

“Optional Discipleship”

April 18, 2026

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²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. “Follow me,” Jesus said to him, ²⁸ and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

Luke 5.27-28

²³ Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

Luke 9.23-25

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...

Matthew 28:18-19

“When we are called to follow Christ, we are summoned to an exclusive attachment to His person.”

Bonhoffer, Deitrich, *The Cost of Discipleship*, p59

⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

59 He said to another man, "Follow me."

But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

61 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family."

62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 9.57-62

VAMPIRE CHRISTIAN: One who in effect says to Jesus, “I’d like a little of your blood, please. But I don’t care to be your student or have your character. In fact, won’t you just excuse me while I get on with my life, and I’ll see You in heaven.”

Willard, Dallas, *The Great Omission*, p 14.

“If it doesn’t work at all, or only in fits and starts, that is because *we do not give ourselves to it in a way that allows our lives to be taken over by it...*

“Disciples of Jesus are people who do not just profess certain views as their own, but who apply their growing understanding of life in the Kingdom of the Heavens to every aspect of their life on earth.

“Examination of our ultimate desires and intentions, reflected in the specific responses and choices that make up our lives, can show whether there are things we hold more important than being like Him. If there are, then we are not yet His disciples.

Willard, Dallas, The Great Omission, pages x xi, 11.

“The Savior's commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life

of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.”

White, Ellen G, *The Desire of Ages*, p 822

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11.28-30

²² The LORD said to Moses, ²³ “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites.

Say to them:

**²⁴ ““The LORD bless you
and keep you;**

**²⁵ the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;**

**²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.””**

**²⁷ “So they will put my name on the Israelites,
and I will bless them.”**

Numbers 6.22-27

“Non-discipleship costs abiding peace, a life penetrated throughout by love, faith that sees everything in the light of God’s overriding governance for good, hopefulness that stands firm in the most discouraging of circumstances, power to do what is right and withstand the forces of evil. In short, non-discipleship costs

you exactly that abundance of life Jesus said He came to bring (John 10.10). The cross-shaped yoke of Christ is after all an instrument of liberation and power to those who live in it with Him and learn the meekness and lowliness of heart that brings rest to the soul.”

Ibid, p 9