



MARKS

O F A D I S C I P L E

7 MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV).

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MARK # 3

A DISCIPLE...PARTICIPATES IN RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

*Optional Resource:
"How to Help Someone Follow Jesus"
Available online at bellshoals.com/7marks
or on the **Stephen Rummage app** on your mobile device.*

INTRODUCTION

The key ingredient to growth toward discipleship is the Holy Spirit Who now lives within you. However, God puts us in relationship with other believers who will encourage and help us in our new life in Christ. Paul said: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." (1 Corinthians 3:6). New believers need to be on the receiving end of discipleship efforts; more mature believers need to be on the giving end. The goal is that every new believer becomes a mature believer.

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

Discipleship can be both educational and relational. Educational discipleship takes place in environments

that do not emphasize personal relationship with the teacher (radio, television, large group Bible study). Jesus utilized this method throughout His ministry. The Sermon on the Mount, His teaching in synagogues and the temple, and His teaching prior to feeding the 5,000 are all examples of educational discipleship. But Jesus seemed to give more importance to relational discipleship, instructing the twelve disciples as they walked along the road, dined in someone's home, or sailed across the Sea of Galilee. The disciples learned in both environments.

EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Read Ephesians 4:7, 11-13.

List some examples of leaders that Christ gave to His Church:

List the reasons Christ gave these leaders to the church:

The leaders listed in verse 11 are given the task of teaching, encouraging, and motivating believers toward discipleship and service. Equipping the saints (believers) to serve the church and building up the body of Christ are tasks of discipleship.

It is always to your benefit, as God leads, to attend church services, participate in classes, and attend Christian conferences where the Word of God is taught. All of these opportunities for educational discipleship will help you grow as a believer.

What educational discipleship opportunities are you currently taking advantage of?

RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2.

Paul met Timothy during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3). He invited Timothy to accompany him and Silas, much like Jesus asked His disciples to follow Him. Paul used Timothy as a helper, but he also poured his knowledge of Jesus Christ and how to serve Him into Timothy's life. Many years later, Paul challenged Timothy to teach "faithful men, who will be able to teach others also," passing along to others what he learned from Paul.

Read 2 Timothy 3:10.

What things had Timothy learned from Paul?

Which of these do you think were better “caught” than taught?

Seeing someone persevere in their faith teaches us more than hearing a sermon on perseverance. The saying “a picture is worth a thousand words” is certainly appropriate here.

ONE-TO-ONE DISCIPLESHIP

This discipleship program is really a combination of educational and relational discipleship. The messages from the sermon series, “Marks of a Disciple,” for example, are educational in nature. But you are also enjoying a relationship with a more mature Christian as you discuss the lessons and learn together. It is a blessing for you to get to know that person in a setting where there is freedom for each of you to talk about what is going on in your life and the challenges you are facing. You would be less likely to share your struggles in a classroom situation. But with just two people, you can pray for each other, encourage each other, and learn from each other.

COUNT THE COST

Jesus did not promise it would be easy to be His disciple. What do you think Jesus meant by “take up his cross daily” in Luke 9:23?

Read Luke 14:27-32.

In this passage, Jesus gives examples of two people who count the cost before they do something. What are the two activities?

Read 1 Corinthians 3:11-15.

Every Christian is building a life upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. Which of the building materials listed will be burned up in the fire?

Which will survive the fire?

Anything we do while walking in the Spirit has eternal value and will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). Whatever the Christian does in the flesh and for selfish motives will be burned up and will not be rewarded. (The eternal security of salvation is assured because the foundation, which is Christ, will not be burned.)

Read Ephesians 6:10-17.

We often think that an individual who is opposing or threatening us is our enemy. Who or what are our actual enemies, according to this passage?

We are at war with a formidable foe, the devil, but “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4b). As we abide in Jesus we put on the armor of God and can stand firm, victorious in our fight against the devil, who wants to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10a).

Read John 6:66-69.

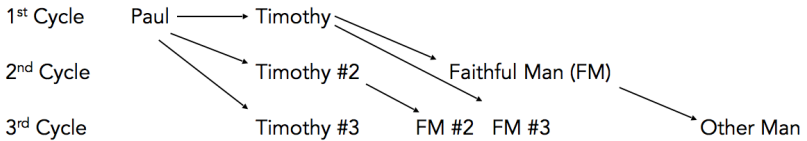
Many of Jesus’ followers thought the cost of discipleship was too steep and didn’t walk with Him anymore. When Jesus asked the disciples if they would leave also, how did Peter respond?

Optional question: In his message, “How to Help Someone Follow Jesus,” Dr. Rummage issues a challenge to leave your comfort zone and take risks. How do you think Jesus’ admonition to count the cost of discipleship relates to this challenge?

SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION

As you continue through your study of “7 Marks of a Disciple,” you should view it as a tool that you can one day use to disciple someone else. Paul would have been practicing “spiritual addition” if he had discipled Timothy without giving him instruction to disciple others. But Paul instructed Timothy to teach others

what Paul had taught him, thus encouraging “spiritual multiplication.” Here’s what 2 Timothy 2:2 looks like.



The arrow represents the one-to-one discipleship process. By himself, Paul would have discipled three men over a certain period of time. However, by involving Timothy in discipleship and encouraging him to pass the same instructions along, Paul would influence six men being discipled. Spiritual multiplication is the best way to win the world to Christ. Jesus is counting on us to do our part!

APPLICATION

At this point in your Christian life, do you need to be discipled by someone else, or are you ready to disciple a less mature Christian?

What should your next step should be?

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSE:

“And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

2 Timothy 2:2