

Discipleship II

by Stephen Kaung

Discipleship is a call to die, to be identified with Christ, and to surrender our will to Him, trusting in His grace to make it possible.

Duration: 52:33

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 5:1-2, Matthew 5:6-7, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 7:24-27, Matthew 28:16-20

Topics: "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not just hearing the word of God, but also putting it into practice. He uses the analogy of building a house on sand versus building on a rock to illustrate the consequences of not obeying God's teachings. The preacher also discusses the Beatitudes from Matthew 5, highlighting the contrast between the world's values and the values of God's kingdom. He encourages believers to rely on God's power and guidance to live out these teachings, as it is impossible to do so on their own.

Transcript

Take us, bless us, break us, and distribute us, that it may be unto the praise of thy glory. Lord, may thy Holy Spirit breathe upon thy word, make it living, thou art the living word, and it is thou thyself that we are opening our hearts to. Oh, fearless Lord, glorify thy name among thy people.

Be merciful to us. Take away all the resistance that is in us. The hidden spot, Lord, make us wholly yielded, completely abandoned unto thyself.

Teach us how to rest in thee. Thou art our resting place, thy will be done in us, as it is in heaven. Once again, Lord, show forth thyself to us, that we may see thee and none else.

Lord, if we see thee, we cannot hold back. Thou art worthy, and we worship thee in thy precious name. Amen.

Just to start with, I'd like to read a passage from Matthew. Matthew, chapter 28, from verse 16 through verse 20. Matthew, chapter 28, verse 16.

But the eleven disciples went into Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they did homage to him, but some doubted. And Jesus coming up spoke to them, saying,

All power has been given me in heaven and upon earth.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them to the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the completion of the age. We mentioned last night that when our Lord Jesus was on earth, one thing he did, he called people to himself, to be his disciples.

This was not only what our Lord Jesus did when he was on earth. After he had accomplished the work of redemption, after he was raised from the dead, before he ascended to the Father, he gave a great commission to his disciples, those who had already become his disciples while he was on earth. And the great commission that he gave to his disciples is simply this.

Go ye and make disciples of the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined you. In other words, even when he was ascending to heaven, his last word to his own disciples was, Go and make disciples of the nations. And of course, when his disciples went out to make disciples of the nations, they did not make disciples of the nations to themselves.

They were sent forth to make disciples of the nations to Christ throughout the ages. This is what the Church ought to do, and is doing, to make disciples of the nations. The Lord is not just contented with us to be believers.

There is a difference so far as the fact is concerned. We mentioned last night, so far as truth is concerned, there is no difference between a believer and a disciple. A believer is a disciple, and a disciple must be a believer, because otherwise no one can follow the Lord.

And yet, as a matter of fact, we find there is a difference between a believer and a disciple. To be a believer is to believe in the Lord Jesus, to receive Him as our personal Saviour, and to enjoy the salvation that He has provided for us. That is a believer.

We get much from Him. But what can He get from us? It is out of the question. But to be a disciple is to hand our lives over to Him, is to yield ourselves to Him, is to surrender our will to Him, to put ourselves in His hands, and let Him do anything He likes with us.

To be trained, to be molded, to be fashioned according to His will, and that is to be a disciple. The Lord is not able to fulfill His full purpose with us if we do not respond to His call as disciples. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, some disciples were of John the Baptist.

We know that John the Baptist was thanked by God as a forerunner of Christ. He was a voice in the wilderness, calling the nation of Israel to repent for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand. And many received the baptism of John.

And those who received the baptism of John were called disciples of John. But it was not John's intention to retain these disciples at hand. You remember when two disciples of John were with him? Probably these were the two best disciples of John.

And when John saw the Lord Jesus passing by, he said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of this world. And his two disciples left him and followed him. Was John the Baptist jealous because of this? Not at all.

When his disciples came to him and said, Look here. People are going to the one whom you testified. People are going away from you and going away to him.

What about that? And you remember John said, I am glad. Because I am just a friend of the bridegroom. It is the bridegroom who takes the bride.

He must increase. I must. One day some Jews came to the Lord and said, We are disciples of Moses.

But the Lord said, Moses testified of me. The Lord is calling for disciples. But remember, to be a disciple is to have a personal relationship with the Master.

To be a disciple is more than just a matter of sitting in a class, listening to a lecture, gathering some information, learning some skills. To be a disciple is to have a personal relationship with the Master. You are a disciple of the Master.

You are to be one with the Master. You are to be so identified with the Master then that when the discipleship is fully realized, you are a reproduction. Not that you are able to transform yourself.

But the Master has transformed you. To be a disciple is not to be attached to a corpse. Is not to be related to a seal.

Is not to be related even to a work. To be a disciple is to be related to a person. And that person can be none other but our Lord in the Holy Testament.

There is only one place. There is a possibility. But there are variations in the original manuscripts that some are called the disciples.

If you go through the New Testament you'll find aside from people who were disciples of John, because that was only a preparation, they became disciples of John not on a permanent basis but on a temporal basis. John will introduce them to Christ so that the disciples of John may become the disciples of Christ. In the Old Testament times there were disciples of Moses.

But to remain as disciples of Moses will become endless evil. In the whole New Testament you'll find we are called to be disciples. But disciples of whom? There is only one one.

The Lord. As I say in the book of Acts, there is one place. That is in Acts chapter 9 verse 25.

But the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket. Now in some Bible translations it is a matter of manuscripts they use. In certain Greek manuscripts it is said but the disciples of his took him by night and let him down through the wall.

In other words they were disciples of Paul. I wonder if this is a correct translation. Because you remember Paul at that time was a new Christian.

He was very young in the Lord. I wonder if he had already collected disciples to himself. It is true.

Later on we find Paul says imitate me. Be imitators of me as I imitate Christ. But he is on a bridge trying to point people to Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, do not be disciples of man but be disciples of Christ. There is only one master whom we serve. No one can serve two masters.

You will either despise the one and respect the other. You cannot serve two masters on earth. And how true it is in our spiritual walk with the Lord that it is the Lord Jesus who is calling us to be his disciples.

How are we to be his disciples? In Matthew chapter 28 you find something very special. Make disciples of the nation. How? Baptizing them into the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

What has baptism to do with discipleship? Why must a believer be baptized? We often say, well if we are saved why should we be baptized at all? But here you'll find the Bible says make disciples of the nation baptizing them. As it were, baptism is initiating into. If you know the meaning of baptism.

Baptism is to be identified with Christ. We are baptized unto Christ. That is, baptized unto his death.

We are to be identified with his death, with his burial and with his resurrection. We are to be identified to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. We are to be completely yielded to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

We are by baptism to belong to the Father, belong to the Son and belong to the Holy Spirit completely. Not just a few simply on your head. But the whole being is immersed.

That is to say, we belong to the Lord absolutely, completely and permanently. That is baptism. We are baptized unto his death.

The call of discipleship is the call to die. The call to be a believer is the call to live. Sinners, you don't need to die.

You can live if you only repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. God has no pleasure, no delight in the death of the wicked. But after we have come to him and lived, then the Lord said, Come, follow me.

Come after me. Go to the cross and die. The way of discipleship is the way of the cross.

It is a call to be identified with him in his death. What he died for, we die. What he was buried to, we bury.

And then, thank God, we are being raised together with him from the dead. So now we are completely in his name. By baptism we belong.

We are his. We are initiated into discipleship from hereafter. It is no longer we who live.

It is he who lives in us. It is no longer our own will, our own way. We are in his hands as a clay in the pot, to be molded accordingly.

So dear brothers and sisters, what is discipleship? We are called. We are called to deny ourselves, to take up our cross and follow him. We are called to the way of the cross.

Because the way of the cross is the way to abundant life. The way of the cross is the way to resurrection. And it is only in resurrection that we may be conformed.

We mentioned last night, unless you know the Lord, you are not able to follow him. A scribe came to the Lord and said, Teacher, know this. He didn't say, Lord.

He said, Jesus. He didn't know Jesus as Lord. He only considered Jesus as just a great teacher.

Teacher, I admire your teaching. I want to learn from you. I want to follow you wherever you go.

And you remember the Lord said, The foxes have fooled you. The birds have left you. But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

You want to follow me? It is not a matter of going to a class and learn something mentally. It is a way of life. And the way of life is the way of the cross.

It's even lower than the birds. It is even poorer than the foxes. But to another the Lord said, Come.

That was his disciple. Come. Follow me.

And he said, Oh. I have to bury my father first. Before I can come.

The Lord said, Your priority is right. Let the dead bury the dead. Come and follow me.

Can we respond to the call of discipleship? It is impossible. Do not think that to respond to the call of discipleship is easy. It is humanly impossible.

It is only when you see it is impossible, then God can make it possible. If you think it is possible with you, you will discover it is impossible. He will make it so hard, you will drop out before you drop out.

But with God all things are possible. What a young rich ruler could not do. That is the great thing.

Voluntarily it is possible. So brothers and sisters, it takes grace to answer the call of discipleship. And I do believe that the grace of God is here with me.

With every one of you. With the most timid ones. Fearful ones.

His grace is sufficient. If you only go to the Lord and say, Lord, I do want to follow you. I do want to commit myself to you completely.

I do want you to take me in my hands and do anything you like with me. I don't know what will happen to me. Just like Abraham, when he was called, he didn't know where he was going, but he knew one thing.

He was in the Lord. Lord, but you do the work. You take me in.

And after you take me in, don't let me go. Be patient. This evening we would like to go on.

After we have come, after we have committed ourselves to Him, and by faith we know He has accepted us, does it mean that we have now completed? We have now arrived? You are just initiated. To be initiated is very different to be matriculated. Now you have committed yourself to the Lord.

Now, by faith, you have identified yourself with His death, burial, and resurrection. What will He do with you now? In that great commission in Matthew, you find, baptizing them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Now you have been baptized.

You belong to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. You have committed yourself to Him. You are one with Him now.

Then what? The second thing is, and teaching them, to observe all the things that I have enjoined, then I will be with you until the completion of the age. To be baptized is the initiation. But to be taught in all the

things that Christ has given to us, and to observe them, that is the process.

So shall we say, the process of discipleship. Or the progress of discipleship. After we have committed ourselves to the Lord, then the Lord will begin to teach us.

You remember in chapter 4 that we read last night? The Lord was passing by the Sea of Galilee, and He saw the two brothers there, Peter and Angel. And the Lord said, Come after me, I will make you fishers of men. And they left everything and followed the Lord.

And a distance later, you'll find the Lord saw the two sons of David, and He did the same thing, He called them, and they left everything and followed Him. So here you'll find the Lord began to have disciples. But He had not only disciples.

He had a great crowd too. Among the crowds there were some disciples. But most of the people followed Him because they had seen wonders.

They had seen signs. They were attracted. So a great multitude came to Him.

And you know what the Lord did? He did some mountain climbing. When He saw the great crowd gather around Him, He began to climb the mountain. Our Lord must be a good climber because He was there first.

And as He climbed the mountain, you'll find all the great multitude began to climb too. But it so happened that His disciples followed Him very closely. So after the Lord had gone to the mountain, and He found a place where He could sit, well, He sat down, and the Bible says His disciples came to Him.

And He opened His mouth and spoke. Now that is the so-called Sermon on the Mount. I don't know if you're familiar with the Sermon on the Mount.

You sure? Matthew chapter 5, chapter 6 and chapter 7. The so-called Sermon on the Mount. To whom was the Sermon on the Mount given? Not to the multitude. When He saw the multitude came, He climbed the mountain.

His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth to teach His disciples. The great multitude that's standing by, they overheard what the Lord had told the disciples.

But remember, it was to these disciples that our Lord was addressing His disciples. After you have committed yourself to the Lord, then the Lord will begin. What's the use of teaching a person if he is not committed? When the teaching becomes a little bit hard, you will say, who can accept this teaching? It's too hard.

You drop out. Do you sometimes wonder why the Lord does not teach you? Because He knows if He teaches you, it will be a waste. You haven't committed your life to Him yet.

If you have committed your life to the Lord, He will teach you. How will He teach you? He will teach you by words. He will speak to you.

Just like you find in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. You know, Matthew 5, 6 and 7. Sometimes people say this is Christian ethic. Oh, the highest ethic in the whole world. Who can keep it? If people cannot keep the Law of Moses, if you find the Ten Commandments too difficult to keep, who can keep the Sermon on the

Mount? Nobody.

Impossible. But this is what it is. Because it is impossible, it is possible.

It is impossible with man, but it is possible with God. If you are His disciples, if you are in His hands, He will make it possible. Don't try to do it yourself.

You won't be able to. But just leave yourself in His hands, and you'll find it is done. It shall be done.

In Matthew chapter 5, the Lord began to show us the spiritual nature of discipleship. If you want to be His disciples, if you are His disciples, what kind of inward character, what kind of inward nature you will have? Lack of the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom. How different this is from the world.

The teaching of the world is happy are those who are rich in earthly things. For they shall inherit the world. But the teaching of the Lord is just the opposite.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Poor in spirit doesn't mean that you really have nothing in your spirit. It means there is a humility.

Even though you may have a lot, and yet you know you have nothing. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom. One thing that characterizes our Lord is His deep humility.

Even though He was equal with God, He emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of man. And after He has become a man, He humbled Himself further to die even the death. Dear brothers and sisters, to be a disciple of the Lord is to manifest the same inward characteristics.

You know, even in human history, when you know a little, you are very proud of what you know. When you know a little more, you think you know everything. But if you begin to know much more, you begin to realize you know nothing.

How much more this is true in the kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Our Lord Jesus is willing to empty Himself completely, to humble Himself.

The Lord gave grace to the humble, but He rejected it. In Matthew chapter 10, chapter 5, you find the Lord is trying to teach the disciples what kind of a spirit, what kind of inward conditions or states are disciples. We do not have time to go through the whole three chapters.

You know, we can spend long time together going through chapters 5, 6 and 7. But I think we would just say this much. After you have committed to Him, then He will begin to teach you. And you will find He is telling you what kind of an inward you must be.

Just like Him. It is not a matter of outward appearance. It is not a superficial thing.

It is something of the heart. It is something in the spirit that He is trying to mold and to punish. The Lord says, unless your righteousness surpasses the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom.

The Lord does not say, unless your righteousness surpasses the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees. The Lord said, unless your righteousness surpasses the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Do the scribes and the Pharisees have a kind of righteousness? They do.

Even though most of the scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites, but there are some who are real. For instance, Nicodemus, soul of Tarsus. Soul of Tarsus.

They say, I'm a Pharisee. So far as the righteousness according to the law is concerned, I am perfect. Not being hypocritical.

According to the letter of the law, He was perfect. Even that rich young ruler said, I have kept all these from my childhood. That's the righteousness of the scribes.

And dear brothers and sisters, sometimes we do not even have that right. Do not look down upon the scribes and the Pharisees. They have a righteousness that the world does not have.

They have a righteousness even we cannot match with them. And yet the Lord said, unless your righteousness surpasses the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of the heavens. The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, it is righteousness, though it is superficial.

It is the righteousness according to letter. And the Lord demands that His disciples be righteous according to the law. Thou shall not kill.

And a Pharisee said, I do not kill. But the Lord said, if you get angry with your brother without reason, if you call your brother a fool, if you call your brother a rebel, you shall be judged. It is your right.

The teaching of our Lord Jesus is spiritual. It reaches into our spirit. It is not just on the surface.

Who can do that? In chapter 6, the Lord is trying to tell us that His words, His teaching is heavenly. It is not only spiritual, but it is heavenly. It is a heavenly relationship with the Father.

When you are given alms, which the Pharisees often do, you know, in the temple, in the court of the women. I don't know why they put the offering boxes in the court of the women. I don't know.

Probably women offer more than men. I don't know. But, you know, there in the temple of Jerusalem, they put several boxes in the court of the women.

And people would come in and offer. You know? Oh, they would raise their hand higher and let Him. What is your name? I have died.

I don't know. When you are fasting, do not put on a lot. Let your hair all be chapped and combed.

Because I am fasting. Look, I am fasting. The Lord said, Comb your hair.

Do it. Between you. Kingdom of God.

I will add it to you. Where are your treasures? Lay your treasures in heaven. Chapter 7. The teaching, the ritual, not only heavenly, very practical, does not walk in and on sand, build on sand.

But you'll hear my word and do it. Just on the rock. And the wind will blow the flow and the house will stand.

That is to say, you hear the word and don't do it. On sand, it will collapse. Great teaching in your mind.

You know. But it has to be very dear to you. The Lord teaches us then before His Word.

I feel with you. The Ten Commandments was given. God is coming.

We are like that. For everything that the Lord says, we'll do. We'll do.

Sign of Lent check. The Lord, you can see. Lay your faith with His teaching.

He is already. Garment. Your disciple.

But even John taught it. Give away one. And I'm your disciple.

I'm... Am I right? Am I wrong? My conscience is wrong. For a period, I didn't know. I thought it.

I didn't know it. The Lord requires. I taught it.

You know what to do? He said, Father Lord, you cannot do it. You just tell Him, Lord. You do what He does.

And you know, farewell. Yes. He responds.

When you... You say, all right, Lord. I will... Try to do it. Can you? Your conscience will condemn you.

The Word of God. Yes. Oh.

How should we... Dear brothers. Fight. But... Fight.

Then you...

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