

# Discipleship: What Did God Say? and What Are You Going to Do About It?

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## I. Introduction

To be a disciple of Jesus is to answer two questions: “What did God say?” and “What are you going to do about what God said?” This is what it means to be a Christian, it’s to live life the way Jesus did, always listening to His Father’s voice and then acting on what His Father said. Your fellow Christians also help you with these two questions by asking you a third, “How can we help you obey what God said?”

## II. Discipleship: What Did God Say? and What Are You Going to Do About It?

To make someone a disciple of Jesus, you essentially ask them three questions throughout the process:<sup>1</sup>

**Question 1: What did God say?** Jesus was always doing this, i.e., He was always listening and paying attention to what His Father said (Mark 1:35; Luke 3:21; 5:16; John 5:19, 30; 8:26-28).

**Question 2: What are you going to do about what God said?** When God speaks, you’re supposed to obey what He said (Luke 8:21). Jesus always did what His Father told Him; He didn’t simply hear it, He obeyed it (Matthew 3:16-4:1; Luke 6:12-16; John 5:19-21, 30; 8:28).

**Question 3: How can we help you obey what God said?** God dwells in our midst (Ephesians 2:22) and collectively we are the Body of Christ. Each one of us is a member that serves the other members of the Body; we represent the eyes, ears, and mouth of our Lord Jesus to each other as we all walk together with the Lord (Romans 12). Thus, as a group of believers is being discipled by a leader, the Holy Spirit will begin to work among them, enabling them to help each other mature in their walk with the Lord as they grow to be more like Jesus (John 16:12-15; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:24).

**A leader invites you into his/her life and challenges you,** as Jesus led the Twelve Disciples and was the authority among them, there will be a leader in a position of authority who discipled the group. However his/her leadership will follow Jesus’, i.e., they will be a servant leader (Matthew 20:20-28; 1 Peter 5:2-3). Thus, someone invites you (and 3 to 5 others) into their life, into a relationship with them where you will learn how to live like Jesus by watching them. They will challenge you, but it will be done with love and encouragement (Jesus invited the Twelve into His life, Matthew 4:19; 9:9; John 1:43; 21:19, and challenged them, Matthew 9:35-10:33; 14:13-21; John 6:1-6; Matthew 16:13-28). And as Jesus relied on the Spirit (Matthew 3:16- 4:1), the leader must be led by the Spirit as he/she leads the group (Romans 8:9-14; Galatians 3:2-5).

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<sup>1</sup> The process will take about 1-3 years, though each individual will be expected (not forced) to start a smaller discipleship group of their own within 6-12 months. As they’re being discipled, they will disciple others, giving them a more complete understanding of what they learned. Why expect this of those you disciple? That’s what Jesus expects of them and the one discipling them (Matthew 28:19-20).

Some see the church as that thing that feeds them and when they get bored or tired with the food they say things like, "I'm gonna find another church; I don't think I'm being fed here." This is not to say that the pastor or leadership of a church is never the problem; they can be the problem. However, God did not intend for us to be consumers but producers, people who produce more disciples of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus poured Himself into a few individuals and they in turn disciplined the nations (Acts) and their legacy goes on to this day. Thus, we're to pour ourselves into others the way Jesus did, to challenge them to live the way He lived so that they can go out and do the same for others.

This is what's missing in our churches. Many church-goers struggle with life because no one's showing them how to live it; they don't know how to really pray, forgive, study God's Word, be in a marriage, etc., etc. They don't know how to face everyday challenges the way Jesus did. They need to be disciplined into the life of Christ. Jesus didn't institute programs or simply preach sermons; He showed His disciples how to live life in connection with the Father. Every Christian should be living out their true identity as a child of the Great King, a child who has access to His Kingdom, power, and authority. They shouldn't be limping along hoping for the best and not really connected to the King and His power to transform everything and everyone.

**"But I can't take a group of people and disciple them"** You are correct, until someone disciplines you, you won't know how. But don't worry, Jesus promised that what He's asking you to do is "easy" and "light," that the life He's offering you is waaaaay better than the life you're living now (Matthew 11:28-30). And Jesus will provide you everything you need to make disciples. You won't even have to recruit anyone to be part of your discipleship group; the Lord will bring the people to you, i.e., He will show you who to have in your group (Matthew 10:9-14). There will be hard work ahead, but He will empower you through His Spirit to get the job done (Matthew 10:16-31) and He will be with you every step of the way (Galatians 2:20).

### III. Conclusion

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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."*