

**Sermon or Lesson: How Jesus Interacted With His Disciples, Part 11** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

Note: The intent for this sermon or lesson is not to provide a thorough explanation of the meanings of all of these passages and principles, but instead to summarize their meaning in order to bring them all together to support a unified theme.

TITLE: Some Main Requirements To Be A Disciple

PASSAGES: John 8:31; Luke 9:23; 14:27; 14:26

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INTRO: At various times in your life when you have wanted to become a member in a group or organization, while checking out the nature of the group, what is usually the next thing you check on? You search to determine what their requirements are for joining. And if you do not meet those requirements, then what happens? You cannot join yet or become an official member in good standing because you do not meet their requirements. So you remain merely an observer or visitor.

Whether you are aware of it or not, Jesus likewise has requirements for a person to be His “real” disciple. Let’s check out what some of His main requirements are so you can determine whether you are one of His “real” disciples or not.

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[Lesson Questions:

For each of these passages:

- - list each requirement cited for being a disciple,
- - summarize its meaning,
- - and briefly describe how it impacts an average believer.]

READ: John 8:31

SECTION POINT: To be a disciple of Jesus, you must be a believer in Jesus as the One who saves you, and then thoroughly hold to His teaching.

must be a believer in Jesus:

- - You must place your faith in Jesus Christ, that He was and is both fully God and fully human, lived a perfect sinless life, died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins, and He rose from the dead on the third day. (John 3:16; 1:1; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:2-4; Romans 3:20-25)

“hold to My teaching” then “you are really my disciples”:

“hold” = Strong’s #3306 “continue; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy)”

- - According to this verse, merely believing in Jesus is not enough to be considered by Him as being His disciple, because “hold to His teaching” is linked to and listed as an “if” condition to “really” being His disciple.

- - This implies that being a real disciple includes both being a believer and requires the accompaniment of authentic buying into, and committed to, and obeying, and living out the teachings of Jesus.
  - - Therefore, a proper conclusion is that Jesus does not approve of being a partially-committed believer, or a sporadic believer, or a fair-weather believer, or a Sunday-only believer, or a worldly believer, or a hypocrite believer, or a adhere-to-only-agreeable-teachings believer, or a do-nothing believer, or a mooch believer, or a prodigal believer, and etc.
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READ: Luke 9:23, with cf. 14:27

SECTION POINT: To be a disciple of Jesus, you must refrain from pursuing what you want in life, and instead pursue what God has for you to be and to do.

“must deny himself”:

“deny” = Strong’s #0533 “to deny utterly, i.e. disown, abstain”

- - Self-denial is giving up and abstaining from what you want and instead taking on and engaging in what Jesus wants.

“and take up” (or carry (v.14:27)) “his cross daily”:

- - This is taking on as mission in life the ministry work God has for you to do, being active to pursue that mission every day even if it is very difficult or burdensome.

“and follow [Jesus]”:

- - This means to pursue Jesus within everything you think, say, and do.

- - Therefore, every other aspect in your life should be secondary to and subordinate to daily fulfilling the ministry work God has for you and living a life pleasing to Him.
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READ: Luke 14:26

SECTION POINT: To be a disciple of Jesus, you must actively hold Jesus in highest or supreme priority in your life.

“come” to Jesus:

- - If any of you are interested in being His disciple, come to Jesus to be a follower of Him.

“hate his [close family members]”:

“hate” = Strong’s #3404 “love less; to detest (especially to persecute); by extension, to love less”

- - You will need to hold all your family members, even close ones, in a priority below that of Jesus; i.e. you love Jesus more than any of them.

“hate his own life”:

- - Furthermore, you are to hold even your own life in a priority below that of Jesus; i.e. you love Jesus more than your own life, your own lifestyle, your own life’s enjoyments, and everything else in it.

- - Jesus is to hold supremacy in your life above all of your relationships and every aspect of interaction in all of your relationships.

- - By implication, this supremacy includes subordinating the lifestyle of your family and upbringing, and includes appropriately leaving or distancing yourself from every parent, sibling, or relative that is hindering you from fully pursuing God’s agenda for your life.

- - Of course, this does not promote that you abandon your spouse and children, or fail in maintaining and fulfilling proper marital and parental functioning with them.

- - The emphasis is on supremacy of priority - that living for Jesus is your highest priority.

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BIG IDEA: The requirements for being an authentic disciple involve far more than merely believing in Jesus and refraining from indulging in sinfulness. At the core of the requirements is the imperative to hold Jesus in complete supremacy in your life, with the corresponding result of determined pursuit to fulfill the ministry work He has for you.

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#### APPLICATIONS:

- - Are you truly a believer in Jesus? Or have you not decided to be one yet? Or are you a pretender?

- - Are you committed and actively engaged in pursuing the ministry work God has assigned for you to do?

- - Or are you partially committed - when it is convenient for you and you have nothing else to do?

- - Or are you coasting along, making no significant effort to do anything for Jesus, not having any interest to correct this deficiency, and relying on others to do your God-assigned ministry work for you?

- - Does Jesus hold supremacy over everything and everyone in your life?

- - Or are you holding other things or other persons in supremacy above Him - you love and prioritize them more than you do Jesus?

- - Are you what Jesus wants - a “real” disciple? Or not?

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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary". *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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