

# LIVING THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLE

## 1. WE ARE TO BE DISCIPLES AND MAKE DISCIPLES (MATT 28:18-20)

**DISCIPLE:** Implies forming lives, training in obedience, and calling people into relationship and transformation under Jesus' authority.

## 2. FOUR GROWTH STAGES

1) **CONVERT**  
(ACTS 3:19) - Repent and be converted.

2) **EPISTLE**  
(2 COR 3:1-3) - You are an epistle of Christ (living letter), read by all men.

You become an epistle when your mind becomes renewed and transformation begins to take place on the outside (Romans 12:1-2).

3) **DISCIPLE**  
(LUKE 6:40) - You can become like Jesus.

Perfectly Trained - To be "perfectly trained" in this context means to be **fully equipped, matured, or shaped** — as a result of **intentional and complete instruction** — to the point that the disciple becomes **like their teacher**.

(JOHN 14:12) - We can do the same works (business) that Jesus did.

Believes - To **entrust** oneself to someone (especially with personal trust and commitment).

4) **MINISTRY**  
(EPH 4:7-16) — Disciples become equipped to fulfill their purpose of ministry both in the body, and in the world.

(HEB 13:17) - You must submit to the gift that is on your pastor and the five-fold ministry gifts he brings to your church to become a disciple.

Hebrews 13:17 (AMP) — Obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them [continually recognizing their authority over you], for they are constantly keeping watch over your souls and guarding your spiritual welfare, as men who will have to render an account [of their trust]. [Do your part to] let them do this with gladness and not with sighing and groaning, for that would not be profitable to you [either].

### 3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISCIPLE

#### A. A LEARNER IN RELATIONSHIP

- A disciple doesn't just absorb facts — they learn by following a person (the teacher/master).
- The **relationship** is personal and transformative, not just academic.

#### B. IMITATOR OF THE TEACHER

- In ancient Jewish and Greek culture, a disciple **imitated the life** of the teacher, not just their teachings.
- Think of a rabbi and his students: the disciple **walked with, watched, and mimicked** the teacher.

#### C. COMMITTED FOLLOWER

- A disciple is **committed** — it implies ongoing devotion, not casual interest.
- The New Testament often contrasts true discipleship with those who followed Jesus temporarily or half-heartedly.

#### D. TRANSFORMATION GOAL

- The goal of a disciple is to **become like the teacher** (Luke 6:40).
- This includes adopting the teacher's **values, mission, and character**.

### 4. IT ALL BEGINS WITH A “DESIRE” TO BECOME A DISCIPLE (MATT 16:24-27)

Matthew 16:24 (AMP) — Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to be My disciple, let him deny himself [disregard, lose sight of, and forget himself and his own interests] and take up his cross and follow Me [cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying, also].

A. The key element to becoming a disciple is “**desire**”.

**Desire:** A **deliberate choice or intention** — not a fleeting feeling, but a **determined will** or **heartfelt commitment**.

**Deny Self:** Loose sight of one's own interests.

**Take Up Your Cross:** Carry out His will.

**Follow Me:** Follow His example, wholly conformed to Him.

**4. IT ALL BEGINS WITH LOYALTY - NOT SACRIFICE  
(MATT 9:13, HOSEA 6:6)**

**Mercy** - Loyalty – A devoted steadfast love.

God does not want what we do in relationship to Him to be a sacrifice on our part, but instead a life devoted to loving Him.

**5. OUR DESIRE TO BE A DISCIPLE MUST BE MOTIVATED BY HIS LOVE FOR US  
(2 COR 5:14-15)**

- A. He was willing to die for us, laying His life down, taking our sin and the punishment our sin deserved.
- B. Recognizing His love for us is what now motivates the believer to no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for us.

**THE CHARACTERISTICS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST**

**1. A DISCIPLE “LIVES IN” AND BY THE WORD OF GOD  
(JOHN 8:31-32)**

A. Abide: To stay, dwell, remain, settle, to continue unchanged, to be permanent.

- Abide emphasizes:
  - Consistency
  - Ongoing relationship
  - Commitment to His word

B. To be a disciple the Word of God becomes an absolute in your life, for it is in Him (He is the Word) we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28).

C. To know the “Truth” is to know Jesus, and in getting to know Him, we come to know the Father, for Jesus said if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father.

**(JOHN 1:1-2, 14)** - Your fellowship with God is dependent on His Word. This is the primary way you come to know God and have fellowship with Him.

“I understand God by His Word. I cannot understand God by impressions or feelings; I cannot get to know God by sentiments. If I am going to know God, I am going to know Him by His Word.” – Smith Wigglesworth

**(REVELATION 3:14-22)** - Jesus stands at the “door” and knocks, awaiting our fellowship so we can get to know Him and get to know the Father.

**(PSALM 119:130)** - His Word is the door to let Him (light) in.

Psalms 119:130 (CJB) Your words are a doorway that lets in light, giving understanding to the thoughtless.

**2. A DISCIPLES FIRST LOVE IS JESUS  
(LUKE 14:26)**

A. No one can come between us and Jesus, or we cannot be a disciple of His.

**(MATT 10:34-37)** - If you do not love Jesus more than anyone else, He said we are not worthy of Him, that we do not deserve to be His disciple.

**(ACTS 15:35-41)** - Barnabas allowed a family member to come between him and what the Lord had needed him to do in fulfilling his ministry with Paul.

**(REV 2:4-5)** - Do the first works when you initially gave your life to Jesus.

**3. A DISCIPLE LIVES TO FULFILL GOD’S WILL, NOT THEIR OWN  
(LUKE 14:27)**

**(LUKE 2:46-49)** - Like Jesus, we must be about the Father's business. This is the priority of a disciple.

**(1 COR 6:19-20)** - We were bought at a very high price. We are not our own, we belong to the Lord.

**4. A DISCIPLE IS WILLING TO FORSAKE ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS  
(LUKE 14:28-33)**

A. A disciple considers what they allow in their life and whether or not it will cost them in their walk with Jesus.

**(LUKE 9:57-62)** - No one who looks back to the things of this world is useful for the kingdom of God. They will become double minded, unstable in all their ways.

**(COL 3:1-3)** - A disciples focus changes. They set their mind on things above, not on things on earth.

**5. A DISCIPLE GETS RESULTS  
(JOHN 15:7-8)**

A. Results in a disciples life are related to him abiding in his relationship with Jesus, and the Word of God coming alive in him, which produces faith, and faith gets results.

**(MARK 4:13-20)** - A disciple keeps his heart as good ground, and therefore the Word of God once planted produces results.

**6. A DISCIPLE WALKS IN THE LOVE OF GOD  
(JOHN 13:34-35)**

A. A disciple of Jesus walks in the unconditional, sacrificial, and continual love of God that is in them now.

**(ROM 5:5)** - God's love is poured out in our heart (our spirit man) the moment we become born again.

**(1 JOHN 4:7-11)** - To walk in God's love one must forgive themselves, and forgive others, no longer punishing anyone.

**7. A DISCIPLE DOES NOT BECOME OFFENDED BY THE WORD OF GOD  
(JOHN 6:47-69)**

John 6:61 - "Does this teaching cause you to stumble in your faith, to question, to reject Me because it offends or confuses you?"

A. You are heading the wrong way when you start criticizing the Word of God.

**(MARK 6:1-6)** - Those in His hometown went from astonished to offended because they did not believe He was the Son of God. They did not reverence what He was saying as from God, but only from a man.

**(1 THESS 2:13)** - The believers received the Word Paul taught as from God and not from men, therefore they welcomed it.

**(2 THESS 1:3)** - Their faith grew exceedingly, and their love abounded.

**8. A DISCIPLE IS EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE A WITNESS  
(JOHN 20:19-22, ACTS 1:4-8, ACTS 2:1-4)**

A. When we are “filled” with the Holy Spirit, we will be able to yield unto the power of the Holy Spirit, doing what Jesus did.

**(ACTS 4:29-33)** - Being filled with the Holy Spirit, they spoke the Word of God with boldness, and with great power they gave witness to the resurrection of Jesus.

**(ACTS 10:34-38)** - God shows no partiality. God anointed Jesus who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, and we with that same anointing can do what He did (John 14:12).