

This Way to Discipleship

“This Is The Way” Series – Part 02

A 15 Minute Study Guide- Read Matthew 23:1-12

1. How did the Pharisees fail in their attempts to make disciples?
2. What kinds of things do Christians do today to impress others with their ?
3. Give your best description of a “servant disciple-maker”.

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A Fuller Study Guide-

Connect question: If you could “job shadow” anyone in the world, who would it be and why?

Introduction: Big truth: It is God’s grace that allows us the opportunity to have a saving relationship with Him. It is this same grace that encourages us to follow His Son at all cost. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Protestant theologian, known widely for his view of Christianity’s role in a secular world, wrote the following about grace:

“Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: ‘Ye were bought at a price’, and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.”

Which sentence from the above Bonhoeffer quote has the greatest impact on your thoughts right now? Why?

In our message series, entitled “*This Is The Way*”, we learn that the way of Jesus begins with entering into a relationship with Him, and that this relationship includes an invitation to follow Him as a student or disciple every day of our life. The nature of His discipleship is different from the religious discipleship of His day. In the following text, Jesus prescribes true discipleship:

Read Matthew 23:1-12

Mat 23:1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples,

Mat 23:2 "The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses.

Mat 23:3 So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach.

Mat 23:4 They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden.

Mat 23:5 "Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels.

Mat 23:6 And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues.

Mat 23:7 They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi.'

Mat 23:8 "Don't let anyone call you 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters.

Mat 23:9 And don't address anyone here on earth as 'Father,' for only God in heaven is your spiritual Father.

Mat 23:10 And don't let anyone call you 'Teacher,' for you have only one teacher, the Messiah.

Mat 23:11 The greatest among you must be a servant.

Mat 23:12 But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Discussion:

In this chapter, Jesus noted that there were positive, as well as negative, aspects concerning the discipleship program of the New Testament Pharisees'. What were the positives and the negatives?

If you could address the Pharisees, what changes would you suggest to improve their discipleship movement?

How should the indictment that Jesus presented against the Pharisees affect our role as a disciple-maker?

Jesus points out that as religious leaders, the Pharisees had succumbed to feelings of superiority and false pride. How can these two flaws adversely affect our ability to disciple others?

What was Jesus really getting at when He said not to call another man "Rabbi" or "Father"?

As a disciple of Christ, how would you apply this constraint to your life?

Give your best description of a "Servant Disciple-Maker":

What area of your life needs to change to be a true disciple and to be a true disciple-maker?

Homework:

Is there an area of pride in your life that needs correction? How is clinging to this attitude affecting your ability to follow Christ?

How is it affecting your ability to help others to become more Christ-like?

What intentional action will you take to find peace and be more effective in making disciples?