus, mankind will still be in their sin and receive the penalty of being eternally separated from God in the lake of fire. God gave His only Son Jesus Christ because it is not His heart for anyone to experience this eternal penalty. Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross to wash away mankind's sin and satisfy God's holy wrath.

Romans 3:23

²³For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 6:23

²³For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8

⁸But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:15-16

¹⁵That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

D. To reject God's salvation is to declare to Him that you have your own way.

Without Christ, eternal separation from God over our sin is the ONLY other outcome. To reject God's salvation is to say to God that you know another way. The Bible strongly warns against this approach.

Proverbs 12:15

¹⁵The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Proverbs 14:12

¹²There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Proverbs 26:12

¹²Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

E. How does someone receive salvation through Jesus Christ?

Through faith, a person receives Christ by calling upon His name for salvation. It is confessing with the mouth what is believed in the heart about Him.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 10:9-10

⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13

¹³For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

A SAMPLE PRAYER GUIDE:

This is a sample prayer someone might pray when calling upon Jesus for salvation. This is only an “example,” and not a script or formula to follow. When someone prays to receive Jesus as Savior, it must come from their heart in faith. If not, the prayer is useless, and may cause someone to a false conversion.

Jesus,

I am a lost sinner in need of your salvation. I believe in my heart that you died on the cross for my sin, was buried, and rose again on the third day. I believe that you are the way, the truth, and the life. I believe that there is no other way that I can be saved apart from you. I am calling upon you for redemption and forgiveness through your blood that you shed on Calvary’s cross. In faith, I call on you now to be my Savior and Lord.

Based on the Word of God, if that prayer was prayed from a position of genuine faith, you have been saved, sealed and seated in Christ forever:

SAVED

Romans 10:9

⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

SEALED

Ephesians 1:13

¹³In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

SEATED

Ephesians 2:5

⁵Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)⁶ And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

SPARED

1 Thessalonians 1:10

¹⁰And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:9

⁹For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

DISCIPLESHIP REQUIRES YOUR SUBMISSION TO THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

The terms “Lord” and “Savior” both refer to Jesus Christ, but they do not mean the same thing in practice. Many have believed on the Savior Jesus Christ who saved them from the eternal penalty of their sin through his shed blood. There are, however, fewer believers who have become disciples of Jesus Christ by submitting to him as Lord. The issue of lordship is at the heart of discipleship because a believer’s sole purpose in life is to fear God and keep his commandments.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

¹³*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

A. Submit to Jesus by fearing who he is.

Fear God: this is the beginning of wisdom!

Psalms 111:10

¹⁰*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments : his praise endureth for ever.*

Proverbs 1:7

⁷*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

When you see Jesus for who and all that He is, it produces within you a desire to follow Him.

Colossians 1:16-18

¹⁶*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

1. Jesus is the creator – vs. 16

All things submit to Jesus because they were created by Jesus and for Jesus.

2. Jesus is self-existing – vs. 17

All things submit to Jesus because without Him, they would cease to exist.

3. Jesus is supreme – vs. 18

The church body submits to Jesus as the head and authority of the church.

4. Jesus is preeminent – vs. 18

All things (calendars, relationships, desires) submit to Jesus because He is the priority.

B. Submit to Jesus by obeying what he says.

You cannot be ready to be a disciple of Jesus until you are willing to obey His Word! To be a follower of Christ requires you to walk with Him in obedience to His commands.

Luke 6:46-49

⁴⁶And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? ⁴⁷Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. ⁴⁹But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ begins with your baptism. Believer's baptism is an outward expression of an inward truth. It is giving a public testimony that you personally identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-19

¹⁸And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **(EVANGELISM)** baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **(BAPTISM)** ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: **(DISCIPLESHIP)** and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The following verses teach us that salvation occurs first, and then it is followed immediately in baptism by full submersion into water. Believers who have not been biblically baptized should seek to follow the Lord in baptism as soon as possible.

Act 8:35-39

³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. ³⁶And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? ³⁷And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Acts 16:14-15

¹⁴And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. ¹⁵And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:29-33

²⁹Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ³¹And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. ³²And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. ³³And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

Acts 18:8

⁸And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many

C. Our goal is to disciple those who are faithful to the Word of God.

You cannot be ready to be a disciple of Jesus until you are willing to submit to the authority of God's Word.

1. Our Command:

2 Timothy 2:1-3

¹Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. ³Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2. Our Problem:

Proverbs 20:6

⁶Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

3. Our Focus: Finding the faithful.

We are to invest in those that are willing to endeavor to live out what they learn in the Word of God.

Philippians 2:12-13

¹²Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Notice how the Word of God describes those who obey the Word of God.

2 Peter 1:1-5

¹Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: ²Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, ³According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: ⁴Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. ⁵And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

Notice that the we are to add to our faith virtue, not more knowledge. We are looking for faithful men and women of virtue who seek to obey the Word of God as they learn it. We are not looking to invest in those that skip application for more knowledge.

Philippians 4:8-9

⁸Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. ⁹Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Those “things” are the Word of God. What Paul’s disciples learned had to be applied. The command is “do” those “things.” 2 Peter 1:10.

THE SEVEN MARKS OF A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST

What does a disciple of Jesus look like? Jesus makes it clear that there is a difference between those who make a profession of faith only and those who follow Him as a true disciple. As we study the statements that Jesus made about discipleship, we can see there are at least seven marks found in a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

MARK #1

A disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is established in the Word of God.

True disciples understand that their belief in what the Bible says about who Jesus is should also move them to follow Jesus as they “continue” (to *stay* or *abide*) in His Word.

Many people make a profession of faith, but they do not follow the Lord as true disciples of Christ.

John 8:31-32

³¹Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ³²And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

1. True disciples of Jesus rely on God’s Word to be their final authority.

You will face daily opportunities to choose between continuing in the Word of God or continuing to live in things that are against His Word.

Psalms 119:128

¹²⁸Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

2. True disciples of Jesus depend on God’s Word to sustain them.

The goal for every believer is for our lives to be established in the Word of God. The word of God provides everything that disciples need to follow the Lord and honor Him with their lives.

Job 23:12

¹²Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Matthew 4:4

⁴But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

1 Peter 2:2

²As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Psalms 119:103

¹⁰³How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

3. True disciples of Jesus are changed as they live out God's Word.

John 15:3

³Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

John 17:17

¹⁷Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

KEY QUESTION:

Tragically, many have prayed the sinner's prayer, been baptized, joined a church and have attended church for several years without ever being established in the Word of God. The only interaction they have with the Word of God is during the corporate Sunday gathering. They do not have a regular, consistent pursuit of it. Being established in the Word of God means that it is read regularly, meditated on constantly, discussed frequently, studied diligently, and obeyed faithfully.

Can you say that you value the Word of God at a level that demands your consistent and constant pursuit of Its Truth?

MARK #2

A disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ loves him more than any other person.

No one, including self, is to be loved first or greater than the Lord Jesus Christ. There is never a scenario in your life where Jesus should be in any other position than first in your life. Your love for Jesus may require you to choose between Him and your earthly relationships.

Luke 14:25-26

²⁵And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, ²⁶If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

1. True disciples make their relationship with Jesus the priority.

Our love for and devotion to Jesus is to be unparalleled by any other earthly relationships. No one, including self, is to be loved more than the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to be preeminent over all things.

Colossians 1:18

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Matthew 8:21-22

²¹ And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. ²² But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

There will always be a relationship that Satan will use to derail your relationship with Jesus. It is not uncommon for believers to make a verbal commitment to grow as a disciple of Jesus, only to change their minds after realizing that following Jesus may mean losing or having to reevaluate the importance of some of their relationships. The most common relationships that challenge the lordship of Jesus Christ are:

Family

Do you view your family in the way that Jesus did?

Matthew 12:48-50

⁴⁸But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? ⁴⁹And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! ⁵⁰For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Friends

Are your friends hindering or encouraging you?

Proverbs 27:17

¹⁷Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Proverbs 13:20

²⁰He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Dating

Is this person following Jesus too? Is this person helping me to follow Jesus?

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

2. True disciples will eliminate relationships that do not glorify the Lord.

It is important to understand that it is impossible to disciple someone who is actively pursuing relationships that are in biblical rebellion before the Lord. Believers who are walking in the lifestyles of lost friends, dating unbelievers, and/or living with someone they are not married to does not reflect a believer who desires to follow Christ. Any relationships that displease the Lord are worth dissolving immediately because your relationship with God is more important.

James 4:4

⁴Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Can you say that your relationship with Christ is preeminent before all other relationships?

Is there anyone or anything that you need to reprioritize or “breakup” with?

MARK #3

A disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ will follow him unconditionally.

Good leaders never demand their followers to do something they are not willing to do. The Lord Jesus Christ bore His cross and then expected His disciples to do the same. Disciples are willing to do it because they love Jesus.

Luke 14:27

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

1. True disciples are willing to carry their own cross.

Disciples are willing to endure hardship, humiliation, discomfort, heartache, and even death. The Bible does not shy away from the reality of what would be involved for those that are willing to follow Jesus – death to self. Disciples must be willing to lay down our rights and our life in following Jesus. Disciples must choose between making a life for themselves versus following Jesus with their life.

Matthew 8:19-20

¹⁹And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. ²⁰And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Mark 13:9

⁹But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

2 Timothy 3:12

¹²Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

John 15:20

²⁰Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

1 Peter 4:12-13

¹²Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: ¹³But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Galatians 6:14

¹⁴But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

2. True disciples are not deterred by the difficulties of persecution.

There are times when believers are tempted to quit following the Lord because they think it is too difficult. To be a disciple of Jesus means that you are willing to follow Him even when it is not comfortable or convenient. Disciples understand that their relationship with Christ is far more powerful than any hardship they may endure.

John 16:33

³³These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Romans 8:31

³¹What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

2 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

Romans 8:36-37

³⁶As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ³⁷Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

2 Timothy 1:7

⁷For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

KEY QUESTIONS:

What must you lay down in this world in order to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

What is keeping you from following Him?

Are you willing to give it up and lay down your life to follow Jesus?

Are you ready to give up your rights in this world to serve Christ? Will you daily live for Him?

MARK #4 – A disciple of Jesus Christ loves Him more than any other possession.

There may be a time in your life where following Jesus means that you have to leave it all behind. This requires deliberation. There is some reckoning required beforehand.

Luke 14:28-33

²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? ²⁹Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, ³⁰Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. ³¹Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? ³²Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. ³³So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

1. True disciples are willing to count the cost of following Jesus.

Believers must know in advance that following Jesus calls for the forsaking of all that we have. Jesus is not trying to discourage believers from following Him, but He is rather making sure they know in advance what following Him will cost. He wants disciples that will count the cost, and that are willing to pay the cost.

Mark 1:16-20

¹⁶Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. ¹⁷And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. ¹⁸And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. ¹⁹And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. ²⁰And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

2. True disciples are willing to forsake everything to follow Jesus.

There may be times when you will be distracted from following Jesus because of your fleshly desire to obtain or enjoy your possessions. There is nothing wrong with owning things and enjoying them; however, you must decide between owning possessions and your possessions owning you.

1 Timothy 6:6-11

⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ⁹But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare,

and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Luke 12:15

¹⁵And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Key: if you are coveting you are not consecrated to Christ.

Too often we let our blessings make us dumb. We get focused on our blessings instead of seeking after the Blessor. Mark 10:17-23

Mark 10:21-23

²¹ Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. ²² And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. ²³ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Philippians 3:7-9

⁷But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, ⁹And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Philippians 4:11-12

¹¹Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. ¹²I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

3. True disciples are willing to make following Jesus their main priority.

Our hobbies and careers often hinder us from following the Lord and being involved in local church ministry. Just like the disciples forsook their nets to follow Jesus, it is important to understand that you may be led to the place where you must choose between following Jesus and your career as it may be hindering your spiritual growth and the ministry of making disciples.

One of the common mistakes often made in discipleship is to accept a position that calls for the believer to work on Sundays and other days/times that often interfere with the ministry of the local church. This might seem to work financially, but it is not good for spiritual growth.

You may also be forced to choose which hobbies to be involved in because they may interfere with the ministry.

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

¹Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. ²Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

THE KEY POINT:

Following Jesus will cost you everything! Following Jesus may require that you sacrifice a career, the comforts of life, cultural and family responsibilities, and even some close relationships. We cannot follow Jesus with a “me first” attitude.

Luke 9:57-62

⁵⁷And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. ⁵⁸And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. ⁵⁹And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. ⁶⁰Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. ⁶¹And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. ⁶²And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

MARK #5

A Disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is useful to Him.

We exist to serve our King, The Lord Jesus Christ, not to live as we want or feel. We must serve His expectation as disciples.

Luke 14:34-35

³⁴ Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? ³⁵ It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Salt that has lost its savour is salt that has become insipid. That is, it is tasteless and because it is tasteless it is therefore rendered useless. So also, a believer who refuses to follow the Lord Jesus Christ is of no use to Him.

Jesus uses a fig tree as an illustration to teach us that a believer who refuses to follow him as a disciple becomes essentially useless for the kingdom. It is important to understand that the issue is not that the fig tree did not have fruit, but that it only gave the appearance of having fruit. Jesus taught us that fruitful disciples are useful disciples when he determined the tree to be useless after inspecting it.

Mark 11:12-14

¹²And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: ¹³And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. ¹⁴And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

1. True disciples live for Jesus' purposes!

Exodus 8:1

¹And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

Matthew 5:16

¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

2 Timothy 2:20-21

²⁰But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. ²¹If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

2. True disciples live in light of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

While discipleship is the believer's choice, there are clear consequences for not doing so.

The believer was and is clearly saved for the Master's use which begs the question, "If a believer is useless to the Master, what's the point for their existence?"

Never forget: we will all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

1 Cor 3; 2 Cor 5; Rom 14

KEY QUESTION:

Are you ready to GIVE your life into service for Christ so that one day you will hear "Well done, good and faithful servant?"

MARK #6

A disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ will bear fruit for Him.

There is a natural tendency for believers to attend church every week with no intention of sharing the gift of salvation with someone else. God desires so much more from His followers.

John 15:8

⁸Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

1. True disciples will bear fruit by leading others to salvation in Christ.

Disciples are preoccupied with bearing fruit because they understand that this is their chief purpose in life.

John 15:1-2, 5

¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ²Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit...

⁵I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

2. True disciples will glorify God by bearing fruit in their own life.

There is always external evidence of what is happening within you spiritually. God desires that the life of the disciple overflows with fruit that glorifies Him.

Galatians 5:22-23

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Ephesians 5:9

⁹(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Philippians 1:11

¹¹Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 4:17

¹⁷Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

Colossians 1:10

¹⁰That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Essential to the call of discipleship was the promise that Jesus would make us fishers of men (Mat 4:19.) This is our work! The disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is always preoccupied with being useful to Him and fruitful for Him.

KEY QUESTION:

Are you ready to GIVE your life into service for Christ so that one day you will hear “Well done, good and faithful servant?”

MARK #7

A disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ loves his people.

One of the greatest expressions of Christlikeness is to be selfless.

John 13:34-35

³⁴A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1. True disciples of Jesus love His people more than they love themselves.

We are to have a sacrificial love for the body of Christ just like Jesus did. Jesus demonstrated his love by humbling himself and laying His life down for us.

1 John 3:16

¹⁶Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Philippians 2:3-4

³Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. ⁴Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

2. True disciples of Jesus will pursue relationships within the body of Christ.

You may have a natural desire to become internally focused when you get together with other believers; however, your love for Christ should lead you to love others that love him too. This does not mean that disciples must be extroverts, but it does mean that they should pursue unity, forgiveness, and fellowship within their local churches.

Romans 12:10

¹⁰Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Your love for your others will bless, backup and build them up!

Ephesians 4:1-3; 15-16

¹I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ²With all lowliness and meekness, with

longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: ¹⁶From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Can you say that you love what Jesus loves?

Can you say that you are ready to give your life loving the church?

WHAT DOES PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP LOOK LIKE?

Biblical discipleship is the lifelong discipline of being a hearer and doer of the word of God so that the believer might be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

A. Discipleship is the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

New Testament believers have been commissioned by God to lead individuals to Christ by preaching the Gospel. They must also lead new believers to become followers and learners of Christ by teaching them the Word of God.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching 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.

B. Discipleship is the reproduction of spiritual life.

Biblical discipleship is the process of reproducing one believer's relationship with Jesus into another. The natural result is to make growing disciples who are in turn making disciples. An example of this is the Apostle Paul's relationship with Timothy.

1. Paul began the discipleship process by having Timothy follow him in his ministry.

Acts 16:1-5

¹Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: ²Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. ³Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. ⁴And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. ⁵And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

2. Paul then sent Timothy to disciple the church in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 4:15-17

¹⁵For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. ¹⁶Wherefore I beseech you, be ye

followers of me. ¹⁷For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

3. **At the end of his life and ministry, Paul instructs his disciple Timothy to have a ministry that is always reproducing disciples.**

2 Timothy 2:1-2

¹Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

C. Discipleship seeks to accomplish four main goals in each follower of Christ.

1. **Established in Worship: The focus of your life.**
Honor God by following Christ personally and passionately.

Genesis 22:5

⁵And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

Psalms 22:27

²⁷All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Psalms 29:2

²Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

2. **Established in the Word of God: The authority of your life.**
As you ground your mind by learning the Bible, the Word of God will be elevated to the highest position in the life of the disciple.

Psalms 138:2

²I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3. **Established in the Local Church: The context of your life.**
You should submit to the structure of the local church through your development of authentic fellowship and relationships with others, your participation in the vision, your observance of the ordinances, your submission to spiritual leadership, and your financial support **of reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Acts 2:42; 46-47

⁴²And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷ Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

4. Established in the Ministry: *The purpose of your life.*

God has gifted you so that you might bring Him glory by using that gift by edifying others within the body of Christ. Invest your time, talents, and treasures through the church and its ministries as you grow to the point that you are able to disciple faithful men and women.

1 Peter 4:10

¹⁰ *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

D. Discipleship utilizes a set of 18 lessons.

The goal of each lesson is to teach you what the Word of God says, and instruct you in how to apply its truths so that you may, in turn, lead another faithful believer to do the same.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7. Salvation | 1. Local Church | 13. Giving |
| 8. Eternal Security | 2. Other Christians | 14. Money and Possessions |
| 9. Ordinances | 3. Family | 15. Job and Employer |
| 10. Holy Spirit | 4. Dealing with Sin | 16. Sharing the Gospel |
| 11. Word of God | 5. Liberty in Christ | 17. Judgment Seat of Christ |
| 12. Prayer | 6. Will of God | 18. Next Steps |

WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?

1. Count the cost of following Jesus.

You should spend some time in prayer as you consider the cost of following Jesus with your life. It would also be wise to spend some time considering what it might cost you to not follow Jesus as his disciple.

2. Be consistent.

The one-on-one discipleship process will take approximately 12 months to complete on average. Make your spiritual growth a priority by being consistent to attend church, fellowship opportunities, and the weekly meetings with your discipler.

3. Submit to the standard.

The biblical teaching standard we use is the King James Bible (Authorized Version). Anyone that is discipling or being disciplined will use the KJV. If you do not have one, a bible can be provided for you.

4. Be prepared for opposition.

Discipleship will stretch you in a good way. However, you can expect opposition from people and situations to pull you away from being disciplined. There is no greater priority or privilege than growing as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Stay focused and stay faithful!

DISCIPLESHIP PAIRING REQUEST

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

AGE RANGE (circle one): 18-25 26-35 36 and up

MARITAL STATUS (circle one): Single Married

- Would you like to be discipled as a married couple? Yes No
(Each spouse must submit this form.)

CHILDREN (If so, how many, and ages): _____

Are you currently any Sunday Fellowship or small group? If so, please confirm which one(s.)

Please share any additional information you feel may be important to the pairing process:

MBT Appendix: Looking Ahead – 8 Key Points

Point 1: The one-on-one discipleship process on average takes approximately 12 months. You will meet with your discipler every week or every other week depending on what is agreed upon together.

Point 2: If you have not completed the New Members Class at Midtown, with respect to goals 3 and 4, it is important that you do so.

Point 3: The biblical teaching standard at Midtown is the King James Bible. Therefore, anyone discipling or being disciplined at Midtown will use a King James Bible. If you do not have one, one can be provided. If you have additional questions about this position, see our website for audio on our “Why KJV series?” If using the King James Bible is unacceptable to you, respectfully and in love, Midtown is not the church where you should be looking to get disciplined.

Point 4: If you are not faithfully attending a Sunday Fellowship, please start doing so. This is a great way to grow in goal 2 of discipleship!

Point 5: All pairings are reviewed and approved by the Midtown pastoral team. This process can take a few weeks. Please know that there’s quite a bit of work that goes on behind the scenes to pair you with a discipler. Know that you are not being overlooked or forgotten. We’re doing our best to get it right!

Point 6: Be prepared to be stretched in a very good way and expect anyone or anything to surface soon to dissuade you from doing this. There is no greater priority or privilege than growing as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ! Stay focused and stay faithful. It’s so worth it!

Point 7: If you missed this point under the First Mark of a Disciple, please consider now:

Without exception, at Midtown Baptist Temple, we will **NOT** attempt to disciple anyone who is yoked to an unbeliever in a dating relationship, living with a boyfriend/girlfriend, living a life of fornication (sex outside of marriage) or living an ungodly life with unbelievers.

Point 8:

To be paired with a discipler, please complete the following form and submit to Van Snead or Lori Morgan at the Discipleship kiosk in the lobby.