

The Marks Of A Disciple Of Jesus Part Two

1 Thess 5:17-18

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

KJV

What if you lived in another nation and visited the United States without any knowledge of what the church was like in the United States? What if your mission is to examine the church of Jesus Christ in our nation? What if you attended as many churches as possible and you met with as many leaders as possible? What if you discussed with each Pastor what they believe, what they practice, and what kind of disciples they were trying to make. What would you find?

Wow! There is so much diversity in the church of Jesus Christ. There are so many different cultures in the church even within the same nation. There are so many different beliefs and practices that people feel very strongly about. They all tend to gather in groups around these different convictions and preferences. There is a vast number of members moving from group to group.

What should you find is the same every disciple of Jesus Christ?

I am sorry to say you would not find what you should find.

Why is this? As a result of the fall of man, men tend to make disciples in their own image rather than making disciples of Jesus.

Men use the call to be a disciple of Jesus to manipulate converts to be disciples of themselves rather than disciples of Jesus.

They even use the bible as the authority to do this. It is amazing what men can do with the bible.

So what about Western Hills? What about your family? What about the new converts we win? What kind of disciples do we want to become? What kind of disciples should we be trying to make?

From the life of Jesus, we discovered last week that.....

- A disciple of Jesus Christ loves to have fellowship with God. He loves to be alone with God and talk with God.
- A disciple of Jesus Christ loves to learn the will of God for His life. He loves to study the scriptures to discover the will of God for His life.
- A disciple of Jesus Christ loves his brothers and sisters in Christ. He will lay down his life to meet the needs of his brothers and sisters in Christ.
- A disciple of Jesus Christ loves lost people. There is nothing more valuable to him in this world than the soul of a lost person. There is nothing in this world that means more to him than winning lost people to Jesus Christ.

Last week we looked briefly at all four marks. Today, let's look at the first mark.....

A disciple of Jesus Christ loves to have fellowship with God. He loves to be alone with God and talk with God.

Paul was a disciplined man. As a blameless Pharisee, he was diligent in both prayers and fasting. But he calls himself the chief of sinners. Paul knew that as a Pharisee he did not love to have fellowship with God. As a Pharisee He did not love to be alone with God and talk with God.

As a Pharisee his motive was to prove his righteousness to God and to some significant others. I knew a man like this. He always told me when he was fasting and how many days it had been.

So the amount of time you spend in prayer or fasting may not mean you love to have fellowship with God. It does not mean you love to be alone with God and talk with God?

Now we all know that we need to pray. Now we all know that we need to pray more. But do we love to have fellowship with God? Do we love to be alone with God? And this is the kind of disciples we should be trying to make.

Did you know that the Greek word that is used for prayer most often in the New Testament is the word that means worship?

Let's consider our paradigm of prayer. Proseuche is the Greek word. It means worship. There is another word for prayer. Enteuxis means to interview or supplication. There is still another word for prayer. Euche means a wish, expressed as a petition to God. Then there is deomai which means to beg. Then there is erotao which means to interrogate; by implication, to request:

Which word is used most frequently? The first word, proseuche which means to worship.

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The word pray in this verse is a Greek Word that means to worship. So the verse reads, worship without ceasing.

Worship is what Jesus taught His disciples to do first when they pray.

Matt 6:9

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

KJV

What is worship?

The word worship is the word. Roskuneo means to fawn or crouch. prostrate oneself in homage and respect and to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand. So there is a double meaning. It means both to humble yourself and to express your affection

Now Sandra and I have three dogs. It is another part of our blended family. Now one of those dogs is named Ralley. He is a giant snazzier. He stands about three feet high. He looks like a small horse. When I come home at night it is normal for Ralley to kneel down and lay his head down in my lap. This shows both his humility and his affection for me. He is worshipping me. He loves to have fellowship with me. He loves to be alone with me.

Now this is the way we should be with God as disciples of Jesus Christ. This should be the kind of disciples we are trying to make.

Now how do we become this kind of disciple of Jesus Christ?

When Ralley and I first met he did not love to have fellowship with me. He was scared of me. He tried to intimidate me with his loud bark and gritted teeth. But over time I won his respect and his affection and now he loves to have fellowship with me. He cannot get enough time alone with me.

Now how did I do this? I showed Ralley there was no reason to be afraid of me. I showed Ralley that I was for him and not against him.

I did this by being kind to Him. I did this by showing Him affection; affection that he did not deserve after the way he first treated me.

Now this is what God has done for us. We are afraid of God. We are afraid of what He might do to us. Our conscience condemns us. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin. But then the kindness of God is revealed to us through Jesus Christ; kindness that we do not deserve.

Titus 3:3-6

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

KJV

This kindness wins our heart. It causes us to trust God. We suddenly love to have fellowship with God. We love to be alone with Him. Only those who have known and have received God's kindness through Jesus Christ will love to have fellowship with God and love to be alone with Him.

We all can learn some important practical guidance for our personal devotions or quiet time, and these can change on our spiritual journey, but the natural man cannot learn to love to have fellowship with God and to be alone with God any more than a sheep can learn to love being alone with a lion. This love is the work of God that occurs when we

receive the kindness of God through Jesus Christ. Faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ causes a man to be freed from the fear of God's judgment because there is no fear in love and it causes the man to have a great debt of love and gratitude for God the son and God the Father.

It is natural to want to have fellowship and spend time with anyone who shows you kindness. Marriage is the best example of this. Two people fall in love which means they desire the constant companionship of that person. But as that couple demonstrates kindness to one another the desire to be alone with one another only increases. Their love and affection for one another grows and their desire to share one another's companionship grows especially when that kindness in response to failure.

The same can be said for our relationship with God. God loved us first. He wanted our constant companionship. He showed His kindness to us through Jesus Christ when we were His enemy. If we are enlightened to this by the Holy Spirit, the natural result is that we want to have fellowship with Him. We will want to be alone with Him and talk with Him.

And this is the kind of disciples that we should be trying to make.

It is natural for us to want this if we have been born again of His Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ.

Now if you have this love, it is just a matter of making time for this fellowship.

- [Schedule a time each day to be alone with God.](#)
- [Take time to show Him your affection by worshiping Him.](#)
- [Listen to His voice by beings still before Him and by reading His Word.](#)
- [Journal what you hear Him say to you.](#)

Now if you have had this love but you have lost it, you need to discover why.

- [You can lose it because of neglect.](#) You stop reminding yourself of the kindness that God has shown you.
- [You can lose it because of disappointment and bitterness.](#) You get your eyes focused on something other than the kindness of God.
- [You can lose it because of love for the things of the world.](#) This would include some sin that you have come to love more than you love Jesus.
- [You can lose it because of pride.](#) You start believing that you deserve the kindness of God.

When you discover the problem, you need to...

- [Confess this to the Lord.](#)
- [Ask the Lord to reveal His kindness to you again.](#)
His mercies are new every morning.

Where are you today? What needs to happen for you to love to have fellowship with God? Have you known the kindness of God for you through Jesus Christ? Have you

been born again? Or do you need to accept His kindness right now for the very first time and be born again of His Spirit?

If you have been born again then there was there a time when you loved to have fellowship with God? You loved to be alone with God. Have you had it and lost it for one of the reasons I listed above? Now you need to confess that you have lost it and you need to ask the Lord to reveal His kindness to you again.

Let's begin 2010 with a renewed devotion to prayer. Let's start the New Year with a renewed vision for having fellowship with God and being alone with God; not because we feel the need to prove to God or others that we are righteous; not because we fear if we don't, we will be cursed by God rather than blessed by Him. Let's begin 2010 with a renewed devotion to prayer because we have known His kindness through Jesus Christ and we love to have fellowship with Him and we love to be alone with Him.

And let's devote ourselves to making these kinds of disciples. Let's be a good example and then let's lead others to the truth that will make this kind of disciple of Jesus Christ. Amen!