WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A disciple is a learner.

Luke 6:40 • Matthew 28:18–20

OPENING QUESTION

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OPENING QUESTION

What is a disciple?

Most Christians would probably answer: “A follower of Jesus.”

When we are talking about a disciple of Jesus, that is true.

But what does the word disciple itself mean?

STRIP THE WORD DOWN

The Greek word translated disciple is mathētēs.

STRIP THE WORD DOWN

The Greek word translated disciple is mathētēs.

LEARNER.

STRIP THE WORD DOWN

The Greek word translated disciple is mathētēs.

LEARNER.

PUPIL.

STRIP THE WORD DOWN

The Greek word translated disciple is mathētēs.

LEARNER.

PUPIL.

STUDENT.

STRIP THE WORD DOWN

The Greek word translated disciple is mathētēs.

LEARNER.

PUPIL.

STUDENT.

A disciple is someone who learns from another.

THE FOUNDATION

DISCIPLE = LEARNER

NOW ASK THE NEXT QUESTION

If a disciple is a learner...

NOW ASK THE NEXT QUESTION

If a disciple is a learner...

What does a learner actually do?

1. A LEARNER NEEDS A TEACHER

You cannot have the relationship of disciple without somebody functioning as teacher.

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You cannot have the relationship of disciple without somebody functioning as teacher.

Jesus puts disciple and teacher together in Luke 6:40.

LUKE 6:40

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.”

Luke 6:40 (CSB)

LOOK AT THE PROCESS

DISCIPLE

LOOK AT THE PROCESS

DISCIPLE

TEACHER

LOOK AT THE PROCESS

DISCIPLE

TEACHER

TRAINING

LOOK AT THE PROCESS

DISCIPLE

TEACHER

TRAINING

LIKENESS

THE PROCESS IN MOTION

TEACHER

THE PROCESS IN MOTION

TEACHER

↓ LEARNER

THE PROCESS IN MOTION

TEACHER

↓ LEARNER

↓ TRAINING

THE PROCESS IN MOTION

TEACHER

↓ LEARNER

↓ TRAINING

↓ LIKENESS

DISCIPLESHIP IS FORMATION

The disciple starts as a learner.

DISCIPLESHIP IS FORMATION

The disciple starts as a learner.

The teacher provides instruction.

DISCIPLESHIP IS FORMATION

The disciple starts as a learner.

The teacher provides instruction.

The learner undergoes training.

DISCIPLESHIP IS FORMATION

The disciple starts as a learner.

The teacher provides instruction.

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The learner increasingly becomes like the teacher.

DISCIPLESHIP IS FORMATION

The disciple starts as a learner.

The teacher provides instruction.

The learner undergoes training.

The learner increasingly becomes like the teacher.

Discipleship is not merely information. It is formation.

2. A LEARNER LISTENS

Jesus teaches.

2. A LEARNER LISTENS

Jesus teaches.

The disciples listen.

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Jesus teaches.

The disciples listen.

A disciple cannot learn while refusing to listen to the teacher.

2. A LEARNER LISTENS

Jesus teaches.

The disciples listen.

A disciple cannot learn while refusing to listen to the teacher.

If Jesus is my Teacher: Am I listening to what He is teaching?

3. A LEARNER ASKS QUESTIONS

Learners do not understand everything.

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Matthew 13:36 — the disciples ask Jesus to explain the parable.

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Luke 11:1 — “Lord, teach us to pray.”

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Learners do not understand everything.

Matthew 13:36 — the disciples ask Jesus to explain the parable.

Luke 11:1 — “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Recognizing “I don’t know” can be the beginning of learning.

4. A LEARNER WATCHES

The disciples are with Jesus.

4. A LEARNER WATCHES

The disciples are with Jesus.

They watch how He treats people.

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The disciples are with Jesus.

They watch how He treats people.

They watch Him pray.

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The disciples are with Jesus.

They watch how He treats people.

They watch Him pray.

They watch Him respond to opposition.

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The disciples are with Jesus.

They watch how He treats people.

They watch Him pray.

They watch Him respond to opposition.

They watch Him serve and handle Scripture.

4. A LEARNER WATCHES

The disciples are with Jesus.

They watch how He treats people.

They watch Him pray.

They watch Him respond to opposition.

They watch Him serve and handle Scripture.

They hear what Jesus says and observe what Jesus does.

5. A LEARNER CAN BE WRONG

Being a disciple does not mean: “I know everything.”

5. A LEARNER CAN BE WRONG

Being a disciple does not mean: “I know everything.”

It means: “I am learning.”

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Peter gets things right—and Peter gets things wrong.

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Being a disciple does not mean: “I know everything.”

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Peter gets things right—and Peter gets things wrong.

Jesus corrects him.

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Jesus corrects him.

A learner must be correctable.

CAN I REALLY LEARN IF...

I cannot be corrected?

CAN I REALLY LEARN IF...

I cannot be corrected?

I already know everything?

CAN I REALLY LEARN IF...

I cannot be corrected?

I already know everything?

Every correction offends me?

CAN I REALLY LEARN IF...

I cannot be corrected?

I already know everything?

Every correction offends me?

Discipleship requires enough humility to say: “Teacher, I was wrong.”

6. A LEARNER PRACTICES

Jesus does not allow the disciples to remain spectators.

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They have watched.

They have listened.

They have asked questions.

6. A LEARNER PRACTICES

Jesus does not allow the disciples to remain spectators.

Luke 9:1–6 — Jesus gives them instructions and sends them.

They have watched.

They have listened.

They have asked questions.

Now: YOU DO IT.

THIS IS APPRENTICESHIP

WATCH ME.

THIS IS APPRENTICESHIP

WATCH ME.

LISTEN TO ME.

THIS IS APPRENTICESHIP

WATCH ME.

LISTEN TO ME.

LEARN FROM ME.

THIS IS APPRENTICESHIP

WATCH ME.

LISTEN TO ME.

LEARN FROM ME.

NOW PRACTICE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.

7. A LEARNER IS BEING TRAINED

Training takes time.

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Training takes time.

Training involves repetition.

7. A LEARNER IS BEING TRAINED

Training takes time.

Training involves repetition.

Training involves mistakes.

7. A LEARNER IS BEING TRAINED

Training takes time.

Training involves repetition.

Training involves mistakes.

Training involves correction.

7. A LEARNER IS BEING TRAINED

Training takes time.

Training involves repetition.

Training involves mistakes.

Training involves correction.

Training involves practice.

7. A LEARNER IS BEING TRAINED

Training takes time.

Training involves repetition.

Training involves mistakes.

Training involves correction.

Training involves practice.

Training involves growth.

A DISCIPLE HAS NOT ARRIVED

A disciple is living a life of learning under Jesus.

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

Why observe?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

Why observe?

Why receive correction?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

Why observe?

Why receive correction?

Why practice?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

Why observe?

Why receive correction?

Why practice?

Why train?

8. THE GOAL IS LIKENESS

Why listen?

Why ask questions?

Why observe?

Why receive correction?

Why practice?

Why train?

Because the fully trained disciple will be like the teacher.

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING PRODUCE?

Am I learning forgiveness?

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING PRODUCE?

Am I learning forgiveness?

Am I learning mercy?

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING PRODUCE?

Am I learning forgiveness?

Am I learning mercy?

Am I learning humility?

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING PRODUCE?

Am I learning forgiveness?

Am I learning mercy?

Am I learning humility?

Am I learning obedience?

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Am I learning forgiveness?

Am I learning mercy?

Am I learning humility?

Am I learning obedience?

Am I learning sacrificial love?

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING PRODUCE?

Am I learning forgiveness?

Am I learning mercy?

Am I learning humility?

Am I learning obedience?

Am I learning sacrificial love?

Is the Teacher’s instruction showing up in the learner?

NOW LOOK AT THE GREAT COMMISSION

“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, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20 (CSB)

JESUS SAYS: MAKE DISCIPLES

If a disciple is a learner...

JESUS SAYS: MAKE DISCIPLES

If a disciple is a learner...

Jesus commands His disciples to make more learners of Jesus.

JESUS SAYS: MAKE DISCIPLES

If a disciple is a learner...

Jesus commands His disciples to make more learners of Jesus.

Then He says: “teaching them...”

JESUS SAYS: MAKE DISCIPLES

If a disciple is a learner...

Jesus commands His disciples to make more learners of Jesus.

Then He says: “teaching them...”

Learning and teaching belong together.

BUT NOTICE WHAT JESUS SAYS

He does not merely say: “Teach them everything I said.”

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He does not merely say: “Teach them everything I said.”

He says: “teaching them to OBSERVE everything I have commanded you.”

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The goal is not merely information.

The learner is taught to live what Jesus taught.

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

↓ LEARNING

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

↓ LEARNING

↓ TRAINING

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

↓ LEARNING

↓ TRAINING

↓ OBEDIENCE

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

↓ LEARNING

↓ TRAINING

↓ OBEDIENCE

↓ LIKENESS

THE GREAT COMMISSION CYCLE

JESUS

↓ DISCIPLES

↓ LEARNING

↓ TRAINING

↓ OBEDIENCE

↓ LIKENESS

↓ MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

SO WHAT DOES A LEARNER LOOK LIKE?

A learner LISTENS.

SO WHAT DOES A LEARNER LOOK LIKE?

A learner LISTENS.

A learner ASKS.

SO WHAT DOES A LEARNER LOOK LIKE?

A learner LISTENS.

A learner ASKS.

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SO WHAT DOES A LEARNER LOOK LIKE?

A learner LISTENS.

A learner ASKS.

A learner WATCHES.

A learner RECEIVES CORRECTION.

SO WHAT DOES A LEARNER LOOK LIKE?

A learner LISTENS.

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A learner PRACTICES.

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A learner WATCHES.

A learner RECEIVES CORRECTION.

A learner PRACTICES.

A learner TRAINS.

A learner GROWS.

A learner increasingly BECOMES LIKE THE TEACHER.

DISCUSSION

Can you be a learner if you refuse to listen?

DISCUSSION

Can you be a learner if you refuse to listen?

Can you be a learner if nobody can correct you?

DISCUSSION

Can you be a learner if you refuse to listen?

Can you be a learner if nobody can correct you?

Can you be a learner if you never ask questions?

DISCUSSION

Can you be a learner if you refuse to listen?

Can you be a learner if nobody can correct you?

Can you be a learner if you never ask questions?

Can you be a learner if you hear instruction but never practice it?

KEEP THINKING

Is knowing something the same as learning it?

KEEP THINKING

Is knowing something the same as learning it?

What is the difference between knowing what Jesus said and being trained by what Jesus said?

KEEP THINKING

Is knowing something the same as learning it?

What is the difference between knowing what Jesus said and being trained by what Jesus said?

Why does Jesus say the trained disciple becomes like the teacher?

KEEP THINKING

Is knowing something the same as learning it?

What is the difference between knowing what Jesus said and being trained by what Jesus said?

Why does Jesus say the trained disciple becomes like the teacher?

Why does the Great Commission say “teaching them to observe”?

THE PERSONAL QUESTION

IF JESUS IS MY TEACHER,

WHAT AM I CURRENTLY LEARNING FROM HIM?

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

A LEARNER.

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

A LEARNER.

What does a learner do?

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

A LEARNER.

What does a learner do?

Listens. Watches. Asks. Receives correction. Practices. Trains. Grows.

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

A LEARNER.

What does a learner do?

Listens. Watches. Asks. Receives correction. Practices. Trains. Grows.

What does the trained learner become?

BRING IT ALL THE WAY BACK

What is a disciple?

A LEARNER.

What does a learner do?

Listens. Watches. Asks. Receives correction. Practices. Trains. Grows.

What does the trained learner become?

More like the Teacher.

AND WHAT DID JESUS TELL HIS LEARNERS TO MAKE?

MORE DISCIPLES.

AND WHAT DID JESUS TELL HIS LEARNERS TO MAKE?

MORE DISCIPLES.

More learners of Jesus.

THE LESSON IN ONE SENTENCE

A disciple of Jesus is a learner of Jesus who is being taught and trained to live what Jesus taught, increasingly become like the Teacher, and eventually help other people become learners of Jesus too.