

Proven Character? Are we believable?

The preparation of a warrior is a critical process that involves both skill development and character refinement. In the context of discipleship, this principle holds profound significance. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called not only to engage in the mission of spreading the gospel but to embody His character in our lives. Just as a warrior must master his weapons and maintain their effectiveness, a disciple must cultivate Christ-like qualities to be an effective witness.

Jesus' Great Commission, as outlined in **Matthew 28:18-20**, emphasizes the importance of making disciples before preaching to the nations. Jesus stated, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the 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; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

This directive underscores the necessity of teaching others to live according to His commands, which **requires us to first be practicing disciples ourselves**.

Similarly, **Mark 16:15-18** calls believers to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Yet, this mission is accompanied by signs that follow those who believe—casting out demons, speaking in new tongues, healing the sick, and more.

These miraculous signs are rooted in a faith that is mature and grounded in Christ-like character. Without such character development, our witness may lack credibility and authenticity.

Romans 5:3-5 further illuminate the process of character formation. It teaches that tribulations produce perseverance, perseverance develops proven character, and proven character fosters hope—a hope that does not disappoint because it is anchored in God's love poured out through the Holy Spirit.

This progression highlights that character is not instantaneous but is forged through trials and challenges. It is through enduring these moments with faith that we become credible representatives of Christ.

As disciples, our preparation involves more than knowledge or outward actions; it requires an inner transformation that aligns our hearts with His. To be believable messengers of the gospel, we must reflect His love, integrity, humility, and perseverance. Only then can we effectively fulfill both aspects of our calling—to make disciples and preach the gospel.

In conclusion, discipleship is a journey that begins with personal preparation. Developing Christ-like character is foundational to being an effective witness for Him. As we grow in maturity and faith, we equip ourselves to carry out His mission with authenticity and power. Let us embrace this process with dedication, knowing that He is with us always, even to the end of the age.

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