

## Walking In The Way Of Jesus; Radical Relationship Considering the path from the tomb to the world

*Acts 6:1 NKJV Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists (Greek speaking Jews), because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.*

*NLT But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.*

“Disciple” in the Greek, *mathetes* (math-ay-tes): those who confess Jesus as the Messiah, learner, or pupil.

As we have been discussing these past weeks, an apprentice of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are trying to refocus our faith on Jesus to the point of embracing our role as apprentice which means that we are inexperienced or novices and that we are learning by practical experience under the tutelage of a skilled person.....Jesus.

Notice.....”the number of disciples was rapidly multiplying”

Let’s start with the 120 disciples in the upper room. (Acts 1:15)

*Acts 2:41 NIV Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

*Acts 4:4 ESV But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.*

120 plus 3,000 plus 5,000 men (4,000 men with a wife and two children each, conservatively speaking would be 16,000) Just trying to give you a sense of the potential reality of the lives transformed. 16,000 plus 1,000 plus 3,000 plus 150 equals 20,150 people.

### **Radical Response to the Gospel**

Notice the blessing of repentance and belief. The Holy Spirit was present and at work in peoples lives in a powerful manner yet people are still people even though many were full of the Holy Spirit. Problems still arise.

Just a quick observation.....their answer was not to construct a larger building to handle the growing number of followers. They did not add on to the temple.

Think about the three and a half years of public ministry by Jesus. Look at the amount of time that passed from Christ’s ascension into heaven.

If you are reading these passages with an assumption that all of these disciples have years of training and multiple years of preparation.....consider the reality of the numbers.

It appears that the most seasoned apprentice of Jesus had only been following in His ways for a maximum of around four and one half to five years. Examples would Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

It could be that many of these people that we are reading about had only believed in Jesus as Messiah for a very short period of time.

#### Bible Hub, Acts Timeline

30 AD	The Ascension	Acts 1
30 AD	Matthias Chosen by Lot	Acts 1:12
30 AD	The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost	Acts 2
30 AD	Peter Heals and Preaches	Acts 3
30 AD	Peter and John Arrested and Released;	Acts 4
30 AD	Believers Share All	Acts 4:32
30 AD	Deaths of Ananias and Sapphira	Acts 5
30 AD	Apostles Preach and Heal	Acts 5:11
31 AD	Stephen's Speech, Stoning and Death	Acts 6, 7
62AD	Paul Preaches at Rome	Acts 28:11

#### Religious ritual and routine

Nothing wrong with ritual and routine **but if the ritual/routine becomes the comfort level so that the human feels a sense of control then it becomes a problem.** Focusing on the ritual or routine can easily become a process driven experience.

**The heart and mind do not matter as long as you are going through the motions that appear religious on the outside.**

#### Radical relationship

Relationship is a much different approach and it can embrace ritual but the point of the ritual or routine should be to evaluate the heart and soul. Relationship is all about yielding control to the master (the skilled teacher) in order to learn, grow, and change.

Religious orders and education of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes.

Religious orders of the western church could easily seem no different than that of the Jews during the times of Jesus.

We have created this hierarchy of spiritual and less spiritual.....professionally trained and untrained.....educationally prepared and unprepared.

What we are pursuing is a church where men, women, boys, and girls are learning, growing, and changing to the point of living as ministers of the gospel wherever planted.

### **Home grown, radical servants of the Most High God.**

We have people in spiritual leadership in the corporate church all across America that I question whether they have a genuine relationship with Christ. Many don't even believe that the scripture is the Word of God. Many are more concerned about academics and politics than the presence of the Living God.

**We must press in to the presence of God.**

**We must make the church about the power of God not the power plans of man.**

- **Faith to the point of following Jesus of Nazareth**
- **Filling of the Holy Spirit**

Commentary excerpt sent to me this week:

It's one thing to pray to the Lord and quite something else to be a worshipping intercessor. When we see the greatness and glory of God, it helps to put our own burdens and needs in proper perspective. By exercising even little faith in a Great God, we can move the hand of God to accomplish wonders that will glorify His name.

Dr. Robert A. Cook used to say, **"If you can explain what's going on in your ministry, God didn't do it."**