

BECOMING FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST



Christian Life Center, A Foursquare Church | 951-689-6785 | www.DiscipleshipDevelopment.org

To follow Christ begins with a life-altering decision which is based on faith and understanding.

PART 2 | OUR DECISION TO FOLLOW CHRIST



As Jesus went throughout Israel He urged people to repent (a change of thinking with a corresponding action), to believe the gospel, and to follow Him. In Matthew 4:19 He called his first disciples with, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Later in His ministry, He told the crowds, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." (Mark 8:34) Then in John 21:17-19, Jesus reinstated Peter with, "Follow me."

When Jesus said, "Follow Me," He was not speaking about a casual following until something better came along. His expectation was literal, as exemplified in the calling of Matthew.

- Matthew 9:9-13 (from the AMP) *As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man named Matthew (Levi) sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me (as My disciple, accepting Me as your Master and Teacher and walking the same path of life that I walk)." And Matthew got up and followed Him.*
- "Follow" in Matthew 4:19 is a slightly different Greek word. The word in Matthew 9:9 and Mark 8:34 is more direct.
- Following Christ does not always mean that we abandon everything. Rather, it begins as an issue of the heart, leaving our old, self-centered ways and embracing the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of life.

The lives of everyone who decided to follow Him were dramatically impacted and forever changed!

What does it mean to make a decision to follow Christ?

Jesus was quite clear about the type of dedication it would require to be His disciple. This was evident from even a casual reading of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), a teaching primarily to whole-hearted followers. To read more about the Sermon on the Mount and The Beatitudes, click the QR code and go to pages 4-6.

Notes...

Click the QR code above to view the main Institute course. The code on the left takes you to the current lesson online. Put aside some time to read the information this week!

Memory verses

Matthew 7:13-14
Galatians 2:20

Answers:

Personally
Relationally
Eternally

Read Part 3:

Understanding
God's Word, the
Bible. (Top QR code)

**Main thought that
the Holy Spirit
revealed to me...**

Additional thoughts...

1. To be a follower requires a decision. The root word for decision is *to cut away that which is unnecessary*. Following Christ (discipleship) begins with a decision to serve the Master in spite of what may come as a result. Because of the *eternal importance*, it must be a priority!
 - Notice the two different responses between Elisha's calling in 1 Kings 19:19-21 and the rich young man in Mark 10:17-22.
2. To follow Christ is a "narrow path." Although many teach Matthew 7:13-14 as salvation, in the context of the Sermon on the Mount it actually refers to an entrance into the disciplined life. This entrance is narrow and is literally strewn with obstacles and pressures, greatly contrasted to the broad, smooth, and easy way that many choose.
 - It requires personal **sacrifice** (Luke 14:25-33; Galatians 2:20). Following Him may, at times, mean that we have to choose between our family members and friends, a difficult decision that countless people before us have had to make (Matthew 10:34-39). Many who had followed him turned away when He told them the sacrifice it would take (John 6:66). Even the disciples decided that following Jesus was too difficult the night He was arrested, when following Him meant possible arrest and execution (Matthew 26:56, 69-75; Mark 14:50).
3. Romans 12:1 *Therefore I urge you, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies (dedicating all of yourselves, set apart) as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational act of worship.*
 - He gives us the ability through the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you...*

Our decision to follow Christ affects us...

1. _____ Matthew 7:24-29 summarizes all that Christ taught in the sermon. The "rock" is a decision to actively obey the message He shared earlier. The one who builds his or her life on His teachings will be able to withstand the storms of life! However, the one who builds his or her life on sand — the values and principles of this world and human understanding — is vulnerable to the storms and inevitable destruction.
2. _____ Joshua 24:15 *...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.* Our decision to follow Him as parents or grandparents can literally set the course of our children's lives, affecting them and the lives of their children!
3. _____ 1 Peter 1:3-5 tells us that our eternal inheritance in Heaven cannot fade or be destroyed! Because of our decision to follow Him, we are born again and are adopted into His Family with an eternal inheritance (John 1:12-13, 3:16)!

Part 3: Understanding God's Word, the Bible.