

“ADJ - Call to Discipleship Part 1” (2-13-22)

Introduction: Being a disciple is about becoming like your master - in character & purpose

So, as a Disciple navigates life following their Master, the everyday circumstances of life are filled with opportunities to grow in character and live with purpose (Jesus character & purpose).

This is not our default setting though. Living like this requires something of us . . .

Today: Explore the Conditions, Cost, & Characteristics of a Disciple thru miracle of feeding the multitudes

- All 4 Gospels share the story of the feeding of the 5,000 - Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6
- Additionally, both in Mathew 15 & Mark 8 another occasion is recorded where Jesus fed a large multitude

1) Conditions of Discipleship

Being in a relationship with Jesus is the primary condition of Discipleship. And the conditions of relationship are on His terms . . .

Example: Faith in Jesus (Read Dave’s definition on page 39)

Mathew 14 - John the Baptist has died, Jesus & his disciples retreat to a desolate place, crowds follow and Jesus has compassion and heals and ministers to them all day . . .

Matthew 14:15-21 (ESV)

(15) Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” (16) But Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” (17) They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” (18) And he said, “Bring them here to me.” (19) Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. (20) And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. (21) And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Note: Jesus original stated purpose was to get away and rest, but his PURPOSE in life caused him to be moved to meet the need that arose & minister to the crowd. And he used this opportunity to invite his disciples into that purpose and to grow their character. Consider how he stretched their faith . . .

- Jesus - “You feed them” (16)
- Jesus - “Bring me what you have” (18)
- Jesus performed the miracle, but involved the disciples in it - they distributed the food (19)
- Disciples needs were met too - all were satisfied and there were leftovers! (20)

Consider: How is Jesus growing your faith right now? What’s challenging you in your walk with Him? Where do you feel stuck?

Perhaps that’s not a problem or failure on your part, but an opportunity to step out in faith . . .

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Note: Remember, we walk in relationship with Jesus on his terms, but it’s for our benefit & growth!

2) Cost of Discipleship

Being a disciple of Jesus based on His **conditions** comes with a **cost** . . .

Example: Difference in Standards

John 6 - records the feeding of 5,000, but also his interactions with the same crowd the next day . . .

John 6:22-27 (ESV)

(22) On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. (23) Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. (24) So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. (25) When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" (26) Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. (27) Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

Note: Jesus is saying that following him isn't about getting what you want, but trusting him to provide for what you really need!

The conversation that follows boils down to: What can you do for us? And prove yourself with a sign.

John 6:29 (ESV)

Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

John 6:35 (ESV)

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

John 6:38 (ESV)

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me."

Note: Jesus is setting the standard of who he is and how he operates, and they are invited in!

John 6:41 (ESV)

So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

So, does Jesus change or lower the standard?

John 6:53-54 (ESV)

(53) So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. (54) Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Notice the response . . .

John 6:60 (ESV)

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"

John 6:61-64a (ESV)

(61) But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? (62) Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? (63) It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. (64) But there are some of you who do not believe."

Their response shows that they wouldn't accept his Standards, & reveals another cost of being a disciple . . .

John 6:66 (ESV)

After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

Note: Another cost of being a disciple of Jesus is being despised by society . . . even at times “the church”

John 6:67-69 (ESV)

(67) So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” (68) Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, (69) and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

Note: We see here another cost - sticking to the task. We may not always get it - his standards will challenge us, and others who despise him will also despise us, but if we stick to it - it's well worth the cost!

3) Characteristics of Disciples**The beauty & joy of being a disciple of Jesus . . .****Dave Buehring (from ADJ page 40)**

“When we love Jesus, we see the truth He brings, and we are changed.”

Some examples of this character change• **Disciples Testify to & proclaim the reality of Jesus**

Example: Peter in John 6 - “You have the words of eternal life . . . you are the Holy one of God”

• **Disciples obey Jesus**

Example: Handing out the bread & fish as Jesus directed them

• **Disciples don't love the World**

Example: Peter in John 6 - “Where else can we go?”

• **Disciples love other people**

Example: Jesus had compassion on the crowds . . .

1 John 3:16-17 (ESV)

(16) By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. (17) But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

• **Disciples are of the Spirit**

Example: Jesus - “my words are spirit & life”

John 6:63 (ESV)

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Conclusion: Let's answer the call of discipleship - walking in a relationship with Jesus on his conditions, not ours, fully aware of the costs and counting them as worth it that we might grow in character and live with Jesus Kingdom purposes in life!