

# Discipleship: Eliminating Everything That's Not Like Jesus

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## I. Introduction

To be a Christian is essentially to be like Jesus and to show others how to be like Jesus. As a Christian your goal is to get rid of everything that is not like Christ. If Jesus wouldn't say it that way, we shouldn't either. If Jesus wouldn't do it that way, we shouldn't either. If Jesus wouldn't think that way, then we shouldn't think that way. In every area of life we're to copy what He did. We're to constantly analyze our behavior and act the way He did; we're to ask, "What does He think about it and therefore what should I do?"...and then we're to pass it on.

## II. Discipleship: Eliminating Everything in Your Life That is Not Like Jesus

**Who is Jesus?** The apostle Matthew (the tax collector, Matthew 9:9; 10:3) spent the first three chapters of his Gospel telling us who Jesus is: Matthew calls Him the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, clearly indicating that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah who would sit on king David's throne forever (2 Samuel 7:12-17; Matthew 1:1, 16-17) and through whom all the nations of the world would be blessed (Genesis 12; Galatians 3:16; Matthew 1:1). Jesus fulfilled every Old Testament prophecy spoken about Messiah: the Scriptures said He would be born of a virgin, He was (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25). Since God was His Father, it said that He would be more than human; He would be called Immanuel, "God with us" because He would be God in the flesh (Isaiah 7:14 [9:6-7]; Matthew 2:18-23). It said He would be born in Bethlehem, He was (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1-6). It said He would be called out of Egypt, He was (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:13-21). It said that He would have a forerunner who would announce His coming, He did (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-3). And God Himself authenticated all this at Jesus' baptism when He declared from heaven, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17). God also said that Jesus would be the new Moses, He would be the prophet like unto Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15), which is why there are several similarities between Jesus and Moses: Moses came out of Egypt (Exodus 12), so did Jesus (Matthew 2:13-21); Moses was in the wilderness 40 years (Numbers 14; Deuteronomy 29:5), Jesus was in the wilderness 40 days (Matthew 4:1-2); Moses gave the people the Law from the mountain (Exodus 19-31), so did Jesus (Matthew 5-7).

**Why did Jesus come to earth?** In the Garden of Eden, we lost our close contact with God; we lost His abiding presence and His guiding voice (Genesis 3). Jesus came to restore all this to us, to give us back an abiding life in God's Kingdom where His voice constantly guides us; He came to give us the thing that would fix everything that is wrong in our lives (Matthew 4:17, 23-25). When we look at our lives, we don't see too clearly; Satan's lies deceive us. Jesus came to take the blinders off so that we could see ourselves and everything around us crystal clearly. He came to show us that we're not just another cog in this broken world but a light which represents God to the world around us (5:16), that anger and harsh words can be deadly to us and others (5:22-26), that adultery is not just a sexual act but a mental one (5:27-28), that divorce should never be approached lightly (5:31-32), that you should always honor your word without having to swear (5:33-37), that you should love your enemies and pray for those who abuse you (5:43-48), that you should only seek God's praise for your charitable deeds (6:1-4), that we have a Father in heaven who longs to hear from us (6:9-13), that forgiving those who hurt us is critical to our relationship with our Heavenly Father (6:14-15),

that true wealth doesn't reside here on earth (6:19-21), that our love for money will erase our love for God (6:24), that we shouldn't worry about anything except following God because He will take care of everything we need (6:25-34), that we should help those around us who are failing but not before we address our own failures (7:1-5), ....that if we're wise, we'll take what Jesus said and do it (not simply study it, but do it) (7:24-27).

**Why does Jesus want you to follow Him and then show others how to follow Him?** If you want to experience Jesus' power to transform your life, if you want Jesus to fix everything that's wrong in your life, you have to follow Him. This is why after telling us how life should really be lived, what life in God's Kingdom could really be like, Jesus demonstrates it in people's actual lives: in Matthew 8-9 Jesus heals individual after individual as He urges people (and us) to follow Him (8:22; 9:9). Then in Matthew 10 Jesus sends out the Twelve Disciples to do what He did, to show others how to live in God's Kingdom and hear His voice (and His power went with them; they were able to do what He did, Mark 6:7-12).

**What does it mean to be a Christian?** Your job as a Christian is to model your life after Jesus and then show others how to do the same, i.e., to be a disciple and to make disciples of Jesus. Right before Jesus returned to heaven, that's what He told His disciples to do (Matthew 28:18-20), to show others how to live like Him, how to obey everything He said. How do you show someone how to obey a command? It requires more than study; we have to show them how to *do* something not just how to *study* something. Like Jesus we have to know what God said and then what to do about it.

When it comes to your life, the question is this, if Jesus were assigned to live your life, is that how He would live it? Is that how He would raise His children? Is that how He would treat His spouse? Is that how He would deal with His addiction? Is that how He would deal with a crappy job? Is that how He would deal with difficult relatives? Is that how He would deal with depression?

*A father struggles with his teenage daughter*, having a teenage daughter is some fathers' worst nightmare. Talking to them about sex is the last thing some fathers want to do. But if you're a Christian father, you're supposed to follow Jesus. If she were Jesus' daughter, how would He handle the sex talk? Would He avoid it until it was too late? Would He severely restrict her freedom to keep her away from boys? Would He put her on the pill so she wouldn't get pregnant? Or would He teach her about everything related to sex the moment she started noticing boys, things like marriage, love, romance, intimacy, having sex by yourself? Would He make sure that he and his wife (Proverbs 1:8; Song of Solomon 8:2) were the ones to teach her about sex and not a dirty magazine, the internet, an R-rated movie, her friends, etc? Would He teach her the Do's (Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 24:5; Proverbs 5:19; Song of Solomon) as well as the Don'ts (Leviticus 18:19-30; 20:10-21; Deuteronomy 22:13-30; Proverbs 5:15-23; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9)? Would He ensure that she's not another clueless teenager who doesn't know how to handle her emotions or temptation, who would respect and protect her sexual intimacy instead of using it as a bargaining chip?

### III. Conclusion

*"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.*