

Paradise Lost and Restored: What is Discipleship? (Part 8)

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I. Introduction

Discipleship is about showing people how to have a relationship with God as their Father and how to live life in His Kingdom so that they can go out and show others how to do the same. To do this successfully we must follow Jesus' example and disciple people the way He did using God's truth to set people free from Satan's lies.

II. What is Discipleship: Review

1. **Discipleship is about family:** God created us to be part of His family and thereby have healthy relationships with each other and the world around us. But then Satan destroyed our relationship with God and thereby all our other relationships, Genesis 3. Jesus came to show us how to get back into God's family and once we get back, we're to show others how to get back into relationship with God, i.e., we're to disciple the nations back into harmony with God and each other, Matthew 28:18-20.
2. **Discipleship is parenting:** when we become part of Jesus' family, we become brothers and sisters who are to help each other become more and more like Jesus. He is the Big Stone; we are the little stones that make up His House/Family, 1 Peter 2:1-10. Jesus is simultaneously our big brother and our spiritual father. This is why He spent three years parenting His disciples, showing them how to follow His example, i.e., how to have a proper relationship with their Heavenly Father, each other, and the world around them. And when Jesus left, His disciples went out to do the same. They became spiritual parents who showed others how to have a relationship with God the Father, each other, and the world around them so that they could go out and show others how to do the same, Acts-Jude.
3. **What does a spiritual parent look like?** The relationship between a spiritual parent and their spiritual children is parent/child (or shepherd/sheep) not teacher/student. This is why the apostles in the New Testament treat their audiences and close disciples as their children and not as students. They live and do discipleship with them, 1 Corinthians 4:14-17. A spiritual parent must model their parenting after Jesus. Therefore, like Jesus, they must have a strong relationship with God the Father (Up) John 5:19-21, parent the other members of God's family (In) John 13-17, and show others how to become part of God's family (Out) Mark 1-3.
4. **Has Satan stolen your Up, In, and Out?** Satan's goal is to make sure no one enters God's family. He does this through deception: he'll get you to believe that God is not there or if He is there that He's angry with you (Up), that there's something wrong with you which destroys your relationship with those close to you (In), and that your life is hopeless which keeps you from your destiny and showing others how to enter God's family (Out). He did this to Adam and Eve, he tried to do this to Jesus, and he tries to do this to everyone else. But God's truth can set you free as it did Adam and Eve. God will restore everything that Satan has stolen from you, Genesis 3:8-21.

5. **God rescues one couple and two individuals from Satan's lies:** a couple is headed for divorce. The wife cheated on her husband four times. She was chasing the love her father never gave her. He was chasing career success so he focused all his attention at work. Thus, she went looking for love elsewhere. But then God opened their eyes and revealed to them their true identity and the idols they were chasing. This set them free to have a wonderful marriage. A Christian woman suffered from paralyzing panic attacks. From a very young age, her mother convinced her that there was something wrong with her and one look from her mother would trigger a panic attack. She was insecure, cursed to live with panic attacks, and God was unable to help her. But then God showed her who she really was which freed her from her panic attacks. A Christian man suffered with a 50 year depression. His parents convinced him that he was genetically flawed and so that's the identity that he lived with all his life. He was in his second marriage, fighting with his wife and kids, therefore, his wife kicked him out of the house. But then God freed him from Satan's lies and he became a loving husband and father. This is what Jesus came to do, to set us free from Satan's bondage, Luke 4:18; Hebrews 2:14-15.

6. **How to help someone find their way back to God and the freedom He brings:** *first*, we must realize that it's a spiritual battle, which means we'll have to rely on everything God has given us to defeat Satan. God will do the fighting not us; all we have to do is cloth ourselves with His truth, believe it, and stand, Ephesians 6:10-17. *Second*, Satan's tactics haven't changed; his main weapon is deception and what he did to Adam and Eve, he'll try to do to us. *Third*, find out what lies Satan told them about God, themselves, and their lives so that God can free them with His truth. *Fourth*, show them how God really made them, how to wear God's armor, how to confess the lies Satan told them, how to ask God for the truth, and how to talk with God their Father. *Fifth*, have them apply everything they've learned to the very things they're struggling with and then check on their progress. Remember that you're there to show them how to have the three dimensional life that Jesus had (Up, In, Out) so that they can show others. Finally, don't give up on them; that's exactly what Satan wants you to do. If they continue to repent and move forward, no matter how small the repentance or victory, keep helping them. We need to see people the way Jesus sees them and not the way the self-righteous see them, Luke 7:36-50.

7. **Show people how to live in Jesus' Kingdom instead of Satan's:** Jesus' death established His Kingdom. And the moment you believe in Him, God takes you out of Satan's darkness and places you inside His Son's Kingdom of light. This is why over and over God urges us to live our lives with Jesus instead of Satan, 1 John 3. But life in the Kingdom does not happen through studying a textbook called the Bible. It happens through a personal relationship with God the Father and His Son, John 17:3. And there is nothing that can keep us from living our lives in His Kingdom, not our sinful nature, not our terrible circumstances, and not Satan. We have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us and He is greater than Satan, our circumstances, and our wicked nature, 1 John 4:4. But in order for people to live their lives in Jesus' Kingdom, they have to be disciples. As Jesus showed His disciples how to live in the Kingdom, someone has to show us how to connect God's truth to our daily lives so that God can free us to have a proper relationship with Him as our Father, each other, and the world around us.

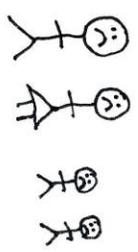
God frees a man struggling with a 50 year depression:

Man struggling with a 50 year Depression

Who is God, who is he, and what life does he see in Satan's Kingdom versus in Jesus' Kingdom?

Satan's Kingdom of Darkness

* he's married with 2 kids who have learning disorders



Problems

1. Depressed
2. Thinks he's a loser
3. Kicked out of the house
4. Is arrogant
5. No patience with kids
6. Fighting with kids
7. Fighting with his wife
8. Fighting with co-workers

Results of what he believes

1. Separated from his wife
2. Separated from his kids
3. Separated from his destiny as a loving husband + father
4. Even though he's a Christian God can't help him

What he believes about God

1. He's my Father
2. I'm a child of God
3. I'm going to heaven when I die
4. God is mad at me

What he believes about himself

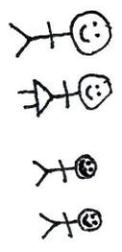
1. I'm a depressed loser

What he believes about his life

1. Since I'm a loser, bad things will always happen to me

Jesus' Kingdom of Love + Forgiveness

* he's married with 2 kids who have learning disorders



Problems

1. Depressed
2. Thinks he's a loser
3. Kicked out of the house
4. Is arrogant
5. No patience with kids
6. Fighting with kids
7. Fighting with his wife
8. Fighting with co-workers

Results of experiencing Jesus' Salvation

1. Reunited with his wife + kids
2. Knows he's not a loser, knows his true destiny
3. God becomes real, Jesus' salvation becomes real

Jesus comes to his rescue

1. His spirits are lifted
2. He sees the real him Jesus made
3. After 4 months his wife asks him to move back in
4. Humility replaces arrogance
5. He's a loving husband
6. He's a loving father
7. He's a considerate co-worker

What he believes about God

1. God is my Loving Father who helps me with my wife, kids, work, everything

What he believes about his life

1. Bad things will happen, but I have my Father's wisdom to fix them and to be patient, loving, and gracious