

November 18, 2012

The Definition of Real Discipleship

Selected Scripture

Series: Life on Life Discipleship

Introduction:

The greatest desire of my life is to be a man of God that is growing and maturing in his faith and adding disciples into the Kingdom of God. More than anything else in the world, I want to finish faithful.

1 Timothy 4:15-16 *“Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”*

When Jesus called the original twelve to Himself, He carefully instructed them about what they would be expected to do and to endure. In so doing, He excluded the half-hearted people who wanted the benefits of the kingdom but not its commitments. He called to Himself only those who were willing to enter the narrow gate and walk the narrow road.

Here are a few questions that will reveal true devoted discipleship:

1. Are you willing to follow Jesus wherever He goes?
2. Are you willing to follow Jesus into vocational ministry, if indeed He asks you to?
3. Are you willing to die to your dreams and personal ambitions?
4. Are you willing to die to your relationships, your finances, and your resources for His Kingdom purposes? Will you follow Him there?

Probing question:

Are you a convenient or inconvenient follower of Jesus Christ?

Three fold goal in “Life on Life” discipleship:

1. To get people into the *Word* of God.
2. To get people into the *Church* of God.
3. To get people into *fellowship* with the people of God.

I. The Meaning of Discipleship

Matthew 10:24-25 (NKJV) ²⁴ *A disciple is not above his teacher (I thank God for my spiritual teachers), nor a servant above his master.* ²⁵ *It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!*

Jonathan Edwards:

“During my ministry many people made professions of faith in Jesus Christ, but many years later those same people showed no fruit of genuine salvation. There was no change and no transformation in many of these people’s lives.”

- In response, Edwards wrote his sermon, “Treatise on Religious Affections,” to address the issue of deficient discipleship, of authentic faith. In his writing, he coined the phrase, “holy affections” as the distinguishing mark of true discipleship.

Jonathan Edwards:

“The supreme proof of true conversion is holy affection, zeal for holy things, longing after God, longing after holiness, and desire for purity.”

- The defining mark in a Christian’s life is a transformed heart. True biblical discipleship brings with it a radical change of tastes and appetites.

Oswald Chambers (Devotional - July 2):

“Discipleship means a personal, passionate devotion to a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a vast difference between devotion to a person, and devotion to a cause. Jesus promoted personal devotion to Himself! To be a disciple is to be a devoted bondservant, motivated by love for the Lord Jesus. Many people who call themselves disciples are not devoted to Jesus Christ. Just because a person attends Church doesn’t necessarily mean he is a disciple. No one can be a disciple unless the Holy Spirit has given him a love for His Lord and repentance toward Jesus is made.”

Ten spiritual disciplines for every leader or teacher: (Thom Rainer)

1. Bible engagement.
2. Obedience to our God.
3. Self denial.
4. Service and ministry to God and to others.
5. Sharing our faith.
6. Exercising faith in everyday life.
7. Personal stewardship.
8. Hungering and thirsting after God.
9. Building relationships.
10. Unashamed transparency.