

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Who is truly a disciple?

Who is truly a disciple? - posted by CofG (), on: 2019/7/26 6:05

And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him.

And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'"

And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. - Exodus 32:25-28

Who is on the Lord's side?

We have a self focusing tendency to emphasize the real and important truth that the Lord is on our side. That He is faithful. He is, but....,

the Bible also speaks very often asking this critical question....Who is on the Lord's side? Who will remain steadfast for Jesus no matter what? Who will remain faithful to Him until the end? This is a question of ultimate loyalty, devotion and faithfulness to Jesus on our part and is ultimately important to God. Here are some proofs.

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. - Luke 14:26

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home."

Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." - Luke 9:57-62

I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband.

I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord. - 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;

if we are faithless, he remains faithful- for he cannot deny himself. - 2 Timothy 2:12-13

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. - Matthew 10:16.....So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. - Matthew 10:32-33

Faith in God of necessity requires faithfulness towards God. We have excelled in teaching trust in Jesus and have severely faltered in properly or fully teaching and expecting faithfulness towards Jesus.

Who is on the Lord's side when the chips are down, when the costs are high? For that matter, who is on the Lord's side when it's merely inconvenient?

Jesus is ultimately devoted to Himself. We should be likewise because He is worthy and deserving, because He commands, demands and expects it, because He empowers it and finally, because our status as a disciple and our entry into h

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Heaven requires it.

Who is worthy to be a disciple? To enter into Heaven? Those who trust in Jesus and those who are trustworthy to Jesus. Jesus said so. Reread the verses

Re: Who is truly a disciple?, on: 2019/7/26 10:40

Robert, you bring up a very foundational, central truth here. At the heart of true faith in Christ Jesus is the need to be His disciple. At the heart of being a true disciple is strict, uncompromising devotion, obedience, and faithfulness to Him - regardless of consequence.

I recall, back during the years prior to being sealed with the guaranteed deposit Holy Spirit, struggling with wondering the reason I hadn't yet fully received Him. Although I had been drawn by God, becoming eager about learning more, I knew at some level I was missing something. I was attending various congregations, reading the Bible regularly, etc.; yet, there was a nagging, gnawing sense within me which was unsettled and discontented. Despite people trying to reassure me with Biblical promises I should "claim" and trust, I knew - at some level - this wasn't enough.

During those years, only ONE person was willing to confront me with the hard-hitting words of Jesus and emphasize the woeful lack of true disciples among the throngs of people who claim to be Christian. I had met this man at one of the congregations I regularly attended. We were chatting outside my apartment, one afternoon, as he simply and directly posed this question to me: "Are you willing to lose your whole life and self - your personal WILL - to Jesus, thereby becoming His true disciple?!" Now, even though I most certainly read those words in the Bible, before, for some reason it was as if I was actually realizing the significance of them for the first time. I had to be honest with him, admitting I just wasn't ready to do so, at that time...

Although it would be several more years from the time of that conversation, before I would finally be able to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and begin actually walking out a life of faith as an honest, actual disciple of the Lord Jesus, that poignant moment stood out as a watershed moment on my journey. Somewhat like those whom Jesus addressed, in your quoted passages from Luke, I had been trying to "worship" and "follow" Him without first truly surrendering my whole heart and will, being willing to lose my life and put aside all other relationships in this life behind my submission to Him. It was only after I began utterly and truly humbling and offering myself, crying out desperately to let God have the all of my being and life, He eventually led me to a state of being which was able to receive the fulness of Christ.

Let us never deceive ourselves, or others, by preaching and teaching a gospel which lacks the crucial need to lose our lives in order to gain them.

Re: Who is truly a disciple?, on: 2019/7/28 17:04

Quote:
-----We have a self focusing tendency to emphasize the real and important truth that the Lord is on our side. That He is faithful. He is, but...the Bible also speaks very often asking this critical question....Who is on the Lord's side? Who will remain STEADFAST for Jesus no matter what? Who will remain FAITHFUL TO HIM UNTIL THE END? This is a QUESTION OF ULTIMATE LOYALTY, DEVOTION AND FAITHFULNESS TO JESUS ON OUR PART and is ultimately important to God. FAITH IN GOD OF NECESSITY REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS TOWARD GOD. We have excelled in teaching "trust in Jesus" and have severely faltered in PROPERLY OR FULLY teaching and expecting FAITHFULNESS TOWARD Jesus. Who is on the Lord's side when the chips are down, when the COSTS are high? For that matter, who is on the Lord's side when it's merely inconvenient?...He is worthy and deserving, because HE COMMANDS, DEMANDS AND EXPECTS IT, because HE EMPOWERS IT and finally, because OUR STATUS AS A DISCIPLE AND OUR ENTRY INTO HEAVEN REQUIRES IT. Who is worthy to be a disciple? To enter into heaven? Those who trust in Jesus and those who are trustworthy to Jesus. Jesus said so. Reread the verses

Robert - grace to remain faithful, steadfast, devoted and obedient to our Lord be with you - today and until the end!

While prayerfully and more carefully re-reading and meditating upon your posted thoughts, I realized with more clear focus the emphasis you had put on faithfulness, devotion, and the inferred need for endurance. Allow me to add these words of the Lord and some of His biblical servants to the references offered in your posting:

"You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved." (Matthew 10:22 NASB)

"And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. 20And it was reported to Him, 'Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You.' But He answered and said to them, 'My mother and My brothers (in other words, His true family) are these who hear the word of God and DO IT.' (Luke 8:19-21 NASB)

"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have COUNTED AS LOSS for the sake of Christ. More than that, I COUNT ALL THINGS TO BE LOSS in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may GAIN CHRIST, and may BE FOUND IN HIM, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through FAITH IN CHRIST, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, being conformed to His death; IN ORDER THAT I MAY ATTAIN THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD." (Philippians 3:7-11 NASB)

"For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is NOT ABLE TO FINISH, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So then, NONE OF YOU CAN BE MY DISCIPLE WHO DOES NOT GIVE UP ALL OF HIS POSSESSIONS. Therefore, salt is good; but IF EVEN SALT HAS BECOME TASTELESS, with what will it be seasoned? IT IS USELESS either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Luke 14:28-35 NASB)

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the TESTING OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES ENDURANCE. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing...Blessed is a man who PERSEVERES under trial; for once he has been APPROVED, he will RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE which the Lord has promised to those who love Him...But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not MERELY HEARERS WHO DELUDE THEMSELVES. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately FORGOTTEN what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and ABIDES BY IT, not having become a forgetful hearer but an EFFECTUAL DOER, this man will be BLESSED in what he does." (James 1:2-4, 12, 22-25 NASB)

"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner WORTHY of the Lord, to PLEASE HIM in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the ATTAINING OF ALL STEADFASTNESS AND PATIENCE; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through PERSEVERANCE and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4 NASB)

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who OVERCOMES, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7 NASB - among the several, similar statements to the various churches addressed in Revelation 2-3)

"Here is the PERSEVERANCE of the saints who KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD AND THEIR FAITH IN JESUS." (Revelation 14:12 NASB)

Robert, along with any and all who truly have ears to hear and the faith to obediently live by EVERY word which proceeds from the mouth of God (Deuteronomy 8:3 + Matthew 4:4 NASB) - not just the ones easier to hear, which are easily twisted out of context to fool many into false self-assurances (2 Timothy 4:3 NASB) - let us encourage, pray for, teach and help one another truly be found worthy daily and until the end. Amen and amen!

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/7/28 23:00

Robert,
You ask, "who is a disciple?"

What I am seeing according to the Scripture is :

Mt.11:29,

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Disciple: a learner

* some disciples went back, and followed Jesus no more,(was it because of the yoke?),...but I believe if we are following on with Jesus,.. learning,..(a disciple),..we will not learn it all,..He wants to teach us,..always,.. that it will be a continuing thing,... life-long,..but the yoke is included.

Am I right,...?

I know at some point,they were sent out by God. .. then they were called Apostles, ... (sent ones)
But they ... I would say, still put the yoke upon themselves and continued to "learn" of Him.

"
elizabeth

Re: - posted by CofG (), on: 2019/7/29 4:19

Hi Elisbeth,

There was a distinction that Jesus made in His teachings and one that the other apostolic writers and prophets made between sanctification and devotion. Becoming like Christ is very clearly a process that is fed by more and more knowledge of Christ and applying the teachings of Christ in our lives.

Devotion and treasuring Jesus above all else however, is something Jesus consistently and often maintained was required from the beginning before entering the Kingdom. Many would say they wanted to learn and follow Jesus, but before He would allow them to even start, Jesus would put before them the type and depth of devotion that is demanded to become and continue as a disciple or follower. He made it clear that if you lacked the level of devotion that He was worthy of, then they would be unworthy of Him.

Many would say that they have not experienced that level of devotion or that they are developing it over time. I can't and shouldn't speak into peoples' experiences but am only trying to set forth a standard and expectation that Jesus insisted on and one which generally many churches and teachers seem to have neglected.

When God says through Paul that He has shown the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus into our hearts at conversion and we respond that it is ok that we don't see, experience a treasuring above all else and devotion to Him above all others as He is revealed in this way is strange given what Jesus said about those who choose to follow Him through revelation and regeneration.

Re: , on: 2019/7/29 16:28

Elizabeth,

Jesus' teachings about being His disciple draw distinctions between those who would attempt to follow without being wholeheartedly His and those who are willing to be so; on their own, limited terms instead of submitting to His. Being wholly His is to be completely and genuinely devoted to Him, as Robert has said.

Always remember we must consider the collective context of ALL the teachings about being His disciple. Your reference to taking upon His yoke is certainly right; but, He won't allow a person to stay yoked to Him, in the long run, if the person does not remain steadfast and "worthy" through unconditional devotion to Him - before all other relationships and desires.

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May God bless you.