

Working the word

Discipleship Is Love In Action

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Introduction

One of the clearest demonstrations of God's love is that he gave himself for others. Jesus did not merely talk about love; he showed love through sacrifice, service, and commitment. True discipleship follows the same pattern.

Discipleship is love in action.

Many people think love is simply a feeling, but biblical love is demonstrated through action. When we invest our time, prayers, encouragement, wisdom, and lives into helping others follow Jesus, we are expressing the love of Christ.

As HTBC continues to expand, enlarge, and increase, discipleship must be at the center of everything we do. Growth is not simply about filling seats; it is about loving people enough to help them become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

John 15:13 (KJV)

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

1. Jesus demonstrated love through discipleship

Jesus loved people enough to invest his life in them.

Mark 3:14 (KJV)

"And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach."

Jesus spent time teaching, correcting, encouraging, and preparing his disciples. He shared his life with them.

John 13:1 (KJV)

"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

Practical illustration

A parent who truly loves a child does more than provide food and shelter. They teach, guide, correct, and prepare that child for life. In the same way, discipleship is helping spiritual children grow and mature in Christ.

Life application

Love asks:

- Who am I helping grow in Christ?
- Who am I encouraging in their walk with God?

- Who am I investing my life into?

2. Love compels us to help others follow Jesus

The love of Christ should move us beyond ourselves.

2 Corinthians 5:14 (KJV)

"For the love of Christ constraineth us..."

The word "constraineth" means to compel, motivate, or drive us forward. Christ's love should motivate us to care about the spiritual condition of others.

Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV)

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."

Practical illustration

If you discovered a cure for a deadly disease, you would not keep it to yourself. You would share it with everyone possible. We have the message of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Love compels us to share it and help others grow in it.

Application

When we disciple others, we are saying:

"I care too much about you to leave you where you are."

3. Discipleship requires sacrificial love

Love costs something.

Jesus gave his time, energy, comfort, and ultimately his life.

John 15:13 (KJV)

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

1 John 3:18 (KJV)

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

Sometimes discipleship means:

- Making time for someone.
- Praying for them.
- Meeting with them.
- Listening to them.
- Encouraging them.
- Walking with them through challenges.

Disciple-makers invest time in helping people become more like Jesus.

Discipleship is not convenient love; it is committed love.

4. Discipleship multiplies God's love

When one disciple makes another disciple, God's love continues to spread.

2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV)

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

The progression:

- Paul taught Timothy.
- Timothy taught faithful men.
- Faithful men taught others.

That is love multiplying through discipleship.

Practical illustration

One candle can light many other candles without losing its own flame. One believer can help many others grow in Christ without losing anything. Instead, the light increases.

Life application

Every believer should ask:

"Who am I helping become a stronger follower of Jesus?"

Discussion questions

1. Why do you think Jesus viewed discipleship as an expression of love?
2. How is discipleship different from simply attending church services?
3. What sacrifices may be necessary to disciple another person?

Closing thought

Love is more than words. Love takes action. Jesus loved us enough to give his life for us. As his disciples, we demonstrate that same love by investing our lives in helping others become followers of Christ. Discipleship is love in action. When we disciple others, we show the world what the love of Jesus looks like.