

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Study Series: Rediscovering Discipleship Part 3
Lesson – Church Membership Vs Discipleship

Wednesday, September 7th, 2022
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Last week, we discussed Jesus' requirement for discipleship. And 3 clear demands Jesus made on anyone who wants to be a disciple. Today we will focus on church membership and Discipleship. Let's start by looking into these important scriptures passages:

Matthew 19:16-22 NIV

*“Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.” “Which ones?” he inquired. Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’” “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?” Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. **Then come, follow me.**” **When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.**”*

***Luke 9:23-26 NIV** Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

Introduction:

One of the challenges of today's Christianity is that it is shallow and hardly makes much difference in people's lives. Many surveys that measure moral values sadly reveal that Christians hardly perform better than unbelievers in most surveys. Whether they look at the issue of attitude toward sexual purity, cohabiting, commitment to marriage, or integrity, many of these surveys reveal that Christians don't do much better than their unbelieving counterparts. Why is this so? I believe it is because the church has abandoned its primary mission of making disciples and has replaced it with the easier job of making good members. We must counter our culture's gospel of consumerism with the true gospel that produces disciples.

Christianity is not a fan club. Jesus does not want cheerleaders or groupies. Following Christ is not about t-shirts, slogans, or hashtags. Jesus calls us to be children of his Father. He calls us to abandon a life of the self and become His disciples. Unfortunately, many churches today are content with producing good church members, whereas we are commanded to make growing disciples.

Question:

1. How is a disciple? Were you taught who a disciple is when you first join the church?
2. Why is it easier to make church members than disciples?

A good church member could be defined as someone who:

- Attends church regularly
- Serves in Ministry
- Give consistently and sacrificially
- May even lead in some capacity of the other.
- Leave whenever you are not valued or appreciated.

A growing disciple could be defined as someone who:

- Arranges his or her life to be with Jesus. Phillipians3:10
- Intentionally pursues the character of Jesus. Phillipians3:8, Galatians 5:22-23
- Increasingly loves what Jesus loves. Luke 10:25-37
- Is committed to the mission of Jesus because of his or her devotion to Jesus. Mathew 26:36-46

The sad thing is that a person can be an excellent church member and yet not be a disciple. In fairness, growing disciples will automatically be good church members... true disciples will attend, serve, and give faithfully. However, those things are secondary to their life in Christ, not primary. Serving, attendance, giving, etc., flow out of their discipleship (total commitment) to Jesus, not their commitment to the church.

Conclusion:

The church must return to the business of making disciples. Perhaps we need to get back to the basics and consider our commitment to Christ. Jesus is looking for disciples who will follow him and make him the most important part of their lives so that he is in control of every part. It's not always easy – you could say it is discipline – but it's also the adventure of your lifetime.