

### Key Text: Matthew 28:19

“Go therefore and makes disciples of all nations.”

### What is Discipleship?

A disciple is a student, a follower, one in submission, one in training, or an adherent to doctrine. When you are being disciplined you are in submission to an instructor or teacher. Discipleship is submitting to the process of discipline that is designed by the leader. A disciplinarian is simply one who enforces the discipline. Can you think of some “disciplinarians” in your life? The word “Disciple” is only used once in the Old Testament (Isa. 8:16) but it is used over 200 times in just the four Gospels alone. This is because Jesus focused on people who would submit to His teaching. Jesus was considered to be a great teacher and called people to “follow” Him. The Greek word for “TEACH” means “to make a disciple”. Jesus’ goal in teaching was to “Train” His followers up to be like Himself. (Luke 6:40) This pattern is also seen in the ministry of Paul. (1 Corinthians 11:1) So when Jesus calls us to go into all the world and “Make” disciples, He is commanding us to make little copies of Him all over the world. Discipleship is learning to live and act like Christ.



### LOVE IT *or* HATE IT

According to Proverbs 12:1, you may love or hate discipline. But It would be foolish to hate it because discipline is the very thing that will lead to a blessed life. (*Proverbs 6:23*) **Discipline** literally means to train by instruction and control. (*1 Corinthians 9:27*) The problem with discipline is that it is painful. We will either dislike the limits and restrictions placed on us through training or we will want to avoid the consequences of disobeying a command. (*i.e. Romans 11:22*) *People don't like being told what to do or want to give up control!* When people refuse to submit to God's positive discipline by obeying His laws they will experience God's negative discipline through His wrath and judgment. God's punishment is also something we mentally resist. We wonder... could a loving God also punish people? This is when it is good to remember the promise in Hebrews 12:5-11, God disciplines those He loves and accepts.

### MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

- I Continue in the Word.
- I show the Love of Christ.
- My walk with Christ is fruitful.
- I am single-minded in my service for Christ.
- Christ is your Boss or Lord.
- I am consistent with my discipline & training.
- I am not in “Love” with the things of the World.

These are some of the key areas to consider when evaluating your personal devotion and progress toward maturity in Christ. Self-examination is encouraged in **2 Corinthians 13:5** with regard to your faith. How would you score yourself from one to ten in each of these categories? Remember that maturity in your faith is something that God's Holy Spirit will work into you, so just keep submitting to the Holy Spirit and the Word as your teacher (**Jeremiah 31:34; John 14:26; 15:8; Philippians 2:13; James 1:22**).

## HOW DOES A DISCIPLE RELATE TO THE CHURCH?

The Church is your partner in “**Training**”. God has given various ministers to the church that serve in training and equipping you for your faith and ministry. (*Ephesians 4:11-16*) Your relationship is marked by **mutual submission** to ministers, leaders, and other members within the body of Christ. (*Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 5:21*) A healthy relationship is one where you are receiving training and instruction and giving what you learn to others. The cycle continues because someone else will be looking at the outcome of your faith and will imitate you. One way to sum up the relationship a disciple should have with the whole church could be... “**Following others as they Follow Christ.**” (*John 13:12-17; Phil. 3:17; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Peter 5:2-5*) Here is what this ends up looking like:

1. Disciples learn doctrine from church leaders and in turn share what they learn with others.
2. Disciples practice proper obedience to authority in the church and give honor where honor is due.
3. Disciples serve others in the church faithfully with their time, talent, and energy.
4. Disciples produce fruit consistent with righteousness giving others an example to follow.

## HOW ARE YOU FOLLOWING SOMEONE AND WHO IS IT THAT IS FOLLOWING YOU?

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PICK UP YOUR OWN CROSS **DAILY** AND FOLLOW JESUS?

Many people have repented but they are still not disciples! Salvation happens when you accept the finished work of Jesus’ cross, but discipleship is going one step further and picking up your own cross. Jesus’ cross was substitutionary, He died in your place. The figurative cross you pick up as a disciple is your responsibility and nobody will pick it up for you. Picking up your own cross starts with you counting the cost of discipleship. **Luke 14:25-33. If you choose to follow God then you have chosen to do these three things DAILY:**

**Deny Self:** Luke 9:23; Philippians 3:8-14 “Willing to lose everything in order to gain a relationship with God.”

**Lay Down Your Life:** You will suffer many things for following Jesus. The time may come when you even face death as a martyr. (Acts 5:41; 9:16. 2 Corinthians 11:23-29)

**Follow Christ:** Obedience to the expressed will of God is a daily walk. You must be “diligent” and submit. (John 15:14; 1 John 5:3)

Disciples must willingly choose to submit.

“**X**” truly marks the spot where your will-power intersects with Gods’. Will you obey your own will or God’s? **SUBMISSION is the act of yielding to power and authority, a surrender of the person and power to the control of another.**

Jesus illustrated the heart of a submissive disciple in Mark 14:36 & Matthew 26:39. *Have you ever come to a place like Jesus’ Garden of Gethsemane?*

