

Perfecting Discipleship: Discipleship and the Cross



Perfecting Discipleship

Today we start a new series titled "Perfecting Discipleship." The last thing Jesus told his disciples was, "Go therefore and make disciples..." To make disciples I must first be one. In a private meeting with His disciples—Jesus teaches them the way of the disciple.

John 13:1

:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, (A) when Jesus knew that His hour had come that (B) He should depart from this world to the Father, (C) having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Introduction: A Private Conversation with Jesus

1. Jesus, the Passover Lamb chose a Passover meal to share His last message with His disciples
2. The word for 'love' appears 31 times in chapters 13-17
3. The word 'disciple' appears 273 times in the Gospels and Acts but nowhere else in the New Testament
4. The word 'disciple' means 'to learn' (see side bar)

A. The Disciple and Life

"When Jesus knew that His hour had come..."

1. Instead of running from or fearing death Jesus comes forth to meet it.
2. Like Jesus—we must bear our own cross and follow Jesus daily. *Luke 14:27*
3. Another kind of death for the disciple is death to the world. *Luke 14:33; 1 John 2:15-17*

B. The Disciple and Death

"...that He should depart from this world to the Father..."

1. Could there be anything greater than going to the Father?
2. In God's presence is complete joy *Psa 16:11*
3. "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." *Phil 1:21*
4. If I've really died to this world then I won't miss it!

C. The Disciple and Love

"...having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."

1. Jesus loved the disciples by His calling them to follow Him; by patiently teaching them; by bearing with their errors and weaknesses; and by making them the heralds of his truth and the heirs of eternal life.
2. "He loved them to the end: which he showed by dying for them; and continues to show by interceding for them in heaven, by supplying them with all grace, and by preserving them from a final and total falling away; and he will at last introduce them into his kingdom and glory, when they shall be forever with him; and so that love to them continues not only to the end of His own life, nor barely to the end of theirs, but to the end of the world, and forever." *John Gill*

Disciple: Greek—*Mathētēs*

(where we get our word 'mathematics.') means more in the New Testament than a mere pupil or learner. It is an adherent who accepts the instruction given to him and makes it his rule of conduct. The word appears 261 times in the New Testament.

Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen

Luk 14:27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Luk 14:33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Mat 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me

Psa 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.