

# Discipleship: How to Face Life-Changing Moments Part 1

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## I. Introduction

Life-altering events have a way of destroying our lives, but they don't have to. When something life-changing happens, God is desperate to tell us what the problem is and how to fix it. In order to hear what God has to say, we have to step into His Kingdom by repenting and believing. To repent is to change directions, it's to analyze the critical event by asking, "How did I react and why?" What you're doing is asking, "What does God say about this?"

## II. Discipleship: How to Face Life-Changing Moments

**Two Kingdoms: where will you experience your Life-Changing moments?** There are two kingdoms to choose from: Jesus' Kingdom of Truth or Satan's kingdom of Lies. The moment you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father saved you and transferred you from Satan's kingdom of darkness into Jesus' Kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13). However, staying in Jesus' Kingdom requires listening to and obeying His voice instead of Satan's. Thus, every second of our lives, especially during life-altering events, we're either living in Satan's kingdom or Jesus'. Here's what the two kingdoms look like and what happens in each:

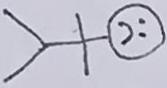
*Satan's kingdom of Lies*, Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44) so everything in his kingdom is designed to steal, kill, and destroy you (John 10:10). His goal is to keep you from hearing your Father's voice and therefore make you believe that you suck, your life sucks and God's not coming to help you. In fact, God's very angry with you and wants to punish you (Genesis 3).

*Jesus' Kingdom of Truth*, Jesus is the God of truth (John 14:6) so everything in His Kingdom is designed to show you who you really are and what you were meant to be (Psalm 139:13-16). He longs to show you that you have a Loving Father who has an amazing life waiting for you (heartaches and all). He'll show you that regardless of what happens, He will never turn His back on you and will always be there for you: nothing will ever be able to separate you from Him (Romans 8:31-39; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 13:5-6).

**Life-Changing events (good or bad, big or small)**, God wants you to pursue His plan for your life at all times, so He'll constantly guide you in that direction, i.e., He's always speaking to you about the direction you're going. If you're going the wrong way, He'll tell you. This requires that you hear His voice. His voice is always present, especially during life-changing events, things that impact your life, things that trigger positive emotions like happiness, excitement, euphoria, bliss, satisfaction, etc. Or things that trigger negative emotions like fear, anxiety, depression, anger, frustration, panic, jealousy, etc. The event can be big or small, good or bad: your friend gets pregnant, your mom gives you that look, you get an "F" on your 4<sup>th</sup> grade test, your spouse is diagnosed with dementia, a bill you can't pay arrives, the person you love leaves you, your friend ignores you, someone else gets the promotion, someone makes fun of you, etc. How you respond to these moments is crucial: you can ignore them and keep moving. You can let it sink you into depression as it reminds you of past mistakes. You can try to make sure it never happens again. You can run away from it through work, food, entertainment, or drugs.

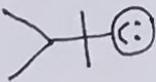
## Satan's Kingdom of Lies

- You're overweight and ugly
- People don't like you
- You're in pain all the time and it's not going to change
- You're in a dead-end job, that's why you drink
- No one's ever going to marry you.
- You're always going to be in debt.
- God's not happy with you because you're such a sinner. Why do you think you're in pain? Why do you think you're miserable? God's punishing you.



## Jesus' Kingdom of Truth

- You're so funny and encouraging to people
- I know you're in pain but I'm not going to let it destroy you. I'm going to comfort you through it.
- Follow my advice and I'll show you how to handle this job and debt.
- I've got the perfect person for you to marry.
- Please remember, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I'm aware of everything you're going through and I'm going to deliver you from it all. I love you and will never turn my back on you. Nothing will ever make me hate you."



Or you can let God use it to strengthen you, to show you what life is like when you experience these moments in His Kingdom. Every time you process one of these events, God has something to say to you; He wants to tell you what just happened. If you process these events by yourself, you'll be guided by the emotion it triggered and Satan's voice (e.g., Eve is tempted to eat from the Tree of Death, Genesis 3:1-6). Not only will the Lord be with you as you process these critical moments, but He's designed the Church to also be there in order to help you process these events (Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 12:26; James 5:16). And as you, the Lord, and the brothers and sisters He's placed around you walk through this crucial moment, you will all grow closer to God and each other. And you will grow more confident in the Lord and in your ability to mature from these life-changing moments. You will also learn how to disciple others to do the same, i.e., how to face their life-changing moments.

**How do you face Life-Changing moments in God's Kingdom instead of Satan's?** To access the Lord's Kingdom you need to do two things: Repent and Believe (Mark 1:14-15). To repent is to ask "What is the Lord saying to me about this?"

**Repent: how to face Life-Changing moments successfully**, the first thing Jesus said is to "repent" (Mark 1:15). To repent is to change the direction or course you're on. In order to repent you have to know how to hear God's voice. To hear His voice during a critical event you analyze your reactions and the reasons behind them as you ask, "Lord, what are you saying to me through this event?" So to repent you're going to *Observe, Reflect, and Discuss*:

*Observe your reaction*, what was your reaction to the life-changing event? What did you feel, think, say, or do when it happened? You have to be brutally honest with yourself and later with the brothers and sisters the Lord provides you. You're not placing blame or fault but simply stating what your reaction was.

*Reflect on your reaction*, why did you react the way you did to this life-changing event? Why did you feel that way? Why did this event trigger those emotions (anxiety, fear, depression, anger, frustration, jealousy, euphoria, bliss, etc.)? Again, you're going to be brutally honest with yourself and later with your brothers and sisters as they help you reflect on the why.

*Discuss it with fellow Christians*, once you observe and reflect, you'll discuss it with your fellow Christians. It's crucial that you discuss this with your brothers and sisters. Why do we need to discuss this with others, why not just the pastor or a trusted friend? First, we are interconnected with Jesus and one another (Ephesians 2:5-6; 4:11-16). Second, we're designed by God to help each other, especially with the critical events and failures that impact our lives (1 Corinthians 12:26; Romans 12:15; 15:14; James 5:16). You'll be talking things over with brothers and sisters who care about you because that's exactly what God has given you: a family of brothers and sisters who will help you, who will see things you can't, who will challenge you in ways you won't, who will walk with you in the Lord's Kingdom as He transforms how you feel, think, say, and do.

To repent is to answer one of the key questions: "What is God saying to me?" So utilize these three steps as your brothers and sisters help you hear God's voice.

### III. Conclusion

*Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."*