

DISCIPLESHIP

Matthew 28:19

Disciple – The word disciple means – a taught one, a learner, or a follower.

It is impossible to separate the word discipline from the word disciple. Discipline means – to train in self-control or in obedience. There is no discipleship without discipline, the words are synonymous.

Matthew 28:19 Jesus did not say “make converts” or “make church members.” Disciples are made, not born. This places a great responsibility on those that minister and teach the Word of God.

THE CALL

Mark 8:34 We must notice the phrase “when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also...” He was calling the general population as well as those on the inside of his spiritual circle.

Matthew 11:28; Luke 9:23 Jesus gave two great invitations during His earthly ministry. 1. “Come unto me” (**Matt. 11:28**). 2. “Come after me” (**Luke 9:23**). One cannot “come after Him” until one has “come unto Him”. These are two very different invitation. One is for the lost, one is for the saved.

THE CANDIDATE

Luke 9:23 There are two very distinct qualifications that Jesus addresses in His invitation: anyone and desires. One word represents His appeal to win them over, and the other pertains to an appetite.

A. The Extent Of The Appeal - “If anyone” This phrase is used by God to represent the vast audience of human beings in the world. Sometimes He uses words like “all”, “whosoever”, “the world”, “any man”, etc. It is a word or phrase that is all inclusive and shows the impartiality of God.

B. The Existence Of An Appetite - “If anyone desires”. Desire is a powerful word that can mean; a yearning, a longing, craving, or hunger. Jesus of course was speaking in terms of a spiritual appetite such as in (**Matthew 5:6**) and (**Psalms 40:8**).

THE CONDITIONS

Luke 9:23 It requires a hunger for God that will motivate believers to prioritize their lives and make the choices and changes necessary to become disciples. Notice the two conditions Jesus identifies.

A. The Rejection Of Self – Philippians 3:7-8; Matthew 6:31-33. To deny self means more than physical or financial sacrifice. It means to totally deny our selfishness, our self-confidence, our self-sufficiency, our self-defense, our self-interest, our self-opinions, our self-seeking ambitions, etc.

John 4:30 John the Baptist who was at his peak of spiritual popularity said it best when he said, “He must increase and I must decrease.” We must ignore self to the edification of Jesus Christ.

B. Receiving A Cross – Make no mistake here, Jesus is not saying that you need to take up His Cross. There will always be only one cross that Jesus took up. Each person that will be a true disciple of Christ must take up their own cross and follow Him. The cross that we must take up represents suffering the reproach, the mockery, the rejection and ostracism and the humility He suffered. Total rejection by His nation, religion and others, the hatred of His enemies is what the cross means for us.

Matthew 26:42 The cross meant refusing to submit to His own will but submitting to the Father. For those that would be His disciples it means total submission and sacrifice to Him (**Romans 12:1-2**).

Luke 9:23 Finally, In order to become a disciple, to reject our own priorities and self, to receive the cross of humiliation and disdain, will never be forced on any heaven bound believer. Jesus says “let him..”, it is a statement by Jesus of allowing something to happen. Cross bearing and discipleship is not something that happens by accident, it must be intentional and out of a heart of agape love and gratitude for the King we serve now and forever.