

The Gospel of John

True and False Disciples (Part 6)

John 6:67-71

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we will be completing John chapter 6, Lord willing. It has been a very powerful chapter that shows the contrasts between a true and a false disciple. This morning we will see examples of the ultimate true disciple and the ultimate false disciple and investigate how we fit in.

All Stand and Read Scripture.

John 6:67-71 (NASB)

67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" 68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. 69 We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God." 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and *yet* one of you is a devil?" 71 Now He meant Judas *the son* of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

Prayer

The Lord made it very clear as to what is required in our lives in order to be a true disciple. There is no room for confusion.

ILLUSTRATION:

Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by US Air Force pilots and the replies from the maintenance crews:

Problem: The left inside main tire almost needs replaced.

Solution: The left inside main tire was almost replaced.

Problem: There is something loose in the cockpit.

Solution: Something was tightened in the cockpit.

Problem: There is evidence of a hydraulic leak on the right main landing gear.

Solution: The evidence was removed.

Where there is lack of clarity there is always confusion and the potential for misunderstanding. When it comes to our discipleship, there is no room for confusion as to what Jesus expects from us.

Jesus does not have levels of followers. He doesn't have **the dedicated disciple, the**

recreational disciple, and the occasional disciple. He requires complete devotion and dedication to him.

It is a big call! Jesus calls us to a life of submission to him. Sometimes it seems as though it's impossible to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ...to follow Him exclusively, to love Him above all others, and serve Him devoutly.

If you honest with yourself, you realize that a **full** surrender is a **MAJOR PROBLEM!** You may feel like you will never get there.

The reality is that we **cannot** give Jesus the **full** submission that He asks of us! So what is a person to do? We are incapable of doing it! We can never fully be the person Jesus calls us to be – not while there is sin in our lives – not while there is a hint of self centeredness within us. So we live in this realm between what He asks us to do and what we actually accomplish. It is very discomfoting!

1. You may feel guilty because you are **not good enough.** You may feel like you are **always** disappointing God. You may beat yourself up because you feel like you are such a lousy disciple.

2. Or you can try harder – you can keep yourself busy and work harder and harder to try to be the person God calls you to be. In the end you might even feel like you have made some progress. In fact you might even feel quite proud of the progress you have made compared to some of those **other** people who just don't even seem to care. **Losers!** Oops, my pride is showing!

3. Or you might just want to give up altogether because it's too hard. You might feel like there are just too many things to do that you do not know how to do. Or too many things that you keep doing that you aren't supposed to do. You keep on sinning and can't live with the continual failure so you give up trying.

Today, let's look at the other side of the coin. The side that gives ordinary people like you and me a bit of hope. If we look at the 12 men that Jesus chose as His own disciples we find great hope. It puts us back in the game in a big way. Because these were not elite people – they were not super Christians. They were people just like you and me.

When Jesus was picking his team of 12 guys, He could have picked the most prominent leaders of His day. He could have influenced society through its key leaders – which to us might seem sensible.

Have you ever looked at who Jesus did pick? If we are honest, they were a pretty mixed up bunch of men. And Jesus wanted to change the world with them.

Ever wonder why he chose what appears to be ordinary men?

Jesus' disciples **were** people who blew it regularly and quite spectacularly. Let's look at some of their human failures.

- There was a continual lack of understanding of what Jesus was trying to teach them. They did not understand that He was going to die on the cross until after it happened.
- They had discussed with one another which of them was the greatest.
- Just before Jesus is arrested Peter, James, and John fell asleep in the Garden of

Gethsemane while they are waiting for Jesus as He was praying.

- When Jesus was arrested, they all fled.
- When Jesus was being questioned Peter denied Christ three times.
- Thomas would not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until he had seen the nail prints in His hands and put his hand in His side.

Are you starting to feel like **your chance** of being a true disciple is a bit more possible?

If we look at these 12 men, there is at least one characteristic that they all had in common. I am sure Jesus was looking for that quality when He chose them. It is a quality that might seem insignificant in some ways, but it's probably one of the most essential qualities of a disciple. **It is not related to giftedness or talent.** The quality is "**teach ability**". It simply means an openness to learning, a humble spirit that isn't always right, a desire to grow and develop. A recognition that you don't know everything.

ILLUSTRATION:

A story is told of a young woman who wanted to go to college, but her heart sank when she read the question on the application blank that asked "**Are you a leader?**" Being both honest and conscientious, she wrote "**no**" and returned the application, expecting the worst. To her surprise, she received this letter from the college. "Dear applicant, a study of the application forms reveals that this year our college will have 1,452 new leaders. We are accepting you because we feel it is imperative that we have at least one follower."

Jesus probably said "give me 12 teachable people and I can change the world." I think that's why he didn't chase the leaders and big shots. He didn't want to waste His time trying to fight them and convince them of His truths, when these guys would just buy in. And that doesn't mean that they were mindless morons who couldn't think for themselves. These were capable men! Jesus knew their heart and knew that they were open to new ways. They were ready to learn. They were willing to be taught and change.

These 12 had left everything to follow Him. They had put all their eggs in one basket. They weren't perfect, but they were teachable.

How teachable are you?

Struggle and failure do not necessarily equate to a lack of devotion. It just proves that following Jesus can be hard and it will test your faith.

The question we need to ask ourselves is not "am I **able** to follow Jesus completely" but rather "am I **willing to do my best** to follow Jesus completely?" We are all human and sometimes we will fail in our commitment but the thing Jesus is interested in is not our **ability** but our **willingness** to follow Him with our whole heart.

BODY:

I. THE ULTIMATE TRUE DISCIPLE.

Let's look at the mindset of Peter and the other chosen true disciples of Christ.

John 6:67-69 (NASB)

67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” 68 Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. 69 We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”

Although the question is directed to all the disciples Peter acts as their unofficial spokesman and answers with a question of his own.

The main point that John continues to make is that a true disciple **believes** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and He acts upon that belief.

Notice again what Peter says, “...**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.**”

At least a part of this question expresses the thought of going back. Peter is saying that once they have decided to follow Jesus, going back is unthinkable. Once we have experienced the peace and joy of knowing Christ, you need to ask yourself, “**What would you go back to?**” Is there anything in your past that can compare to what you have in Jesus? Would you really go back to the way your life used to be?

II. THE ULTIMATE FALSE DISCIPLE.

John 6:70-71 (NASB)

70 Jesus answered them, “Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and *yet* one of you is a devil?” 71 Now He meant Judas *the son* of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

Judas Iscariot lived with and followed Jesus for three years. He witnessed Jesus’ ministry, His teaching, and His many miracles. He was not wholeheartedly committed to Jesus even though he was numbered among the twelve. He was the ultimate false disciple.

Romans 12:2 (NASB)

²And do not be **conformed** to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

The false disciple is conformed to the ways of this world, but we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. So even though we still live in this world, we no longer do and say things to satisfy our own desires. Instead everything that we do and say, looking at it from a heavenly perspective, will be done and said to the glory God!

He obviously did not believe because he betrayed our Lord. He was still conformed to the world. He was the treasurer for the group and used this trusted position to steal from the money box. His love for money caused him to accept thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus.

Jesus knew from the very beginning what Judas Iscariot would do. It is hard to imagine how he could follow through on such a betrayal after following Jesus for three years. Judas’ story teaches us to guard against small, gradual failings that gain strength and power in our lives. His story is also a great reminder that appearances can be deceiving. Jesus taught...

Matthew 7:22-23 (NASB)

²² Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

III. EXAMINING YOUR DISCIPLESHIP

Not everyone who says they're interested in Jesus is really a true Christian. And John is saying to us, that if you are a true follower of Jesus, you never grow tired of Him. You need Him like you need food. You go to Him daily, like your daily meal.

Let me say it another way. **When a true believer confesses Jesus as Lord in saving faith, that was the last selfish act of your will. That was the last!**

Never again in the life of a true disciple is it about what **you** want. It's always about – What? - What **God** wants. So false disciples have a completely selfish personal preoccupation that causes them to view God as a dispenser of the things they want.

I can't say it more simply than to say this. For the true disciple, Christ is everything. **Everything!** He is the soul-satisfying bread. **It is never what HE can give that the true disciple seeks. It is Who He IS that the true disciple seeks.** He is the sole satisfaction of the true disciple.

Paul says, "Everything else was manure when I met Christ. Christ was everything. I considered everything I'd ever achieved, earned, gained, or acquired as garbage, when I found Christ. "For to me live is Christ. To die is gain." "I'm crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me." The true disciple is completely consumed with Christ.

The true disciple would say with the apostle Paul...

Philippians 4:11-13 (NASB)

¹¹ Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹²I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

It's all irrelevant. I don't care if I have a car or a house. I don't care if I have health or I don't have health. All I want is Christ. Christ is all there is. Christ is all I need. Christ is all I want.

CONCLUSION:

That's the preoccupation of a true disciple. You see that if you go with me back to Matthew 13. That is a great chapter on the parables of the kingdom that our Lord gave. Two very brief parables.

Matthew 13:44-46 (NASB)

Hidden Treasure

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and

hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

A Costly Pearl

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, ⁴⁶and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Very simple little stories. A man finds a treasure when he’s plowing a field. He could have just grabbed the treasure and ran, but he’s an honorable man, so he put it back. And according to Jewish law, if he was to be entitled to that treasure, he had to buy the entire field, which he did.

And so he had to sell everything he had to purchase the field to get the treasure. He came across it somewhat inadvertently. In the second story, this is a merchant looking for pearls. This is a man on a mission - and he finds one pearl of great value - who went and sold all that he had and bought it.

So here’s the key. Finding a treasure, whether you stumbled across it or whether you were in a search for it, that is so valuable, you literally sell everything for this one treasure.

It was common in ancient days to bury treasures in fields. There weren’t banks and such that were safe, so you buried it in a case in a field. It was not uncommon for someone to find the buried treasure many generations later.

Pearls were considered to be the most valuable of all things in terms of jewelry in that day.

What is the treasure and what is the pearl? Whatever it is, it’s the most valuable thing possible. It’s the most valuable thing there is. So valuable that literally, you’d give up everything to purchase it, absolutely everything you possess.

The treasure is Christ and the pearl is Christ. You sell all to buy Christ.

It’s all about Him.

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

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.

The Family of God.