



## DISCIPLESHIP

Disciple: "one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another: one of the twelve in the inner circle of Christ's followers according to the Gospel accounts. --Merriam-Webster Dictionary

*You do not become a Christian by asking Jesus into your heart. You become a Christian when you are born again. Jesus said, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Saying a prayer or making a public commitment or signing a decision card will not save you. Only being born again will do that. The apostle Paul said that when you are "in Christ," the old things pass away.*

*--Richard and Henry Blackaby, Experiencing God, Day-by-Day, January 18 "*

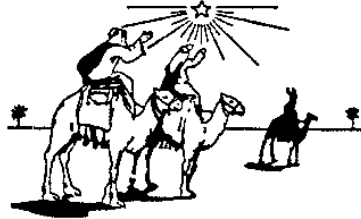


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The Bible contains everything we need to function effectively. In Luke 14:27-33, Jesus speaks to His disciples about discipleship, saying this:

And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'



Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

From this I coined the *Destination Principle: Consider the full implications before accepting any assignment.* Understand the extent of your commitments. You don't need to have solutions; merely appreciate the full ramifications of your decisions. This principle has several aspects.

First and most profound is to *consider everything we do in the context of our discipleship role.* Jesus our Messiah, has called His followers to be His disciples, and to fulfill the Great Commission He gave us in Matthew 28:18-20. This is a full time activity—at home, in the neighborhood, and at work. One key aspect to note here is the requirement to obey everything Jesus taught.

Often we hear, "Wait, this is the twenty-first century and we need to change some of the old stuff." Folks, God's Word is unchanging. Regrettably, the church is becoming more like the *world*. Instead of teaching Christians to *obey*, many churches have become "seeker friendly" and have softened the Word so, the *world* will not find it offensive.

Who is seeking whom? Does it bother you that the *world* is becoming more comfortable in the *church*? Does it offend you that many churches have become politically correct, and in the process, no longer obey God's teachings?

As we move to our destinations, understand we should obey His teachings and not rationalize our position on abortion, marriage, homosexuality, and other areas where the Bible clearly provides God's plan for mankind. We should not take shortcuts that compromise His Word. His way is the only acceptable way, even when it's not politically correct.

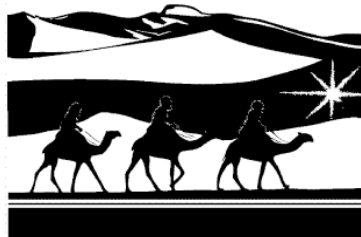
This is not intolerance! On the contrary, it merely recognizes the right of the Christian to follow Jesus' teachings. But, as we tread this path, we must love everyone and



acknowledge his or her right to hold views different from ours. I wish to emphasize this: *every believer in Messiah Jesus must love everyone, even if he disagrees with his or her views and lifestyles.* She must show Messiah's love, grace, and mercy. But, let's not confuse disagreement in love, mercy, and compassion, with intolerance!

When we behave like disciples of Messiah, likely we will not "win friends and influence people," but this is our role. We must do what's right, even when it's difficult and unpopular. The Apostle James tells us, in James 1:2-12:

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the



w i n d .  
That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man; unstable in all he does. The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. But, the one who is rich should take pride in his low position,

because he will pass away like a wild flower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business. Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

The second part of the *Destination Principle* is often overlooked: *Consider the full implications of your decisions and actions before rushing ahead.* Building a tower may seem simple and convenient, but as Jesus reminds us, we must sit down to prepare a budget of time, cost, and other resources, including the cost of seeking help from others.

When asked to do something, apply this principle--consider the full implications of what you will try to accomplish. As well, look at how it fits with the *P-Square's* parameters and priorities (*Managing God's Time, chapter 8*).

Since the primary purpose of our journey here is to fulfill the Great Commission, consider fully the true cost of discipleship. Don't complain when you are persecuted --it's merely one cost. Daily, ask the Lord to help you *consider the full implications* before taking on new assignments at home, work, and church. As well, ask Him to help you *consider the full implications* after taken them on, and before rushing ahead.

Counting the discipleship cost will help us see more clearly God's call, and so, we will be able to join Him in His chosen tasks.

## GIVING IS KEY

Giving time, talents, and money to God's work is a key part of the disciples role. Today, how do you decide to allocate time, talents, and money? There are so many good causes needed time, talents and funding, and we can't fill all. Besides, there are so many who coerce manipulate, feed on our greed nature to give money.

God's work need funding! Pray continually; ask God to lead you to God-fearing ministries, churches, and other groups, and away from the health and wealth, name-it-claim-it, smooth-talking TV evangelist and others with similar motivation.

Ask Him to guide all your spending of time and money, including giving. Remember, you have nothing; all is His.

Don't give on your credit card to increase your debt. If in debt and God convicts you about your financial state, confess, repent, and He will lead you through your challenge--you can count on Him! He loves you and me so much He died for us! Be patient, wait on Him.

Understand that giving on credit cards pours funds outside His kingdom, and giving on credit card while in debt, pours even more funds out of the kingdom, and leads to extra debt. Indeed, if you can't pay your credit card balance in full you shouldn't have one.



For more on giving, especially the *Truth about Tithing* visit: <http://tinyurl.com/2dks8l9>