

Discipleship

Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. --Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Definitions:

Etymology:

Middle English, from Old English *discipul* & Anglo-French *disciple*, from Late Latin and Latin; Late Latin *discipulus* follower of Jesus Christ in his lifetime, from Latin, pupil

Date: before 12th century

1: one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another: as **a**: one of the twelve in the inner circle of Christ's followers according to the Gospel accounts **b**: a convinced adherent of a school or individual

Discipleship is the process by which a Christian with a life worth emulating commits himself/herself to a few individuals who have been won to Christ, the purpose being to aid and guide their spiritual growth to maturity and equip them to reproduce themselves in a third spiritual generation. - Allen Hadidian

Biblical Definition:

OT - No actual word "discipleship"

Deuteronomy 6.4-9 – *Shema* – teach these things to your children, when you sit, walk, lie down, when you rise, bind them on your hand and on your forehead (phylacteries), & on the doorposts, gates of your home.

Jewish life was holistic. There was no separation between spiritual and physical. Everything was about learning and living the commands of God. Parents taught their children. Teachers of the law taught younger children. It was a lifestyle of learning.

NT -

Matthew 5.1; Matthew 8.23; Jn. 1.35-37

Mathetes - μαθητες – learner, scholar, pupil; one who accepts the teachings of another in both belief and in life; from manthano - μαυθαυω – one who is appraised, increased in knowledge; one who hears and learns by use and practice

Basic Discipleship

Matthew 4.19-20

And He said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Creation Account of Discipleship

Genesis 1.26-28

Genesis 2.7-8

Psalm 139.13-15

Genesis 3:8-10

Remix: OT understanding on Matthew 4.19-20

"said" – called out to them, named them

Naming things is very significant to the Hebrews from their proper names to speaking things into existence, relational/personal invitation

“follow” – δευτε οπισω - deute opiso - come hither, come now - from back, from behind

Urgency, imperative invitation, extension to retrieve them from the background into the foreground, acknowledgment of potential, authority established

“me” – Jesus – the center and core of this passage, the point of discipleship, the apex of what we want.

“will make” - ποιησω - poieso – make, form, construct, this word has a process perspective attached to it, formative mentality

“left” – released, neglected, put aside, speaks of a cost of discipleship

“followed” – akoloutheo – to follow one who precedes, join to him as an attendant, to join as a disciple; from two words a+keluethos meaning, the beginning and a road, path or way (journey implied).

The very concept of following meant to submit to another.

Core Concepts of Discipleship

Personal invitation

Identity/identification

Authority

Submission/obedience

Christ centered

Not about you, it's about him.

Formation/Change

Imitation, not impersonation.

Cost

Boundaries

Lifelong commitment

Covenant

What happens?:

Close relationships (Vulnerability)

Submission to each other (Reciprocity)

Alignment to the Way of Jesus (Biblical Worldview & Literacy)

Willful decisions & accountability (Integrity)

Limits are instated (Priority)

Never stop (Longevity)

How do I disciple?:

Follow Christ's example:

Call out someone that you see potential in

Commit to loving that person regardless of their differences

Create a time to hash life out - maybe while participating in a hobby, dinner, coffee, etc.

Communicate “like whoa.”

Covenant with one another about your life goals, aspirations, spiritual growth.

Cultivate the image of God in one another. See what God sees, affirm to good, address the negative, seek God.

A few pointers:

There is no magic bullet. One person will not be able to be everything to you.
Everyone has something to offer, whether educated or new to the faith, young or old, man or woman, etc.
Be patient. It takes time.
Invite them to be your family member.
Pray for each other.
Write everything down.
Everyone will not be on the same level. i.e. Inner circle of Jesus.
Be you. Allow them to be them.

Key: "Jesus principle" –
reverse what you think you should do.
Love them before they love you. Serve, be vulnerable, ask questions, seek them, express care. Always be the initiator.
You take the burden, they will follow your example.

Examples:

- washed his disciples' feet
- asked their opinions
- empowered them to be sent
- had them pray for him
- loved them unto death
- died to further their lives

The final word"

Matthew 28.18-20

Mark 12.29-31

Jn. 21.19-22

Other great passages:

Mt. 16.24

Lk. 6.40

Mt. 10.35-45

Mk. 1.17

1 Cor. 11.1

Rom. 12.2

2 Cor. 3.18

Gal. 4.19