

The Heart of a Disciple of Christ

What does it mean to have a relationship with Jesus Christ – and what is the Heart expected of such a disciple?

We see from Scripture that we are to have such – that Scripture shows clearly a relationship with Jesus Christ is intended.

We will see as we go thru this seminar today that there is a relationship of Disciple and Teacher mentioned in scripture.

But what does that mean? What does it look like?

Think about how you would answer these questions.

It's usually not too difficult for most of us to understand the concept of a relationship with God the Father. Each day, hopefully - we get on our knees and come boldly before His throne of grace. We have direct access to God the Father.

I think it's easier to understand that relationship with the Father conceptually – because of our physical families that God has created. But we can **by type** - through the family – understand this Father/child relationship.

We understand that when we come before God - He is our Father and we are His children.

So again in a very basic way – we understand that relationship and what it means **in type** through our physical family. God has the title in this spiritual relationship of **Father**.

But when we consider titles pertaining to Jesus Christ - such as Lord, Master, High Priest, Advocate, King, Savior, Messiah – and there are many others.

When we consider those titles and positions that He holds – maybe the concept of what it means to have a relationship with Him becomes a little bit fuzzy.

Again – parent-child – that's pretty direct for us – but, High Priest, Advocate – those things tend to get blurred in our mind. And yet – (and we won't do this today) – but if you studied each of those titles and those positions that JC holds – there is indeed relationship between us and Him **in those**.

But have you really considered what it means to have *a relationship with Jesus Christ as HIS Disciple* – and what that might look like for you to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

We're going to explore **that avenue** today.

Now - Scripture tells us that if we love Jesus Christ – not just **know Him** – or **know about Him** – or know who He was in terms of being our Savior, – **But if we love Jesus Christ – that we will be loved by the Father.**

So that's expressing a very deep and personal and intimate relationship – to love somebody – that is a relationship.

The 12 disciples had a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Q: What did that relationship look like?

For over three years of Jesus's ministry – from the point He said. **“follow Me”** – they walked with Him, they talked with Him, they ate with Him, they slept with Him, they endured hardship with Him – and they learned by His teachings and by His example. They had a relationship with Him. A very intimate and personal one.

In our calling from God the Father, you and I are called to be **disciples** of Jesus Christ.

When we accept Him as our Lord our Master – and our Teacher –we acknowledge our position as His **disciples**.

Let's begin by looking at the concept of Discipleship.

Question - What does the term **disciple** mean? –

(A learner. A student – a pupil of a teacher or philosopher. Someone who learns from another).

What we understand in the biblical meaning of the term of disciple or learner – is that it is actually being more than a student or pupil– a student can show up in a classroom setting – listen to the teacher – take it or leave it – and get up and be on their way.

In terms of a disciple – a learner is not someone who not only learns from the teacher – but they seek to emulate – to follow - the teacher. They seek to be - just like the teacher. And so we see this goes **way beyond** head knowledge. This goes to **acting upon** what is being learned. Our conduct – our actions – become just as the Teacher.

The **Vines New Testament word search** defines the Greek word that is translated **“discipleship”** as literally – **a learner**. It says *it denotes one who follows ones teaching – a disciple was not only a pupil – but an **adherent**.*

So you **adhere** to the teachings and to the examples and **follow** those things. It says, *“hence they are spoken of as **imitators** of their teacher”.*

Act 5:34 Then one in the council stood up, **a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people**, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.

Act 22:3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, **but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel**, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Taught by Gamaliel—How?

When the apostle Paul told the crowd in Jerusalem that he was 'educated at the feet of Gamaliel,' what did he mean? What was involved in being a disciple of a teacher like Gamaliel? Regarding such training, Professor Dov Zlotnick of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America writes: "The accuracy of the oral law, hence its reliability, depends almost entirely on the master-disciple relationship: the care taken by the master in teaching the law and the intentness of the disciple in learning it. . . . Disciples were, therefore, urged to sit at the feet of the scholars . . . 'and drink their words with thirst.'"—Avot 1:4, the Mishnah.

In his book *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Emil Schürer sheds light on the methods of first-century rabbinic teachers. He writes: "The more famous Rabbis often assembled about them in great numbers, youths desirous of instruction, for the purpose of making them thoroughly acquainted with the much ramified and copious 'oral law.' . . . The instruction consisted of an indefatigable continuous exercise of the memory. . . . The teacher brought before his pupils several legal questions for their decision and let them answer them or answered them himself. The pupils were also allowed to propose questions to the teacher." In the view of the rabbis, the stakes for the pupils were much higher than merely receiving a passing grade. Those studying under such teachers were warned: "Whoever forgets a single thing from what he has learned—Scripture reckons it to him as if he has become liable for his life." (Avot 3:8) Such was the sort of training that Paul, then known by his Hebrew name, Saul of Tarsus, received from Gamaliel.

But he spoke to them about a Teacher far superior to Gamaliel—Jesus, the Messiah. It was now as a disciple of Jesus, not of Gamaliel, that Paul addressed the crowd.—[Acts 22:4-21](#).

Although not among the original disciples, the apostle Paul well understood this relationship. He had trained under the famous rabbi Gamaliel until he was called to follow a far greater Rabbi who personally trained him. Paul knew we are to become like our perfect Rabbi in every way.

And in this teacher/learner relationship – Jesus Christ literally **tells us** and **shows us** the way to go. The way to live.

And in this relationship – our response to Him - is to **adhere** to His example.

Let's go to the book of **Luke 6:40**. We're going to run through a number of Scriptures in the Gospels today – many passages where Jesus Christ Himself expresses His thoughts on this.

*Luk 6:40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will **be like his teacher**.*

And so it's not like if you're a disciple now – you're going to excel your teacher and be above your teacher – and now He's going to learn from you. No – but in this relationship – the disciple learns from the teacher - for the purpose of becoming just like the teacher.

Beyond head knowledge. Again this is walking as He walked. As disciples of Jesus Christ – we don't just simply study the word of God for head knowledge - and the teachings concerning him – rather we are to be learning to be just like Him. To **act** just like Him. To **speak** just like Him – and to **live our lives** each day – just like Him.

A true disciple of Jesus Christ is completely devoted to God. Just as Christ was. And they followed the example that Jesus set.

If you study the gospel accounts – there's a phrase that you notice – it's repeated over and over again – that phrase is – **“follow me”**. Follow me. It was spoken by Jesus Christ.

When he came into Galilee and saw a couple of fishermen on the shore mending their nets – and He calls to them – “you follow me”.

It was as he was going about his way – and then later he comes across Matthew – a tax collector – and he says, “follow me”.

It's no coincidence that in the Gospels we repeatedly see Jesus telling someone, “Follow Me.” **It was an invitation, but also a command:** *“Follow Me and be My disciple.”*

To be a disciple meant to literally follow the Master wherever He went, to walk as He walked, to live as He lived, so that the disciple might become just like his Master in every way.

Christ implored His disciples – those who would hear His voice and listen – to **follow Him**.

Again it is an example that we see with the 12 disciples– that during His ministry – they accompanied Him – they traveled with Him – they ate with Him – they talked with Him – they had close interactions with Him – they listened to what He taught - **and they learned**.

Q: What are some of the things they learned as Disciples?

- *Pray*
- *Compassion*
- *Care for others*
- *How to handle God's word*
- *How to understand it*
- *How to live it*
- *How to teach it*
- *How to apply it*

During that relationship the disciples learned how to pray. They asked him, "Lord teach us to pray". He said okay – this is the manner in which you are to pray. And He taught them to pray.

As disciples with Him they learned how to handle God's word. How to understand it. How to live it. How to teach it and apply it. Because Christ modeled those things by His example.

So what we learn from the Scripture – and I would say in this case – specifically the four gospel accounts – when we read about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ – **He now becomes our teacher today as well**.

And we become His disciple. He becomes the One **we** seek to model.

Now - all thru the Scripture we have the words of God – we have the Commandments – we have it revealed – here is a way of life you must live – but one of the reasons Christ came was **to demonstrate** what this way of life looks like. He came to model **how** to live.

Because up to that point – no one had done it perfectly. In fact, all of mankind had fallen short. And He came as **the model** that demonstrated what it is that God was conveying to His people thru the scriptures. He came to show God's people how to live.

Let's notice something not widely known. That our relationship JC affect our relationship with God the Father.

Notice **John 16:27**. These are the words of Jesus Christ...

*Joh 16:27 for the Father Himself loves you, (Notice Why) **because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.***

Our relationship with the Father is dependent on our relationship and love towards our teacher JC as well. There's no way around it. The two go hand-in-hand. You cannot bypass the one and seek the other.

That will not be accepted. **John 14:19**

***Joh 14:19** "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.*

Joh 14:20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

*Joh 14:21 He who **has My commandments** and **keeps them**, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

So a couple of things about the heart of a Disciple that we notice here in verse 21– 1) a disciple of Jesus Christ not only **learns** the Commandments – but will **keep** them. A disciple of Jesus Christ will keep His Commandments. Now - we have Commandments from God throughout scripture - from beginning to end.

And so – when we obey His Commandments – as He brought them – it is a sign that we love Him and indeed we are His disciples. We demonstrate that by obeying His commandments.

Verse 21 tells us – if we love Jesus Christ – then we will be loved by the Father as well. Again it's in this **reconciled** relationship – which comes through Christ's sacrifice.

Sounds like a relationship. Loving Jesus Christ – responding to His example – and the Commandments which He brought.

Notice Luke 14:25

People were beginning to come to Christ. People were beginning to learn from Him – and then He begins to share something much deeper. We begin to get to the heart of the matter of being a Disciple of JC.

Luk 14:25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them,
Luk 14:26 *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."*

Q: What's He talking about in verse 26?

As you may have heard in the past – “hate” is a comparative word – and it means to love less by comparison. He's not literally saying, “hate your parents” – but He's saying there can be nothing in this life that you love more than Me.

Q: What does that mean to you in this room today?

The point in this scripture that Christ is saying is – “if you want to be my disciple – if you want to walk with me – and have this relationship with Me – you must love Me more than these other physical relationships”.

You can't be a disciple of the JC apart from loving Him. Apart from a loving relations with JC and God the Father that is above all others.

Notice Luk 14:27 *And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

Jesus says you cannot be my disciple unless you bear your cross.

Q: What is Jesus Christ getting at here? What does it mean to bear your cross?

The cross was a symbol of crucifixion and death. And I'm not going to talk about the exact shape of the symbol. The Romans crucified people on a number of different crucifixes.

It could've been a Capital T – it could've been a small T – it could have been an “X” – it could've been a stake. The Romans built whole scaffolding's at major intersections and crucified multiple people so those who would walk by and see would fear.

So the point isn't the shape of the cross – but the point is that the cross was an instrument of crucifixion and death. That's what it points to.

In that day and time when you saw someone dragging that heavy cross beam through the streets – you knew they were marked for death. You knew they were to be crucified shortly.

In this calling Christ said, if you're going to be His disciple – you take up your cross and follow Him. In this calling - this is a one-way trip.

If you saw someone carrying the cross – they didn't have an option to put it down. Someone who was under Roman guard – dragging that beam through the street – heading to their death – they didn't get to say – ***“I think I’ll take a break – kind of tired – can’t I do this tomorrow”?***

No – the point was – They carried that beam until they were crucified on it – and they died.

The point Jesus Christ is making – is if we’re going to be a disciple of His – we’re going to have to bear our cross to the end. We’re going to have to **carry** – tirelessly – the consequences of living this way of life – in a world that is going completely in the opposite direction.

And you’re going to be dedicated to it to the end – if you are my disciple.

You and I as disciples – don't get to put down that cross – that beam. We don't get to say – *“this is getting kind of heavy – this isn't exactly what I signed up for – this isn't exactly what I want to do today – I'd rather go do something fun”*.

So the point is – we don't get to lay it down – we will carry it until we either live out this physical life – or we die on that stake. One way or the other. Because that is what Jesus Christ did. And that is the example He set.

*Luk 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and **count the cost**, whether he has enough to finish it—*

Luk 14:29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,

Luk 14:30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

There is often a price for being a disciple. And when I counsel someone for baptism – I tell them to consider very carefully the cost that they may have to pay. You count the cost.

I'd like to see each person baptized – but the point is - that it is a personal commitment that you have to make. To count the cost and come to the point where you say – *“Yes I am willing to carry this load – to be a disciple – no matter what the cost”* – in a world that is going in the opposite direction.

And all through that Jesus Christ says – *“You follow me”*. *“If you want to be My disciple – you follow me”*.

I'll just refer to **Matthew 16:25** - I'll just quote it for you... Jesus said...

Mat 16:25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

The apostle Peter came to understand that point very clearly. Remember Peter – the disciple who denied Jesus three times prior to his crucifixion?

He came to understand that his commitment as a disciple of Jesus Christ – would come at a very high cost.

Let's notice that in **John 21:17** (repeat)

Peter was going to find out – you know - there is a price to this relationship.

Joh 21:17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

Sounds an awful lot like a relationship.

Joh 21:18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old (Now that you're my disciple), you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

Joh 21:19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Christ revealed to Peter –You are going **to die** for your service to this way of life. To be a disciple of Mine – to represent our Father and the Kingdom of God – and to preach the gospel – is going to cost you your life.

Nevertheless – **you follow Me.**

Sometimes I think how nice it is – that we don't actually know the end result of what lies ahead for us in our circumstance. Peter was told ahead of time.

What we do need to know is God has called us into His family to pursue His kingdom. Christ says, “follow Me” – we do so one day at a time – one step at a time. Day by day.

Again – Peter had to pay a high cost. Tradition states – this is not in the Scripture – but is believed by some historical sources - that he was crucified upside down.

Crucified upside down for his dedication and service to the gospel of God and Christ.

We know that James – the half-brother of Christ lost his life. The apostle Paul was beheaded - for his witness to the gospel. Others were martyred.

Christ said – this will come at a price – if you want to be my disciple – it will come at a price. Here is the price – here is the cost – you bear that cross to the end – and you follow Me. Follow Me.

He's called you and I to the same relationship today. Jesus Christ is the Master – He is the Teacher – and we are the student. We seek to emulate Him and learn from His example. And in this relationship - **we follow Him.**

Notice John 8:31

Joh 8:31 *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you **abide in My word**, you are My disciples indeed.*

Joh 8:32 *And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Q; What does that mean?

To “abide” – literally means **to live**. So what Christ is telling us is that His words are not just to be head knowledge again – they are to be **lived**. They are to be **acted upon**. They are **demonstrative**.

And He set the example for us as to how these things are to be lived. A disciple of Jesus Christ will be abiding in His word. Living according to His example.

Notice 1 John 2:3

1Jn 2:3 *Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

Has somebody ever asked you – do you know the Lord? It's kind of a common phrase that goes around isn't it? Do you know the Lord?

What does that mean really? What does that look like?

1Jn 2:3 *Now by this we know that we know Him, if **we keep** (acting on) His commandments.*

1Jn 2:4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

*1Jn 2:5 But whoever **keeps His word** , truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.*

*1Jn 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also **to walk just as He walked**.*

Do we say that we know Jesus Christ? Do we say that we are a disciple of His? That we are a follower – and He is our Teacher? If so, we must be found keeping or acting upon His Commandments. Keeping His word – and walking as He walked.

Outside of that focus – there is no room for a relationship with either God the Father or Jesus Christ. We must keep these Commandments – not just know them – but live them.

I'll refer you to Matthew 5:19 Christ said – *Whoever therefore breaks the least of these Commandments – and teaches men so – shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.*

*But whoever **does them and teaches them** – to be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Christ did them and taught them. And that's our example. That's our model. He exemplified them and demonstrated total obedience to God.

That was His example – that was His commitment – that was the purpose of why He came – and that was the clear example that He set for us to follow.

Notice 2 Timothy 2:19

2Ti 2:19 *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "**The Lord knows those who are His,**"*

To me – that is a comforting phrase. Because times come along when I question or wonder about this person or that person – where are they – what is God doing –

"The Lord knows those who are His," and that is in his hands – and I am grateful.

2Ti 2:19 *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "**The Lord knows those who are His,**" and, "**Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**"*

Here we see another proof of true discipleship. That is if you declare the name of Jesus Christ as your Teacher – as your Master that you're looking to – and His example – then departing from sin is going to be a part of your nature and character.

Christ did not sin. He came in the flesh and lived this way of life perfectly - even though He was tempted in all points as we are – yet He was without sin.

And this is what qualified Him to be our Savior.

Sin is contrary to the nature of God and Christ – and it is the same godly nature that you and I must be developing through these words - by living according to the example that has been set by our Teacher.

The point of all these Scriptures – is to point out the kind of relationship that we're to be maintaining with Jesus Christ. Again we're to be looking to Him as our example. As our Teacher – As the one that we seek to imitate and emulate.

We understand in the relationship with God the Father – that we study His word – and God speaks to us through His word – and we in turn get down on our knees and pray to the Father and it is a conversation. And when we're seeking understanding by His spirit – He reveals again to us through his Words.

So we have this relationship. With Jesus Christ we have a relationship in these words as well – because as we study His life – and I would say specifically in the gospel accounts – we see how He lived the words that He spoke. We learn from Him through that study.

And on the flipside of that relationship - we respond to live and to walk – just as He did. Seeking after the **stature** of the **fullness** of Jesus Christ.

As we go through the Scriptures over the years, we learn a lot of things. There is a balance between the relationship with God the Father and the relationship with JC. Some have thought it Protestant to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. But it is biblical – and we must understand it in balance.

With Christ as our Teacher as we study the Scripture – we learn at His feet – and we learn from His example.

Throughout the Scriptures we see real-life examples of the forgiveness that He extended. His willingness to forgive – those who had wronged him. We see real-life examples of the compassion and mercy that He showed.

The fact that He was willing to sit down and eat with publicans and sinners and tax collectors – and interact with harlots – (not that it was fine to live that way of life unrepentant) – but He sought to reach them with the word of God - that they may live a better life.

Thru the example of Jesus Christ we see what it means to continue in obedience and submission to the Father's will.

He demonstrated that - even under duress. He prayed to God and said – “*if there's any way that this cup can pass from me – nevertheless not my will but yours be done*”.

We learn from his example – submission to the will of the Father. All of that – is for our edification.

In turn – we respond – we act – by imitating our Teacher. By living as He lived – walking according to that standard. It is a relationship – a working relationship that is indeed very real.

Another example from Scripture - shows us that a disciple of Christ is someone who **bears fruit** in living this way of life. We talked about this in a message last time about bearing the fruit of the spirit.

Notice John 15:4

***Joh 15:4** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

Joh 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Again – it sounds very much like a relationship.

Joh 15:6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

So – how are you going to get to the Father apart from abiding in Jesus Christ? If you do not abide in Christ – you are cut off. Withered – thrown into the fire – and consumed.

It is the heart of a relationship that works hand-in-hand together.

Joh 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

*Joh 15:8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; **so you will be My disciples.***

Again – clearly this way of life – is not just a sit around and do nothing way of life. Bearing much fruit is what God the Father has called us to do. What He has purposed us to do. What He has willed us to do – and it is our Teacher's example - which we are to emulate.

In our lives – when we bear much fruit – and we do these things and live as Christ lived – we not only fulfill our discipleship – **we glorify God the Father** who has drawn us to Christ in the first place. The glory goes to the Father.

Additionally – true discipleship is shown through the fact that we must be willing to suffer. Even for doing good – because that's the example that was set.

1 Peter 2:18 (repeat)

1Pe 2:18 *Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.*

1Pe 2:19 *For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*

1Pe 2:20 *For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.*

1Pe 2:21 *For to this you were called, because **Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:***

1Pe 2:22 *"WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH";*

1Pe 2:23 *who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

There is much that we can learn through the example of Jesus Christ. Have you ever suffered wrongfully for doing good? Suffered for doing the right thing?

What should our response be? Is it to get angry – because we've suffered for doing the right thing – or is it the example of Jesus Christ? That when you suffer for doing good – God the Father notices. This is commendable in His sight. Verse 23 ...

1Pe 2:23 *who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

1Pe 2:24 *who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.*

1Pe 2:25 *For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

I hope we're getting the picture clearly brethren. Christ set the example for us. That we might learn from Him – and live by these words.

Possible ending

Notice John 13:33 The example of discipleship – is love. Christ set the example here – just as in everything else.

Joh 13:33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you.

Joh 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Again – Christ says, I have set the example – now you do it. You love each other – just as I have loved you. Which in part meant - I was willing to suffer wrong in My love for you. That is Christ's example.

Joh 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

So He's saying by the outward example - to those on the outside looking in – the evidence of our discipleship – and this relationship with Jesus Christ and with His Father – **would be the fact that we love one another.**

In fact one of those fruit of the spirit is love. That is the fruit that is displayed.

We've not always done so well with that in the Church of God. If we're to be honest with ourselves. We've not always done so well with that. Brethren we must. We must love one another as Jesus Christ loved us – even on occasion being willing to suffer wrong for righteousness sake.

And to carry on in love. That is the outward example of a disciple of JC of what is living in our lives. That is His example that we model. Love one another as He loved us.

The good news – because earlier I expressed some of the challenges and the costs of being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The good news is that it's not all hurt – it's not all difficulty – it's not just having a price to pay – there are blessings as well for being a disciple of Jesus Christ - both in this age – and in the age to come.

Notice Matt 19:23 What we see is the reward – when He returns in His father's kingdom –will be far beyond anything we can imagine. It is not worthy to be compared to the price that you and I pay today.

Matthew 19:23 speaks to the reward of being a disciple of JC.

Mat 19:23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 19:24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Mat 19:25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

Mat 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

*Mat 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have **left all** and **followed You**. (Family, father, mother, land) (we have left all and followed You.) Therefore what shall we have?"*

*Mat 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have **followed Me** will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*

You might say – well that's great for the 12 disciples – but what about everyone else?

*Mat 19:29 And **everyone** who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.*

The principal – is that anything you or I have to give up in this life – in order to be a disciple of Jesus Christ – remember He said – “*you follow me*”.

Anything we've had to give up – anything we've had to pass up – will not be worthy to be compared to the glory that God has for us.

Whatever it is – that you think you had to give up in this life – the principle is – the reward far outweighs whatever the price or cost may be.

Discipleship is a high calling brethren. It's a calling that extends from God the Father. A calling that draws us into a special relationship with His son Jesus Christ. So that we might come to know Him and learn from Him.

Christ said in Matthew 11:29 learn from me - my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Let's conclude in **Matthew 28**

Discipleship is not to be a solo event. It's actually something we are called to pass on – as God gives us opportunity.

Matthew 28:16 – this is following the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mat 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them.

*Mat 28:17 When they saw Him, they **worshipped Him**; but some doubted.*

Worship is a proper response in a proper relationship between Jesus Christ and His disciples. That His disciples worship Him.

We worship no man – we worship no Angel – but certainly God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ are worthy of worship and praise – indeed the Angels in heaven worship them as well.

Again – this sounds like a relationship. Verse 18 ...

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

*Mat 28:20 **teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**" Amen.*

Discipleship is not to be a closed-ended opportunity that simply stops with us. The church has been commissioned by the One who has been given all authority – the Father has given Christ all authority – and Christ said – I have the authority – now you go and make disciples of all nations.

Help those whom God has called to a greater understanding of this way of life. And respond to the Teacher – and live accordingly.

That is the responsibility the Church of God has been called to carry on as long as God gives us the ability to do so.

Now we can look at Scripture – we can look at prophecy – we can see at the end of the age - the power of the holy people will be shattered – there will come a time when we will not be able to do so – in terms of preaching the gospel.

But let it be because it's God's will – and timing – not because we've fractured to the point we can no longer carry on the work.

Love as Christ loved – forgive as He forgave – show mercy as He was merciful. Go and make disciples as He has instructed.

Brethren – in our calling before God – let us not ever stop responding to those two words – again we read them over and over again in scripture – **follow me.**

In doing so – you and I will have opportunity to partake in a very special relationship with our Teacher – with the One whom we imitate – Jesus Christ.

And in doing so – we will be reconciled in a wonderful family relationship with God as our Father – and Jesus as our older brother – Savior and coming King.