

Recipe for Discipleship

2 Peter 1:5-9

Intro

By way of introduction, would you please open your Bibles to...

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV)

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

This passage is what is referred to as ***the Great Commission*** and it is important to note that the Lord Jesus it is not simply instructing believers *to go and witness...*

Instead, the Lord Jesus is calling ***disciples to go and make other disciples...***

disciple — *someone who not only learns, but becomes attached to one's teacher and becomes his follower in doctrine and conduct of life...*

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are not only to ***believe in Him***, but we are also to ***believe Him — we are to believe that His way of living is the best way to live life...***

As ***disciples*** are to become ***His apprentices*** — we are to ***learn*** from Him and ***do*** what He calls us to do...

This ***calling to be a disciple*** is the ***calling of each and every believer*** in Jesus Christ — ***we are each to be disciples...***

And it is this truth that Peter reminds believers of in the text that we will be studying this morning...

Please follow along as I read the passage that we will be going through...

2 Peter 1:5-9 (NKJV)

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

*I've entitled this message **Recipe for Discipleship** and we will spend our time in 3 sections...*

1) Diligent Disciples

2) Fruitful Disciples

3) Distracted Disciples

Let's move into our first section...

1) Diligent Disciples (vs 5-7)

5 But also for this very reason,

The first question to ask ourselves here is: what **very reason** is Peter referring to?...

Because whatever Peter is instructing believers to do in the verses connects to **this very reason**...

Well, it seems clear that **this very reason** refers back to what we have been studying over the last three weeks...

So let's quickly look back at...

2 Peter 1:2-4 (NKJV)

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

*So, in vs 5, Peter is telling us that it is **for this very reason** — because of the wonderful things that the Lord has done for us...*

This is what should motivate us to pursue a life of **dedicated discipleship**...

So let's briefly remind ourselves of some of these wonderful benefits that we have received through the Lord Jesus Christ...

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we have received the grace of God, peace with God and the peace of God...

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness through His divine power...

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we have been given exceedingly great and precious promises...

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we have become partakers of the divine nature...

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we are escaped prisoners — we are no longer prisoners of lust but have been set free that we might enjoy the abundant life with the Lord...

All of this — and 10,000 other reasons — make it clear that the only life that is reasonable for a believer is a life of dedicated discipleship...

So, Peter — in keeping with all the other New Testament authors — calls us to a life discipleship — which is the best possible life...

Now, if we are serious about this sort of life then we must begin by choosing the path of discipleship for ourselves...

We cannot disciple others effectively if we are not disciples ourselves...

You and I cannot impart to others what we ourselves do not possess...

[ex. our oldest daughter wants to learn to cross-stitch — so she asked my mom for instruction — my daughter wisely did not ask me...]

So, if we are truly seeking to obey the Great Commission then the best thing that we can do is ***become dedicated disciples ourselves...***

And as we grow in discipleship, the Lord Jesus will give us the opportunity to disciple others...

2 Chronicles 16:9 (NKJV)

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him...

Now, as we continue on in 2 Peter 1:5, Peter gives us a step-by-step guide...

And I think it is helpful to consider this a ***recipe of discipleship*** — that what Peter lists are essential ingredients that we need if we are to be mature disciples...

[ex. if you add the right ingredients in the right way — good things happen...]

So Peter begins his discipleship recipe with...

giving all diligence,

giving — *to bring forth something additional, to contribute in addition to...*

all — *all in totality with a focus on its individual components...*

diligence — *earnest commitment in discharge of an obligation or experience of a relationship; eagerness, earnestness, willingness, zeal...*

Giving all diligence is giving your all — it is making discipleship the ultimate *telos* — the ultimate goal — of your life...

That everything else in our lives should fall under the umbrella of being a disciple...

[ex. A Doctor is a Doctor at all times — even when not at work...]

The life of a **diligent disciple** is a life of **commitment to Christ** — not merely **involvement with Christ**...

[ex. Bacon and egg breakfast burrito — the chicken was **involved** but the pig was **committed**...]

This is the sort of life that the Lord has called us to as diligent disciples...

To remind us of this truth, would you please turn to...

Luke 9:23-25 (NKJV)

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?"

And though we may draw back from the Lord Jesus' call to such radical obedience — the truth is that we are capable of making incredible sacrifices if we believe that the sacrifice is worth it...

Professional athletes often sacrifice their health in pursuit of money and glory...

Business professionals often sacrifice familial relationships to climb the corporate ladder...

Explorers sacrifice time, money and relationships to chase the next experience...

And on and on it goes...

But one central truth remains — we must spend our life in one way or another...

We don't get to hold on to this life — our days are fleeting — and no amount of worrying, plotting, or planning will keep the days from flying by...

So — if we seek to be ***diligent disciples*** — we will not try to hold on to this life...

Instead, we will view this ***one fleeting, earthbound life*** as a time of investment that will pay dividends in this life and in the life to come...

We will become wise investors as we realize that there are only two categories worth investing in — ***investing in God*** and ***investing in people***...

These two categories are the only ones worth ultimate investment because only God and people will outlast this life...

God and ***people*** are the reason why we are to ***give all diligence*** as faithful disciples...

Because as we invest in ***God*** and in ***people*** we are ***investing our lives*** — ***we are spending our lives*** — on what matters both now and for eternity...

Please turn back to 2 Peter 1:5 as Peter writes...

giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue,

Now, all born-again believers have **faith** — they have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation...

But that initial placement of one's faith in the Lord Jesus at the moment of salvation is not the end of the disciple's life — it is merely the beginning of the disciple's life...

We understand that when we were born *physically* it was just the beginning...

We were expected to learn and grow — we were expected to mature and develop...

Likewise, when we were born *spiritually* — we were expected to learn and grow — we were expected to mature and develop...

And as we follow Peter's recipe as diligent disciples we will do just that...

*But what is this **virtue** that we are to add to our faith?*

Because we can't add virtue as an ingredient if we don't what it is...

virtue — *courage, fortitude, resolution; uprightness...*

Virtue is essentially ***doing the right thing in a situation...***

The person who lives virtuously is the person who ***chooses to do what is morally correct in any given situation...***

And it makes perfect sense that as disciples of Christ we would seek to behave virtuously — because He was absolutely virtuous...

[ex. Follow the example of a physical trainer on youtube because I trust that what they are telling me is true...]

However, if I fail to follow the example of the physical trainer then ***I don't really trust them*** or ***I don't value what they value***...

The same is true for us as disciples — if we fail to add **virtue** to our **faith** then either we don't really believe what Jesus says or we don't value becoming like Him...

But the Lord Jesus had this to say in...

Luke 6:40 (NKJV)

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.”

Now we move on to the next ingredient...

to virtue knowledge,

knowledge — *comprehension or intellectual grasp of something...*

If we are to grow in our **faith** and **lead virtuous lives**, we must also grow in **knowledge**...

There is simply no way around this truth — if we want to grow in any area, our knowledge of that area must increase...

So, if you want to grow as diligent disciples then we must grow in **knowledge**...

For more on this subject, would you please turn to...

Philippians 3:7-11 (NKJV)

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

The Apostle Paul — and countless other disciples — added **knowledge** to **faith** and **virtue** because they valued the knowledge of Christ so highly...

And human beings value knowledge — that reality is what caused Google to become a world superpower — human beings have an overwhelming desire to know...

So, the good news is that as disciples we do not have to create in ourselves a desire for knowledge...

All we have to do is redirect our desire for knowledge by living a life of faith and virtue...

This will cultivate in us a desire to know Christ more and more...

Please turn back to 2 Peter 1 as we move into vs...

6 to knowledge self-control,

self-control — *restraint of one's emotions, impulses, or desires...*

It is worth noting that a proper **knowledge** of God leads to a life of **self-control**...

[ex. knowing that certain substances are poisonous keeps us from handling them foolishly...]

Little children do not have that sort of knowledge so we must keep these poisonous substances out of their reach...

Tragically, if disciples fail to grow in **virtue** and **knowledge** then they will lack **self-control**...

This will cause them to remain spiritually immature and they will continually reach for that which is spiritually poisonous...[expand]

The good news is that if we — as disciples — choose to actively add **virtue** and **knowledge** to our lives then we will live lives of **self-control**...

No one will need to come and childproof our lives because we will be mature believers who are actively removing anything that is spiritually poisonous...

Continuing on we read...

to self-control perseverance,

perseverance — *the capacity to hold out or bear up in the face of difficulty; patience, endurance, steadfastness...*

Faith, virtue, knowledge and **self-control** enable **perseverance** — the ability to choose to remain faithful — to stick it out — to refuse to quit...

*And **perseverance** is an essential ingredient in the recipe for **hope**...*

To see this, let's first turn to...

Romans 5:1-4 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Now please turn to...

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Finally, please turn to...

James 1:2-4 (NKJV)

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Clearly, **perseverance** or **endurance** or **patience** — however it is translated — is an indispensable ingredient for discipleship — and it is an ingredient that leads to hope...

Please turn back to 2 Peter 1 as we look at the last ingredient of vs 6...

to perseverance godliness,

godliness — *devotion to God; well-directed reverence; our attitude toward God...*

In context, this word speaks of having **a right view of God** — of seeing God as He actually is and therefore treating Him with the reverence and respect that He deserves...

This is another essential ingredient in the recipe for diligent disciples...

Because if we do not view God correctly then we will not follow Him...

It is vital that we view God **as He is** if we are to walk in right relationship with Him...

[ex. if we do not believe that God is good then we will not be diligent disciples...]

Peter continues in vs...

7 to godliness brotherly kindness,

brotherly kindness — *Gr. philadelphia* — *love for fellow believers...*

We see the importance of this love for fellow disciples throughout the New Testament...

Romans 12:10 (NKJV)

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another...

1 Thessalonians 4:9 (NKJV)

But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another...

Hebrews 13:1 (NKJV)

Let brotherly love continue.

Brotherly love is one of the biggest factors in our effectiveness as disciples...

Because if we have this sort of love for other believers then at least two results follow...

***1) The believers that we disciple will be positively affected...
[expand]***

2) The people who witness our love for one another will be positively affected...[expand]

Let's move on now to the last part of vs 7...

and to brotherly kindness love.

love — *Gr. agape* — *others-centered, self-sacrificing love...*

Most famously, this sort of love is revealed in...

John 3:16 (NKJV)

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

And the most helpful definition that I have found for agape love comes to us from Dallas Willard...

Love is the “Genuine inner readiness and longing to secure the good of others.”

As we consider this definition, I believe the life of a diligent disciple can be summarized by the Greatest Commandments...

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself...[expand]

So, Peter has given us the recipe for being diligent disciples — and if we follow the recipe then we will see wonderful results...

And it is this reality that we come to as we move to our second section...

2) Fruitful Disciples (vs 8)

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, our **knowledge** of the Lord Jesus Christ will be ***fruitful and productive*** as we seek to be diligent disciples by adding all the ingredients of the recipe that Peter has given us...

[ex. if we wish to bake a cake and follow the recipe exactly — it should turn out pretty well...]

Now, in this section of our study, I just want to remind you of two of the primary passages that reveal the truth that disciples are called to be fruitful...

If you would, please turn to...

John 15:1-8 (NKJV)

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Now please turn to...

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)

**22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

So, if we follow the recipe and seek to be diligent disciples, we will bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit...

Please turn back to 2 Peter 1 as we quickly look at our final section...

3) Distracted Disciples (vs 9)

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

The **these things** that Peter is referring to here in vs 9 are the ingredients of discipleship that we referred to in our first section...

The idea here is that if we as disciples fail to appropriate these ingredients then we will be *ineffective disciples*...

We will be **shortsighted** — we will become fixated on the **earthly and temporary** instead of focused on the **heavenly and eternal**... We will only be able to see what is right in front of us — we will fail to see what is really important and we will forget that we were cleansed from our sins so that we might become fruitful disciples...

Conclusion

This brings us to the end of our study and I will close by simply rereading our passage — trusting that the Lord will speak to us through it...

2 Peter 1:5-9 (NKJV)

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

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