

Are You Being Discipled? Loving God, part IX

Being discipled plays a big role in God's plans as you'll learn today. In my last post, we discussed [what God wanted us to do](#), consider this part 2 of that message. As a reminder:

John 6: 27 "But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. ..."

But I thought, "Hey, I gave my life to Christ when I was 12, I know I haven't been the "ideal" Christian, but I'm saved, right?, I don't really "have to do", anything right? Isn't the gift of salvation free, not based on works, why bother?"

I always clung to **John 3: 16** "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

But now I am convinced that I never really understood that verse. At face value, in modern day English, it's very simple and I was led to believe that it doesn't require any effort on my part, other than to have an intellectual belief that Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice for my sins. I guess I just didn't get it.

I'm sure I've read this verse before but glossed over it:

Matt. 21 "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.

Your Bible is calling out to you, “Read me, read me!”

What’s interesting is that although I might’ve had that belief for many years, I knew that I knew that I knew, that I should be reading my Bible regularly.

And then there’s church.

Some years I regularly attended church, Some years I did not. Of course, when I regularly went to church I felt closer to God. I felt better about myself and overall it had a positive impact on me and my family.

Although I was attending church, something was missing. When participating in Bible studies, that helped, where we’d actually open the Bible and discuss what God would say, that gave me some Divine inspiration, **but still, something was missing.**

I get it now.

I understand what I was missing, and that is discipleship. What’s amazing to me is I’ve read about the twelve disciples and heard about them, but never thought that the concept applied to me, or I just never considered it I suppose.

Maybe I wasn’t attending the right church, a church that took discipleship seriously. Or maybe I just wasn’t open to it. It doesn’t matter now, I am on the path that God wants me on and it is an incredible journey. He’s using my past to teach me what doesn’t work and I can use that to teach others:

2 Timothy 2: ¹ Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. ² You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

There are two ways to be disciplined.

The way I see it, there are two major ways to be disciplined, and I believe both are absolutely essential for spiritual growth. The first is to be disciplined directly from God. This occurs when reading the Word and praying. I believe King David knew this very well:

Psalms 25: ⁴ Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. ⁵ Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.

My friends, God is in the discipleship business, but that is not enough. We, humans, were meant for relationships, therefore the second way of being disciplined, which is just as important, is meeting with someone else that has a common goal of seeking God:

Proverbs 27: ¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

I take this literally to mean that we're quite dull (ineffective) if we are not learning from and serving our Christian brothers and sisters.

Let God transform you

Here is what I think it really boils down to, and if this makes you uncomfortable, good. A "Christian" that is not disciplined in either of these ways will not be accused of being a follower of Christ. They might be a good person, have great morals, maybe even be a pillar of society. But if they are not allowing themselves to be influenced by God or by other Godly people (disciples) on a regular basis, then how effective will they be and how would they know God's will for their lives? If you are uncomfortable, then read this carefully:

Rom. 12: ¹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

In contrast, I think this next verse applies to many churches today and the North American Church in general. This passage is directed toward the church of Laodicea:

*Revelation 3: ¹⁵ "I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! ¹⁶ But since **you are like lukewarm water**, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth! ¹⁷ You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.*

That being said, do not wait for your church to start a discipleship program if they don't already have one. **Pray that God will lead you to someone that you can learn from.** I like Bible Studies, but it's not nearly the same as one-on-one or very small groups.

I was lukewarm for far too many years.

Today I am determined to stay on His path.

At TheBibleTeam.com we offer a weekly opportunity to learn and grow, and that is our weekly Bible Team call. This is an informal time of discussing the Bible and what everyone's been reading. It's open to the new believer as well as the most seasoned, everyone learns something. For me, it is the fastest

hour of the week.

Are you a disciple?

“Dear Lord, thank you for your patience. Teach me your ways. It is my true desire to learn more about you and I need help with that. Speak to me in your Word and teach me how to pray. Lead me to others that can encourage me and help me grow as well. Please don't give up on me. Thanks in advance for where you are leading me.”