**Discipleship 101**

**In Luke 14:25-33, Jesus gave the ground rules for becoming one of His disciples. He said that a person who desires to become a follower of His, needs to calculate the cost. This means that before making the lifelong commitment of becoming a Christian, one must evaluate himself and see if he is willing to pay the price and take the commitment seriously. There is no one who cannot afford to pay the price, but there are many who are not willing to pay such a high price.**

***Luke 14:25 Now great multitudes were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it?29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and take counsel whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks terms of peace.33 "So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.***

**Jesus gave us His life and He expects our life in return. We are to present ourselves as *Romans 12:1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.***

**We must learn the greatest and most important of all the commandments ----**

***Matthew 22:36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"37 And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'***

**It is important to understand that even good moral people will be lost if they love God second or third or fourth rather than giving Him first place. We must love Him so much that we will allow nothing to interfere with our putting Him first. The disciples "left all" in order to follow Jesus**

***Luke 5:11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.***

**We may be called upon to do the same some day. Nothing, including our physical possessions, is to become more important to us than God. Indeed, we become simply "stewards" of all we possess and we are accountable to God for our use of the blessings He has given us...**

**1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

**There will be much that you learn and come to understand as you grow and study. However at the very beginning, you need to be willing to surrender your will to His, and be committed to follow and obey truth--whatever it takes and wherever it may lead you. Your love for the Lord will be the driving force that will empower you to keep the commandments**

**John 14:*15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.***

**This is why John could say that, even though following the commandments of God may be challenging,**

***1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome*.**

**Look at the example in Exodus 19:*4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.5 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." 7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him.8 And all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. We have an example of the type of faith you need to have in the Lord at the start, even before you come to know everything that the Lord expects of you. God reminded the children of Israel what He had done for them, how He had redeemed them from Egyptian bondage and saved them by bearing them upon "eagles wings". Then God set before them the wonderful promises He had in store for them, if they would simply obey His voice and keep His covenant. Then, even before the people knew what the specific laws were, they demonstrated their faith and trust in God by committing to obey God's laws.***

**Likewise, once we have come to appreciate the Lord Jesus and all He has done for us, and have been convicted of our sins and therefore our need for salvation, and truly desire the wonderful promises of God in our life, then we demonstrate our faith and trust in God by**

***Romans 10:9 "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.***

**Someone has said "unless He is Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all" When one accepts Christ as his Lord, he is stating that he is willing to do whatever the Lord asks, even before he has had the opportunity to learn every detail of what a future life of service to God may involve. Jesus made this clear when He gave the great commission and ordered His disciples to**

***Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."***

***Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.***

**Notice that a lot of teaching must come after one has become a Christian. But the commitment to surrender your will to His and do whatever He asks, as you learn the Lord's will for your life, comes before you make the decision to become a Christian. We cannot make your decisions for you. No one can. We cannot do your thinking for you, nor do we wish to. Difficult issued will have to be studied out and wrestled with as you fulfill your lifelong commitment to the Lordship of Christ.**

**Our commitment to the Lord can be divided up into three general areas;**

**1) A commitment to a personal relationship with God,**

**2) A commitment to the family of God, His church, and**

**3) A commitment to the lost people in the world who do not know Jesus.**

**These basic responsibilities are clear in the scriptures and your willingness to be faithful to these responsibilities is a part of " Discipleship 101." With these thoughts in mind, lets look at some scriptures dealing with these three areas of commitment.**

**TO A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD COMMITMENT**

**Obviously, you cannot have a relationship with someone you do not communicate with! A Christian needs to schedule regular times for communicating with God.**

1. **A personal study of God's word is how you can maintain a personal relationship with you Creator. Let God speak to you through His word.**
2. ***Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***
3. ***2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.***

**A good example to follow are the Bereans,**

***Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.***

**This is an excellent example and one that you would do well to emulate.**

**2) A personal talking to God. Prayer is the way we express our feelings, thoughts, and needs to the Heavenly Father.**

***1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing; 1 Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,2 for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,***

**You should set aside a special time for prayer along with your Bible study. Even Bible study should begin with prayer. It is essential that you communicate with God every day once you become one of His children. Remember that communication is a two party relationship----sender---receiver---confirmation.**

1. **A daily offering of your life**
2. ***Romans 12:1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship*. also offering all your resources to the cause of Christ is part of your relationship with Him.**

**Here are a few examples.**

**1) your time *Ephesians 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise,***

**2) Your money *Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.***

***2 Corinthians 8:2 that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.3 For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord,4 begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,5 and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.***

***2 Corinthians 9:6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.7 Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.***

***3) Your thoughts Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.***

**4) Your supreme love**

***Matthew 22:37 And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.***

***2 Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;15 and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.***

**4) Dealing with sin in your every day life is part of the commitment.**

**a) We are to be dead to sin at the point of baptism,**

***Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Romans***

***6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;***

***Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

**b) We are to put to death daily our sinful tendencies ….**

***Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***

***1 Corinthians 15:31' I protest, brethren, by the boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.***

**This is part of our growth in Christ and our sanctification before God. This is serious business because we read in…**

***Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.***

**c) Learn a list of sins that are not to be a part of the Christian life.**

***Galatians 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.***

**Those that apply to you now need to be repented of and changed.**

**d) You need to learn to abhor evil and put away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness**

**e) Our primary purpose in life is to become like Christ**

***Luke 6:40 "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.***

***Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;***

***1 John 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.***

**A daily relationship with God is essential in fulfilling this purpose.**

**COMMITMENT TO THE FAMILY OF GOD, THE CHURCH**

**1) All Christians are equally important, therefore every Christian must be involved and willing to do their part (1 Cor 12:12-27).**

**The work is to be done by all in the church.**

***Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.***

**We need to have deep relationships within the body. Our best friends should be Christians since we are members of one another.**

***Romans 12:5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.***

***Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;***

***1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.***

***1 Thessalonians 5:15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.***

**It is important that we understand our responsibilities to the assembling of ourselves together**

***Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.***

**2) Since we cannot condone false doctrine, we cannot worship and abide in the apostles doctrine by worshipping with just any religious body**

***2 John 9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting;11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.***

**Why can't we worship with just anyone?**

***Mark 7:66 And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. 7 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' 8 "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."***

***Galatians 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ.8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.***

**In practice this means that wherever you go, you must find a faithful congregation to worship and work with. This is important to remember when traveling or if you move to another location.**

**You need to understand clearly what you had been practicing, or not practicing, in the past that was unscriptural and understand that it teaches in**

***Hebrews 10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,***

**COMMITMENT TO THE LOST**

**1) Jesus came to the earth to *Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."***

**Therefore as His disciples, saving the lost should be one of the primary purposes of our Christian life as well.**

**a) We cannot belong to Christ without also belonging to the cause of Christ.**

**b) It was Jesus' last command to His apostles**

**c) Ours is the same mission as the Christians in the first century, the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world.**

**d) The proclamation of the Gospel is to be a natural outgrowth of your walk with Christ. It is a part of the fruits you are to bear on a daily basis.**

**e) There is time to study and grow and be trained, but there will come a time when you ought to be a teacher**

***Hebrews 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.***

**f) In the meantime, take advantage of opportunities to share what you can to lead others to someone who can teach them.**

**2) We are to represent Christ to others.**

***2 Corinthians 3:2 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;***

**We would not want to be a bad reflection on Christ or misrepresent Him in anything we do or say.**

**For example:**

**a)We need to dress modestly**

**b)Watch our speech and language**

**c)Avoid anything that would discredit the Lord.**

**CONCLUSION**

**Obeying the Gospel will require substantial changes in your life.**

***Acts 26:20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.***

**Only you know for sure the changes that you need to make to demonstrate true repentance. Whatever your sins are, they must cease. You must turn away from them. You must be completely and totally honest with yourself in order for you to make a total commitment. You must turn from your evil ways.**

**We must all count the cost of discipleship.**

**We must be totally committed.**

**We cannot ask for a refund or rebate once we have started.**

**We must be willing and dedicated to make adjustments in our lives in order to demonstrate our discipleship.**

**Are you a true disciple of Christ?**

**Have you counted the cost?**

**Have you paid the cost?**

**Are you willing?**