

# The Way of the Disciple

by Chip Brogden

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*Chip Brogden's sermon emphasizes the importance of true discipleship, highlighting the need to follow Christ's way and the transformative journey it entails.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 16:25, Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 23:8, Matthew 28:19, Luke 14:33, John 3:30, John 14:6, John 14:26, Romans 13:14

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Following Christ"

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## Description

Chip Brogden preaches about the two ways presented to us: the broad way of man leading to death and the narrow way of God leading to life, with Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He emphasizes the importance of discipleship, where believers must enter the narrow gate, walk the narrow path, and be conformed to the image of Christ, allowing Christ to be expressed through them. Brogden challenges the common focus on ministers and workers, highlighting that God desires disciples above all else, who sit at the feet of Jesus as their Teacher and learn directly from Him. He stresses the cost of discipleship as giving up 'our way' to follow Christ's way, leading to the loss of worldly approval but the gain of Christ's approval.

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## Transcript

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts (Romans 13:14)."

"There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end is death (Proverbs 16:25)."

"The way which leads to life is narrow, and few find it (Matthew 7:14)."

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6a)."

We talk about "one way", but there are really two ways: the broad way which many take, ending in death; and the narrow way which a few take, ending in life.

There are two ways presented to us. One way is of man, seems right in man's opinion, and leads to death. The other way is of God, seems wrong in man's opinion, and leads to Life.

We find that Christ is the Way to Life, and He Himself is Life. He is both the means towards the End, as well as the End.

What is God after? What does He seek from us? What does He want? First and foremost, He desires a people who will be conformed to the image of His Son, that they may demonstrate the preeminence of Christ in all things. But how does He gain such a people for Himself? The first step is to reveal His Son to us. This is the narrow gate. We cannot begin to walk the narrow path until we have entered the narrow gate.

Upon entering the narrow gate He begins to change us from the inside out so that it is Christ expressing Himself through us. "Not I, but Christ." This is the narrow path. This narrow path we call discipleship. It leads us somewhere. A path is not for standing still. It has a destination. Where does the path lead? What is the End? Christ as All in All. That is the End. All things work together according to this supreme purpose, His Purpose.

What is a disciple? A disciple is someone who applies their energies to learn a special discipline under a master teacher. There is no other way to be a disciple. There must be a pupil who is taught, and there must be a teacher who teaches. The disciple lives with the teacher, eats and drinks with the teacher, travels about with the teacher, observes the teacher during the course of the day and night, asks a lot of questions and listens intently to the answers. This is the Eastern way of making disciples, and it is the way the Lord Jesus disciplined the Twelve.

Disciples sit under the teacher - literally at his feet - and hang on his every word. Disciples memorize their master's teaching and repeat it verbatim to one another, using the same hand gestures, phraseology, and emphasis, until they sound and act just like their teacher. Thus when you see a mature disciple you will, in essence, see the teacher as well. When the disciple speaks, it is as if the teacher is speaking. This not only honors the teacher but preserves the teaching.

So a disciple of the Lord Jesus is someone who enters the narrow gate and walks the narrow path until they come to the end of the narrow path and are left with nothing but Christ. As you can see, this is a very, very narrow way, which is why few find it, and fewer still remain on it once they find it. Nothing of self can be retained. All of self must be lost in order to gain Christ.

As we walk the narrow way we are being changed from glory to glory. Today we should reflect a little more of the glory of God than yesterday; tomorrow we will reflect yet more than we did today. This is growth. Growth is not more knowledge or increase of years: it is simply more of Him and less of me. He increases as I decrease. This is what it means to be a disciple.

### What God Wants Is Disciples

God does not want ministers or workers to begin with. We think these things are very important, for how can the Church get along without ministers and workers? What else does God want if not ministers and workers? Quite simply, He wants disciples first and foremost. There are many ministers and workers today and very few disciples. Everyone either has a ministry or wants a ministry. Everyone is expected to be a minister or a worker. We do not hear too much about being a disciple, yet this is what God must have before He can have anything in the Church.

Jesus said go into all the world and make disciples. It is not that ministers and workers are unimportant; indeed they are. But what is the priority? Can a man or a woman truly be a minister or worker on behalf of the Kingdom if they are not a disciple first? Of course not. They can minister and work themselves to death and still be in the flesh, doing many mighty works in the name of Jesus and not know Him at all.

"Few there be that find it." But doesn't everyone know the way by now? Surely multitudes of people will find it? Not at all. The way that leads to Life is narrow, and few there be that find it. Isn't the way Jesus? And doesn't everyone know that? Well, everyone has been told that, and they think they know it, but Jesus as He really is and Jesus as He is commonly taught are two different things.

What is our idea of discipleship? I hear brothers and sisters say, "I have been sitting under the ministry of brother so-and-so for years now." They say this with great pride as if it is something others should be impressed by. I ask them, "How long have you lived with your teacher?" Invariably you discover they do not live with their teacher at all. They simply listen to his sermons in church or on television or on cassette tape or video tape. Furthermore they have no personal relationship with their teacher. In many cases they have never even met in person, much less shared a meal with them.

Be careful of who you "sit under" for you will become just like them, and you will never advance beyond them. Please understand that the Lord did not call us to go forth mentoring and being mentored. A mentor is a synonym for teacher, guide, or counselor. If I am not mistaken (and I am not), the Holy Spirit is our Teacher, Guide, and Counselor, not man. This is where so many of us have missed it. We are still looking for man - flesh and blood - to affirm us and tell us what to do. Should we encourage one another? Yes. Should we seek advice and prayers of other brothers and sisters? Absolutely. That does not mean we need a mentor to tell us what to do. Who tells the mentor what to do? His mentor? And who tells the mentor's mentor what to do? You see this can become ridiculous, and it has in fact become that ridiculous in recent years right up until this present time.

There are people out there who are eager and willing to be your mentor, to teach you how to release your "gifts" or find your place in "ministry" or move in the "prophetic" or pastor a large "church". Anyone who is eager to mentor someone doesn't know himself well enough. Anyone seeking a mentor doesn't know the Master well enough. Finding a mentor isn't difficult. The difficult part is understanding that discipleship has nothing to do with finding a mentor or sitting under a teacher. Instead the Bible tells us that we have no need of any man to teach us, for the Anointing (Christ) will teach us all things and will lead us into all truth. A teacher who is teaching in the name of Christ will always teach you away from himself and towards Christ as the Teacher. "Less of me and more of Him." Does your mentor do this? Does your pastor do this? Or do they find ways to keep you dependent upon them and their teaching?

#### Who Is Your Teacher?

When the Lord revealed Himself to me I realized that such experiential, intimate knowledge cannot be found in a book, or I would have had it years ago. It cannot be found simply by reading the Bible, or everyone who has a Bible would know the Truth experientially, and we know that is simply not the case. It is a revelation of Truth as a Person, not as a philosophy, and from that day forward I understood that MAN cannot add to it or take away anything from it. That is when I stopped seeking the affirmation or confirmation of man.

I understood then (for the first time) that there is only one Teacher, and I am His disciple. I do not belong to anyone else, and no one else belongs to me. This was not something I would have understood automatically. As a pastor I was used to talking about "my sheep" and "my congregation" and "my church" as if I owned something. But when I discovered that there is One Flock guided by One Shepherd I knew then that I owned no one, and no one owned me. I belonged to Him, and they belonged to Him. What liberty! For me certainly, but more so, for the ones who were formerly "sitting under my teaching." People

would come to me to be taught instead of others because they claimed they could not be fed by others, only by me. What a tragedy! Who is your source? Where did the manna come from? Moses? No, "Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the True Bread." When will we look away from Moses the man and towards Christ the Living Bread?

Now I can say (and indeed, "boast" is not too strong of a word here) that my teaching is not my own. It is from Christ, for Christ, and unto Christ as All in All. My boast is that my teaching does not come from a human source. That is not to say that I have not learned much from the likes of Watchman Nee, T-Austin Sparks, and others. I read their writings for years and continue to read them. But what I know I did not learn in a book. I do not read them to discover something new, but to verify something I already know. We have the same Teacher.

What is my point? To boast of myself? Not at all, but to boast of my Teacher! There is no better thing in the world than to have someone ask, "Where did you learn what you know? Who taught you these things?" and for you to respond, "Jesus Christ is my Teacher, and He taught me everything I know." This is discipleship! The Lord told us to call no earthly man "Rabbi" (that is, Teacher) because you only have One Teacher. But how many of us can say that?

Become His disciple. Sit at His feet and hear His Word. There is no other way to learn. You cannot get it from someone else, you must get it from Him. He is Truth.

#### The Cost of Discipleship

What does it cost to become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ? What does one have to give up? There is truly only one thing that must be given up. It is not, and it never has been, a question of giving up friends, family, material possessions, fame and fortune. You can give up all those things, just like the first disciples of the Lord, and still run away and deny Him.

Forget the outward things and go right to the heart of the matter. Only one thing is necessary, and if we give up this one thing we are qualified to be disciples of the Lord. What is the one thing? All we have to give up is OUR WAY.

There are two ways, one which seems right, and one which IS right. One is my way, the other is His way.

Yes, if we are willing to give up OUR way then we have, in effect, given up everything. I am thinking of a dear man who pastors a church, but he does it according to his way. Unfortunately he cannot see that he is pastoring according to his way. Not that his way is necessarily bad, because there is a lot of good work in his ministry. But it is not purely the Way of Christ. I do not expect that he will give up his church, or his ministry. The reality is that he will probably never give up his work. The glorious thing is he does not have to give up a single thing, except his own way! If he will but give that up, everything else will take care of itself. The same is true of us.

That is not to say we will keep everything. When we give up our way then we will, in fact, lose quite a bit. We will lose the admiration and appreciation of the world. We will lose the prestige and position we once enjoyed. We may very well lose friends and even members of our family who will not approve of us anymore.

The disciple is not greater than the Master, but it is enough that the disciple be like the Master. The cost is great, but the reward is greater. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep in order to gain what he

cannot lose.

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