

Week Seven: Discipleship

Scripture references:

On the meaning:

Matthew 18:2-4, 10:25; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 6:43-49, 14:26-33;
John 10:10; Ephesians 4:21-24; Philippians 3:8-14;
I John 4:9-19



On activity: Matthew 28:18-20a; Mark 12:29-31; Colossians 3:9-17; James 1:22-25; II Peter 1:1a-11

Points to take away:

1. "As Jesus' disciple, I am his apprentice in kingdom living. I am learning from him how to lead my life in the Kingdom of the Heavens as he would lead my life if he were I." (Dallas Willard)
2. There are basically four parts to discipleship: choosing, following closely, doing what the Master does, and being transformed in the process.
3. Discipleship is about transforming ourselves: becoming like Christ, and doing the usual activities of life as people formed (and informed) by Christ.
4. Discipleship is about transforming the world: doing what Jesus said to do, ministering good and defeating evil
5. Discipleship is about living out our salvation: living as an outward and visible sign of God's inward and invisible grace.
6. We practice Jesus' spiritual disciplines and submit to Spirit-ual formation in order to have the strength, resilience, and understanding to live as disciples.
7. Discipleship is ultimately about living an utterly "with-God" life: re-incarnating Jesus over and over again.

A very few resources for further exploration:

On spiritual disciplines:

- § www.renovare.org, and the Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible. Renovaré is dedicated to bringing spiritual formation to churches so that Jesus followers may grow to spiritual maturity.
- § Richard J. Foster, *Celebrating the Disciplines*, 25th Anniversary Edition (HarperSanFrancisco: 1998). The modern classic of the genre, Foster's book outlines 12 disciplines (including celebration!) and how they fit into a Christ-lighted life.
- § Michael Foss, *Real Faith for Real Life* (Augsberg Fortress: 2004). A simplified, community-centered version of the disciplines presented in workbook form.

On becoming like Christ:

- § Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart* (NavPress: 2002), and Dallas Willard and Dan Simpson, *Revolution of Character* (NavPress: 2005). Willard is the most important writer on spiritual formation today. Period.
- § Matthew Fox, *Original Blessing* (Tarcher/Putnam: 2000). Fox is the new-age former Catholic priest who developed on the idea of creation spirituality. This is his best book, and approaches the Christ-nature from a common-sense mystical point of view.
- § Marianne Williamson, *The Gift of Change* (HarperSanFrancisco: 2004). Both traditional Christians and Williamson herself would probably be horrified to see her listed as a Christian devotionalist, but there's no way around it: this book is about allowing Christ to permeate your being, and living the Imago Dei ("image of God")

