

Four Keys to Becoming a Disciple of Jesus Christ – Part 1

Acts 14:20-28

Introduction:

1. The word “*disciple*” is used three times in our text.
2. What is a disciple? Literally, it means “a learner; a pupil” (disciples of science, sports, art, aeronautics etc.). Disciples are those who have made themselves available for spiritual training and have devoted themselves to a lifetime of learning.
3. John 15:8 indicates that God is glorified when we become fruit-bearing disciples of Christ.
4. Just because someone claims to be a believer does not mean that he is a disciple of Christ.
5. We know a person is saved and becomes a child of God by simply placing his complete trust in Christ to save him (not by joining a church, getting baptized, good works, etc.). Romans 5:1 – **This** is how you become a child of God.
6. People become disciples of Christ by learning and growing in their relationship with Christ. Disciples want to grow and learn in their relationship with Christ.
7. This is what we want to focus on this morning. Let's focus on four keys to possessing this growing relationship with Christ - four keys to becoming a disciple of Christ.
8. If you are not saved, God wants to know you in a personal way and have a relationship with you. If you **are** saved, He wants you to have that close, growing relationship in Christ.

First, you must get established in the Word of God. vs. 21-22

1. After Paul gets stoned at Lystra, he and Barnabas travel to the city of Derbe and they did two things. vs. 20
 - They “*preached the gospel to that city*” (“*preached*” literally means “evangelized”). They were sharing Christ.
 - They “*taught many*” (the word “*taught*” comes from the same word meaning “discipled”). Maybe some did not want to learn and grow. But many did, and they submitted to biblical teaching and instruction!
 - Walk Through Bethlehem and outreach events are wonderful. But then discipleship must take place.
2. After this, they traveled back to the cities where they had led souls to Christ. “*They returned again...*”
 - Why would they take time to go back through these cities instead of going to new ones?
 - In verse 22a, “*confirming*” means “to strengthen in the faith.” cf. Acts 18:23
 - Paul was strengthening them in their faith.
3. What do we learn from this?
 - Evangelizing involves the salvation of souls.

- Discipling involves the strengthening of souls through God's Word (cf. Acts 18:11). We see a balance between these two - evangelizing and strengthening.
 - Delivering a child and raising a child are two different worlds. How awesome when people are saved, but...
4. Baby Christians must be fed so they can grow and mature in their faith (1 Peter 2:2; cf. Ephesians 4:14-15). God wants baby Christians to “grow up,” with the idea that they will one day be feeding themselves, digesting God’s Word, applying it to their lives, and teaching others.
- But at first, baby Christians **do** need somebody to feed them and get them rooted in the foundational truths of Scripture. It is a must. **Illustration:** A baby being fed with bottle - but at 5 years old, it isn’t cute any more!
 - At five months old, my boys couldn’t get up from the chair, go to the stove, warm up a bottle, and stick it in their mouths. But, they are good at going to the fridge and feeding themselves now!