

14 June 2026 - Discipleship 101 – Part 3

Introduction

John Bunyan was told to quit preaching or be thrown in prison. He knew that if he went to prison his wife and children would be left destitute. They had little enough to eat and wear when he was free; but if he were imprisoned, they would be totally impoverished. Yet he knew he must preach the gospel God had called him to preach. Because he refused to stop preaching, he was imprisoned; and from his cell he wrote,

*The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling of the flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these great mercies, but also because I would have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I have besides. Oh, the thought of the hardship I thought my blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces.... But yet, recalling myself, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh, I saw in this condition, I was a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet thought I, I must do it. I must do it.
(Macarthur)*

This heart-breaking story illustrates a man driven by a love for Jesus above even His own family.

This is something that a disciple of Christ may be faced in life and be called to follow.

Our Passage this morning explores some of the biblical principles that guide true disciples of Christ. Principles that bring God glory.

Passage

Matthew 10:34–42 LSB

- ³⁴ *Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.*
- ³⁵ *For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*
- ³⁶ *and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.*
- ³⁷ *He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.*
- ³⁸ *And he who does not take his cross and follows after Me is not worthy of Me.*
- ³⁹ *He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.*
- ⁴⁰ *He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.*
- ⁴¹ *He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*
- ⁴² *And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.*

Proposition

3 Characteristics Of A Disciple Of Jesus That Should Guide You As You Follow Jesus:

1. The love of a disciple vs 34-37
2. The sacrifice of a disciple vs 38-39
3. The reward of the disciple vs 40-42

1. The Love of a disciple vs 34-37

Matthew 10:34–37 LSB

³⁴ *Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.*

³⁵ *For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*

³⁶ *and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.*

³⁷ *He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.*

34 Do not think.

Think = nomizo = Root = think, consider, believe Lemma Bedag = to form an idea about something. but with some suggestion of tentativeness or refraining from a definitive statement, believe, hold, consider SENSE = think or believe something without being settled in mind or opinion

This is similar to Jesus's words in the sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:17 LSB

¹⁷ *Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.*

The grammar expresses probability or some degree of uncertainty.

- You might not form the idea...
- You might not believe.
- You might not form the opinion.

Jesus, as the divine heart surgeon, cuts into the heart and confronts a false belief.

What false belief does Christ confront?

...that I came to bring peace on the earth.

The term bring = Root = throw, cast or put, Lemma BDEAG = to bring about a change in state or condition Sense= to cause to be in a certain state

Peace = eirene= the state of harmony, safety, welfare- the absence of war or discord.

Don't suppose that Jesus came to bring peace on earth.

It's easy to understand why people would think that.

The Jews expected a Messiah that would bring political peace.

Isaiah described the Messianic king as the prince of peace.

Isaiah 9:6 LSB

⁶ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Even the angels who announced Jesus' birth announced Him as bringing peace.

Luke 2:14 LSB

¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

Many even today believe that Jesus is:

- pro peace and pro uniting people
- purely a God of love.
- here to sort out your troubles and problems, like a magical genie in a bottle leading you to spiritual nirvana.

But Jesus' words bring that thinking to a screeching halt, like a freight train in your path.

If He was predicted as the Prince of Peace and bringer of peace, why does Jesus' words seem to contradict God's words?

By repeating the statement, Jesus emphasizes the truth.

I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Slide: sword on display in Israel Museum made from iron and bronze and wood.

He came to bring a sword.

The sword is a metaphor for conflict, for cutting or dividing something.

What did Jesus mean by a sword?

Jesus explains.

35 For...

The word "for" explains what Jesus meant by saying He brings a sword. The answer is found in two words: "to set."

I came to set...

To set is the Greek = dichaxo (dichasai) = separate, dis = twice, divide in two, Root = divide separate, Lemma BEDAG = cause separation, Louw Nida = to cause people to rebel against or reject

I came to divide,

I came to separate.

The Grammar implies a settled reality, a completed event, something that may even become permanent.

Luke stated Christ intention more clearly.

Luke 12:51 LSB

⁵¹ Do you think that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division.

Jesus came to divide or separate something.

What would He separate?

Jesus explained how the division reached even the closest human relationships, separation among family members.

Those closest to you.
He describes it.

...a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law

Repeating the word “against” three times emphasizes and connects the separation with various family members.

The direction of hostility in this passage appears to be from the younger to the older: cross-generational hostility.

Something had brought about split families.

What caused this split?

We get a hint in the sentence.

I have come.

The coming of Jesus brings division.

Acceptance or rejection of Jesus as the true Messiah would bring division in the family.

Our verse may suggest that the parents had accepted Him as the Messiah and the children had not.

The Prophet Micah predicted conflict and strife within the home, while he was watching expectantly for Yahweh, the God of his salvation.

Micah 7:6–7 LSB

*⁶ For son treats father as a wicked fool; Daughter rises up against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; **A man's enemies are the men of his own household.***

⁷ But as for me, I will watch expectantly for Yahweh; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.

Jesus then gave the general principle that Micah had predicted.

36 ...and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.

The term enemies= echthros = Bedag = hated, hating Sense personal enemy

They will be your personal enemies.

The revealing of the Messiah would cause people to choose sides.

Accept Him as the Messiah and you have peace with God but the sword for those who reject Him.

Reject him as Messiah and you have the sword(war) with God and the sword with those who have accepted Him as the Messiah.

Here we see a picture of battle within the home.

The age-old conflict that started in Genesis, rearing its head in the home.

Genesis 3:15 LSB

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed: He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.

Enmity between your seed and her seed.

Enmity between the children of Satan and the children of God

Enmity between Those who have trusted Jesus as savior and Lord and those who have not.

Remember the announcements the angels made when Jesus was born.

Notice that the announcement of peace was qualified.

Luke 2:14 LSB

¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

The angels announced that Jesus brought peace for a specific group of people.

Its peace on earth for those men with whom God is well pleased, those who have God's good will and favor towards them.

Those He chose to pour His grace out upon.

To get that peace you need peace with God.

To get that peace, you need to be reconciled to God through Jesus.

¹⁰ *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

Repentance and faith in Christ's death and resurrection will bring about reconciliation with God, peace with God and a deep inner peace.

But reject Jesus and you have no peace with God, and you are at war with all who follow Jesus.

In your family think about this truth.

If your child, your spouse is still unsaved and you are saved, you are actually from separate kingdoms.

Listen to the words of Paul.

2 Corinthians 6:14–16 LSB

¹⁴ *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

¹⁵ *Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?*

¹⁶ *Or what agreement has a sanctuary of God with idols? For we are a sanctuary of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*

- They are lawless but you may be righteous.
- They are followers of Satan, and you are following Christ.
- They have an old nature and you a new
- They are driven by their selfish desires, and you have a new set of desires.
- They are in darkness and you are in the light.
- They are idolators and you are at war with idols of your heart.
- The parenting problems many believing parents face are actually only because they are unsaved and are displaying the old nature.
- The true solution for parents and true peace is salvation.
- Jesus then focused on the core reason for division.

What motivates that divide or separation?

37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

He begins with timeless statements.

The grammar tells us that the one who loves his parents or children more than me as a timeless fact is not worthy of me.

Love speaks of great affection, care, loyalty and commitment, friendship The term more than in the Greek = hyper and means above

The one who loves (has greater affection and loyalty to) Father and Mother or son or daughter above me is not worthy of me.

Meaning you love your family above Jesus.

You have swapped the greatest command with the second greatest command.

Loving God has been swapped with loving your child, your spouse, your parents.

Jesus is no longer no 1.

Loving anyone above Jesus implies you have made that person your idol.

Jesus words to you...you are not worthy of Jesus.

As a timeless fact then you are not worthy.

What does that mean?

The term worthy = axios = to weigh, Root deserving, Lemma Bedag= to being correspondingly fitting or appropriate = being treated or recognized in a particular way.

Jesus was saying they do not deserve to be mine or to be called mine. They are not deserving or fitted to be called my disciples.

How quick are you to Jesus with something or someone?

How quick does your heart cloud Christ out.

Listen to the sobering thoughts of Yosef Vaktor, a Jew who had escaped the Nazis in the Holocaust and who shared some insights in **loving God more than your parents. He taught:**

Abraham:

- had to leave His family and His father's house Genesis 12:1-3
- had to send his son Ismael away Genesis 21:8-13
- was willing to sacrifice his son Genesis 22:1-19
- Moses:
 - at the golden calf incident: called those who were for Yahweh to come, and God instructed them to kill brothers, friends and neighbors and some even killed their own sons and daughters, and yet God bestowed upon them blessings. Exodus 32:26-30
 - taught how if your son, daughter or even your wife entices you to secretly go after other gods, you shall not listen to them but kill them. (Deuteronomy 13:6-11)
- One was to kill your rebellious son Deuteronomy 21:18

These examples in Scripture highlight the importance of loving God above even your closest family.

This characterizes the life of His disciples.

When you love Jesus above your family, it may lead to family division or splits.

Application

Believer you can only serve one God; there is no space for any other idols (small letter gods) in your life.

You are to love God with all your heart, soul and mind above any earthly relationship.

When Jesus led us to serve in Tanzania, Many people tried to use our children as the reason we should not obey what God was calling us to do.

It's at that point in time.

At that second in your life, you must decide.

Will I love and Obey Jesus more than even my family members.

Will I:

- follow His word or the world.
- be in conflict because of Christ or peace because of compromise at home.
- follow His truth or the error others follow.

If you truly pursue Jesus, you have no control over how your family may respond. Jesus warned that this might bring:

- separation between them and you.

You may be:

- shunned, ostracized at family meetings
- have conflicts.
- even face divorce.

But if you were to lose that family member relationally, God's word brings comfort.

2 Corinthians 6:17–18 LSB

¹⁷ "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean, And I will welcome you.

¹⁸ And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says the Lord Almighty.

Some because of the gospel may lose earthly family, but God will welcome you and be your Father.

What You lose God will restore when you choose to love Him above all else.

A disciple of Jesus loves Jesus above their own family.

Is this true of you?

If you say yes, ask what you say and do reflect this truth?

the 2nd Characteristics of a disciple of Jesus that should guide you as you follow Jesus.

2. The sacrifice of a disciple vs 38-39

Matthew 10:38–39 LSB

³⁸ *And he who does not take his cross and follows after Me is not worthy of Me.*

³⁹ *He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.*

38 And he who does not take his cross and follows after Me is not worthy of Me.

Slide: Three crosses on display in the biblical garden of Tantur (used to be between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.)

The grammar reveals this to be a lifestyle of taking your cross and following Jesus.

The cross symbolized the most extreme form of excruciating pain, cruelty and death for a Jew.

In Roman times the cross (stavron) or crossbar were carried by the condemned man to the place of execution.

Then their wrist and acles were nailed into the wood, and the stake was pounded into the ground where they were left in excruciating pain until death.

Just a few years before this a Zealot named Judas gathered a band of rebels to fight the roman occupation.

The insurrection was flattened by the Romans.

The Roman General Varus ordered the crucifixion of 2000 Jews.

Their crosses lined the roads of Galilee.

So, when Jesus said these words, they heard take up your execution stake and follow me.

They heard be willing:

- to abandon your own life and follow Jesus as Lord of your life.
- to sacrifice everything you have including your life for the sake of Jesus.
- Jesus went on.

39 He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Jesus call to a new life entails a call to die to the old life and perspectives.

But more than that what He was saying was that those who lose their lives whether through actual martyrdom in this life or the disciplined self-denial would find it in the life to come.

Those who find their lives now- preserve their lives now, meaning they refuse to submit to the demands of Christ discipleship, may lose it in the age to come.

The willingness to forsake everything including your life is the true life of a disciple of Jesus.

When a man has no self-remaining but has given himself up as a living sacrifice for Christ, that which would be a terror to another man becomes a comfort to him.
The Church-The World's Hope, Volume 51, Sermon #2952
Charles Spurgeon

Application

As a believer you are called to sacrifice yourself for Jesus.

Luke 9:23 LSB

²³ And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Paul said

Galatians 2:20 LSB

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Romans 12:1 LSB

¹ Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Philippians 3:7–8 LSB

⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.

John stated

Revelation 12:11 LSB

¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their witness, and they did not love their life even to death.

You need to come to terms with what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Death to self

Alive to God

Death to your selfish desires

Alive to God glorifying desires.

Death to your earthly hopes and plans

Alive to Godly hopes and plans

3. The reward of the disciple vs 40-42

Matthew 10:40-42 LSB

⁴⁰ *He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.*

⁴¹ *He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*

⁴² *And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.*

40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Jesus closed off His teaching with the principle:

The Jews understood that the authorized representative was to be treated as equivalent to the one who has sent them.

The term receives = dechomai = ROOT = receive, welcome, accept, Lemma: has received to her or himself, take, welcome, receive in hospitality, entertain Sense= to willingly permit access to one's company

They're not hostile to you.

Jesus goes on to give the principle.

Whoever receives you receives me and ultimately God the Father who has sent me.

When people welcome you as a follower of Jesus, by implication they are welcoming to Jesus and welcoming to God the Father.

You represent the King of Kings and as King He takes notice and we see will reward.

The Grammar reveals this as a true statement and a timeless fact.

41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward...

Jesus briefly discussed God's way of rewarding.

The one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, meaning based on them having the reputation of being a prophet will receive a prophet's reward.

God not only rewards the prophet with a prophet's reward, He rewards those who welcome the prophet with a prophet's reward.

Not only that

...and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

God not only rewards the righteous man with a righteous man's reward, He rewards those who welcome the righteous with a righteous man's reward.

He who receives a true disciple (Believer) of Jesus will also receive the same reward of that person.

Remember you can only be righteous if the righteousness of Christ been applied to your life through faith in Christ.

God showers His blessings on every person who receives His people because they are His people.

42 And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.

Slide: cups found in display in Israel museum.

2nd slide: water carrier of Jerusalem that used to be employed to carry water up from the Gihon spring and then selling it to the people.

It does not matter how insignificant or unimportant.

They might be new believers, untaught and even stumbling.

Jesus's point

Service done to any people in His name amounts to service to Him and will be rewarded.

The simplest help to the disciple will not go unnoticed and will be rewarded by God.

*John Calvin was banished from Geneva by ungrateful citizens who resented his giving them the full truth of God's Word. In response to the disappointing news he said, "Most assuredly, if I had merely served man, this would have been a poor recompense. But it is my happiness that I have served Him who never fails to reward His servants to the full extent of His promise."
(Macarthur)*

Why is this important?

This is the invisible mark of a disciple.

1. They will be rewarded someday in heaven,

1 Peter 1:3–5 LSB

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *to obtain an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, having been kept in heaven for you,*

⁵ *who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

2. But they are not the only ones who will be rewarded. Everyone who welcomes you, who blesses you even in small ways will be rewarded by God.

Application

You can know that no matter the hardships you face, there lies in heaven eternal rewards for serving Him and not only for you, but for all you welcome you, who welcome you as follower of Jesus, who welcome the message you bring, who welcome you by physical assistance. God sees it.

God will reward it.

You and I need to start embracing an eternal mindset.

Am I living for now or for eternity?

This means that when you call people to repentance, when you call them to turn away from falsehood, know that ultimately you may either be leading people to have eternal reward or eternal loss.

How people respond to the Messiah, whether a family member or someone in the street, has eternal implications.

In conclusion a story is told

750 Engaging Illustrations for Preachers, Teachers and Writers 574: Rewards
As Christmas 1996 approached, the Kingston Technology corporation of Orange County, California, informed its 523 employees they would soon receive an extra special Christmas bonus.

Having started in the owner's garage in 1987, Kingston Technology, like many high-tech companies, had experienced explosive growth, to the point where it now was the world's largest supplier of add-on memory boards for personal computers. And each year since the company had begun with just a handful of employees, the owners had followed a generous policy of giving 10 percent of the annual profits to the workers.

Well, in 1996 another company bought Kingston Technology for \$1.5 billion. The arrangement called for Kingston's owners to retain control of their company, and they decided to carry on generosity as usual: they gave 10 percent of a billion or so dollars to their employees as a Christmas bonus! With the bonus computed on the basis of seniority and performance, that meant the average employee would receive \$75,000, and the highest bonuses could reach \$300,000.

This story had only one downside. When it hit the national news, Kingston Technology was besieged by a flurry of applications for employment, but alas they were not hiring.

The decision makers at Kingston Technology believe in giving lavish rewards to their workers. So does God. At the final judgment, the Christmas bonuses of this company will look like peanuts compared to the heavenly rewards God will shower upon those who have served him in this life. What's more, anyone who is
