

BECOMING A DISCIPLE

As we have seen previously, a disciple is a follower. A follower is going to mimic the one he is following, and as that follower of Jesus Christ, we should be learning as well as training others to be disciples (encouraging them to "walk" forward toward that goal). We see what to do (for ourselves and those we disciple) as we look into God's Word. Jesus gives us the pattern and demonstrates it through His own life as He walked this earth. It is a process/ a "walk" of continually moving forward to the point of Him calling us His disciples because we have met the qualifications He requires.

TAKING THE STEPS FORWARD:

In Matthew (4:17), we see Jesus beginning to preach and cry out to the people to repent (following His temptation in the desert). This preceded the account of Him beginning to call His disciples. If our intention is to follow Jesus, we must first repent of our sins. Whether you are being mentored or are discipling others, there needs to be the acknowledgment of repentance, turning and going the opposite direction in our lives.

As a result of repentance, not only is there the confession with our mouth (Romans 10:10), but there is the testimony we declare to others of that inward work by water baptism (Mark 16:16 and Matthew 28:19). Through water baptism, we are identifying ourselves with Christ by being "buried" (the old dying) and the rising to new life in Him. It is the outward sign of an inward work that we are acknowledging.



THE CALL:

As Jesus walked the earth throughout His ministry, we see how He touched many lives in many different ways. Many believed in Him and loved Him. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus loved Him, had Him in their home, loved to learn from Him; but they did not follow Him as His disciples did. What was the difference? Let's look as we continue on in this process of being called a disciple.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus gave the command to go and make disciples. As He

began to call His own disciples, we get a picture (in the natural) of a spiritual application. I love the way Jesus taught in this manner so we and the people He taught while on earth would understand a higher principle.

"As He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He noticed two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, throwing a dragnet into the sea, for they were fishermen." (Matthew 4:18) He gave the call to follow Him and He would in turn make them "**fish for people**" (verse 19). So here we see the purpose of His disciples. He was raising them from a lower fishing level to a higher fishing level (from the natural to the spiritual). He comes to each of us as well to call us from a lower to a higher level. David was called from a lower (tending the animal sheep) to a higher feeding (shepherding people - Psalm 78:70-72 - once again from the natural to the spiritual). Is He calling you from a lower to a higher? Have you responded to the discipleship call or are you still just content to sit where you are at?