

EXAMINING DISCIPLESHIP

LUKE 14:27

Text: Luke 14:27

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²⁷ And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Introduction:

The word “disciple” is used more than 265 times in the New Testament. There is a question about discipleship in John chapter 18 that everyone who professes to be a Christian must answer: “Are you one of this man’s disciples?”

John 18:17

¹⁷ Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

In New Testament days, followers of Jesus were called disciples and later were called Christians, the word occurring only 3 times. Today many are called Christians but few are referred to as true disciples of the Lord Jesus. All disciples are Christians but not all Christians are disciples. The word “Christian” defines our belief; the word “disciple’ defines our behavior.

James 2:17

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Faith – Belief Without works – Behavior

The word “disciple” means “A taught or trained one; a learner-follower.”

I want each of us to evaluate our own personal discipleship status by examining the New Testament to see what a true disciple looks like. Three things I want you to notice.

1. TYPES OF FOLLOWERS

There are different kinds and degrees of followers with different motives. In Luke 9 we find three types of followers:

A. The Calloused

Luke 9:7-9

⁷Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; ⁸And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. ⁹And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

Herod did not have good intentions - He was a calloused murderer! There have always been those whose hearts are hardened toward Jesus. They are the skeptics, the cynical – looking for an opportunity to criticize.

Of this sort were the Pharisees of the Lord's day.

There are those who follow the Christian crowd and hang around the fringe just waiting for an opportunity to oppose. They are cynical, censorious, critical infidels.

There were the calloused in the Lord's day as well.

B. The Curious

Luke 9:11

¹¹ And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

Luke 9:13

¹³ But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

Luke 9:18

¹⁸ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

C. The Committed

Luke 9:23-26

²³ And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. ²⁵ For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be

cast away? ²⁶For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels.

2. TEST FOR FOLLOWERS

In Luke 14 there are three “cannots.” These three “cannots” comprise the tests for would-be disciples. These tests are:

A. The Relationship Test

Luke 14:26

²⁶If 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.

What is the meaning of such a strong statement?

Scriptures elsewhere plainly tell us that we are to love and cherish our parents, siblings, and children. What does the Lord mean here?

Just this: We are to make Jesus Christ preeminent, supreme in relation to anyone else. No one is to have the place in our lives that Jesus Christ has. Our love for all others will be as hatred compared to our love for Him.

B. The Lordship Test

Luke 14:33

³³ So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

The test here is one to determine who is really in control of my life - self or the Saviour.

Am I going to opt for self-centered satisfaction in life or am going to yield to the Lordship of Christ and live a self-sacrificing life under Christ's leadership?

C. The Stewardship Test

Luke 14:33

³³ So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

What is your attitude toward possessions? Do you consider them trusts that the Lord has given you to use for Him, or assets that you own to use as you please?

The test of stewardship calls into question the matter of ownership. Once the matter of ownership is established, stewardship, for the conscientious and sensitive Christian is settled.

The three tests of discipleship in Luke 14 give rise to these three questions:

#1 – Do we love others more than Jesus?

#2 – Do we love self more than Jesus?

#3 – Do we love things more than Jesus?

Again, the question that I asked earlier: “Am I a disciple by New Testament standards or merely a Christian by 21st century standards?”

We have looked at Types of Followers of Jesus and Tests for Followers of Jesus.

3. True Followers

As we conclude it would be profitable to get a brief look at True Followers of Jesus from Luke 9.

There are five identifiers of a true follower of Jesus in Luke chapter nine.

Note a True Follower:

A. Fellowships with Christ in Worship

Luke 9:18

¹⁸ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

B. Faithful to Christ in their Witness

Luke 9:20

²⁰ He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

C. Follows Christ in Their Walk

Luke 9:23

²³ And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

D. Forsakes the World not Christ

Luke 9:24-25

²⁴ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. ²⁵ For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

E. Is a Friend of Christ and His Words

Luke 9:26

²⁶ For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels.

The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is central to the life of a true disciple. Christ is not on the circumference but at the center of the life of discipleship.

Close:

The standard of a true disciple is his Master.

Who is your standard?

At the beginning of this message I read the question that the young woman asked Peter:

“Are you one of this man’s disciples?” (Jn.18:17)

John 18:17

¹⁷ Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

There is another Bible question with which I conclude:

“Will you also be his disciples?” (John 9:27)

John 9:27

²⁷ He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?