


Tuesday

Living as a Disciple



We have been called to live as Christ's disciples at home, work, school, in the marketplace, and beyond. He is the light of the world (John 1:4). If He lives in you, it will be evident to those around you. Your knowledge of God cannot be hidden. It cannot be private, known between you and God alone. It has to bless others. "Like their master, the followers of Christ in every age were to be the light of the world."*


Sometime ago I attended a funeral of an elder in Kenya. His wife and teenage children testified about his life in a manner that touched every mourner. "At our wedding," she said, "he vowed to love me, and he genuinely loved me until his death." The children affirmed this as true. As a Christian and church elder, he truly exemplified the love of God to his spouse and children. This is living as a disciple!

DISCIPLES DEFINED


In common English a disciple is a personal follower of a teacher. In Hebrew a disciple is one who actively imitates both the teaching and life of the master—one who applies what has been learned. The big question for a follower of Christ is: What would Jesus do if He were in my situation? Then that is what I must do! (Phil. 3:10, 11).

It is always a challenge to live what you claim to be! People around you want confirmation that you are genuine. The Bible is full of examples of people who lived as genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. They imitated both His teachings and life.

Paul encouraged the believers: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, KJV). Joshua declared before all the leaders of Israel, "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day



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whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15, NIV).

A BIBLICAL DIRECTIVE

Scripture calls spouses to live as genuine disciples at home. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . . . Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body” (Eph. 5:25-30, NIV).

“Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not

believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives” (1 Peter 3:1, 2, NIV).

If you are a parent, your discipleship is revealed in the way you interact with your children. “Fathers [or parents], do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4, NIV).

As a child, living as a disciple requires that you obey your parents, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth” (verses 1-3, NIV).

Paul admonished the youth to confirm their discipleship through their characters. “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12, NIV).

The apostle Peter challenged pastors and church leaders to live as genuine disciples: “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder. . . . Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away” (1 Peter 5:1-4, NIV).

A CRITICAL NEED

Living as a genuine disciple is critical. In these last days the devil and his angels are working tirelessly to keep believers comfortable in a lukewarm state. “There will

be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, . . . having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people” (2 Tim. 3:1-5, NIV).

Like Paul, let your consuming desire be to know Christ and be like Him: “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:10-14, NIV). ©

* Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), p. 369.

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Questions for Reflection

1. When does one become a disciple of Jesus Christ?
2. Is it possible to share your light to those far away and fail to share it with those close to you?
3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship?