

1. Definition of a Disciple of Christ

- a. A disciple is an apprentice who participates in life with his master and who patterns his life after the life of his master
- b. Discipleship describes the process of participation in the life of the Triune God through Jesus Christ, resulting in growth in our knowledge of God's Word and in our imitation of God's way through the power of God's Spirit.
- c. Discipleship is not a status we achieve through our obedience; discipleship is a gift we receive by God's grace. This gift begins at a particular point in time but it is also a process.
- d. Simply because discipleship is a gift does not mean it does not involve effort. Grace is not opposed to effort; grace is opposed to earning." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12)(2 Peter 1:1-12)
- e. Not only our faith but also our fruit is a gift from God.
- f. The gospel is not just to save us from hell; it is a daily power of salvation and the fuel for our sanctification and discipleship; by the gospel we are saved and then also formed throughout our lives to become like Christ.
- g. There is no concept in the NT of becoming a believer and not walking and being a disciple of Christ; we are called to participate in Christ.
- h. This close walk of discipleship is called the "Union with Christ" (John 14:20; 15:5; 17:1, 22-23; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 3:1-4) which is the goal of a believer – Union with Christ, which is much more than just "sin-reduction"
- i. Disciples are followers of Jesus. They have turned from their sin and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. They have died to themselves and surrendered their lives to him as Lord. Christ now lives in them, transforming everything about them from the inside out, resulting in six primary marks of a disciple; first with regeneration and a transformed heart, and then in increasing measure as the disciple grows through faith in Jesus as a member of his body, the church.

1) **Transformed heart** – must be born again to be spiritually alive with the Holy Spirit indwelling us

2) **Transformed mind** – this will begin immediately as the new believer knows the Word of God is true and is necessary and sufficient for all of life, for memorization, meditation, correction, teaching, renewing of our minds (Rom 12:1-2)

3) **Transformed desires** – do not allow old desires and passions rule our life, but love God with all our heart, mind, strength – being a disciple is a passionate thing – means that the disciple will live differently from the world – a desire to please God, enjoy Him and know Him better

4) **Transformed will** – we have died to sin, baptized into His death, raised in Christ in newness of life – we put off rebellion and the old life and take on the character of Christ – there is an active cooperation with the Holy Spirit to pursue the way of Christ

5) **Transformed relationships** – we are to love others as we love Christ – we are commanded to show mercy and grace always and forgive everything

6) **Transformed purpose** – we have been bought with a price and our mission has changed – we live to see God receive the glory due His name by making disciples of all people which is a purpose for ALL believers and all churches

2. Focus of a Disciple of Christ

- a. Christ – His words, ministry, attitudes, commands (Phil 2:1-11; Jer 29:11; Jer 24:7; Heb 12:1,2)
- b. Seek heavenly things (Col 3:1,2)
- c. Love of God and man (Matt 22:36-40)
- d. Love God's Word (Psalms 1; Josh 1:8; Ps 119; Prov 4:25-27)
- e. Glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)
- f. Pleasing God (Col 1:9-12)
- g. Listening and talking to God
- h. Be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29)
- i. Agents of change for the disciple
 - i. Word of God (John 15:3; John 17:7)
 - ii. Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:13; 1 Thess 5:23)
 - iii. Other believers (2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 10:24)

3. Attitudes of a Disciple of Christ

- a. God's is our supreme passion and His glory is our ultimate motivation
- b. Desire to know God
- c. By God's grace and through faith in Christ we have a transformed (Rom 12:2):
 - i. Heart (John 3:1- 8; 1 Peter 1:3-9, 22-25)
 - ii. Mind (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119, Mark 12:30, Luke 24:44-45, Romans 12:1- 21, 1 Corinthians 2:14- 16, Ephesians 4:17-24, Colossians 3:1-17)
 - iii. Affections (Matthew 10:34- 39, 22:35-40; Luke 16:13; John 12:25; Philippians 4:8; 1 Timothy 3:3, 6:9- 10; 2 Timothy 2:22, 4:10; Titus 1:8; Hebrews 13:5; 1 John 2:15-17)
 - iv. Will (Matthew 28:18-20, John 14:15, Romans 1:5, 1 Peter 1:2, James 1:22-25, 1 John 5:3)
 - v. Relationships (Matthew 5:43- 48, 22:37-40; Luke 6:27-36; John 13:34-35, 15:12-17; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Galatians 5:13-26; Ephesians 4:1- 6, 5:1-2; 1 John 3:11-18, 47-21)
 - vi. Purpose (Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:44-49, John 20:21, Acts 1:8, Romans 15:18- 24)
- d. The Spirit of God is our Guide
- e. Prayer is central to our lives
- f. Salvation from sin is the greatest need of every human being
- g. The Great Commission commands us to make disciples for Christ
- h. Pleasing God is the end goal of all knowledge and obedience (Col 1:9-12)
- i. We must have the Mind of Christ (Phil 2) – Selfless, Servant, Sacrifice
- j. Joy even in suffering & trials; they are a blessing from God and have a purpose (James 1; 1 Peter 1; Phil 1:21): Endurance, Patience, Testing
- k. Other basic attitudes –
 - i. Selfless & sacrificial not selfish & self-centered
 - ii. Thankful not complaining
 - iii. Content not covetous
 - iv. Loving not critical
 - v. Trusting not doubting
 - vi. Submissive not rebellious
 - vii. Humility not pride
 - viii. Need grace not demand rights
 - ix. Confess sin not blame others
 - x. Servant not superior
 - xi. Perseverance & courage not weakness & timidity
 - xii. Victorious not defeated

4. Beliefs of a Disciple of Christ

- a. God's Word
 - i. God-breathed (2 Peter 1:21)
 - ii. Inerrant in the original text
 - iii. Trustworthy completely (Num 23:19; Ps 119:160; John 17:17)
 - iv. Sufficient for all of life (2 Peter 1:3-4; Ps 119:98-100; 2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - v. Our ultimate controlling and highest authority (Deuteronomy 12:28, 13:4; 1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 66:1-2; Acts 5:29)
- b. God is: Triune: One Spirit, three Persons
- c. Jesus is: Wholly divine; One Person, two natures
- d. Holy Spirit is: Wholly divine; Proceeds from the Father and the Son
- e. Man is: totally corrupted by sin, all people have rebelled against God (Rom 1:21)
- f. Salvation is: By God's grace through faith, which is a gift of God, nothing of works; only through faith and repentance is there salvation in Christ (Eph 2:8-9); I am personally accountable to God and stand in need of His grace
- g. Our Lord Jesus, who is God the Son in human flesh, lived the life we should have lived and then died the death we deserved to die, taking the judgment we deserved on Himself (2 Corinthians 5:21). He rose from the dead as the eternal conqueror of sin, death, and hell (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 20-28)
- h. Our responsibility is to proclaim the good news and urge people to repent and believe; God, and God alone, saves people who are dead, blind slaves to sin

5. Living Like a Disciple of Christ

- a. What to put off & put on (Colossians 3)
- b. Growth in Christ (2 Peter 1)
- c. James patterns of living: Trials; temptation; works & faith together; the mouth; wisdom; treatment of money and those with money; conflicts with God and others; friends with the world; steps of repentance and return to God
- d. Herman Bavinck maintains, it will be "necessary above all else that our entire life be presented as a fundamental unity in which faith in God, love to God, and obedience to God controls our every activity."
- e. 1 John: Three connected truths
 - i. Love for God
 - ii. Obedience to God
 - iii. Knowing that I belong to God

6. Habits of a Disciple of Christ

- a. Prayer
- b. Reading
- c. Memorization
- d. Meditating
- e. Journaling
- f. Explaining the gospel
- g. Encouraging others
- h. Sharing godly wisdom
- i. Learning by conversing with the disciple and formal teaching