

“What is a Disciple”

1. What is the church?

Acts 2:38, 41 (ESV) “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’ [...] 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”

- a. The church is a gathering of disciples.
 - i. The collective of called-out ones = church
 - ii. Each individual called-out one = disciple

Acts 6:1a (NIV) “In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, [...]”

Acts 11:26b (NIV) “[...] The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”

- b. There is no such thing as a Christian that isn't a disciple.
 - i. If you are a Christian, then you are a disciple.

The goal of this sermon is threefold: 1) To explain to you what the word disciple means, 2) to help you take your next step in being a disciple, and 3) to remove false reasons for discounting yourself from being a disciple.

2. What is a disciple in a broad context?

- a. A disciple is an active learner who apprentices under another to live like him.
 - i. Stage 1 - I don't know... and I don't care that I don't know.
 - ii. Stage 2 - I don't know... but I want to know what I don't know.
 - iii. Stage 3 - I know what I need to know, but performing a task requires intense concentration and effort.
 - iv. Stage 4 - I know what I need to know, and I do it sometimes subconsciously.

3. What is a disciple of Jesus?

Matthew 4:19 (ESV) “And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’”

- a. **A disciple is one who follows Jesus.**
 - i. The disciples literally followed Jesus around for 3 years.
 - 1. Learn Jesus's teachings, ways of living, and how to respond.
 - ii. Discipleship (apprenticing Jesus) will cost you something:
 - 1. You cannot stay exactly how you are and follow Jesus.
 - 2. You don't get to choose who you follow.
 - 3. You don't get to have geological no-go zones.
 - 4. You have to be willing to learn to do what you haven't ever done.

Philippians 2:5 (NIV) “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: [...]”

- b. **A disciple is one who is becoming like Jesus.**
 - i. Come as you are, but Jesus will change the way you believe, think, and act.
 - ii. Being a disciple of Jesus is not merely: “I know a lot of the Bible.”
 - 1. I'm growing in love for God.
 - 2. I'm growing in love for people.
 - 3. My character is changing.
 - 4. The way I do relationships are changing.
 - iii. There is a connection between love and obedience.

John 14:15 (NIV) “If you love me, keep my commands.”

c. **A disciple is one who is on mission with Jesus.**

- i. Jesus’s mission = to seek and save the lost.
 1. This looked like meeting physical needs and spiritual needs.
 - ii. A disciple is on mission with Jesus in the church, at home, at work, in the community, and the world.
 - iii. Who is discipling you and what would that even look like?
 1. I need to be around more spiritually mature Christians who will intentionally help me learn Jesus’s way of thinking, Jesus’s way of living and acting, and who will question and challenge me to grow.
 2. **Caution:** Discipleship doesn’t always look like:
 - a. One on one
 - b. Once a week**But discipleship always has:**
 - a. Biblical foundation
 - B. Transparent relationship
- d. Thought: Jesus didn’t call us simply to believe something about Him. He called us to follow Him and become like Him and join His mission.

4. **But wait!? I Can’t Be a Disciple, Because....**

- a. I don’t know enough.
- b. I have a jacked up past.
- c. I still struggle.
- d. I am inadequate.
 - i. Acts 6:1, Acts 9:1 facts

John 6:66 (NIV) “From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.”

5. **What Does Being a Disciple Look Like in 2026?**

- a. **Move from seeing yourself as just a believer → Jesus follower.**
 - i. New life groups start on October 6th at the North Campus... come!
 - ii. Purchase the book *Intentional* and read along with the staff.
- b. A disciple isn’t someone who has arrived. A disciple is someone intentionally following Jesus.

Life Group Questions

Ice Breaker: Have you ever been an apprentice or had to shadow to learn a job or skill?

Main Passages: Matthew 4:19, Acts 6:1, Acts 9:1, Acts 11:26b

1. Before we define a disciple as a group, write down your own definition first.
 - a. Now read Matthew 4:19 and answer “What is a disciple?” from the text.
2. When did you first respond to the call of Jesus to follow Him?
3. Jesus didn’t call us simply to believe something about Him. He called us to follow Him and become like Him and join His mission... What does this look like in your life?
4. Being a disciple of Jesus will change you at the heart level... in what ways is following Jesus changing your character, beliefs, or priorities?
5. How is following Jesus impacting the way you do relationship with others?
6. In what environments or relationships are you being disciplined by a godly person?
7. What’s your next step in being a disciple of Jesus?



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