

## Decisions into Disciples – Marks of a Godly Disciple

**Matthew 28:18-20** NLT Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- Are Christians and Disciples the same thing?
  - o Another way I can ask this question is “Are you a Christian?” Are you a Disciple?”
  - o You can make an argument for either choice you made but let me tell you how the words started and how they are used in today’s society.
    - Christian is used 3 times in the New Testament
      - **Acts 11:26** – It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians
      - **Acts 26:28** - ”Agrippa interrupted him. “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?”“
        - o Paul did correct King Agrippa and say no no we are called Disciples.
        - o This implies the early believers were called Christians. It had the same meaning of the name disciple.
      - **1 Peter 4:16** ”But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!”
      - The New Testament scholar F.F. Bruce said “that it was the disciples who first began to call themselves Christians, meaning thereby ‘servants of Christ’.”
- In today’s society the word Christian and Disciple convey 2 different things.
  - o 1 - Christian functions as a sociological label.
    - Meaning that there are certain ways Christian’s vote, think, act,
      - In society a Christian is one who protects life, pro-life, protects gun rights, votes a certain way, pro-America – they wear shirts with the flag on it, like food and coffee.
      - Joking aside, people want to do good and know a good way to start is by being a Christian although many don’t completely know what that entails.
  - o 2 - Another meaning is the label Christian is thought to be a entry level follower of Christ.
    - Like there are 2 different classes of believers. One who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. They have done enough to go to heaven but haven’t fully surrendered, don’t obey every command nor do they teach others to obey God’s commands.
    - Then there is a super Christian called a disciple.
  - o If I were to ask 10 different people what is a Christian? I would probably get 10 different answers.
    - If I were to ask are you a Christian? There would be all kinds of responses.
    - Some would say yes.
    - What do you mean.
    - Yes but . . .
    - No but . . .
    - Some would say yes I’m a Christian but I’m not like . . . Or yes but I don’t think like, or I don’t vote like that or I don’t agree with . . .
    - “Many have come to believe that a person can be a “Christian” without being like Christ. A “follower” who doesn’t follow. How does that make any sense? Many people in the church have decided to take on the name of Christ and nothing else. This would be like Jesus walking up to those first disciples and saying, “Hey, would you guys mind

identifying yourselves with Me in some way? Don't worry, I don't actually care if you do anything I do or change your lifestyle at all. I'm just looking for people who are willing to say they believe in Me and call themselves Christians." Seriously? Francis Chan

- Does Jesus Christ offer two acceptable standards for living the Christian life—a less demanding one for “ordinary Christians” and an optional, more challenging version for those who commit themselves to be “disciples?”
  - Unfortunately, this view fails to notice that Jesus had only one standard. His earthly ministry was focused on proclaiming God's kingdom and calling people to discipleship.

#### - Disciple

- The word Disciple is used 281 times in the New Testament.
- Disciple describes a lifestyle choice.
  - New Testament scholar William Kynes offers a definition “A disciple is one who responds to the call of Jesus in faith, resulting in a relationship of absolute allegiance and supreme loyalty through which Jesus shares his own life and the disciple embarks on a lifetime of learning to become like his Master.”
  - Discipleship is a very personal decision. It starts when a person commits himself or herself to God as His follower and allows the results of that commitment to overflow into everything else in life. Tony Evans
  - A disciple is one who:
    - Follows Christ, is surrendered to Christ, Is changed by Christ and follows the mission of Christ.

#### - The shape of Faith to Come - Brad Wagner

- Took a close look at the shape of church in America today.
- Statistics of America's church
  - 54% say that the Bible is written by God and totally accurate.
  - 58% say salvation comes through God's grace alone.
  - 56% say that every person is born a sinner.
  - 70% say there is one true God.
  - 46% say Jesus may have committed sins.
  - 74% say God is all-knowing and all-powerful.
  - 67% say Christ will return a second time to gather believers.
  - 58% say that Satan is a real being.
  - 54% say that hell is a literal place.
  - 36% say that they're open to input from a pastor.
  - 16% read their Bible daily.
  - 20% read the Bible a few times a week.
  - 62% say they should be accountable to another person.
  - 28% say you must learn to deny yourself in order to serve Christ.
  - 43% say they confess sin to God when they've sinned.
  - 23% say they make the necessary changes when they see wrong in their life.
- Something has to shift in the mindset of disciples today.

#### - Year Theme

- This year's theme is Disciple – Be One Make One
- We want to get back to the basics. The most important thing Christ called his church to be and do.
  - Over the next 14 weeks we are going to be going over Marks of a Disciple.
  - We want to grow disciples that make disciples.
    - Become a disciple.

- Grow as a disciple.
  - Make disciples.
  - Be one Make one
    - The first thing I think about when I think of discipleship is make one. We are first called to be one.
    - What comes into you is what will come out of you. If we actually focus on becoming a disciple making disciples will naturally flow out of you.
    - If you skip the process of becoming a disciple first it is so difficult to make disciples.
      - We need to be connected to the branch in order to produce fruit.
      - Example of a dead plant.
  - It's a great challenge we face today in the church.
  - The church today is full of people who go to church but aren't disciples.
  - What is a disciple and are you one, and are you making them?
- Change Start with You
  - A couple of years ago I was frustrated with several things in the church. I really wanted to see a difference in the church, and I wasn't seeing it.
    - God told me I needed to be the change I wanted to see.
  - Apathetic churches are a result of apathetic people.
    - Dead churches are a result of dead people. Complacent churches are a result of complacent people. Introverted people, lack of holiness people result in those type of churches.
    - On the other end, passionate people produce passionate churches. Active reproducing members produce active reproducing churches.
  - The church is a result of me.
  - If the church was filled with 100% of people just like you what type of church would we have?
    - If they prayed like you? What type of church would it be?
    - If they read the Bible like you? Would we have a Bible focused church?
    - When it comes to your life of purity and thought life, would the church be pure?
    - When it comes to sharing your faith. Would it be a reproducing church?
    - We live in a culture that is competing so much for your time, talent and treasure that its hard to be disciple.
  - Are you a disciple of Christ?
    - If you were arrested with a claim that you were a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you? - Like produces like.
    - Do you model it? People will model what you do not just what you say.
- **Matthew 28:18-20** NLT Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
  - Disciples – this is our mark. These were Jesus last words.
    - Clearly in this text there is only one category of follower envisioned: a disciple. Just as clearly the mission is focused on one thing: making disciples.
  - Teach them – speak into their life.
  - So they would obey – its not just to indoctrinate them but is for them to apply it to their life and obey the Word of God.

- I remember taking a nutrition class in college. After class there were times I would go to Krispy Kreme and eat some good doughnuts. I had the knowledge but didn't apply it. We are called to learn it then to obey it.
  - Commands – these aren't suggestions. They are critical to your protection, salvation, destiny, purpose.
  - I will be with you always.
    - **Matthew 11:11** “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is!
- Defining a “Disciple”
  - Greek – Mathetes – means “learner.”
    - One who professes to have learned certain principles from another and maintains them on the other's authority.
    - 2 components to a disciple
      - Imparting
        - Those who accept the teachings of anyone, not only in belief but in life.
        - It's not just knowledge, its applied knowledge. It's not just going to school but an apprenticeship.
          - Not university class buy my anatomy class.
      - Relationship
        - We think the relationship piece is the only part of discipleship. It's an important part but not complete.
        - How will you know someone's character without relationship. How will you speak into their life without knowing them.
        - More is caught than taught.
          - Christians in America go to church 1.6 times per month
        - It's living life out. If you are teaching about prayer, then you go and pray and actually teach them how to pray. You live it out. If you are praying for the lost, you show them how to do that.
    - Concepts of discipleship
      - Holistic
        - Everything you do involves discipleship. It's not just reading a book.
      - It never ends.
        - It's not just for a period of time.
- Steps in Discipleship – Steps in or Christian faith
  - Salvation
  - Water baptized
  - Baptism of the Holy Spirit
  - Reading the Bible daily
  - Praying daily
  - Attending weekend services
  - Attending small groups – being involved in Biblical community.
  - Involved in a ministry or serving
  - Faithful tither and giver
  - Established good relationships in church
  - Models Christ-like attributes
  - All aspects of personal life in order
  - Sharing their faith with the lost
  - Reproducing themselves in others

- These are qualities of a Disciple
  - When you get with a disciple you can tell them this is what we are trying to build. In my time with you we are going to sit down and say why they are important in your life and how do we get them in your life. You talk through these things.
  - It takes effort and hard work in order to see fruit in your life.
- 12 Biblical Marks of a Disciple
  - In submission to the Lord (Lk. 14:25-35; 9:23-25)
  - Filled with and living by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:17-18)
  - Functioning in their spiritual gifts (Ro. 12:1-6)
  - Committed to and supporting the local church (Ac. 2:37-47)
  - A fervent worshipper (Col. 3:16)
  - A faithful prayer (Lk. 16:1-10)
  - Consistently sharing their faith (1 Pe. 3:15)
  - A generous giver (2 Cor. 8-9)
  - A family builder (Mt. 19:4-6)
  - A servant to others (Mt. 20:26; 23:11)
  - Overcoming their self-life (Mt. 10:39, 16:25)
  - Supportive of a world vision (Mt. 28:20)
  - Your One
- Challenging list
  - I encourage you to go and do a self-evaluation. I'm challenged myself.
    - What areas do I need to work on?
      - It's an ongoing process.
    - The more you get these things into you the more it will come out of you.
    - What are things competing for that time with God?
      - I encourage you to fast from those things.
- Church's vision
  - Be a disciple
    - Grow as a disciple
  - Make disciples
- Step 1
  - Over these next 13 weeks we are going to apply these teachings to our lives through discipleship.
  - Last week we will be going over "Your One."
- Step 2 – reproduce what we have learned to others
  - Introduce your friends to Jesus
  - Get Baptized
  - Starting point – 4 week class
    - Grow spiritually.
    - Connect relationally.
    - Discover your purpose.
    - How to make a difference.
  - Partnership classes
    - 9 weeks course designed to teach you about what Freedom Fellowship believes.
  - Foundations of a Disciple
    - 14 weeks
    - The goal is to have you disciple others through this course.