

Philippians 3:17-4:1

OUTLINE

Key to Being Discipled is knowing It is Important to Follow Godly Examples, Avoid Wicked Companions, and Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

1. **Follow Godly Examples** (3:17), Paul says follow me and follow those that look like me.

¹⁷ Join in imitating me, brothers and sisters, and pay careful attention to those who live according to the example you have in us.

2. **Avoid Wicked Companions** (3:18-19), Don't follow talkers who aren't walkers.

¹⁸ For I have often told you, and now say again with tears, that many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. They are focused on earthly things,

3. **Keep your Eye on Jesus** (3:20-21), Watch and wait for our Lord and Saviour.

²⁰ but our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself.

4. **This is Important** (4:1), Discipleship within the context of community is worth fight for.

¹ So then, my dearly loved and longed for brothers and sisters, my joy and crown, in this manner stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF DISCIPLESHIP

• **What is Discipleship?** A pupil, learner, devotee or follower.

1. **To be a Disciple is to Follow Jesus**

- **Mt 4:19**, ¹⁹ “Follow me [126x],” he told **them [the disciples]**, “and I will make you fish for people.”
- **Mt 8:34**, ³⁴ Calling **the crowd** along with **his disciples**, he said to them, “If **anyone** wants to **follow after me**, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.
- **Mt 10:38**, ³⁸ And **whoever** doesn't take up his cross and **follow me** is not worthy of me.
- **1 Jn 2:6**, ⁶ The one who says he remains in him should **walk just as he walked**.
- **1 Pe 2:21**, ²¹ For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you **an example**, that you should **follow in his steps**.
- **To be a Disciple is to Follow Jesus**

2. **To be a Disciple is to Imitate Jesus**

- **Mt 28:19-20a**, ¹⁹ **Go**, therefore, and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching** them to **observe** everything I have commanded you.
- Christianity affects the Head (intellect), heart (emotions and will) and life (it looks like something)
- **To be a Disciple is to Follow Jesus and Imitate Jesus**

3. **To be a Disciple is to help others imitate and follow Jesus**

1. In evangelism, **Mt 28:19-20a**, ¹⁹ **Go**, therefore, and **make disciples** of all nations...
2. In maturing, **Mt 28:19-20a**, **make disciples...** ²⁰ **teaching them** to observe everything I have commanded you.
 - **To be a Disciple is to Follow Jesus and Imitate Jesus and Help others to do the same**

• **What does Discipleship look like?**

“Not everyone has been impacted by individualism to the same degree; however it is true to say that as far as Western culture has impacted us in South Africa we're increasingly individualistic. We've adopted individualism; and individualism has bled into the church. So when we talk about discipleship being following Jesus and imitating Jesus we're generally OK with that. We're OK with personally reading our Bible and personally praying everyday. But where we're not so good as a church at helping others to imitate Jesus and helping others to follow Jesus or being helped ourselves to follow Jesus or being helped ourselves to imitate Jesus.”

○ And yet this is the mechanism Scripture presents to us for our growth and other's good:

1. **Ti 2:3-4**, ³ In the same way, **older women** are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to excessive drinking. **They are to teach** what is good, ⁴ so that **they may encourage the young women** to love their husbands and to love their children, ⁵ to be self-controlled, pure, workers at home, kind, and in submission to their husbands, so that God's word will not be slandered.
2. **2 Ti 2:1-2**, ¹ You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² What you have **heard from me** in the presence of many witnesses, **commit to faithful men** who will be **able to teach others** also.

○ **Discipleship looks like lives lived out, Following, Imitating and Helping, in the context of Community**

• **What are Objections to Discipleship?**

1. **Discipleship requires Transparent Vulnerability which is Risky**

You can't do church well by loving the music, loving the preaching, loving the programs and not loving the people and allowing them to love you back. Church is where our double life is put to death. It is where our struggle with sin, problems and discouragements are dealt with and that requires vulnerability. And being vulnerable with the most private parts of your life means that you could be hurt and that is risky.

2. **Discipleship requires Time Commitment which is Costly**

Discipleship requires time. Time to talk, time to laugh, time to read, a commitment of time. We live in a fast-paced society. Time is a commodity in short supply. And yet, if discipleship is to work it requires time. And so we must make the allocation of time to discipleship relationships a priority.

3. **Discipleship requires Emotion Expenditure which is Draining**

Discipling is soul work. It is dealing with the intimate hopes and fears, joys and pains of another individual. And this can be, and often is, emotionally draining. It requires preparation, prayer, intentionality.

4. **Discipleship requires Life Transfer which is Daunting**

- *"I was not sure what discipling was supposed to look like, but I was certain it did not look like what I was doing. "I must have it all backwards," I thought as I closed the door behind the poor sister who had given up an hour of her life to come and be discipled. "I am a mess. I have no idea what I'm doing here. There certainly wasn't any 'teaching' going on with my crazy hooligan children and my heart in a bad place toward my husband. I shouldn't be teaching anyone. I'm the one who needs discipling! God, what would you have me do?" I mumbled all this half aloud as I walked back into the kitchen to finish making dinner"* (Erin Wheeler).

- My relationship isn't all roses but Jeff wants marriage advice. Or, my kids are mad but Susan is a 1st time single mother of a 6 month old and she clearly isn't coping; Or, I'm not where I'd hoped to be in my career at 45 but Xolani is 19, unemployed, with no higher education, and little prospects, and he really needs help.

5. **Discipleship will result in a Morally Messy Church**

- While new believers believe in Jesus they still need to learn what the Christian life looks like. Immature Christians: 1.) can be swayed by powerful personalities, 2.) might be sexually active outside of marriage, 3.) may have questionable business practices, 4.) could end up in broken families, 5.) are often too swayed by the culture, 6.) probably don't know how to conduct themselves in worship, 7.) almost certainly need teaching on core doctrines like the resurrection.

- And before you shake your head in disbelief know that I've pulled every one of those problems out of 1 Corinthians. These are problems evangelising, soul winning, growing churches – like ours – struggle with. In fact the most morally 'pure' people of the first century – the Pharisees – were the very ones Jesus most often condemned!

- The good news is that Corinth was an authentic church that Christ loved and Crystal Park Baptist Church Benoni is too. But we can't leave new converts, baby Christians, newborn Believers there!

• **Given the Objections why should you Disciple?**

1. **Because Discipleship is Commanded**

- **Make disciples, not be disciples:** Many Christians live as if the Great Commission was a command to **be** a disciples but it wasn't. It was a command to **make** disciples.

- **Mt 28:19-20a**, ¹⁹ **Go**, therefore, and **make disciples** of all nations

2. **Because you will be held Responsible to how you Discipled**

- **Ro 14:10-12**, ¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God. ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- **2 Co 5:10**, ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

3. **Because Discipleship Glorifies God**

4. **Because if Discipleship is to God's Glory, it is for our Good**

TRANSITION

1. **What is Discipleship?**

2. **What does Discipleship look like?**

3. **What are Objections to Discipleship?**

4. **Why should you Disciple?**

- **Key to Being Discipled is knowing It is Important to Follow Godly Examples, Avoid Wicked Companions, and Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

1.) Follow Godly Examples (17)

a.) 1.)¹⁷ **Join** [γίνεσθε, PMM] **in imitating me**, brothers and sisters,
2.) **and pay careful attention** [σκοπεῖτε, PAM]
to **those who live** [περιπατοῦντας, PAP] **according to the example you have** [ἔχετε, PAI] **in us.**

1. Following

- **Join** in imitating me:
- **1 Co 4:16**,¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to **imitate me**.
- **1 Co 11:1**,¹¹ **Imitate me**, as **I also imitate Christ**.
- **2 Th 3:7-9**;⁷ For you yourselves know how you should **imitate us**... ..make ourselves **an example** to you so that you would **imitate us**.

2. Intentional

- **pay careful attention**: Put to the test. Exercise caution.

3. Life style

- **live according to the example you have in us**: Those who don't think, or feel, but practice these things.

4. Communal

- **me**: Paul
- **us**: Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus
- **those**: Others
- brothers and sisters: Philippians

APPLICATION

- Men, Woman, Children
- Singles, Married, Single Moms, Husbands, Wives, Workers, Retireders
- **Ga 5:19-21**,¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions,²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar. I am warning you about these things—as I warned you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- Service

TRANSITION

- **Key to Being Discipled is knowing It is Important to Follow Godly Examples, Avoid Wicked Companions, and Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

2.) Avoid Wicked Companions (18-19)

b.)¹⁸ **For** I have often told [ἔλεγον, IAI] you, and now **say again** [λέγω, PAI] **with tears** [κλαίων, PAI], that **many live** [περιπατοῦσιν, PAI] **as enemies of the cross of Christ**.

- 1.)¹⁹ Their **end** is **destruction**;
- 2.) their **god** is their **stomach**;
- 3.) their **glory** is in their **shame**.
- 4.)a.) They are **focused** [φρονούντες, PAP] on **earthly things**,

- **many live as enemies of the cross of Christ**: Profession doesn't match life application
- **end... ..destruction**: Lordship salvation. Lips, life.
- **god... ..stomach**: "unrestrained sinful appetite, sensuality, governed by all things sinful" (CJM).
- **glory... ..shame**:
- **focused... ..earthly things**:

TRANSITION

- **Key to Being Discipled is knowing It is Important to Follow Godly Examples, Avoid Wicked Companions, and Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

3.) Keep your Eye on Jesus (20-21)

b.)²⁰ but

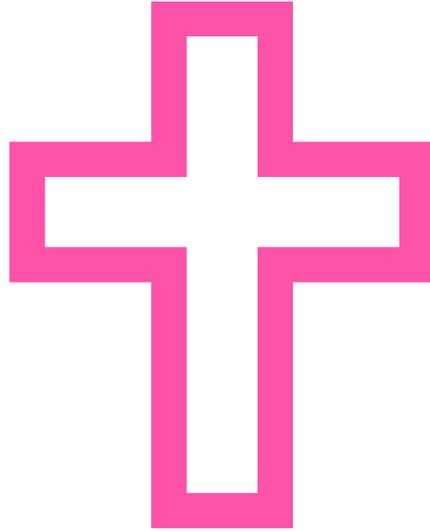
1.) our citizenship is in heaven,

2.) and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.

²¹ He will transform the body of our humble condition

into the likeness of his glorious body,

by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself.



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• *Key to Being Discipled is knowing It is Important to Follow Godly Examples, Avoid Wicked Companions, and Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*

CONCLUSION

¹ So then,

1.) my dearly loved and longed for brothers and sisters,

2.) my joy and crown,

in this manner stand firm [στήκετε, PAM] in the Lord, dear friends.

• stand firm: be resolute

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BENEDICTION

2 Pe 3:18,

¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.