

Discipleship in the New Testament:
Jesus on Discipleship
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Introduction:
What is Discipleship?

Questions:

- **Are you confident you are an authentic disciple of Jesus?**
- **Are you confident you are a real believer?**
- **Confusion about discipleship: what does it mean? how to do it?**

What is discipleship?

- **Dictionary: "following a leader"**
- **from Latin: "same word root as disciple"**
- **"a disciple is one who accepts the 'discipline' of a master teacher"**

So what is discipleship all about?

What is Discipleship?

"Christian Discipleship is the practice of following Jesus"

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Men of Grace

Biblical Overview:

**Discipleship Throughout
The Bible**

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Biblical Overview

- **OT summary: God called people into relationship with Him; covenants**
- **but no consistent use of word for discipleship**
- **God wanted followers, through Mosaic law and personal calling**

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Biblical Overview: Culture of Disciples

- **Greek: following a master, like Plato following Aristotle**
- **Jews: Great Rabbis had disciples that followed them and were trained**
- **Jesus: "follow me"**
- **what does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? how is it different?**

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Biblical Overview

NT survey: Gospels & Acts

- **Primary Greek Word: "mathetes": 'learner'**
- **220 times in Gospels and Acts**
- **"Disciples": primary name for followers of Jesus in the Gospels**
- **in Acts, 'disciples' is synonymous with 'Christians'**
- **'Christians' first used at Antioch in Acts 11**

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Biblical Overview

- **What is your favorite discipleship verse in the Epistles? suggestions?**
- **What verse best describes discipleship in the Epistles?**
- **Name one discipleship verse in the Epistles**

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Biblical Overview

NT survey: Epistles & Revelation

- **0 times in Epistles & Revelation**
- **is it there? yes, but with different names and descriptions**
- **so there is a difference in the OT, Gospels and the Epistles**
- **God calls followers in whole Bible, but how he does so and how it's described changes throughout scripture**
- **What is the essence of Discipleship?**

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Jesus on Discipleship

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Jesus on Discipleship

- NT Reading Plan: Daily NT Devotions
- My focus:
 - Who is Jesus?
 - What does he want me to do?
- Gospels: What do you hear?

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Jesus on Discipleship: Sermon on the Mount

**What is the essence of discipleship?
Sermon on the Mount**

- Greatest sermon ever given
- Summary of Jesus' teaching
- famously difficult to interpret; so much, so radical
- Conclusion of Sermon on the Mount teaches surprising answer about Discipleship

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Jesus on Discipleship: Sermon on the Mount

The Conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 7:13-29

- Listen to Jesus summarize his teaching in the SOTM
- What is he tell us about what true discipleship means?
- the answer may surprise you

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The Narrow Gate

7:13 "Enter through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the way is spacious that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 7:14 But the gate is narrow and the way is difficult that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

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A Tree and it's Fruit

7:15 "Watch out for false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are voracious wolves. 7:16 You will recognize them by their fruit. Grapes are not gathered from thorns or figs from thistles, are they? 7:17 In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 7:18 A good tree is not able to bear bad fruit, nor a bad tree to bear good fruit. 7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 7:20 So then, you will recognize them by their fruit.

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Judgment of Pretenders

7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven – only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 7:22 On that day, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons and do many powerful deeds?' 7:23 Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!'"

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Hearing and Doing

7:24 "Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. 7:25 The rain fell, the flood came, and the winds beat against that house, but it did not collapse because it had been founded on rock. 7:26 Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 7:27 The rain fell, the flood came, and the winds beat against that house, and it collapsed; it was utterly destroyed!"

7:28 When Jesus finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed by his teaching, 7:29 because he taught them like one who had authority, not like their experts in the law.

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Who is the Authentic Disciple?

Four Images of True Disciples:

1. **Enter by the Narrow Gate: Choose Jesus (commit)**
2. **The Tree that Bears Fruit: Bear Good Fruit (produce)**
3. **The One Who Does the Father's Will: Obey The Father (obey)**
4. **Build Your House on the Rock: Do what Jesus says (follow)**

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Who is an authentic disciple?

Four Images of False Disciples:

1. **The broad way: It doesn't matter whether I commit**
2. **The dead tree: It doesn't matter what I produce**
3. **The religious performer: It doesn't matter who I serve**
4. **The sand-builder: It doesn't matter what I do**

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What Discipleship Isn't

Discipleship is not:

- What you are thinking about doing
- What you say you're about
- Doing a program, finding a guru
- Doing what you want

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Jesus on Discipleship: Summary

"Discipleship is your whole life"

1. **Commit**
2. **Produce**
3. **Obey and**
4. **Follow**

It's about following Jesus in all your life; That's what authentic disciples do

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Discipleship is your whole life—Get in the Game

Illustration: football recruit—Matt Barkley

- Commit: signed with USC
- Produce: produce on field
- Obey: Pete Carroll
- Follow: 4 quarters

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Discipleship is your whole life—get in the game

The alternative makes no sense:

- Not sign? No commitment?
- Not show? Not produce?
- Not follow SC Playbook?
- Follow the devil?

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What does it mean to “do the will of My Father”?

What difference does it make whether I obey?

I’m saved, aren’t I?

I’m under grace, aren’t I?

It matters what we do.

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Divorce Rates by Church Attendance

- 49% Never attend church
- 46% Less than once a year
- 46% About once or twice a year
- 42% Several times a year
- 42% About once a month
- 41% Two or three times a month
- 31% Nearly every week
- 27% Every week
- 26% Several times a week

52% No religion (e.g., atheist, agnostic)

(Source: Dept. of Sociology, Univ. of Connecticut)

Jesus on Discipleship:

**Jesus’ Call to Discipleship:
Other Verses**

Following Jesus: Mark 8

8:34 Then Jesus called the crowd, along with his disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. 8:35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it.

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Following Jesus with all Your Heart: Mark 12

The Greatest Commandment
 12:28 Now one of the experts in the law came and heard them debating. When he saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" 12:29 Jesus answered, "The most important is: 'Listen, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 12:30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 12:31 The second is: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

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Counting the Cost: Mark 14

14:27 **Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.**

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Jesus on Discipleship: Other Verses

Show of hands: How many are confident you are a true disciple of Jesus?

- It seems impossible
- Give up family? life? possessions?
- It takes every thing
- How can we do it?

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Jesus on Discipleship:

How do we do it?

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Reality Check: I'm not even close

- Business sticks
- Family sick
- I fail often
- Should I just turn my back? it's impossible to be a true disciple

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The Rich Young Ruler: Matthew 19

19:16 ..."Teacher, what good thing must I do to gain eternal life?" 19:17 ...if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."
 ...19:20 The young man said to him, "I have wholeheartedly obeyed all these laws. What do I still lack?" 19:21 Jesus said to him, "if you wish to be perfect, go sell your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 19:22 But when the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he was very rich.

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The Rich Young Rule: Matthew 19

19:23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven! 19:24 Again I say, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of God." 19:25 The disciples were greatly astonished when they heard this and said, "Then who can be saved?" 19:26 Jesus looked at them and replied, "**This is impossible for mere humans, but for God all things are possible.**"

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Jesus on Discipleship: How do we do it?

Only through God's power:

- Holy Spirit (John 14)
- Abide in Jesus (John 15)
- Jesus with us (Mt. 28:20)
- Jesus in our hearts (Eph 3:17)

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Jesus on Discipleship:

Conclusion

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Conclusion:

Jesus Call: "Follow me"

- 1 Peter 2:21: "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."
- Follow Jesus; just follow
- His strength perfected in our weakness
- Repent and obey, day by day

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Conclusion: Who is the Authentic Disciple?

Four Images of True Disciples:

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Conclusion:

"Get in the game: if you fumble, you screw up, What do you do?"

- quit the team? no, you get back in the game and make a play;
- you keep playing until the final horn sounds
- it doesn't require perfection, just commitment
- you do have to work at, but Jesus is there calling the plays

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Conclusion

"Discipleship is your whole life"

- ❑ it requires action
- ❑ whether you are doing it tells you whether you on the team;
- ❑ Jesus is leading you; obey him; rely on Spirit; follow the playbook
- ❑ play every down till the final horn.

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Conclusion

"Discipleship is your whole life"

1. Commit
2. Produce
3. Obey and
4. Follow

**It's about following Jesus in all your life;
That's what authentic disciples do**

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Questions of the Day

1. **How is biblical discipleship different from other student-teacher relationships?**
2. **How do you know if you are an authentic disciple?**
3. **What help has God provided for our daily discipleship?**

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Thank you for coming and....

....get in the game!

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