

MAKING DISCIPLES



STUDY 06 DISCIPLESHIP

TEACHER EDITION

DISCIPLESHIP

Big Idea: Saving faith in Jesus includes being a disciple of Jesus, a wholehearted follower who fishes for men. **Key word:** “wholehearted”

Matthew 28:18-20

Q. What does Jesus want everybody to become?

- A disciple.

Q. What do you think a disciple is?

- A disciple is a follower of Jesus who is a “disciplined learner.” A disciple of Jesus intentionally puts into practice what he/she learns. A disciple is like an apprentice.

Q. Do you believe you are a disciple of Jesus? If so, when did you become a disciple?

We will investigate what a disciple is for the rest of this study.

Teacher tip: Don't get into a discussion about baptism here. The purpose of this lesson is to teach that one must learn AND put what they learn into practice.

Acts 11:25-26

Q. What do you see here?

- In Antioch a disciple and a Christian were the same thing.

Q. Which is the more popular term - “Disciple” or “Christian” in the Bible?

- The word “Christian” only appears three times in the New Testament (as in Acts 11:26).
- The word “disciple” occurs over 270 times in the New Testament.

According to the scriptures, a disciple and a Christian are the same thing. You can't be a Christian without being a disciple.

Mark 1:14-18

Q. What was Jesus' call to these men?

- “Come, follow me” (Christ). A disciple is someone committed to following God in all areas of their life.
- A disciple is a person committed to making other disciples.

Q. How wholehearted and urgent was their commitment?

- They left their nets immediately and followed him, which shows a “wholehearted” commitment.

Q. If you believed Jesus was the Messiah, would you follow him wholeheartedly? Would you want to be with him and become like him?

Q. Is this how you became a disciple? Were you “wholehearted” and committed to making disciples?

Teacher tip: This is the third time we are asking “Were you converted in a biblical way?” We need to be prepared to help them compare their story to what is written in the scriptures.

Luke 9:23-26

Q. If anyone would come after me ... Who is anyone?

- All of us! Jesus is talking to anyone who wants to follow him.

Q. Jesus tells us to deny self. What does it mean to deny yourself and take up your cross?

- It is following the example of Christ in the garden (Matthew 26:36-39, “Not my will, but your will.”)

Q. What is going to be the hardest thing for you to deny?

Teacher tip: This is a great place to be vulnerable about your own challenges.



DISCIPLESHIP

Luke 14:25-33

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus applies this teaching to all ("if anyone"), which means us.
- Prior to being a Christian, everyone is supposed to count the cost and give up everything (v. 28).
- Consider the alternatives if you don't follow Jesus and give up everything (v. 31-32).
- Love Christ more than any person (v. 26); Jesus must come first, even over our closest relationships.
- Everything, not just anything (v. 33).

Q. What will be the greatest challenge for you that you see here?

Mark 3:20-22, 31-35

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus was thought to be crazy and dangerous by even his own family.

Q. If you are going to follow Jesus, how do you think your family will respond?

Teacher tip: If they believe they will be persecuted by their family or their friends, go to Appendix D.

Luke 11:1-4

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray in order to have a powerful walk with God.
- Daily personal relationship with God (v. 3) through daily prayer.

Q. Are you willing to learn to pray to have a powerful walk with God?

Teacher tip: Have you prayed with the seeker? If not, this would be a good time to begin.

John 13:34-35

Q. What do you see here?

- Disciples are to love other disciples just as Jesus did.

Q. Are you willing to begin loving the disciples?

Teacher tip: This is a good time to talk about commitment to church and to be active in the fellowship.

Conclusion

As we have looked at what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, let's read Matthew 28:18-20 again and reflect on the following questions:

Matthew 28:18-20

Q. Are you a biblical disciple?

Q. If not, then what do you need to do to become a disciple?

Q. Is becoming a disciple what you want to do?

Someone ready to be a disciple is ready to be baptized. We will study that topic next.

Additional Scriptures: Lk 6:20-26; Rom 6:15-18; Jn 4:1-2; Mt 10:34-39; 2 Tim 3:12; Jn 1:35-42; Jn 1:43-50; Jn 4:28-42; Acts 8:1-4.



APPENDIX D: PERSECUTION

Persecution by others is something that comes with being a disciple. The Bible talks about the certainty of persecution, why it comes, how we are to react to persecution when it comes and a resolve to follow Jesus regardless.

I. The Certainty of Persecution

1 Timothy 3:12

The Bible states if we are living a godly life, there will be persecution coming from some source. In fact, if one is not persecuted in some manner, then they may not be living a godly life before God.

Matthew 10:34-36

Jesus says that his teaching will bring a "sword" that can divide families. While we may get the picture of Jesus holding a sheep and having a docile personality, Jesus' teaching caused people to make tough decisions that could result in strained relationships and enmity even within their household. Even Jesus faced persecution.

II. Examples of Persecution in the Life of Jesus

Mark 3:20-22

Here we see two examples. Jesus is persecuted even by his own family who thought "he is out of his mind" and by the religious leaders who accuse him as acting as an agent of the devil. Tough stuff that even Jesus went through.

III. The Why of Persecution

Why such violent, negative responses from people to whom you are sharing the gospel and your life with? The reasons often come from two sources.

One: The clash of worldviews

The Christian worldview holds that there is a God in heaven who desires to have a relationship with each one of us. He has sent Jesus, his son, as the only source and the only way to the Father. To accept the gift of eternal life, there are objective moral values and principles to be upheld.

This is in direct conflict with the "secular worldview." The secular worldview holds that there are no moral objective values, that one makes up their own truth. Feelings rather than objective truths are the ultimate guide, happiness is the ultimate goal rather than holiness, and the ultimate sin is judging another's motives or opinions.

The secular worldview feeds into the concept of the "authentic self" and our sinful nature, where we want to be in control, independent, and determining what is right and wrong for ourselves.

Those with the secular worldview will persecute the objective moral truths and values championed by Christians. We see this clearly in the abortion debate. The Christian viewpoint is that God determines whether we can take life or not. He says in the Ten Commandments "You shall not murder" which is reaffirmed in the New Testament as well. The pro-abortion argument is "my body, my choice." The source of authority as to whether to take the life of another (a baby in the womb) is up to the mom, not God.

Clue: when you share your faith with others, listen for their source of authority. Is it themselves or is it an objective moral authority centered in the authority of God? If it is themselves, then it is just their opinion. And why should anyone else follow their opinion? But if our source of moral truth comes from God, then it is something we need to follow.

Two: The clash of subjectively held religious beliefs

Even those who are religious will persecute true Christians. Subjectively held beliefs are beliefs obtained by religious tradition or from non-Christian religions taught from men. The Jews in the time of Jesus had certain mistaken beliefs about the Messiah that contradicted what Jesus taught and persecuted him as a result.

Clue: Therefore, don't think it strange that religious people, even in your own family, persecute your beliefs. The source of authority for belief comes from the Bible, not creeds. Make sure when you are sharing your faith you rely on scripture for your beliefs. If a religious person becomes argumentative, let the scripture do the arguing for you.



APPENDIX D: PERSECUTION (CONTINUED)

IV. How to React to Persecution

1 Peter 4:12-16

Here the Bible says we are to “rejoice,” “be overjoyed” and “you are blessed,” not exactly what we want to hear about how to react; definitely not easy to do.

Matthew 5:11-12

Here Jesus says we are “blessed,” and we are to “rejoice and be glad.” 1 Peter 2:20-23 tells us the secrets of how Jesus overcame persecution in a godly, righteous manner before God.

1 Peter 2:20-23

Jesus leaves us an example so we can follow in his steps. Notice the three ways Jesus reacted when he suffered:

First: Jesus did not commit any sin.

Jesus, like anyone, would have been tempted to become angry, distraught, even depressed with his circumstances. Jesus knew what he was going to go through in the Garden of Gethsemane. He even could have been tempted to think the pain, suffering, and separation from God that he endured was not worth it.

But he didn't give in to these temptations. He maintained a godly attitude toward his tormentors. In fact, he cries out to God “Father, please forgive them for they know not what they do.” This shows he has compassion for them.

This example tells us that we need to guard our hearts against negative, sinful thoughts against those who persecute us. They may not know what they are doing. They are in reality precious souls in God's sight who have misguided judgments against us due to darkened understanding.

Second: Jesus did not have any deceit, nor did he retaliate.

Jesus also would have been tempted to retaliate, to think about how to get revenge, to pay them back for the pain and suffering they caused him.

But we don't see this reaction. He could have called down angels to get him off the cross. He could have sent lightning to fry his tormentors. He could have called on his Father to make us humans pay for the pain and suffering he endured. But we don't see retaliation in any sense.

This tells us we need to make sure we do not retaliate against our persecutors or take revenge of any sort. The godly way is to forgive.

This does not mean that we must remain silent. When Jesus was persecuted and accused of being of the devil and casting out demons by Beelzebul (Matt 12:22-32), Jesus responded with logic and truth but not with vengeance. When Paul was unjustly cast into a prison in Philippi, he made the officials come and escort him out of the city, to give credibility to the emerging church (Acts 16:38-40), but not to get even.

So how do we attain this attitude? That leads to the third point . . .

Third: He entrusted himself to him to judges justly.

Jesus entrusted the injustices he suffered to the faithful judging of the Father. The Father is just and fair. In the last judgment and before, the Father will repay justly those who inflicted pain and suffering on his son. Everybody will reap what they have sown, unless forgiven by the blood of Christ.

This is a great lesson for us. In the end, it is going to be OK no matter what persecution we will have suffered. Justice will be meted out. Anyone who has sinned against us in any way or persecuted us will be justly compensated. We just need to trust God to take care of any injustices we have suffered from persecution.

Because we know it will be OK in the end, this allows our spirit to rejoice and to have peace.



APPENDIX D: PERSECUTION (CONTINUED)

Romans 5:3-5

In addition, we see that sufferings and trials build character which produces hope when we react in a godly way. Any persecution we endure in a godly way will make us stronger, show we have perseverance, increase our character, and show that we truly do have a real hope (a confident expectation) of eternal life.

V. Become Resolute Toward Following God in Persecution

Is it worth it to endure persecution or not? Jesus says to his disciples in Matt 10:22 "You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Standing firm during persecution requires conviction, courage, and steadfastness amid crushing blows from the world forces. But God will give you the ability to stand firm, to persevere, to even rejoice, and be glad, and to enjoy the fruits of your labor as you entrust justice to the God of justice so you will obtain the salvation of your soul.

