

DEFINING DISCIPLESHIP: WHAT IT MEANS TO *Follow Jesus*

THE DISCIPLESHIP DEFINITION

In its simplest form, discipleship means following Jesus. The term “disciple” itself means “learner” or “follower,” and Jesus’s disciples were men and women who chose to follow Him to learn from His teachings and live according to His example. In the Gospels, we see Jesus call His disciples to leave everything behind to follow Him.

THE GOSPELS’ DISCIPLESHIP DEFINITION

The Gospels document the life and teachings of Jesus, and each one includes the story of Jesus calling His disciples. Though the accounts vary slightly, the message is consistent: Jesus invited people to follow Him without a detailed explanation or promises of worldly success. He simply said, “Follow me,” and they responded by leaving their old lives behind.

This “follow me” invitation is still the core of discipleship today. Jesus called His disciples to live a new life by His side, to learn from His example, and to commit to growing spiritually. They learned through listening, observing, asking questions, and even making mistakes. For today’s followers, this is the heart of the discipleship definition: spending time with Jesus, learning from His Word, and letting His life change the way we live.

“WHOEVER WANTS TO BE MY DISCIPLE MUST DENY THEMSELVES AND TAKE UP THEIR CROSS AND FOLLOW ME.” – MARK 8:34

HOW TO LIVE OUT *Discipleship Today*



1 SPENDING TIME WITH JESUS

Discipleship means growing in relationship with Jesus. This happens through prayer, reading the Bible, and seeking to know His heart. Just as the disciples spent time in Jesus’s presence, we can spend time with Him by ourselves and in fellowship with other believers.

2 LEARNING BY DOING

The disciples learned from Jesus by observing and imitating Him, even when they made mistakes. Discipleship today includes learning by actively practicing loving others, serving, and sharing the Gospel.



3 FINDING A COMMUNITY

Discipleship often happens within a community of believers. We learn from each other’s experiences, encourage one another, and hold each other accountable. Whether it’s in a small group, church, or casual meet-up with other believers, a community of discipleship strengthens our faith and helps us stay committed.

4 FOLLOWING JESUS’S EXAMPLE

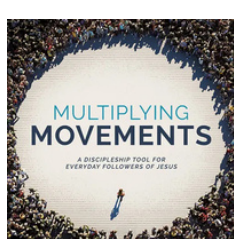
Jesus set an example of love, compassion, forgiveness, and humility. Following His example means living out these qualities in our everyday relationships, whether with friends, family, coworkers, or neighbors.



5 SEEKING SPIRITUAL MENTORS

Discipleship often involves learning from someone who has walked with Jesus longer or has deeper experience in faith. Like Paul and Timothy, this relationship allows us to grow and learn through someone else’s wisdom, and it can be deeply rewarding for both people involved.

DISCIPLESHIP ISN’T ALWAYS EASY, BUT IT’S A JOURNEY WORTH TAKING. DISCIPLESHIP MEANS MAKING JESUS THE CENTER, ALLOWING HIM TO GUIDE OUR *thoughts, actions, and relationships.*



Looking for somewhere to start? The [Forge Multiplying Movements study](#) is a course specifically designed to help you get started in discipleship and multiply disciples!