

The Elements of Discipleship Part 1:

The Heart of a Disciple

☀ What does a fully devoted disciple of Christ look like?

☀ How does Paul's description differ from ours?

"Take a good look, friends, at who you were when you got called into this life. I don't see many of 'the brightest and the best' among you, not many influential, not many from high-society families. Isn't it obvious that God deliberately chose men and women that the culture overlooks and exploits and abuses, chose these 'nobodies' to expose the hollow pretensions of the 'somebodies'? 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (The Message)

The Big Picture of Discipleship

Disciple: A follower of Christ – a Christian.

Discipleship: The process of spiritual transformation where a follower of Jesus Christ becomes more and more like him.

☀ What is God's goal for your life? (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

God's goal is to make you more like Christ and for you to bring glory to Him. (Romans 8:28-29)

☀ Agree or disagree: "God uses believers who have a willing heart. Every believer can be used in significant ways if they have a willing heart." Why or why not?

Qualities of a Willing Heart

Quality #1: A willingness to trust God with everything.

Example to follow: Peter left it all.

¹⁸As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him." Matthew 4:18-20

☀ What part of your life do you have trouble trusting God with?

How do I grow in my ability to trust God?

I must believe that God sincerely has my best interests in mind and that He is not going to have me do anything or go anywhere that isn't ultimately best for me and the furtherance of His glory.

🕯 Personal Reflection:

What do you believe at your core about God's care and concern for you and your needs?

How does your current agenda differ from God's agenda for you? Have you left everything for Him?

Scripture for personal study on trusting God with everything:

Matthew 6:25-33; Luke 12:22-24; John 14:1-4

Quality #2: A willingness to submit to authority.

Example to follow: Peter dropped his nets where Jesus said. (Luke 5:1-8)

*¹One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,¹ with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, ²he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down² the nets for a catch.' ⁵Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. **But because you say so, I will let down the nets.**' ⁶When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'*

"Respect for authority isn't always seen in having the right attitude or obeying for the right reasons, respect for authority is largely seen by sheer obedience to the one in authority over you, regardless of how you feel.

Why is submission an issue? Is God on a "power trip"?

¹Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." Romans 13:1-2

How do I grow in my ability to submit to authority?

I must believe that God is ultimately sovereign in my life. And that everyone who is in authority over me is under God's control.

☀ How does this view help you submit to authority?

Do you agree that your submission to authority is linked to your submission to God?

🕯 Personal Reflection

Do you have an authority figure that you need to submit to as unto God?

How can you pray so that you grow in this area?

Scripture for Personal Study on passionately standing for Christ:

Romans 13:1-5; Titus 3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-19

Quality #3: A willingness to take faith risks for God.

Example to follow: In spite of his fear, Peter was willing to step out of the boat.

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance¹ from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ²⁸"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹"Come," he said. ³⁰Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward

Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Taking faith risks means we need to face our two greatest fears: fear of failure and fear of rejection.

☀ How did Peter face these fears?

☀ In relation to taking risks for God, which of these fears do you need to face?

"Are you going to get out of the boat or just watch others walk on water?"

"These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold--and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold. So if your faith remains strong after being tried by fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world." 1 Peter 1:7

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6

☀ How have you seen your faith purified through testing?

How do I grow in my ability to take risks for God?

Take "Baby Steps" of faith.

☀ What "baby step" can you take this week that will stretch your faith?

"Following Jesus is not about 'No fear or No doubt.' It is about taking risks despite the fear."

♀ Personal Reflection:

How pleasing to God is my faith life?

Where am I taking faith risks for God?

Scripture for personal study on taking faith risks for God:
Hebrews 11; Hebrews 10:19-39; James 1:2-18

Quality #4: A willingness to die for Jesus.

Example to follow: Peter had raw passion.

³³Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will...even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." Matthew 26:33-35

☀ Why did Jesus enjoy Peter's passion?

How do I grow in my ability to trust God?

You cannot care what other people think.

☀ How can other people's opinions affect our passion for God?

Passion increases as hope increases.

¹²Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 2 Corinthians 3:12

¹⁸I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe." Ephesians 1:18-19

☀ What can we do in our day-to-day lives that helps us to live with hope of our reward?

♀ Personal Reflection:

Whose opinion do you care about that is limiting your passion for God?

What are you doing daily to connect with God so that your hope and passion can increase?

Scripture for Personal Study on passionately standing for Christ:

Luke 12:1-12; Isaiah 12; Luke 9:18-27

Quality #5: A willingness to confess sinful behavior.

Example to follow: Peter's heart was broken over his sin.

"Peter replied, 'Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.'³⁴ 'I tell you the truth,'" Jesus answered, 'this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.'³⁵ But Peter declared, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.' And all the other disciples said the same. Matthew 26:33-35

⁷⁵Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: 'Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly." Matthew 26:75

"The heart of a disciple is fully of love and gratitude for what Christ has done. This is why we repent."

☀ According to Scripture, to whom should we confess our sin? (1 John 1:9; James 5:16)

☀ If all of our sins have been forgiven, why is confession of sin necessary?

How do I grow in my ability to trust God?

I must believe and recognize that my sinful behavior hurts God.

♀ Personal Reflection:

Are there certain parts of my life that I am keeping "secret" from God by not confessing?

Do I have a safe person to whom I can confess my sin?

Scripture for personal study on confessing sin:

1 John 1:5-10; Psalm 38

Actions of a Willing Heart

☀ What steps will you take to make your heart more willing to follow Christ?

☀ How can we pray for you in this process?