

**So You
Want To Be A
Disciple**

**By
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INTRODUCTION:

Why Some Become Disciples

I suppose that you could want to be a disciple for many and varied reasons. Some may want to be a disciple because their parents were [or are] disciples; others may want to be a disciple because their husbands or wives are disciples; or perhaps you only know someone who is a disciple and you are impressed with the life they have and are living. Personally, I became a disciple because of my wife and two daughters and I was impressed with a young preacher who came to our area. Preachers can and should be a great influence to everyone they come in contact with. Regardless of what your motive may be in becoming a disciple, it is the greatest decision you will ever make during your sojourn while upon this earth.

What Is A Disciple?

Mr. Webster can answer this question far better than I can:

“**DISCIPLE**, n. [L., to learn.]

1. A learner; a scholar; one who receives or professes to receive instruction from another; as the disciples of Plato.
2. A follower; an adherent to the doctrines of another. Hence the constant attendants of Christ were called his disciples; and hence all Christians are called his disciples, as they profess to learn and receive his doctrines and precepts.”

From this definition it is clear that a disciple is a learner. Not only is a disciple a learner, a disciple is also a follower. As a follower you can be led in many directions; some may be good; other directions may be evil. Therefore one must be very careful in deciding who you decide to follow; choose carefully who and what you will follow!

Decision Time

Making a decision as to whom you will follow is the most important decision you will ever make. You might decide to follow Satan, or you might decide to follow Jesus Christ. Which will it be? If you decide to follow Satan you will have all eternity to regret your decision. However, if you decide to follow Jesus Christ you will have all eternity to rejoice in your decision. Which do you prefer; to be happy or to be in agony? A little common sense should dictate your answer.

Becoming A Disciple of Jesus Christ

As already stated a disciple is a learner. But the question should be answered “Where do I learn about Jesus”? Today you can learn about Jesus almost anywhere; on the street, at work, at home or at church. Where is the best place to learn of Jesus? I’m sure most people would tell you at church would be the proper or best place to learn about Jesus. In most cases this would be true; however, there are many dedicated Christians who would be willing to come to your home and help you learn about the Son of God. So the choice is yours to make. My advice would be even if someone hands you a tract on the street; accept it and read it, if you truly want to become a disciple. Of course there is one method I have not stated; you can pick up a Bible and study to learn by yourself. I would say that someone who has studied for many years can be of great assistance to your learning.

Let’s say that you have studied about Jesus Christ and you have come to believe that He is indeed the Son of God what should be your next step? Recall what Mr. Webster said; “a disciple is a learner and a follower”. So your next step should be to follow Jesus.

Following In The Steps of Jesus.

Very little is recorded in the Bible about the first thirty years of the life of Christ. But there is one thing that we can know for sure He loved His heavenly Father and was concerned about His Father’s business: *(Luke 2:49) “And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”* This was at a very early age; Jesus was only twelve years old when this occurred. Now I am not saying that you must start following the example of Jesus; I believe you can do so at any age, however, it is better to start early on in life. I gave this reference to show what you must do to follow in the steps of Jesus. The inspired writer Luke also gives us some valuable information about the early years of Jesus: *(Luke 2:52) “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”* As any child does Jesus grew in “stature” but He also grew “in favour with God and man”. You and I have seen young people who were on fire for the Lord but when they grew older they drifted away; not so with Jesus: *(John 4:34) “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”* A true disciple will remain faithful until death: *(Rev. 2:10) “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have*

tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. If you truly want to follow in the steps of Jesus you will start early in life and continue faithfully until death.

Now to grow “in favour with man” one must be honest, upright and treat others as you want to be treated: (*Matt. 7:12*) “*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*” We generally call this “The Golden Rule” and we paraphrase it by saying, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. If we would practice what we preach there is little doubt that we too would be favorable with our friends, neighbors and all those whom we meet. Jesus did it and so can we!

The scriptures confirm the fact that Jesus went about doing good: (*Acts 10:38*) “*How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*” What were some of the good things that Jesus did? It would require a very large book to list all the good things and works that Jesus did; therefore, I will only list a few. It is a well known fact that Jesus healed all kinds of diseases: (*Matt. 4:24*) “*And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.*” (*Matt. 8:8*) “*The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.* Friends, I’m not inferring that to be a disciple of Jesus that we must heal the afflicted because the days of miracles have ended: (*1 Cor. 13:1*) “*But when that which is perfect [I.e. the Word} is come, then that which is in part [I.e. miracles] shall be done away.*” Let us be perfectly honest; we don’t have to perform miracles to do good works. Jesus said that our “good works” should be seen by others: (*Mathew. 5:13 – 16*) “*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.* ¹⁴*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.* ¹⁵*Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.* ¹⁶*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Good works can be as simple as giving someone a drink of water: (*Matt. 10:42*) “*And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*” With these words Jesus makes it very clear that giving a

drink of “cold water in the name of a disciple” is something that we must do. We don’t do good works to receive glory for self; rather we do our good works as a disciple and to the glory of God. (*1 Cor. 10:31*) “*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*”

Some might want to ask, “Can a female disciple of Christ also do good works?” I call to your mind a woman from Joppa; she was well known for her good works: (*Acts 9:36*) “*Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.*” From the language of this verse I get the idea that she did more than one good deed; in fact Luke informs us that she was full of good works. Good works are expected of everyone, male and female!

A Disciple Is A Teacher

Throughout the gospels [Matthew, Mark, Luke and John] we find Jesus going about teaching. He spent much time teaching and preparing His twelve apostles for the work that lie ahead of them. He spent a lot of time teaching false teachers, especially the Pharisees. Jesus instructed the apostles to go forth and teach: (*Matt. 28:19 – 20*) “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*” Of course we know that the apostles are all dead and gone; what do you think; since they are no longer available to teach as Jesus instructed do we have the right to stop teaching since this was a command given directly to the apostles? No one believes that that would be the right thing to do, therefore, you and I must take up where others have ended their teaching. We are very fortunate in that we have their teachings recorded for us in the New Testament. They taught what Jesus wanted them to teach through inspiration of the Holy Spirit so we understand that Jesus would have us to continue with the same teaching that they taught.

Where do we start teaching? A home is a good place to start, then we go on to our friends, relatives and neighbors. Can we stop there? Remember what Jesus said, He said, “Go and teach all nations”. Today we have all sorts of tools to carry out “The great commission”. One tool that should not be overlooked is the internet. I know from experience that thousands can be reached every month through a not too costly web site. However, nothing can ever replace the old fashioned method of mouth to ear.

God has not given everyone the talent of teaching, but it has truefully been stated that “the best sermon that some will ever hear is the life that you live.” I believe that Jesus understands that not everyone is able to go and “teach all nations” [Matthew 28:19, 20]; however, we can support those who are willing and able to go with our prayers and our money. There is work for every disciple of Christ to do.

How Do I Become a Disciple?

As I have already stated to be a disciple you must be a believer that Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God. There is only one way this can be accomplished; you must hear! Hear what? You must hear the gospel because therein lies God’s power unto salvation: (*Rom. 1:16*) “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*” Of course we can read about God’s wonderful power for ourselves, but it is much easier if we study with someone. It is as the Ethiopian eunuch once stated when asked if he understood what he was reading: (*Acts 8:31*) “*And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.*”

Once you understand and believe what you have read or studied and you are fully persuaded that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Son of God what is the next step. Jesus, himself said that we must repent: (*Luke 13:3*) “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” So important is repentance that in the very same conversation Jesus repeated the same exact words (*Luke 13:5*). “Repentance is a change of mind or a conversion from sin to God” [Webster]. To put it in simple words repentance is to turn away from; or to turn around. This repentance is a big decision that we must make; as you must turn away from past sins and even turn away from many of your friends; so as you can plainly see repentance is something that requires a lot of thought and dedication.

If as a believer you have decided to repent what comes next? You will need to let people know what you believe about Jesus: (*Rom. 10:9 – 10*) “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” Please notice that this belief comes from the heart and you tell people with

the mouth that you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that you know in your heart that God raised Him from the grave.

Contrary to what some teach there is one more step that we must take before we become a disciple or a Christian; you must be baptized: (*1 Pet. 3:21*) “*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:*” I know of no clearer way to state that baptism is essential to salvation than Peter has already stated it. Jesus made this statement: (*Mark 16:16*) “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” I would only ask this, “Who should you believe?” As for me I choose to believe Jesus and Peter and I do not trust anyone who teaches or preaches anything different.

Conclusion

Living the life as a disciple of Christ is certainly the best life that can ever be lived; however, it is not always easy. You see once you become a Christian it is then that you become an enemy of Satan; it is then that he will do everything he can to get you to go back to a life of sin. We can truthfully say that Satan is a sore loser; he wants you back on his side.

Jesus once warned that the pathway of a Christian is a narrow and hard way: (*Matt. 7:13 – 14*) “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*” He also warned that persecution was sure to come (*Matt. 5:10 – 11*) “*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*” Paul warned that those who desire to live a godly life will suffer persecution: (*2 Tim. 3:12*) “*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*”

Although there may be some rough times for the Christian there is a great reward waiting: (*Matt. 5:12*) “*Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*” But remember this, you must be faithful until death: (*Rev. 2:10*) “*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into*

prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

If you are ready to be committed to being a disciple of Jesus and to live the Christian life won't you please contact a preacher, teacher or member of the church of Christ and study with them and learn more about what is required of you?

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September, 2008**

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