

The Marks Of A Disciple Of Jesus Christ Part Three

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.

1 John 4:19

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

KJV

John 14:15

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

KJV

John 14:23-24

23 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.

24 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.

KJV

My basketball coach in college was Gene Wallace. He was not an easy coach to please. But I wanted to do his will on the basketball coach more than I had ever wanted to please any coach. The main reason I wanted to please him was that was so kind to me by giving me a scholarship that paid for my college education.

Now I felt the same way when I went to work at Kimray. Doug Jones was my boss. He was a lot easier to please than my coach in college. I wanted to do his will more than any boss I had ever had because he and Mr. Hill were so kind to me by giving me a good job that would provide for my large family at a very critical time in our life.

Now I feel the same way in my relationship with Sandra. She is a lot easier to please than my college coach. I want to know her will and please her because she has been so kind to me by making such great sacrifices to meet my needs.

Submission is the natural response to being loved. This is why that one of the marks of a disciple is.....

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There was a man who was been greatly blessed by his father in law. His father in law gave him a place to live. His father in law paid for vacations for him and his family. His father in law gave him funds to meet various needs. But this man did not seek to please his father-in-law. He did not seek his father-in-laws counsel.

There was a man who was given a position who did not have the credentials that most employers would require to have that position. He was a given a generous salary that was more than he had ever earned. He was given credit for the success of the organization in ways that he had never been esteemed by others. But this man did not seek to please his boss. He even spoke evil of his boss to others within the organization.

There was a son who was greatly loved by his father. His father made great sacrifices to give him every thing he needed to succeed in life. He spent time with his son teaching him the truth about those things that would harm him and those things that would be a great blessing to him. He delighted in his son and also spent time with his son discussing things his son enjoyed or participating with his son in things his son enjoyed. But this son did not seek to please his father. He did not seek to serve his father. When he was old enough he asked his father for his share of the family business. He left home and then squandered all that his father had worked so hard to earn. He did not follow his father's teaching and brought great damage to his father's reputation.

Because submission is the natural response of being loved, there could be something wrong with the man or a woman who is loved but they do not want to please the one who has loved them; the one who has blessed them; the one who has provided for them a great opportunity.

Now my father was a hard man to please. I can only remember one time before I went to college that he made me feel that he was pleased with me. And I did not have a desire to please him. I learned and did his will because I was afraid of him. But I did not have a

desire to please him. I had more of a desire to please my older sister or one of my coaches or teachers than I did my father. My father worked hard to provide for me. We always had a comfortable place to live that was clean and well kept. I never was embarrassed by what I wore to school. He always showed up at my games and showed an interest in what I was doing. But I did not seek to please him.

He was an alcoholic. He embarrassed me when he was drunk. He was mean when he was drunk. He drove people I loved away from me because of his problem which included two of my step moms.

Now I did not care to please my father because I felt I deserved a better father than what I had. I compared him with others and he came up way short. I was not grateful for what he did do for me because I focused on what he did not do for me or on what he did wrong.

When someone loves us and we do not have a strong desire to please them, it is because we believe we deserve something other than what we are receiving. Or we feel that we are receiving unjust treatment that we do not deserve. This will take away any desire to please them.

Now this will be true in our relationships with people. There are no perfect people. There will be times when we must yield our rights, overlook their faults, and forgive their faults in order to want to please them. There will be times when we have to focus on how they have loved us rather than how they have not. This is not difficult if you have a humble assessment of your self and your imperfections.

There will be times, especially with authority figures, that we obey them and seek to please them just because we want to please the Lord.

There may even be times when we have to do that which does not please them in order to please the Lord. This should occur if they ask us to do something that does not please the Lord. This should occur if they do something that cannot be overlooked for the sake of the Lord.

But for a disciple of Jesus, we should always want to please Him.

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Now I have not always felt this way toward the Lord. Before I was saved, in spite of everything that the Lord had done for me, I felt I deserved a better God than what I had. I blamed Him for my mother's death. I blamed Him for having the kind of father that I had. I was not grateful for what He did for me because I focused on what he did not do for me or on what I thought He did wrong.

But I was not enlightened to the love of God for me. I knew the gospel but it was not meaningful to me.

Then the Holy Spirit convicted me. He opened my eyes to my sinful condition. I had always been proud of who I was morally. I did not drink like my father. I did not smoke like my father. I did not treat people the way my father treated people.

But then I did. It was only one person but it was a person that I cared about. From that one failure, the Holy Spirit showed me my heart. He showed me the bitterness in my heart. He showed me the evil lusts in my heart. He showed me how I loved the praise of men. He showed me how selfish I was and how I would use others to fulfill my selfish desires. He showed me that if my heart did not change, I was capable of doing the most evil things.

Then the Holy Spirit revealed to me that because of my sinful condition, I deserved death and hell. I saw that God was Holy, righteous, and just. I saw that I could not stand in His presence and live. I saw that He must put me away.

Then the Holy Spirit revealed to me that God gave His Son Jesus to cover me and my sins. He showed me that Jesus died in my place to take away my sins. The Holy Spirit revealed that if I received Jesus He would not have to put me away. He revealed to me He would never leave me or forsake me.

At that point I was not focused on what I thought I deserved from the Lord and didn't receive from Him. I was broken and my pride was broken. I believed the Lord loved me in a way no one had ever loved me before. While I was His enemy, He loved me. I trusted Jesus to be my Lord and savior and asked Him to take control of my life.

My heart changed instantly as it was flooded with the love of God. I was focused on what I did deserve and did not receive from Him. Because I was focused on what God had provided for me, I wanted to please Him more than I had ever wanted to please anyone in my life. Within the next hour, I surrendered to His call to be in the ministry full time. All I wanted was to please Him. I wanted to learn His will. I wanted to study His Word.

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Now the only time I lose this desire is if I start believing the lie again that I deserve better treatment from God than what I am receiving. I wrestled with this lie for months after Debbie passed away. I wrestled with this lie when I saw my children suffer from the loss of their mother. This lie still passes through my mind at times.

Now while it may be true that we do not receive what we deserve from people, it is never true with the Lord. It is never true that He is unjust. The truth is He has not given us what we deserve because of our sinful condition. He has been so kind to us through His son Jesus. He has promised an eternal place where there will be no more injustice. He

uses the injustices of this life to fulfill His plan for us in the next. If we suffer due to our sin, we have no one to blame but ourselves. His discipline is always for our good.

If we claim to be a disciple of Jesus and we do not have a strong desire to please Him, it reveals that something is wrong. It reveals that we have bought into the lie. We have believed that we deserve a better God. We have believed the lie that there is something we deserve we have not received or that we have received something unjust that we did not deserve.

If the Lord has been our first love and we have lost it, for it to return, we must repent for believing this lie. We must change our focus from what the Lord has not done to what He has done. We must trust that the Lord is always just and that His intentions toward us are always for our good.

The Lord will forgive us. He understands our struggles. He will restore us. He will use us again as our love for Him returns. Amen!