

The 'Discipleship Check List' Transcript

A GV247.TV Programme presented by Stewart Menelaws

DCL No1: Discipleship – An Introduction:

This series is for any Christian believer who is either at the very beginning of their journey with Jesus Christ or has been a believer for some years but lacks a sound understanding of the Christian faith. It should also prove to be a helpful aid which interlinks with all our resources for Shepherds, Overseers and Believers reaching out to others.

Before we go onto what we call the discipleship check list - we need to ask 2 questions:

1. What exactly is a disciple of Christ?
2. Why do we need to be a disciple of Christ? – *'I believe there is a God – is that not sufficient?'*

Those 2 questions need to be understood from the outset and we will address them now. Next week we begin 'The Discipleship Checklist' proper - a health and safety check for followers of Christ.

What is a disciple and is it important to be one?

Laying a foundation...

The word disciple also means student. For those of you who have undergone an apprenticeship, be it an engineer, a carpenter, a doctor, a lawyer, you'll understand that it takes a number of intense years to learn the trade or profession, which in turn takes a number of years of application within a real live work environment before you are recognised as a Doctor or Engineer etc.

So it is with the follower (*disciple*) of Jesus Christ. The 12 disciples were with Jesus Christ for over 3 years and through a process of learning, being sent out to apply what they had learned, and finally being empowered by the baptism of The Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4), this maturity of the faith leads on to being equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16--17) and to go forth and teach others.

In the gospel of Matthew 28:19-20 The Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples to go forth and make disciples teaching them to obey everything He has commanded.

Spectator or Disciple?

Follower of Jesus Christ...

An individual who attends a place of worship every week does not mean that they are actually a disciple of Christ. In the letter of James (James 2:19) he warns us that "*demons believe there is a God*" and their reaction is that they tremble! So, belief that there is a God is meaningless unless accompanied by action and the requirement is that we become disciples who are trained through sound doctrine (Titus 2:1).

The Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew 7:24-27 illustrates the need to build our faith and understanding (*the house*) on a solid foundation (*Rock*) which is Himself and His Word. By doing this, in due course, we look forward to hearing the words:

'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' (Matt 25:23)

Conversely, The Lord Jesus Christ warns the careless person that if they build on a weak foundation which is no foundation at all (*the sand*) the house will collapse and fearful judgement awaits.

What is of special note with this passage beginning at chapter 7 verse 21 is that there are individuals who will claim to have done great works in The Lord's name, yet The Lord will say to them on the day of judgement – "*depart from me I never knew you*". A sobering remark from The Lord Himself and surely an encouragement to make sure that we build our faith correctly in line with God's unchangeable Word.

Let us understand from the outset; God is Love (1 John 4:8) and it is His desire that all be saved and come to a knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim 2:4), however, every person is responsible as to whether they choose to walk in the light of God's instruction - or ignore it - and that is why the apostle Paul wrote that we must all work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). In other words we must be sober and take this very seriously.

Before we build the house...

Jesus Christ illustrates that the soil in which the seed of the good news of salvation is planted needs to be good soil (*read the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-23*). The parable illustrates the journey of the obedient believer who hears God's instruction, understands what is required and goes on to bear good fruit.

The lack of disciples...

Jesus Christ says, the harvest is great but the workers are few (Matt 9:37). There has never been a time where information and education has been so readily available 24/7, yet church programmes, empire building, social events, marketing strategies and entertainment with seeker-friendly evangelism designed not to cause offence, has infiltrated the true Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

There has never been a greater need for trained disciples of Jesus Christ than there is today.

The requirement of discipleship...

At the beginning of The Church (Acts 2:42) believers gathered in various locations to devote themselves to biblical instruction from the apostles and to fellowship. You can read that the believers gathered in homes and shared possessions according to each other's needs. There is a real sense of community and love for each other and at the heart of this community is God's Word – His instruction for godly living and service to others.

Discipleship should be the aim of every follower of Jesus Christ (Matt 28:19) and requires relinquishing all (Luke 14:33) and denial of self (Matt 10:38). The disciple of Christ is to become a trained workman who correctly handles the Word of God (2 Tim 2:15) and who shows forth good fruit (Colossians 1:10). You are not your own, you have been purchased at great cost, the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:19-20)

Disciples are accountable...

There is only one mediator between God and man which is Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2:5) where we will all be held accountable before God (Romans 14:12). In regard to corporate accountability - 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of being accountable to one another as we are one body (Eph 5:21) and in regard to reverence for Christ. Those who are young in the faith are required to submit to God-fearing elders in the faith (1 Peter 5:5)

Disciples are responsible...

For those in a leadership role and for those training towards that role (1 Tim 3:1-5) they must meet the requirements listed in scripture. The true disciple of Christ serves, he washes feet, he assumes a lowly position (Matt 20:26) yet steps into a position of spiritual authority when required. The individual who seeks affirmation is an affront to God. The individual who humbles himself and is contrite in spirit and who trembles at God's Word has the eyes of The Lord upon him. (Isaiah 66:2)

A word of warning...

It is extremely rare that The Lord will call an individual to be separated from the Body of Christ but in certain circumstances, believers have no choice in this matter and The Lord is aware of this. The young convert who operates on their own, lacks discernment and is in danger of falling in to self-deception. They are often unable to interact correctly with other believers and never really grasp the meaning of service. (2 Thess 3:6-15)

The Bible is full of scriptures that warns the follower of Christ to guard against spiritual deception which is the most prolific warning throughout the New Testament. The warnings are so great that to ignore them would be spiritual suicide. Q: How do you recognise an imitation? A: Study the original. The disciple of Christ studies The Word of God

A final word...

To illustrate the importance of discipleship and being a representative of Christ, ie. one who becomes an ambassador for The Lord Himself, consider a person who has a life threatening condition. On arriving at the hospital they have 2 choices:

1. Be attended by a first year student who means well and who doesn't want to upset you in anyway, pats you on the back and says, "*don't worry, I'm sure everything will be alright*".
2. Be attended by a specialist, told clearly that you have a serious condition, looks you in the eye and says, "*let us operate and you will survive*".

This is the same situation in regard to the spiritual world. It requires Christian believers to be trained correctly so that they can administer the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who are perishing.

For those who desire to walk upright before The Lord, discipleship is not an option. It is Biblical Christianity.

Next week (DCL No2) we look at:

Do you understand the Gospel of Salvation and its requirements?

The 'Discipleship Check List' series has been produced with the sole aim of encouraging the hearer / reader to study the Holy Bible so that faith in Jesus Christ will be built on Him alone. Every human work is fallible and whilst every effort has been made to represent the truths of God Almighty's Holy Words, this series is but an aid to help encourage study so that the Christian disciple of Jesus Christ will go onto maturity in the most Holy faith.

This is a GV247.TV (Global Vision TV) production. While this work may be copied and disseminated freely, under no circumstances can this work be re-edited, misrepresented or sold for financial gain.

All copies should have the credit: ©Studio Scotland Ltd / Gv247.tv

This series is a copyrighted work 2018 and unauthorised use of this work will be liable to prosecution.