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RESTORING THE CHURCH - PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LIFE

Christian Discipleship

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this lesson is to help us to see that every Christian is also to be a disciple of Jesus, and that the Lord is not just interested in the salvation of the spirit of man, but also in sanctification of the mind, will and emotions of man. This will take place as believers come under the authority of Christ in their lives.

KEY VERSE:

And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Mark 8:34-35 (KJV)

I. WHAT IS JESUS' COMMAND CONCERNING DISCIPLESHIP?

When Jesus commissioned His disciples after the resurrection, He gave them a fourfold charge:

A. To evangelize.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15 (KJV)

B. To make disciples.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matt 28:19-20 (KJV)

C. To be witnesses.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (KJV)

D. To feed others.

“Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” John 21:17 (KJV)

These four things must be experienced in this order in the life of every believer.

II. WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A. The word “disciple” is used over 250 times in the New Testament and simply means:

1. A **taught** or **trained** one.
2. A learner or pupil.
3. One who accepts or receives instruction or doctrines of another.
4. A disciplined one.

B. The word “discipline”, which is closely related, means:

1. Training that develops self-control or character.
2. Submission to control.
3. **Orderly conduct**.
4. Treatment that corrects or adjusts.

III. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST?

- A. It means that we are willing to treat Him as our Lord and master (Matthew 10:24).
- B. It means that we are willing to be taught and instructed in His ways (Matthew 5:1-2).
- C. It means that we must be willing to respond to His commands (Luke 6:46; Matthew 7:21).
- D. It means that we must be willing to be corrected and adjusted by the Word of the Lord (Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:5-13).

IV. WHAT DOES IT COST TO BE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST?

We are clearly instructed in the Word of God that before we begin building, we should count the cost (Luke 14:25-33). Salvation is a free gift of God. We can do nothing to earn it or deserve it (Ephesians 2:8-9), but if we are to respond to that call of discipleship, it will cost us everything that we have (Luke 5:11).

“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

Matthew 10:37-38

This means that everything in our life has to take second place to our relationship to the Lord, including:

- A. Our home (Matthew 8:19, 20; Luke 9:58).
- B. Our family and relatives (Matthew 10:37-38).
- C. Our occupation (Matthew 4:18-22).
- D. Our possessions (Matthew 19:16-22).

This does not mean that the Lord will demand these things of us, but it does mean that we would **be willing** to offer them up if He did (Matthew 16:24-26).

V. WHAT IS THE REWARD OF THE LIFE OF DISCIPLESHIP?

The only reason we can become such a disciple to the Lord Jesus Christ is because He only has our best interest in mind. The Lord never asks us to give something up unless He plans to give us something **better** in return.

“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, ³⁰ But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.” **Mark 10:29-30**

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

VI. WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE LIFE OF DISCIPLESHIP?

There are several goals that will be achieved for those who become disciples:

- A. To be a strong, mature Christian able to weather the storms of life (Ephesians 4:13-14).
- B. To be true reflection of Christ to the world (Ephesians 4:13; Acts 11:26).
- C. To be the kind of Christian that others can follow and pattern their lives after (1 Corinthians 11:1; Titus 2:7-8).
- D. To be the kind Christian that God can use to minister to others (John 15:8, 12-17)
- E. To receive ultimately from the Lord the commendation of a good and faithful servant (Matthew 25:21).

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:10-11

CONCLUSION:

The life of discipleship is really not an option for those who want to reach the above goals in their life. Unfortunately, many believers live a life far below God's standard for them and, hence, never fully experience the great rewards and blessings that come from a life of total surrender to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. As believers, we must be willing to accept the challenge of discipleship if we are to prove "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).