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Being a Disciple: Counting the Real Cost

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Kay Arthur, Tom & Jane Hart

PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

**40**minute  
BIBLE STUDIES

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WATERBROOK  
P R E S S

BEING A DISCIPLE: COUNTING THE REAL COST

PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS

12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

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ISBN 978-0-307-45756-1

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Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

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Printed in the United States of America

2009

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## WEEK ONE

Most people are followers of someone. Someone catches their attention, captures their imagination, or shares the same interests and values. Consequently they want to know more about that person—the goals he or she is pursuing, the accomplishments attained. They want to talk and learn from this person. And if what they find is pleasing or applicable to their desires and ambitions, they want to emulate him, pursue his interests, or take up his cause.

Basically we are followers of those who have gone before us or those who have achieved what we want to achieve. This may be our parents, our peers, our teachers, or our heroes in the realms of our interest—but there is usually someone we want to be like because we believe in who he is or what he is about.


A disciple is a follower. Moses had disciples, the Pharisees had disciples, John the Baptist had disciples.

When Jesus began His public ministry, He, too, looked for disciples so that, when His work was finished and He left to be with the Father again, there would be others who would faithfully carry on the work of the kingdom of God—a kingdom that was now at hand.

### OBSERVE

As we begin, let's look at a passage that shows us how Jesus called His first disciples.

**Leader:** *Read aloud Matthew 4:17-22.*

- Mark the word **follow** by underlining it and putting an arrow on the end of the line, like this: 

#### MATTHEW 4:17-22

17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

18 Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of

Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

19 And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

## DISCUSS

- When Jesus asked them to follow Him, what did He say He would make them?
- What had they been doing?
- What do you think Jesus meant by “fishers of men”?

**Leader:** *Have the group share in fifteen seconds or less what some of them were doing when Jesus first called them to believe on Him. Why did they follow Him?*

## OBSERVE

The pond from which the disciples were going to fish was the world! You might say this was the private lake of the devil—or so the devil thought! But Jesus knew He had many fish who needed to be netted into the kingdom of God.

**Leader:** *In Matthew 10:16-22, we have a portion of Jesus' instructions to the twelve disciples (whom He also appointed as apostles) before He sent them to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Read the passage aloud and have the group...*

- circle every instruction that Jesus gives them.
- underline everything that is going to happen to them.

## DISCUSS

- Does what Jesus said sound very appealing or attractive?
- What are the things that can or will happen to them as His disciples? Talk about what you have underlined.
- What are Jesus' instructions?

## MATTHEW 10:16-22

16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.

17 "But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues;

18 and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

19 "But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say.

20 “For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

21 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

22 “You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.”

- Are there any assurances? promises of help?
- Would you say Jesus was “up front” about what it means to follow Him? Why?
- If those things were going to happen to you, would you still want to follow Jesus?
- Do you realize that these things are happening to many Christians around the world today? And it has happened in every age—beginning with the first twelve of His disciples!

## OBSERVE

**Leader:** Read aloud Matthew 10:24-31.

- Mark every reference to **disciple**, including pronouns, in the same way you marked “follow” by underlining it and putting an arrow on the end of the line.
- Mark every occurrence of the word **fear** with a series of short lines.

## DISCUSS

- What did Jesus teach them about a disciple’s relationship to his master?
- What were they not to fear? What were they supposed to fear? (List these under the headings provided.)

### Not to Fear

### To Fear

## MATTHEW 10:24-31

24 “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master.

25 “It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

26 “Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

27 “What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops.



28 “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 “Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

30 “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 “So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.”

- What are the reasons they shouldn't fear? What can the disciples be assured of?

**Leader:** *When answering this last question, make sure the group looks at verse 29 very carefully. Don't miss “apart from your Father”—which means, “without His knowledge and therefore His permission”! Follow this point by tying in verses 30-31.*

- What are Jesus' instructions in this passage? What are His disciples to do?

**Leader:** *Read aloud the Insight Box.*

### INSIGHT

Beelzebul is a name of Satan. Some accused Jesus of being from the devil, Satan. If they accused Jesus of this, then the disciples could expect to be accused of the same.

**WRAP IT UP**

Honestly, how do you feel when you read these scriptures we've looked at this week?

How relevant do you think they are to today?

Do you think these things pertained only to the twelve disciples of Jesus—or could they possibly apply to us?

These are strong teachings, aren't they? Have you ever wondered if *every* Christian is called to be a disciple—and if so, how such knowledge and understanding of Jesus' requirements for disciples might change the way we present the Lord Jesus Christ to others? What do you think?

Talk to God about it—ask Him what He thinks...



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That Help You Discover Truth For Yourself

