

Being a Disciple of Jesus

Brian Brodersen, senior pastor of CC Costa Mesa, CA



We will conclude this series on discipleship by considering the rewards and purpose of Jesus' disciples.

Jesus did promise a reward for the disciple. It's not just giving up, denying ourselves, and picking up the cross. It is that, but God rewards—both in the present and in the future.

As we noted previously, the cost is high, but the reward far outweighs it. God will abundantly bless you far beyond anything you give up for Him. And what are the most noteworthy things, after all, that we give up for Jesus? Sin, misery, depression, death, and judgment. Those are what I gladly gave up for Jesus!

When Peter asked Jesus what His disciples would receive for their sacrifices in following Him, Jesus responded: ***“Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life”*** (Matthew 19:29).

Jesus did promise a reward for the disciple. It's not just giving up, denying ourselves, and picking up the cross. It is that, but God rewards—both in the present and in the future. What is the present compensation? When you become a follower of Jesus, His presence is with you. We're not following Him at a distance with no connection to Him. We're following Him closely, enjoying His presence. We also receive His guidance, leading us into His purpose.

We are also adopted into His universal family. To those who have left behind

brothers, sisters, father, and mother, Jesus promises a new family. Some people literally give these things up. Those who come from a Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, or Buddhist background and start to follow Christ are often excluded from family relationships; other parties frequently don't want anything to do with converts anymore. So new believers lose fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, sometimes even husbands or wives or children. But the Lord adopts His people into His universal family, and He says we will receive a hundredfold. He brings new relationships into our lives—spiritual parents, spiritual brothers and sisters, or spiritual children. And many Christians testify that their spiritual relationships are far superior

to the physical relationships they lost. God brings us into His family. He adopts us.

And the future reward is ruling and reigning with Christ in His kingdom. One day, the Lord will come back and set up His kingdom, and we will reign with Him—***“In the regeneration,”*** He says (Matthew 19:28b). That's mind-boggling, but that's the reward of a disciple.

Purpose

And finally, a disciple has a purpose. Many today are dying of boredom. And people do absolutely crazy things in pursuit of a thrill to pull them out of the boredom of life.

Well, Jesus will pull you out of the boredom of life. He's got plenty of exciting things going on all over the world, and He wants to bring us into His purpose. He said in Matthew 28:19-20a, ***“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”*** One of the disciple's main purposes is to make disciples of others. As we follow Jesus and He disciples us, He then uses us to make disciples of others. This is how the Christian life becomes thrilling.

Many struggle, feeling that there's no real purpose or meaning in their lives. ***“Why am I here? Is there any meaning to life?”*** are common questions. For Jesus' disciples, there is a purpose. It's the disciple of Jesus who enters in to the great adventure of co-laboring with God in the expansion of His kingdom. If you're bored, I challenge you to think about whether you're really a disciple of Jesus. Because if you're bored, you don't really think you have anything to do. If you don't think you have anything to do, you're obviously not thinking like a disciple—because there's plenty to do.

We will never run out of people to share Christ with, and we will never run out of other believers to instruct and build up in the faith. There are always opportunities to share Christ in word and deed. Many people are looking for a cause, and there are all kinds of causes out there. Some are good and strategic and some are not, but the Lord has an amazing, universal program: the expansion of Jesus Christ's kingdom. If you want to get on board with a valuable cause and find meaning for your life, discipleship is how you find purpose. This is what Jesus was talking about when He said, ***“If you seek to save your life or find your life, you'll lose it; but if you lose your life—if you give it up for My sake and the gospel's, you'll really find it”*** (paraphrase of Matthew 16:25). You want to know the meaning and purpose of life? Become a disciple of Jesus, and you'll find out. We were intended to live in a relationship with God, in obedience to Him. That's where the adventure is, and that's what being a disciple is about.

There's no one and nothing besides knowing Christ in an intimate, discipleship relationship that can ever satisfy the deepest longing of your soul. You can spend your whole life pursuing other things that you think will bring fulfillment, but you will find in the end that they don't. Are you a disciple? That's the big question. Have you pledged your allegiance to Him above everyone and everything else? 🚀