



The Disciple Step

Read: John 21:1-19

In the gospel Jesus invites each of us to follow him. Accepting that invitation is the beginning of a life long process of spiritual transformation and better living. Answering the call to follow Jesus and becoming a Christian is only the start. Jesus' ultimate desire is for us to become his disciples. What we need to recognize is that being a Christian is the first step towards discipleship.

A Christian is someone who has accepted Jesus and made a personal decision to follow him. Being a Christian is the foundation for discipleship. On the other hand, a disciple is someone who makes other disciples (John 15:8). They are Christians who go out and share the good news with others because it is something worth sharing. Discipleship is about embracing Jesus' leadership and plan for better living, and then sharing that plan with others (John 15:4 & Matthew 4:19).

Furthermore, discipleship is about becoming more and more like Jesus (Romans 8:29). Disciples are called to change allegiance from being self-centered to Jesus centered (John 14:23-24). A willingness to follow Jesus is an indication of our love for him. Though we aren't perfect, our faith should be evident and growing.

The gospel story illustrates the step from being a Christian to being a disciple. Being a Christian is a wonderful category to fall into, but, as Jesus points out, it is not the end of the journey. Peter and his cohort have experienced the risen Lord but are back to their day jobs as fishermen. There is no real urgency or drive to proclaim the good news. Jesus comes along and gives them a new direction. He tells them to, "cast the net to the right side of the boat" (John 21:6).

Discipleship is about casting our nets where Jesus calls us to fish. We have two choices. We can sit and be comfortable in our current Christian lifestyle, or we can get up and go fishing. Jesus accepts the first, he desires the second. In fact, he tells each of us to "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). That's the job description. That is exactly what he tells Peter, "feed my sheep". Go and make disciples. This is Jesus' ultimate goal and purpose for each of us when he says, "follow me" (John 21:19).

Grow: How would I define a Christian? A disciple? Which am I?