

Connecting through Discipleship I

“Resist”

Resist means to exert force in opposition.

Resist means to exert oneself so as to counteract or defeat.

Resist means to withstand the force or effect of.

“Come unto me, Follow me, Learn of Me, Go ye”

KJV **Mark 3:14** And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that **he might send them** forth to preach, ¹⁵ And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

The first level of discipleship is never “go ye,” it is “come unto me.”

I

“He ordained 12 to be with Him.”

Disciples vs Talmud discipleship

Bet Sefer

For Jews living in Jesus' day, there were three separate educational venues. The first was called Bet Sefer. At the ages of **six through twelve**, Jewish children began their formal education. Both boys and girls attended synagogue school and learned to read and write. The textbook was the Torah, and the goal was not just to read but to memorize the sacred text. Can you imagine what this would be like? As a child of six, you would go to the synagogue and the most respected man in the city would greet you with a slate and he would put a dollop of honey on the slate and then he would remove the ancient scroll of the **Torah**(instructions, law, walk). As you sat speechless and in awe, the rabbi would have you taste the honey on your slate and tell you that the Torah is sweeter than the honeycomb (see [Psalm 19:10](#)).

Can you imagine the impact this would have on a young child? You can bet that whenever that child tasted honey he was always reminded of the Word of God!

Now at the conclusion of this, a bar mitzvah for the boy welcomed him into the community as a full-fledged male member. Following this sacred milestone, usually the boy then began to learn the family trade. Only the best continued in their education. (**They were the best**)

Bet Midrash

For **the best**, the next educational opportunity was called Bet Midrash. Boys - from age 13 to 15 - who were deemed worthy to continue their educational pursuits went on to study (and memorize) **the entire Tanach** (prophets and writing), as well as learning the family trade. (It is noteworthy that few, if any, of Jesus disciples made it this far in their educational training.) Very few were selected for this pursuit. (**They were the best of the best**)

Bet Talmud

Of those who finished Bet Midrash, again only **the best of the best was able to pursue the final educational leg**, which was called Bet Talmud. This was the longest in duration; it went from the **age of 15 to 30**. To participate, he must be invited by a Rabbi and, if selected, he would begin a process of grooming that would lead to the potential of becoming a Rabbi at age 30. Those who were chosen were referred to as **talmidim**. They would literally follow in the dust of their rabbi - desiring to emulate him in all of his mannerisms. They would eat the same food in exactly the same way as their rabbi. They would go to sleep and awake the same way as their rabbi and, more importantly, they would learn to study Torah and understand God the exact same way as their rabbi.

It appears that Jesus Himself followed this model. At twelve we know that He attended His first Passover in Jerusalem and He began His formal ministry at 30. The Bible is silent as far as His mentors, but we do know that He selected His disciples and, just like those young fifteen-year-olds when invited to Bet Talmud, they left everything to follow this Rabbi from Galilee. No doubt they walked in His dust, wanting to be just like their Rabbi! **They were His Talmidim! History and the Word reveal to us that Jesus trained His talmidim in three years (not fifteen)** and His training was so inspired that they (His talmidim) literally changed the world!

Now, back to the beginning. **How are we as the Church doing in raising up talmidim?** I believe the time has come to reclaim discipleship and to again raise the bar. We all need to follow in the dust of our Rabbi. But where do we start? We start in the same place as those six-year-olds - we start with the word of God Koinonia Institute

(They were the best, of the best, of the best)

II

🔑 We know that Jesus' disciples did not fit this category and these criteria. If they were not the best of the best of the best, they would be following another rabbi. Instead, they were working the family business which meant they did not qualify to be chosen by a rabbi. Jesus' model for discipleship **Resisted** the current model that was available. Jesus set forth a new model for us to make disciples.

🔑 Jesus' model and example were different because he did not choose the best, the best of the best, or the best of the best of the best.

Jesus chose 12 ordinary men and said, "Come on to me, follow me, learn of me (my yoke), And then go ye and do likewise."

I have paralleled aspects of **discipleship** with **parenting** for decades.

Part (A) of the great commission found in **Matthew 28:18-20** commands us to go to the nations, ethnos, and make disciples. Disciples are to be global, multiethnic, and multinational. We go and establish the kingdom of disciples among the nations.

NKJV **Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ **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, ²⁰ 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." Amen.

What is a disciple?

III

A disciple is a student **selected** to follow a rabbi or teacher.

A disciple wants to **know**, what their rabbi knows.

^{KJV} **John 14:26** But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**

A disciple wants to do, what their rabbi does.

^{KJV} **John 14:12** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, **the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;** because I go unto my Father.

A disciple wants to be like their rabbi.

^{KJV} **John 13:20** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Discipleship formation is seen in the knowledge, the actions, and the life of the student, talmidim or disciple.

*Rhema Christian Center
Bishop La Fayette Scales
Saturday & Sunday, May 25 & 26, 2024
9:30 a.m.*