

3. JESUS

—Be His Disciple

The word *Christian* appears 3 times in the Bible. It meant *little Christ*, and was used pejoratively to refer to the followers of Jesus. The words *Christianity* or *Christendom* don't appear in the Bible. These words entered our vocabulary to communicate the idea of the religion and of the culture that grew out of those who became followers of Jesus. The word that does appear over 260 times in the New Testament to describe those who believed in and obeyed the Lord Jesus, is the word *disciple*.

In Greek or Hebraic usage, a disciple was someone apprenticed to a master. Over a period of years, through patient learning and experience, the disciple would acquire the character, knowledge, wisdom and skill of the teacher, thus becoming not only an expert, but also a master teacher who could instruct other apprentices. We see this mentoring model today in various professional fields.

Jesus made disciples. These disciples went out and made more disciples. The kingdom of God grew because disciples of Jesus helped others to follow Jesus.

Although the word *disciple* is not used outside the four gospels and the book of Acts, some terms that are used include the words *follow*, *mature*, or *discipline*. (1 Corinthians 14:20, Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 5:11-14, 1 Peter 2:21).

A thorough study of the New Testament would give us a picture of what a disciple looks like. As Jesus said in Luke 6:40: "...everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher." We should make it our aim to talk to, listen to and become like Jesus, our teacher.

Disciples Called and Sent - Read and reflect on Matthew 4:18-25 and Matthew 9:35-10:16. What did it mean for the early disciples to follow Jesus? What are the implications for us today?

Marks of Disciple - Jesus specifies four marks of a disciple in the following passages. What are they and what observations do you make about them?

Luke 14:26-33

John 8:31-32

John 13:34-35

John 15:8

Lordship - In the New Testament Jesus is described as "Savior" 24 times, but as "Lord" over 700 times! What do we learn about submitting to his Lordship from the following passages:

Matthew 6:33

Luke 6:46

Luke 9:23-24

Romans 14:8-9

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Colossians 1:16-18

APPLICATION: Write a short paragraph in your Bible or journal that affirms your commitment to the Lordship of Christ. As you do this, what areas of your life do you need to surrender to him as Lord? How will you plan to do so?