

Authentic Christian Discipleship

Text: Proverbs 20:6 Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

Matthew 24:45-51 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season. 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

Matthew 25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Introduction: Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Thank God for Grace that makes us worthy for heaven, yet, it is also our duty to examine ourselves from day to day so we carefully walk in a way that Pleases Christ. Are we a FAITHFUL DISCIPLE! ARE WE SINCERE IN OUR PURSUIT OF FOLLOWING CHRIST AS A TRUE DISCIPLE?

Have we “done well” as God’s Servants?

- (1) It is a very personal question!
- (2) It is a deep and probing question – deeper than we may realize!
- (3) Have we meet the requirements for the Lord to say, “well done” at the end of our life? **Only God is qualified to answer these questions?**

➤ **Authentic Defn.: NOT FALSE OR COPIED; GENUINE; SUPPORTED BY UNQUESTIONABLE EVIDENCE; WITHOUT PRETENDING TO BE SOMEONE YOU ARE NOT!**

My Greatest Goal in Life is to not just hear Him say, “You have completed your assigned duty on earth” but, “well done thou good and faithful servant.”

Re-Examining Serious Discipleship... by Larry R. Sinclair --

I am convinced that our idea of serious discipleship is considerably flawed. I believe the depth of devotion and commitment which Jesus expects of his disciples is a whole different dimension than our concept of discipleship. You see, we evaluate Christian discipleship by comparing ourselves with others. If we attend church more often than some Christians, if we contribute more generously than most members, if we engage in more ministry activities than many people do... then surely we would be credited with serious discipleship. Right?

The problem with our comparative assessment of Christians discipleship is that many of the people with whom we compare ourselves are not serious at all about their commitment to the Lord. In fact, some of them may not be Christians. Someone has said, "If you ask the wrong question, you will always get the wrong answer." Well, I would suggest this variation on that thought: If you compare yourselves with the wrong standard, you will always get an erroneous assessment.

The proper standard is no less than Christ himself. The seriousness of his commitment is the acceptable criterion. The depth of Jesus' devotion is the example which we should emulate. And the word of God is always the plumb line by which we should measure and evaluate our discipleship.

As long as Christians persist in assessing our commitment to Christ by comparing ourselves to the lost people or backslidden believers or superficial disciples all around us, we will never have an accurate understanding of serious discipleship.

The truth is that Jesus never called anyone to part-time discipleship. Jesus never invited anyone to follow him part of the time or most of the way. He always called people to full-time, all the way, total commitment.

After all, Lordship is inherently exclusive and unreserved in its very nature. The familiar saying is true: If Jesus cannot be lord of all, he will not be lord at all.

It was regarding tentative, half-way, part-time discipleship that Christ gave one of his very last and very sharpest rebukes. *"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.'"* (Rev. 3:15-16)

I. God Requires Faithfulness in ALL His Disciples:

I Corinthians 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

- **Faithfulness** – Defn.: (source- Love Worth Finding) - *a steadfast loyalty that isn't easily swayed. Our faithfulness to God means trusting in Him and loving Him through all circumstances. It means following the commandments even when we'd rather choose a different path.*

Synonyms & Similar Words: loyal, steadfast, devout, dedicated, steady, reliable, dependable, responsible

II. Thoughts on Faithfulness

(1) *God is our Greatest Example of Faithfulness --*

- **Deuteronomy 7:9-10** Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, *the faithful God*, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.
- **I Corinthians 1:9** *God is faithful*, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
- **I Thessalonians 5:24** *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*
- **Psalms 119:90** *Thy faithfulness is unto all generations*: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
- **Revelation 19:11** And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called *Faithful and True*, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

(2) *We have total control over our faithfulness – no excuses – no one else to blame – no one to take the credit away from us when we obey.*

(3) *(As stated before) Faithfulness is not easy -- quitting is much easier -- We will face many seasons that will test our faithfulness! We will encounter many opportunities to quit! Many have quit already!*

(4) *Faithfulness takes MORE than personal willpower and determination. God provide strength for us to Walk in Faithfulness!*

(5) *God will not reward a Quitter – He gives us him many opportunities to repent. If we repent, He will help us start over again, even if we fail many times! But if we do not repent or decide to quit, we forfeit it all!*

Matthew 24:50-51 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(6) *Lack of Faithfulness is a Sign of Lukewarm Love*

Jesus said, "BECAUSE YOU ARE LUKEWARM, I WILL SPUE YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH"!

(7) *Lack of Faithfulness is a sign of a sick or dying Soul! The following symptoms are present:*

- ❖ *Lack of a healthy prayer life*
- ❖ *Lack of mature growth in Christ*
- ❖ *Lack of Commitment - Following at a distance – Peter followed at a distance and denied Christ*

- ❖ *Misplaced priorities – other things occupy a more important role in the heart*
- ❖ *Lack of desire for heaven / lack of proper fear of hell*

III. Closing – Scripture Reminds us – *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. I Corinthians 15:58*

➤ **Common areas of faithfulness God requires in each of His Disciples – regardless of our calling -- CHRIST REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS in all of the following areas of our life:**

1. *We must - Serve God with all of our heart –*
Matthew 22:36-38 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.
2. *We must - Love our Neighbor –*
Matthew 22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
3. *We must be honorable in Marriage – have we been a faithful spouse? If not, we need to repent and get this sin removed and under the Blood of Christ – we don't want this hanging over our heads in judgement*
4. *We must be honorable Home – have we been a faithful provider or home keeper?*
5. *We must be honorable in Business Affairs – are we honest? – are we hard working?*
6. *We must be honorable in Tithing and giving - tithes and offerings*
7. *We must be honorable in Church attendance – Church Attendance is a barometer that measures our True Love for God!*
8. *We must be honorable in Private Bible study and prayer life – Christian Maturity!*
9. *We must be honorable in Our work within the church – Spiritual Gifts, Talents, Duties and Assignments, Prayer Support, etc.*
10. *We must be honorable in Our work without the church – evangelizing, maintaining a Christ-like attitude, helping others*