



## I am a Disciple - Part II

### INTRODUCTION

In this series, we learn that God's last command of making disciples must be our first concern, but what does it mean to be a disciple? Many of us are used to doing so-called Christian things, and following Christian rules, but is that the same as being a Christ-follower?

This question is also relevant to a popular, as well as problematic idea today: to be yourself. In this very individualistic culture, expressing ourselves is an idea that is often celebrated, but rarely questioned. As Christ-followers, are we called to be, or deny, ourselves? In Matthew 4:18-22, we read that Simon Peter and Andrew left their lives as humble fishermen behind, to follow Christ as 'fishers of men'. This means that they were no longer living their own lives, but had entered into a relationship with Christ that required their attention and willing submission.

To deny ourselves, therefore, involves more than just inviting Christ to be a guest at our house. For, if we acknowledge him as Lord, should we also not surrender every part of our house, or hearts to him?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What, in your opinion, is the difference between 'being yourself' and a Christ-follower? How can we lead the life of a disciple, in a culture that values individual accomplishment and fulfillment?
2. From your own experience, were there moments when you felt challenged to deny yourself as a Christ-follower? Think about the struggle(s) you've had to go through, and the lessons that were gleaned from them.
3. Read Matthew 4:18-22 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

<sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat

*with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.*

**Do an inductive bible study (observations, interpretation and application). You can use the following as a guide.**

i. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.

ii. Read the passage aloud

iii. Ask some context questions of the passage:

- What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
- Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
- What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?

iv. Some observation questions of the passage:

- Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
- What is the main point or points?
- What surprises are there?
- What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?

v. Some leading questions of the text:

- How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
- How does the passage relate to Jesus?
- What does this teach us about God?
- How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?

vi. Some application questions of the passage:

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- Is there some attitude I need to change?
- How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

## **WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**

The challenge, and even struggle, of being a disciple of Christ is not the set of rules that we have to supposedly follow, but the surrender of personal interests and insecurities to the lordship of Christ. Yet, we should also remember that we were not called by a distant god who is indifferent to our sufferings, for Christ, in walking on this earth, had denied himself, and lived the life we were meant to live. As Christ-followers, we are called to be in a relationship with Him, but are we also prepared to deny ourselves and take up our cross as disciples?

## **CHANGE YOUR MINDSET**

Luke 9:23-25 (ESV)

<sup>23</sup> *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?*