

DISCIPLE MAKING

A PODCAST WITH DR. JOHN TOLSON

Episode 13: Characteristics of a Disciple: Part 2

There is a lot of misunderstanding about what “go and make disciples” means. Lots of folks think it means to go and make converts. Certainly that is part of it, but as we carefully study the word as it is used in the New Testament, three primary characteristics of a disciple become evident. A disciple is a learner. Secondly, a disciple is a follower. The Scripture says in Mark 2:14 “As He walked along He saw Levi son of Alpheus sitting at a tax collector’s booth. ‘Follow me,’ Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.”

The implications of following are demanding. Would you call yourself a follower of Jesus? The scripture says in Mark 3:14 “He appointed twelve designating them as apostles that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach.” So Jesus calls His disciples to follow Him, to be with Him, and as they are with Him they will learn what it means to follow Him. Paul said in scripture “Follow me as I follow Christ.” Paul was saying “I’m not a perfect person but I’m a progressing person, so follow me. I want to be a model for you for what it means to follow Christ.” That’s what we are all to be. We are to be models, imperfect but progressing models of people who are committed to following Jesus. A professor once said that the greatest means of communication is modeling. So what are you modeling and what are other people seeing as you follow Jesus and model out what it means to be one of His? Ask yourself this: Am I limiting the disciples I make by my limitations? Again, we are not going to be perfect in this life but we ought to be progressing.

1 Timothy 4:12, 15 says “don’t let anyone look down on you because you’re young, but set an example for the believers in speech and life and love and purity. Be diligent in these matters and give yourself wholly to them so that everyone may see your progress.” Paul is pointing out that diligence and progress is the goal here, not perfection.

Nothing Jesus did ever contradicted what He said. The focus here is understanding that as you follow Jesus, people are going to follow you. They will either get a good model or a defective model. Are you following Jesus? Are you focusing on Jesus? Are you

sticking with Jesus? Are you doing what Jesus says? To be a follower of Jesus means to be willing to be obedient to His Truth and obedient to Him.

So, are you learning? Are you allowing the truth of scripture to change you and transform you? And are you following him? Are you a follower of Jesus Christ? Think about that.

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