

Being a Disciple of Jesus

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Preacher: Jon Hochstetler

[0 : 00] I'm glad it's good to be here this morning. Thank you, Aaron, for what you shared.! Of Jesus.

I know, I think the last time I spoke was about loving God or loving Jesus through His Word and being not just loving Jesus, but loving Him like David did through His Word, through meditating on His Word, through meditating on His statutes and precepts and considering the heart of God, not just saying that we love Jesus, but actually caring about what He cares about and all that. So today I'd like to just kind of with that same thought, if you will, continue in being a disciple of Jesus.

So we will look at a few different verses here, or scriptures here, and then end up probably in Matthew chapter 7. A follower. A disciple is a follower and adherent to the doctrines of another. Hence the constant attendance of Christ were called His disciples. Just looking at the meaning of disciple. What is a disciple?

[2 : 02] And it says here, all Christians should be called His disciples as they profess to learn and receive His doctrines and precepts.

We heard a lot of doctrine in the chapters that Aaron read. In the Sermon on the Mount, that was perhaps, yeah, the greatest sermon ever preached.

But it was a lot of teaching in there, a lot of doctrine. And for us, it's something we grew up with. We grew up with those teachings.

But through the listeners, the people that were hearing it for the first time, there was a lot of new thoughts and new things, new teaching. Have you ever thought about that? At the Sermon on the Mount, I mean, we were still in the Old Testament era when that was being preached.

When Jesus sang the multitude and sat down and, or when they were set, I think it says, He opened His mouth and began teaching them.

[3 : 11] And there was a lot of new things that they had never heard before. Loving your enemies, turning the other cheek, you know, blessed are the poor in spirit.

You know, the whole, almost all of it was probably new to them, in a sense. Maybe not the principle, but they had never heard this type of, how would you and I have responded to that?

Depends on how hungry we were, right? Depends on how open we were. Depends on how hungry we were. The disciple says it is a follower, someone that adheres to the teaching of another, a learner.

Are we truly a disciple? Or do we consider ourselves too much the teacher or the instructor? and maybe we're not a learner like we should be. The other thing I had mentioned was about a relationship, having a relationship with Christ through His Word.

[4 : 29] In Luke 14, verse 26 and 27, Luke 14, Jesus speaking here, He said, If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

Jesus used dramatic terms, dramatic words sometimes to get His point across. And it's true. But, again, just imagine, you know, we read these verses, screw up with them.

But imagine hearing this for the first time. Perhaps. hating your father and your mother and wife and children and your brothers and your sisters, and, oh yes, and even your own life.

If you don't do that, you can't be My disciple. Maybe instead of being so used to these Scriptures, we ought to think about it as what it actually says.

And consider it. Have we ever considered loving Jesus more than anything else, any other person, any, even myself, to where He calls it hate?

[6 : 05] verse 27, and whosoever does not bear His cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

You know, there's a cost in being a disciple. Sometimes in our American Christianity, there's very little cost. In fact, some of the Gospel being preached, there is no cost.

It's actually a benefit to become a Christian. It'll bless you. You'll have a blessed life and a great life and you'll have those millions, you know. That's being preached.

But Jesus said there's a cost. There's a cross. There's a cross. And if you don't bear your cross, if you're not willing to do that, then you can't be My disciple, Jesus said.

Sounds a little more difficult, doesn't it? Maybe not quite as easy a road as sometimes as we think. Because wherever there's a cross or a cross bearing is mentioned, there's a death.

[7 : 20] It speaks of death. It speaks of something has to die. If there's going to be a cross. And in order for us to be a disciple of Jesus, something has to die.

Death to the old and death to self so that the new can live. I've had the opportunity recently to have my grandchildren with me down in the corn.

I can't even remember if they were all there or was it maybe just John's children. I can't remember for sure. But a couple different times and yeah, it was John's little ones.

They were here for a few days. And I explained to them about the seed and the seed falling into the ground and dying and then there's new life and that's what you're seeing.

You're seeing all these called corn plants. And it was a number of days later we were down there again and I said, so what happens? How do these plants come?

[8 : 33] And my little two-year-old grandson said, seed. And he can barely talk or pronounce things right. but he knew exactly. He remembered that the seed died.

It was so special to me. The seed, something dies in order for new life to be there, to exist. But Jesus said, unless we take up our cross, we cannot be His disciple.

Unless something dies, you cannot be a Christian. And then on in that same chapter down to verse 33, it says, so likewise, whosoever He be of you that forsaketh not all that He has, He cannot be My disciple.

That's a lot. That's saying a lot. If we don't forsake all that we have. Is there any forsaking we need to do this morning?

All that we have, I'm not saying it can't be literal, but it is for sure in our heart, in our mind. That battle is in our mind, isn't it?

[10 : 05] Do we have stuff that we're hanging on to? Or can we forsake them? We can hold them with an open, it's not mine, it's yours, Lord.

That doesn't mean we don't have stuff in this life, right?

You wouldn't have a vehicle. Brother Ray, you couldn't have brought your family out here, right? We have stuff. We have vehicles, we have things.

But in our minds and in our hearts, we can forsake them. Right? They don't mean much. And Jesus said, unless we do that, we can't be His disciples.

Now a few verses in John. Again. Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, if you continue in My word, then you are My disciples indeed.

[11 : 17] Are we continuing in His word? Continuing to learn the word of God, the principles, the precepts, the statutes?

If we continue, Jesus said. You know, when we first got saved, especially those of you that got saved at an older age, remember how it was, right?

We continued. We dug into the Scripture. We read. We read books. Right, Mike? We were hungry. We were seeking. We were searching for truth and reality and what is the truth.

Jesus says, don't stop. Don't stop. Continue in My word. Continue to be hungry.

Are we continuing to learn and study the word? John 15, verse 8 says, Herein is My Father glorified that you bear much fruit.

[12 : 24] Now He's talking about fruit. You know, by the way, if we continue in the word, we'll bear fruit too. Let's start that verse again.

Herein is My Father glorified that you bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples. You know, I believe that in the church today there should be, we need teachers.

We need men to teach and to have the gift of teaching and I would love to see more of that. I think that would be God's heart. In that sense, we need more teachers to teach the word to us.

But in another sense, I think there's way too many teachers and not enough disciples. sometimes we think we know everything.

That's what I'm talking about. We just want to teach. I want to tell you how to, what you should do. Right? Instead of saying, no, I want to learn too.

[13:47] I want to be a disciple too. I want to have an open heart. I want a greater revelation of who Jesus is. So in that sense, maybe too many of us are just teachers.

I think you get the meaning. Now let's turn to Matthew 7. You could have read that too, Aaron. That would have been fine. We're not going to read perhaps the whole chapter, but I want to turn to it. Starting in verse 7. Jesus says, Ask, and it shall be given. Given you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be open unto you. or it shall be open. I'm just going to look at something here real quick.

Maybe I'll just read the first six verses because if we did that, we would have read the whole Sermon on the Mount this morning. Right? Let's start in verse 1. Judge not, that you be not judged.

[15:05] For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged. And with what measure you meet, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?

But considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. We know that sometimes when that happens and we take care of our own issue, that little mote in the brother's eye kind of went away.

Right? Can't see that anymore either in the process. Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your perils before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you.

And now we're on verse 7 where I was going to start. Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and you shall find knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

[16:17] For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth. And to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you whom if his son asks bread will give him a stone?

Or if he asks a fish will give him a serpent? If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

A true disciple is a seeker. someone that is always open to a deeper revelation of Jesus. Someone that acknowledges his need from day to day.

A person that needs answers. Not one that has all the answers. God, as our heavenly Father, wants us to knock.

He wants us to seek. But he wants us to knock so that he can open. Right? Does that make sense? He wants to open to us of himself, of his truth.

[17:41] He wants us to seek so he can reveal. He would love to reveal more. To open more. more. That's not the question.

The question is whether we seek, whether we not. Whether we're a disciple. Whether we want to learn. He goes on, he says, therefore, in verse 12, all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

For this is the law and the prophets. verse 13 and 14. I want to focus some on those two verses. Enter ye in at the straight gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.

Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. He uses terms like many and few, wide, narrow.

[18:57] Verse 15, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.

Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs or thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. So what is Jesus saying here?

What does the passage, what does this passage have to do with being a disciple? I looked up the word straight, the way it's spelled here in the King James, in the Webster.

[20 : 04] it says straight means narrow, close, not broad. Close, intimate, as a straight degree of favor.

Strict, rigorous, difficult, distressful. Doesn't sound like the easy road, does it? Straight is the gate. Sometimes we still use that word straight in our language today. You know, the straight of Hormuz, the straight, you know, a passage through two countries or two lands many times is used as the word straight.

Usually a narrow passage. I like to look at it as a narrow passage to get somewhere. To get to a better place in this case.

Narrow is the way, Jesus said, that leads to life. It's not wide and easy and broad. The road that leads to life.

[21 : 22] What are some things that cannot go with us when traveling this narrow way? as a disciple of Jesus? I want you to think about this with me.

And maybe you can have some input. What are some things that are not going to travel well with us on this narrow road? Or not travel with us at all?

What are some things that remove us from this straight and narrow and put us on the broad way instead? I think this can happen easier sometimes than we think.

Maybe much quicker than we think. Without much effort at all. We'll look at a few of those maybe, but be thinking about that.

What are some things in our lives that want to switch us over to, maybe we should just draw it real quick.

[22 : 26] I don't know, but we'll just make a broad road. That's a broad way, right?

And then we'll have a narrow road. It's probably all curvy and rocky and sometimes gets really narrow.

But it does lead upward. The other one goes, I don't know, did I think of that or did that just happen? But anyway, what are some things that for the majority versus the minority that changes us to the different path?

Let's talk about the broad way a little bit. I used to think, and this is the common thought and even taught in many, many circles and it's not all wrong, but I used to think that the broad way was simply for all the sinners and all the things of the world and that that's what Jesus is talking about.

And so if we reject those things, we reject worldly things, automatically puts us on the narrow road. Right? That's how I was taught.

[24 : 01] But if we study this a little bit more, what Jesus is teaching here, and the whole passage here, not just the two verses, but it goes deeper than that.

It goes a little further. And yes, the world is on the broad way. Not taking that away at all. I believe that. But I think it comes a little closer to home than we want to think.

The world and all its allurements, all the fashions and glitter, the self-serving lives, the selfishness, it's all on the broad way.

Let's read a couple more verses here. Verse 21. And this is what I'm referring to. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Did you get that? there are many on this road that are saying the right thing. They're saying, Lord, Lord, Lord, according to this passage or this message that Jesus was preaching.

[25 : 24] Outwardly, they probably look just like these folks. and they do a lot of the same things.

Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works.

And yet Jesus will say, I will profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

We see here that Jesus is actually talking about people that thought they were right. They thought they were right. They thought they were on the narrow road, perhaps.

They even thought they were serving God with their high morals and their wonderful works. How can this be? And they were on the broad road that leads to destruction.

[26 : 49] They thought they were right. You know, as I thought about this, I thought, wow. brothers and sisters, this passage should grip our hearts.

It should stir our thoughts. It should move our emotions in that we care deeply about this. This is not just a light thing that Jesus spoke of.

Jesus is warning us of being deceived. And when Jesus warns us of deception, we should take note.

How do you know that you're on the narrow path and not on the broad one? How do you and I know? Can we know? This is not to discourage somebody that's struggling with doubt. You know, there is an assurance. We'll get to that. We can know. I believe that. I believe we can know. God doesn't want us to be ignorant of where we're going.

[28 : 05] We sang that song, It Is Well With My Soul. We can't really sing that if we don't know, right? We can't say, It's well with my soul.

You know, peace like a river and not know it. But there is a danger. How do you know you're on the narrow path and not the broad one?

Is it because you are in this church and you hang out with a lot of good people? Are you on the narrow path because you say the right things and were baptized as a believer?

we would assume that the people Jesus said that he never knew really, truly thought they were on the right path and yet all along they were deceived.

How do we know whether or not we are deceived? you know, I think those the people that didn't know were on this path.

[29 : 16] The people that are on this path know they're on the right one. and I've come to believe that the only way we are not deceived and are on the narrow path that leads to life is by making sure that we are a disciple of Jesus, of Jesus Christ.

A person that is sitting at the feet of Jesus is not deceived. Jesus will never deceive us.

That person is taking up his cross every day, denying himself, not just denying things, but denying himself, his own desires, crucifying the flesh.

That person is not on the broad way that leads to destruction. Sometimes you look at the other path and you might be tempted.

I have been to think of an easier road. A road easier to walk on, a road less painful, less trials maybe.

[30 : 40] in a moment of pride, I believe that we can jump paths and be on the wrong path again.

But for repentance, pride without repentance will put you on the broad road every time. without repentance.

I'm not saying that you had a proud moment and now you lost your salvation. But without repentance, where we just are proud and we lift ourselves up, it is time to take note and be alarmed.

Repentance is a gift. This might challenge our doctrine a little bit. But this thing of being able to switch paths, I don't know where all that is and those lines are.

Only God does. But we do know that a lifestyle of repentance is required for the Christian.

[32 : 03] These people that thought they were so right, but yet they were not disciples of Jesus. They were not taking up their cross.

They were not repenting. They were just right. I heard of a preacher recently, somebody, Merlin or somebody was telling me, who was it?

Todd White. Never sinned in 30 years. It's the wrong path. Don't follow men like that.

Don't let him be your disciple, or your teacher, I should say. Don't be a disciple of Todd White. But many people are. like that. Don't follow men Don't Jesus spoke of that.

He said, Raven as wolves. Buy their fruits. We can know. Not here to knock people or speakers, but he's a false prophet.

[33 : 11] Never sinned. That means he never had to repent in 30 years. A lot of other false things he says too.

So what are some things that cannot travel with us on the narrow way? Have you thought of any? Anybody have anything?

What are some things? Yeah. Our own way. Just our own way. What are pride in the flesh it must be crucified lust and pride I wrote that down other things idols that's a good one things that are too high in our possessions or in our likings or whatever about bitterness and unforgiveness I think those things will put us on the broad way sooner than we realize thank God for repentance that's why we need to learn at Jesus' feet let him speak those things like this morning the sermon on the mount let those words speak to us and convict us and bring repentance to us thinking that we're

better than somebody else again that's pride maybe we'll look at a few other things a little bit later but we can think of things probably in our lives character things things that need to change from time to time verse 24 same chapter therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them

I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock and the rain descended and the floods came the winds blew and beat upon that house all the stuff that comes flying at us right tries to push our house over rock our faith shake us make us weak but the house fell not for it was founded upon a rock it was solid it was rock solid you might say and it did not fall over and everyone that heareth these sayings of mine same started out the same as the one that was on the rock they both heard these sayings but there's a big big difference and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand so we hear but we don't do we say we have idols he's picking on that one idols or whatever else was said we hear that we think about it we realize it but we don't change a thing that's sand and the same winds blew and they beat upon that house and it fell and great was the fall of it and it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings this is the end of that's the last thing he said in that sermon was about the house the rock and the sand and as he ended the sayings the people were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes

Jesus refers to his teaching as sayings of mine and that we don't just hear it but that we do to be a disciple is to be a very practical person that will apply the things that are being learned or being taught when's the last time I'm going to ask some questions here as we close out when's the last time that you have made a practical change in your life because you're a disciple you're learning things something in your lifestyle has changed you either stop doing something because of a new conviction or maybe and here I have maybe we deleted a bunch of apps you know back in the day it was we used to have burn barrels remember that

[38 : 41] James I mean back in the I remember many tent revivals and they say tonight or tomorrow night we're going to have a bonfire we're going to burn the junk that people possess because of conviction of the Holy Spirit convicting hearts of stuff we had in our homes that needed to go there was a distraction it was maybe even evil anything from just silly books to evil stuff got burned with a big old fire we still should do that but I was thinking about that just a little bit and it's like well now it's just apps digital stuff but we can still repent we can still repent might not want to burn the whole phone but we can block a lot of stuff anyway apps that we're wasting our time on when's the last time we started doing something new that came out of our relationship with Jesus because you are a disciple maybe it's maybe you started witnessing the people maybe it's as simple as getting up earlier to make sure we spend time with the Lord those are things you won't find that much on this road this is a selfish road it's just an outward show but being a disciple is an inner change it's a it's a regeneration something that changes in the inside it's much more and those

Jesus knows those people because he's the one that changes them that's how he knows us if he can change us if he can work in our lives maybe it's time to spend more time in meditating on God and and his heart about issues about things versus the apps I'm not preaching at you talking to myself and God help us in those areas and change us we all have some needs and we should be willing to be told from time to time and this is the other thing yes we want to be disciplined by Jesus but how about being disciplined by each other many times and perhaps most of the time Jesus or we are disciples of Christ but we have teachers we help each other we disciple one another are we open to that we need that don't we practically learning Christ most often is probably through other people if we allow that if we open our hearts to that I mean after all what's the point in preaching if there's no if that's not discipleship if we're not open to well brother Dan said this or Aaron said this or and I want to that spoke to my heart and I want to accept that receive that one from another this is so lacking sometimes there's people that are willing to disciple somebody but there's nobody to disciple disciples already know everything but there's no safer place to know whether or not you're on the right path and at the feet of Jesus with an open heart a contrite spirit like we heard earlier this morning

Jesus said in Matthew 11 verse 28 come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you what rest then he says take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart you shall find rest for your souls all that we would say I will learn of Jesus don't we want to do that to learn more of him he went on he said for my yoke is easy my burden is light do we need rest

for our souls bringing all our burdens and allowing Jesus to lighten our load wants to lighten our load take care of our burdens!

this is considered an easy road but the easy road is with Jesus I know it's it's rugged and hard too but we said that but what we don't want to miss is Jesus is there we're not alone when we're on the right path we have a great help and he invites us to come he invites us to labor with him not alone and there's no safer place than at the feet of Jesus but the only way we can rest there the only way we can get there and stay there is through humility there is no proud person ever sitting at the feet of Jesus it is only those that want to be taught that want to learn and I want to do more of that to learn there's no person there's no age there's no spiritual maturity there's nothing that should hinder us from sitting at the feet of Jesus and learning there are men

[46 : 07] I know men that have much experience I've known a few that I think it seems like they've memorized most of scripture but their life does not indicate to me that they learn of Jesus I mean what is that anybody little children can memorize scripture and that's a wonderful thing we should but that alone does not make you a disciple you can know whole chapters and be on this road but to learn of him to want to get to know him to know his heart to know what he thinks to know what he thinks about our issues and the path we should walk how we should go forward the other day I had the privilege of having lunch with a brother from he lives in another country and he's there as a missionary and with only two families him and one other family and he's quite a bit older than me and much more experienced than me let's just put it that way been a preacher a lot longer and so on and we were having lunch and then he just stopped he said I have a question for you something he's seeking the

Lord about and I thought oh boy how am I gonna I hope he's not looking for an answer but his question was how much persuasion do you put on the lost how much how hard do you how much pressure forget exactly how he worded it to surrender to Christ because he's struggling with that it was a real question and I didn't think of it at the time but later I thought what he was telling me is I don't have all the answers I'm trying to find God's heart in that that's what I'm talking about that humility that says I need I need answers too it's a walk it's a journey let's pray father we just come to you at this time Lord and I just pray that God that your words your words

Lord Jesus would go deep in our hearts God that we would recognize our need before you God that we would humble our hearts before you and allow you Lord Jesus to teach us through your word and do not neglect the learning of your word spending time in your word God father thank you thank you for all the testimonies that are here this morning of changed lives men and women that read your word and study it and care about what you care about Lord I thank you for that thank you for the saints that have the men and women young and old that you have redeemed Lord that have found you because they were seeking you opened the door and you know your sheep you said that you're a shepherd to the sheep and that your sheep know your voice we can know your voice we know that we are walking with you so

Lord help us to walk in that humility and brokenness before you that we would never go astray or ever follow a false teaching or the broad way but stay on the narrow Lord we need you we need your guidance and in these days that we're living in we need it more than ever to know that we are walking with our Savior and that there is a great deception all around us and Lord I pray that you would help us to be built upon that rock that our faith won't fall apart when trials come help us to remain strong in your Jesus we pray in your name amen