

Discipleship Study

Character study: Jesus, Peter, Mary of Bethany, Martha, Mary Magdala, The Disciples

1. Discipleship

A disciple as we now know it is simply one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another; in the time of Christ as He taught, the label of disciple was usually associated with the Twelve disciples but it also referred to the multitudes and others that came to hear Jesus speak:

Luke 6:17-18: He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of His disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases.

The multitudes were not true disciples, they were just curious. Every born again believer should consider themselves a disciple of Christ, we are taught of Him and we believe on Him and we accept salvation through Him. Eastons Illustrated Bible dictionary describes a disciple as such:

Disciple: A scholar, sometimes applied to the followers of John the Baptist (Mat 9:14), and of the Pharisees (Mat 22:16), but principally to the followers of Christ. A disciple of Christ is one who (1) believes His doctrine, (2) rests on His sacrifice, (3) imbibes His spirit, and (4) imitates His example (Mat 10:24; Luke 14:26, 27, 33; John 6:69).

—Easton's Illustrated Dictionary

Jesus ministry began with twelve disciples and

ended up with eleven disciples. All throughout His ministry disciples came and left but the Twelve disciples stayed faithful except the one who gave Him up. Many who came to Jesus came because they heard of the miracles He was doing, some came just for food. The disciples who left did so because the teachings were too difficult to grasp or follow and some left because they were not prepared to be a follower of Christ.

John 6:24-27, 60-64, 66-68: Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. When they found Him on the other side of the lake, they asked Him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval."

On hearing it, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" Aware that His disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where He was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe."

From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The Twelve Disciples were set apart as Apostles

early on in the ministry of Christ, they were set apart and sent forth to preach the Gospel. Smiths dictionary defines an Apostle as:

Apostle (one sent forth), in the New Testament originally the official name of those twelve of the disciples whom Jesus chose to send forth first to preach the Gospel and to be with Him during the course of his ministry on earth. The word also appears to have been used in a non-official sense to designate a much wider circle of Christian messengers and teachers See 2 Cor 8:23; Phil 2:25 It is only of those who were officially designated apostles that we treat in the article. Their names are given in Matt 10:2-4 and Christ's charge to them in the rest of the chapter.

Their office.—(1) The original qualification of an apostle, as stated by St. Peter on the occasion of electing a successor to the traitor Judas, was that he should have been personally acquainted with the whole ministerial course of our Lord from his baptism by John till the day when he was taken up into heaven. (2) They were chosen by Christ himself (3) They had the power of working miracles. (4) They were inspired. John 16:13 (5) Their world seems to have been pre-eminently that of founding the churches and upholding them by supernatural power specially bestowed for that purpose. (6) The office ceased, a matter of course, with its first holders—all continuation of it, from the very condition of its existence (cf. 1 Cor 9:1), being impossible. Early history and training.—The apostles were from the lower ranks of life, simple and uneducated; some of them were related to Jesus according to the flesh; some had previously been disciples of John the Baptist. Our Lord chose them early in his public career They seem to have been all on an equality, both during and after the ministry of Christ on earth. Early in our Lord's ministry he sent them out two and two to

preach repentance and to perform miracles in his name Matt 10; Luke 9. They accompanied him in his journey, saw his wonderful works, heard his discourses addressed to the people, and made inquiries of him on religious matters. They recognized him as the Christ of God, Matt 16:16; Luke 9:20 and described to him supernatural power Luke 9:54 but in the recognition of the spiritual teaching and mission of Christ they made very low progress, held back as they were by weakness of apprehension and by national prejudices. Even at the removal of our Lord from the earth they were yet weak in their knowledge, Luke 24:21; John 16:12 though he had for so long been carefully preparing and instructing them. On the feast of Pentecost, ten days after our Lord's ascension, the Holy Spirit came down on the assembled church, Acts 2; and from that time the apostles became altogether different men, giving witness with power of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, as he had declared they should. Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8, 22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 13:31

Later labors and history.—First of all the mother-church at Jerusalem grew up under their hands, Acts 3-7, and their superior dignity and power were universally acknowledged by the rulers and the people. Acts 5:12 ff. Their first mission out of Jerusalem was to Samaria Acts 8:5-25 where the Lord himself had, during his ministry, sown the seed of the gospel. Here ends the first period of the apostles' agency, during which its centre is Jerusalem and the prominent figure is that of St. Peter. The centre of the second period of the apostolic agency is Antioch, where a church soon was built up, consisting of Jews and Gentiles; and the central figure of this and of the subsequent period is St. Paul. The third apostolic period is marked by the almost entire disappearance of the twelve from the sacred narrative and the exclusive agency of St. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles. Of the missionary work of the rest of the Twelve we know

absolutely nothing from the sacred narrative.

—Smith's Bible Dictionary

Many of John the Baptist's disciples left John and began to follow Christ after he had baptised and announced the identity of Christ:

And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.

John 3:26-30 (KJV)

Jesus also choose seventy two disciples to go and preach and teach the Gospel message, he sent them out in pairs: After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. Some manuscripts say that he only sent seventy instead of seventy-two.

Jesus even had two secret disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a very high ranked Pharisee, a ruler over all Israel. Joseph was rich and was also a member of the Sanhedrin and was called an honorable counsellor; Joseph demanded the body of Jesus from Pilate and both of these men placed Jesus in the tomb:

And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came

therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

John 19:38-42 (KJV)

A lesson can be learned from this; Nicodemus came by night to Jesus so he could be taught without distraction, while Joseph being a secret disciple let his fear stop him from serving God. It is better to come to Jesus secretly than not at all but fear can greatly hinders our service to Christ.

Mary of Magdala was a disciple and she meets the basic requirement for being a disciple, she came to hear the teachings Of Jesus, she followed Him in His ministry and acted upon the knowledge that she had. Mary of Magdala supported Jesus ministry from her own substance, was possessed of seven demons before she met Jesus and He cast them out of her:

Luke 8:1-3: After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with Him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Mary of Magdala was also at the cross and she was present at the tomb and was the first one to see the Lord after His resurrection, there is some debate about whether she is the same Mary of Bethany, it may be possible but its not probable.

Mary of Bethany is a great example of discipleship and alot can be learned from her example. During Jesus' earthly ministry, He taught the Twelve but they did not fully grasp the truth until the Holy Spirit came upon them and then they were transformed into mighty men. The Holy Spirit makes us all better disciples; Jesus said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16:12-15 (KJV) Mary of Bethany also supported the Lord's ministry of her own substance, she came and sat at the Lord's feet to hear His word and she annointed Him before His burial.

2. Mary of Bethany

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and

troubled about many things: But one thing is
needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part,
which shall not be taken away from her.
Luke 10:38-42 (KJV)

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he
came to a village where a woman named Martha
opened her home to him. She had a sister called
Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to
what he said. But Martha was distracted by all
the preparations that had to be made. She came to
him and asked. "Lord, don't you care that my
sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell
her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are
worried and upset about many things, but only one
thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better,
and it will not be taken away from her." (NIV)

Mary is a perfect example of discipleship for
three reasons:

I. She sat at the Lord's feet and heard His word
II. She grasped, and understood the Lord's word
III. She acted upon that knowledge, she was Spirit
led, she was at the right place at the right time

I. She sat at the Lord's feet and heard His word

Why is this important? Well Romans 10:17(KJV)
says: So then faith cometh by hearing, and
hearing by the word of God. Constant exposure to
the Word of God builds our faith. Faith is
defined in Hebrews 11:1(KJV): Now faith is the
substance of things hoped for, the evidence of
things not seen. Faith can be described in 8
points:

1. It is a gift of God:

Mat. 16:17(KJV) And Jesus answered and said unto
him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh

and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Eph.2:8(KJV) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

2.It is of the heart:

Rom.10:9-10(KJV) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised hm from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

3.It exists in different degrees:

John.20:29(KJV) Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

4.It is accompanied by love:

Eph.3:17-19(KJV) That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love; may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all fulness of God.

5.It is a work:

John.6:28-29(KJV) Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him who He hath sent.

6.It leaves all to follow Christ:

Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Mark 10:28-30 (KJV)

And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

Luke 5:27-28 (KJV)

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Matt 13:44-46 (KJV)

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:26-27, 33 (KJV)

7.It sits at Jesus' feet and hears His word

8.It receives the Kingdom of God as a little child:

And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

Luke 9:48 (KJV)

The word enlightens our understanding: But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

Romans 10:6-8 (KJV)

The word of God is powerful, the Lord spoke the world into existence: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Hebrews 11:3(KJV)

II. She grasped and understood what she heard

Not only did Mary hear the word, she understood it. Understanding is even more important than the hearing, when we understand what we hear it begins to take root in our lives and produce results. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which,

when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Luke 8:11-15 (KJV)

When we begin to understand what we hear in God's word we then have a good foundation on which we can build our lives, our main priority as we hear the word is to understand it so we can live what we have heard. Luke 24:45 (KJV) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

On many occasions we find the other disciples hearing the word but not fully understanding or grasping it. The miracles that Jesus performed amazed, baffled and terrified them and He rebuked them a lot for their lack of faith. Jesus explicitly told the disciples He was going to be killed on the cross and raised on the third day but they didn't get it until after it happened. Although the disciples struggled with some of the teachings they did understand some things and were commended by the Lord; their discipleship with Jesus prepared them for future ministry and when they had received the Holy Spirit they spoke the Word boldly.

A. The disciples understood and were commended by the Lord:

1. Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.
Matt 13:51-52 (KJV)

2. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be

thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. Matt 14:28-29 (KJV)

3.And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Matt 16:17 (KJV)

4.But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

Matt 17:12-13 (KJV)

5.When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Matt 26:10-13 (KJV)

6.And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. 9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

Mark 14:6-9 (KJV)

7.He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am?
Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he
straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell
no man that thing;
Luke 9:20-21 (KJV)

8. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi,
thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of
Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because
I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree,
believest thou? thou shalt see greater things
than these.
John 1:49-50 (KJV)

9.Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom
shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
And we believe and are sure that thou art that
Christ, the Son of the living God.
John 6:68-69 (KJV)

10.Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the
day of my burying hath she kept this. For the
poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not
always.
John 12:7-8 (KJV)

11.Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet
only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith
to him, He that is washed needeth not save to
wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye
are clean, but not all.
John 13:9-10 (KJV)

12.His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest
thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we
sure that thou knowest all things, and needest
not that any man should ask thee: by this we
believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus
answered them, Do ye now believe?
John 16:29-31 (KJV)

B.The disciples didnt understand and were rebuked

by the Lord:

1.And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Matt 8:26-27 (KJV)

2.And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

Matt 13:10-11 (KJV)

3.Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

Matt 13:36 (KJV)

4.But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me.

Matt 14:16-18 (KJV)

5.And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

Matt 14:25-27 (KJV)

6. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto

him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Matt 14:30-31 (KJV)

7. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

Matt 15:15-16 (KJV)

8. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

Matt 15:33-34 (KJV)

9. And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

Matt 16:5-11 (KJV)

10. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Matt 16:22-23 (KJV)

11. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

Matt 17:6-8 (KJV)

12. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matt 17:19-20 (KJV)

13. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

Matt 26:8-10 (KJV)

14. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

Mark 4:13 (KJV)

15. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

Mark 4:33-34 (KJV)

16. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Mark 4:40-41 (KJV)

17.He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

Mark 6:37-38 (KJV)

18.But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

Mark 6:49-52 (KJV)

19. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;

Mark 7:17-18 (KJV)

20.And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

Mark 8:4-5 (KJV)

21. Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have

no bread. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

Mark 8:14-21 (KJV)

22. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

Mark 8:32-33 (KJV)

23. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

Mark 9:28-29 (KJV)

24. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Mark 9:32 (KJV)

25. But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. 35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

Mark 9:34-35 (KJV)

26. And they were in the way going up to

Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid.

Mark 10:32 (KJV)

27. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

Mark 14:4-6 (KJV)

28. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

Mark 14:31 (KJV)

29. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

Mark 14:72 (KJV)

30. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Luke 8:9-10 (KJV)

31. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Luke 8:25 (KJV)

32. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves

and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

Luke 9:13 (KJV)

33.And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

Luke 9:49-50 (KJV)

34.And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

Luke 9:54-56 (KJV)

35.Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Luke 10:20 (KJV)

36.Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

Luke 12:41 (KJV)

37.And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Luke 18:34 (KJV)

38.Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

John 3:4 (KJV)

39.Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

John 3:10-12 (KJV)

40. In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

John 4:31-33 (KJV)

41. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

John 6:7-9 (KJV)

42. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

John 6:19-20 (KJV)

43. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

John 6:30-31 (KJV)

44. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

John 6:60-61 (KJV)

45. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

John 7:6-7 (KJV)

46. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

John 12:4-5 (KJV)

47. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

John 12:16 (KJV)

48. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

John 13:6-8 (KJV)

49. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

John 13:27-29 (KJV)

50. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou

canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

John 13:36-38 (KJV)

51. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

John 14:5 (KJV)

52. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

John 14:8-9 (KJV)

53. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

John 16:17-18 (KJV)

54. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew

John 18:25-27 (KJV)

C. Jesus spoke of the cross and resurrection and the disciples didn't understand:

1.From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Matt 16:21-23 (KJV)

2.And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

Matt 17:22-23 (KJV)

3. And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Matt 20:17-19 (KJV)

4. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

Mark 8:31-33 (KJV)

5. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Mark 9:31-32 (KJV)

6. And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Mark 10:32-34 (KJV)

7. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

Mark 14:28-29 (KJV)

8. And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

Luke 9:21-22 (KJV)

9. Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

Luke 9:44-45 (KJV)

10. Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Luke 18:31-34 (KJV)

11. Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

John 2:19-22 (KJV)

12. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

John 14:28-29 (KJV)

III. She acted upon that knowledge, she was Spirit led

Mary of Bethany was at the right place at the right time and did the right thing, she annointed the Lord for burial. Later on when others came to the tomb to annoint Him with spices it was already to late the Lord had already risen. Mary either heard the Lord speak of His coming death or maybe she received a word of knowledge about

the event. When we sit at the Lord's feet and hear His word it will cause us to be filled with the Spirit and we also will be led by the Spirit. James 1:22 says: But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Just as important as hearing and understanding is putting into practice what is learned, if we hear and understand and never use what we have learned we have missed out on the Gospel. When we apply the Word of God to our lives we have acted in obedience.

Each of the four Gospel accounts has the story of Jesus being annointed before going to the cross. There is a debate as to whether this is one, two or even three events. I believe this is one event told from different perspectives but it is possible that Jesus could have been annointed with oil twice or even three times. Matthew, Mark, and John each say that this took place in Bethany and Mark and John say it was at the time of passover. In Mark it says after two days was the feast of passover and in John it says then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, if we rearrange these two it makes more sense: Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany and after two days was the feast of the passover. Both Matthew and Mark say it was at the house of Simon the Leper and in Luke the host is later named as Simon. In John we are not told where this takes place, we are just told that they made Him a supper and that Martha served and that Lazarus sat with them. In Matthew and Mark, we are told that she pours the perfume on His head, and in Luke and John that she poured the oil on His feet and wiped His feet with her hair.

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at

meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Matt 26:6-13 (KJV)

After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

Mark 14:1-9 (KJV)

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Luke 7:36-50 (KJV)

Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.
John 12:1-8 (KJV)

If this is three different events one would be Mary anointing Jesus six days before passover, then two days before passover He is anointed by an unnamed woman and the account of Luke is a totally different event that happened. This is the most likely alternative because the account of Luke never mentions passover and it doesn't say that they were at Simon the Lepers, there was no mention of Judas' reaction either and He tells this unnamed woman her sins are forgiven. Whether this is one, two or three different events is not as important as the love and devotion that Mary showed to Jesus, that's the true focus of this anointing. Mary as a true disciple showed her love and devotion and poured out ointment that was worth a year's salary, Judas the false disciple complained because he was a thief focused on how he could steal more money.

3. Martha

Martha, the sister of Mary of Bethany was also a

disciple of Jesus. She was just as devoted to the Lord as Mary was but her devotion came out as service to the Lord. In fact she became so focused on serving she missed out on the Word:

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.
Luke 10:38-42 (KJV)

Martha is reprooved by the Lord for two reasons:

- I. She missed out on the one needful thing
- II. She was stressed and worried about many things

I. She missed out on the one needful thing

Jesus Christ is our foundation, the Word of God is our foundation for all our service and everything that we do. John 1:1-3 says: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. When the Lord is with you it's more important to receive from Him what He has to give than to serve Him. Effective service born of the Spirit and not of the flesh comes after we have filled up on the Word. 1 Peter 4:10-11 says: As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man

Speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. We stand on the Word for ministry, for healing, for miracles and we stand on the Word of God for all that we say, do and think.

II. She was stressed and worried about many things

Worry and stress chokes the effectiveness of God's Word in our lives. Jesus gives us a few parables about seeds and sowing, in one parable the seed is the Word of God, in another parable seed stands for the children of the kingdom. In the parable of the seed as the Word of God the ground that is being sown into is the human heart. Every Word of God is a seed sown into our lives and when its sown into good ground which is a heart that is not troubled we reap thirty, sixty and even a hundred fold. The kingdom of heaven is compared to good seed that is sown in the field and the enemy comes behind later and sow's tares among the wheat. We also sow into the lives of others but its effectiveness is choked when we are stressed out. There is nothing wrong with serving the Lord and serving others until it brings us to the point of worry and stress.

Parables of seed and sower:

A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to

hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.
Luke 8:5-15 (KJV)

And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Mark 4:13-20 (KJV)

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matt 13:24-30 (KJV)

Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matt 13:36-43 (KJV)

We can learn from Martha's example as, as Christian's we are all called to serve in some way. Not everyone is called to be a pastor of a large church but we are all called to minister to our families, friends and associates. True ministry starts in the home, being focused on the Lord. Everyone is given a spiritual gift and is called to figure out what that gift is and start using it.

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.
1 Cor 12:28 (KJV)

The Spirit also gives spiritual gifts to every believer, every born again Christian has at least one spiritual gift some may have more than one, we are called to use these gifts to exalt and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.
1 Cor 12:4-11 (KJV)

We also serve the Lord through Bible study and reading, tithing and serving our local church, we are all called to serve the Lord in some way and its not optional its the God's Will that we serve Him.

4. Discipleship II

I. Calling of the Twelve:

The names of the twelve apostles are Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Phillip Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Thaddaeus, Simon, and Judas Isacariot. The first 4 disciples are mentioned the most with Simon Peter being the leading disciple. The next set of 4 disciples are mentioned less and last set of 4 disciples are rarely mentioned at all. Before Jesus choose the Twelve, He went up to the mountain to pray; after Jesus choose the Twelve disciples He gave them authority to preach and teach the Gospel and He gave them instructions on what they should do.

And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor. And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there

went virtue out of him, and healed them all.
Luke 6:12-19 (KJV)

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

He commands them to preach and heal the sick

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. 11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.
Matt 10:1-15 (KJV)

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John

These four men had the closest relationship with Jesus during His earthly ministry. Simon Peter was the leader and spokesman for the rest of the disciples. Peter was lead to Christ by Andrew his younger brother:

Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.
John 1:35-42 (KJV)

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and

followed him.
Matt 4:18-22 (KJV)

When Matthew was called to be a disciple of Jesus, he was a wealthy tax collector at the time:

And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.
Matt 9:9 (KJV)

Jesus called Philip and Nathanael in a similiar way as the others:

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

John 1:43-51 (KJV)

II. Cost of discipleship:

Discipleship is voluntary, its a choice every believer must make: How committed to Christ will I be? Jesus warned potential disciples that there is a cost to following Him:

Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

Matt 8:18-22 (KJV)

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Luke 14:25-30 (KJV)

Discipleship is not to be confused with salvation, you can be saved and not be a true disciple of Christ but most if not all true disciples are saved. Discipleship is a choice to have a deeper relationship with the Lord through study and self denial. The cost to following Jesus is different for each person, its not about becoming poor; but rather removing things out of

our lives that we love and place above God.
Discipleship can be seen in 3 different stages.

A.Salvation- Unbelievers and believers alike come to Christ to be saved of their sins. This is the first step accepting Christ as savior. When we come to Christ for salvation then we hear the word and become disciples. An unbeliever can come to Christ and be a disciple without actually being saved, but once saved we are on the path towards true discipleship.

B.Student- Once we are saved, true discipleship can begin but is not required. Some Christians are satisfied just being saved and never pursue true discipleship while some begin discipleship but dont continue; this doesnt effect salvation but it effects spiritual growth. Reading and study of God's Word prepares us for ministry, service and spiritual maturity.

C.Sanctified- best defined as true commitment to Christ and true discipleship, giving up love of the world for love of Christ. To sanctify is defined in the dictionary as: to set apart to a sacred purpose or to religious use and to free from sin, the state of growing in divine grace as a result of Christian commitment after baptism or conversion. Eastons Bible Dictionary defines sanctification as:

Sanctification:

Involves more than a mere moral reformation of character, brought about by the power of the truth: it is the work of the Holy Spirit bringing the whole nature more and more under the influences of the new gracious principles implanted in the soul in regeneration. In other words, sanctification is the carrying on to perfection the work begun in regeneration, and it extends to the whole man (Rom 6:13; 2Co 4:6; Col

3:10; 1Jn 4:7; 1Co 6:19). It is the special office of the Holy Spirit in the plan of redemption to carry on this work (1Co 6:11; 2Th 2:13). Faith is instrumental in securing sanctification, inasmuch as it (1) secures union to Christ (Gal 2:20), and (2) brings the believer into living contact with the truth, whereby he is led to yield obedience "to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come."

Perfect sanctification is not attainable in this life (1Ki 8:46; Prov 20:9; Eccl 7:20; Jas 3:2; 1Jn 1:8). See Paul's account of himself in Rom 7:14-25; Php 3:12-14; 1Ti 1:15; also the confessions of David (Ps 19:12, 13; Ps 51), of Moses (Ps 90:8), of Job (Job 42:5, 6), and of Daniel (Dan 9:3-20). "The more holy a man is, the more humble, self-renouncing, self-abhorring, and the more sensitive to every sin he becomes, and the more closely he clings to Christ. The moral imperfections which cling to him he feels to be sins, which he laments and strives to overcome. Believers find that their life is a constant warfare, and they need to take the kingdom of heaven by storm, and watch while they pray. They are always subject to the constant chastisement of their Father's loving hand, which can only be designed to correct their imperfections and to confirm their graces. And it has been notoriously the fact that the best Christians have been those who have been the least prone to claim the attainment of perfection for themselves.", Hodge's Outlines.

—Easton's Illustrated Dictionary

Whether we are just coming to Christ, or have been students for a while or are true disciples set apart for the Master's use, we are all valuable to the Lord and all our service will be rewarded. The whole goal of true discipleship is to bring us into a deeper more personal

relationship with the Lord to prepare us for service.

III.The Mark of a true disciple

A true disciple of Jesus Christ is marked by three things:

A.Abiding in the Word

B.Obedience to the Word

C.Love

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
John 8:31 (KJV)

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.
John 13:34-35 (KJV)

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you

friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.

John 15:7-17 (KJV)

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

John 14:23-24 (KJV)

Jesus said if ye keep my commandments He and the Father will come and abide with us believers. Our discipleship with Jesus prepares our hearts to receive the Word in good ground, as we receive the Word and love one another we keep His commandment and we do the works of God by believing on Him. As we abide in the Word, He abides in us and the Holy Spirit abides in us and empowers us for effective service and ministry. Our highest priority is to stay focused on Christ!

5.The Holy Spirit as Teacher

Once we are saved we are born again by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit abides in us. Discipleship prepares our hearts and minds for effective ministry and service, as we submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit's control and guidance. The Holy Spirit:

A.Calls to remembrance all things:

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet

present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 14:25-26 (KJV)

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

John 14:15-18 (KJV)

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Matt 10:19-20 (KJV)

B. Empowers believers to witness:

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

John 16:12-15 (KJV)

And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders

may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.
31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken
where they were assembled together; and they were
all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake
the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:29-31 (KJV)

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you:
as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.
And when he had said this, he breathed on them,
and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:
Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted
unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they
are retained.

John 20:21-23 (KJV)

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send
unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of
truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall
testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness,
because ye have been with me from the beginning

John 15:26-27 (KJV)

C.Bestows wisdom: Discipleship is a prerequisite-
if you dont have the Word abiding in you the Holy
Spirit has nothing to work with

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the
spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of
knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall
make him of quick understanding in the fear of
the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight
of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of
his ears:

Isaiah 11:2-3 (KJV)

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith
God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions, and your
old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants

and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:
Acts 2:17-18 (KJV)

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Tim 3:16-17 (KJV)

The life and discipleship of Simon Peter is a perfect example of what the Holy Spirit can do for believers submitted to the control of the Holy Spirit. When Simon Peter began his discipleship he quickly went from fisherman to the leader of the disciples. Peter during his discipleships had alot of ups and downs, he struggled at times and even denied knowing the Lord Jesus! Peter showed true biblical repentance and came back to the Lord.

After Jesus ascended and the Holy Spirit came upon them Simon Peter and the rest of the disciples became altogether different men:

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood,

and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all

things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Acts 3:1-26 (KJV)

After this Peter was confronted by the chief priests:

And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of

them, that they had been with Jesus. And
beholding the man which was healed standing with
them, they could say nothing against it.
Acts 4:5-14 (KJV)

All Scripture is NIV unless otherwise stated.