

FOLLOWING THE

# Master

*A Biblical Theology  
of Discipleship*

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A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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Requests for information should be addressed to:  
Zondervan Publishing House  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Wilkins, Michael J.

Following the Master : discipleship in the steps of Jesus /  
Michael J. Wilkins.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-310-52151-3

1. Christian life—1960-      2. Apostles.      I. Title.  
BV4501.2.W532      1991

248.4—dc20

91-34820  
CIP

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*Edited by Leonard G. Goss and Laura Weller*  
*Cover design by Vicki Heetderks*

*Printed in the United States of America*

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96 97 98 99 00 01 02 / DH / 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3



# 1

## A Preview of the Journey

### *Following up:*

1. In what ways will becoming a more dynamic disciple of Jesus affect our daily lives?
2. How does the discipleship commitment you have made to Jesus compare to the radical commitments made by the first disciples?
3. Is there any place in this world where Jesus would not walk? Why or why not?
4. How would you have responded to Chris (the surfer) if he had asked you to help him to be like the first disciples?
5. What would you do with him to help him accomplish his goal of radical discipleship?

## Jesus and Disciples Today

*Following up:*

1. Which of the five models reflects the definition of biblical discipleship you gave at the beginning of this chapter? Under which model were you raised spiritually?
2. How have the strengths and weaknesses of the model under which you were “discipled” affected your life?
3. Why do you think that there are so many models of discipleship?
4. What would you do to help the sailor out of his dilemma? What advice would you give him?

## The People Called to Follow God: Discipleship in the Old Testament

### *Following up:*

1. How are the qualifications for discipleship in the Old Testament different from those in the New Testament?
2. In what ways was Jesus' call to discipleship a fulfillment of God's Old Testament call to Israel as a nation?
3. What can the Old Testament believers who tried to follow God teach us about following God today?
4. In what ways does your discipleship commitment evidence that you love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength?



## Disciples in the Greco-Roman World

*Following up:*

1. What differences exist between being a disciple of Jesus rather than being a disciple of any other master? What differences were readily apparent between those who followed Jesus and those who followed other masters during the first century?
2. Ask yourself the same questions that Roslynn asked herself: “Can others really tell, by your testimony, that Jesus is your master? Do your actions stand out as being different than those who follow others?”

## Disciples in the World of Judaism

*Following up:*

1. If Jesus had approached a representative of each of the discipleship groups within Judaism and said, "Follow me and become my disciple," how would each have understood what Jesus was requiring of them?
2. Whose understanding would have been most accurate? Why?
3. When Peter, Andrew, James, and John heard the word *disciple* at the outset of Jesus' ministry, how do you think they would have defined the word?
4. If you could have been a disciple in any of these first-century discipleship groups within Judaism, which one would you choose? Why?

## The Jesus Movement

*Following up:*

1. Are you a disciple of Jesus? How do you know?
2. What is the cost you have had to count and cross you have had to bear by following Jesus?
3. How does your own calling compare to the calling of the Twelve?
4. If you were put in charge of training counselors for a Billy Graham crusade, how would you train the counselors to help those who come forward to “count the cost” before making a decision to follow Christ?
5. What is the minimum commitment someone needs to make to Jesus in order to be truly one of his disciples?

## Becoming Like Jesus

*Following up:*

1. What are the differences between following Jesus literally in the first century versus following him figuratively today?
2. If you had your choice, which would you have preferred, to follow Jesus then or now? Why?
3. What can we do to help develop the growth of disciples today?
4. What role of the women who followed Jesus in the first century would be equivalent for women today?
5. How should we develop a balance of personal discipleship with the community of disciples?

## The Twelve

*Following up:*

1. Which of the Twelve do you relate to the most easily? Why? If Jesus were to pair you up with one of the Twelve as part of sending you out two by two to preach the gospel, who would you have liked most to be paired up with? Who least? Why?
2. Jesus chose a diverse group to form the Twelve. What would have been the difficulties of them working together as a group of leaders? What does it teach us?
3. What kind of leadership example do the Twelve show you?
4. Why do you think the New Testament authors record so little of the activity of most of the Twelve?

## Matthew: Examples with a Commission

*Following up:*

1. Who are the “nations” for whom you are responsible to “make disciples”?
2. What is the best way of carrying out the Great Commission? How should the church be involved?

## Mark: Servants of the Redemptive Servant

*Following up:*

1. Why does Mark emphasize so strongly the fact that the Twelve consistently did not understand Jesus' message or ministry?
2. How can we train Christians to "think the things of God"?
3. Is "servanthood" a popular vocation in the present age? Why? Why would Jesus want his followers to be servants?
4. How did Jesus model servanthood for the disciples? How can we be servants today?



## Luke: Followers on the Costly Way

*Following up:*

1. Why did Jesus give some requirements for entrance to discipleship to some people and different requirements to others?
2. What are some “idols” or “gods” in people’s hearts today that might stand in opposition to a “would-be” disciple following Jesus unreservedly? How would you present the Gospel to such a person?
3. What is the significance of the concentric circles of disciples for our ministries today?

## John: Believers Marked by Jesus

*Following up:*

1. If the apostle John were to visit your church this week, what evidence would he find that the members of your congregation are truly abiding in Jesus' Word, loving each other, and bearing fruit?
2. What could you point to in your own life of these three evidences of discipleship?
3. Do you think that discipleship is more of an event or a process? Explain.
4. What do you see as the key elements/stages of that event or process?

## Acts: The Community of Faith

### *Following up:*

1. In the book of Acts, Luke records that the disciples in Antioch were so closely associated with Christ that they came to be called “Christ-ians.” If an impartial observer decided to nickname the disciples of Jesus in your town today, what might they be called?
2. In many “discipleship” movements in the church today, it is common to define discipleship as a one-to-one or small-group teaching relationship between a mature believer and a more recent convert.
  - a. Does this definition fit Luke’s description of discipleship in Acts? Why or why not?
  - b. Is it biblical for a Christian to be called a “disciple” of anyone other than Jesus? Explain.
  - c. Is there some other term that would better describe such a one-to-one or small-group context?
3. What “discipling” methodologies have helped you grow the most as a Christian? Why? What are you doing to help others grow?
4. How has the ministry of the Holy Spirit been emphasized in your personal discipleship journey?

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## Disappearing Disciples?

*Following up:*

1. Which reason appears to you to be the best explanation for the curious absence of the word *disciple* from the Epistles?
2. If you were to try to label a *disciple* by another term that does occur in the Epistles, what would you use? What other expressions in the Epistles approximate the concept of discipleship?
3. When you think of “discipleship,” which comes to mind first, a one-to-one relationship with another believer or a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? In what ways can you enhance your own awareness of Jesus’ presence as your Master on a more moment-by-moment basis?

## The Epistles: Disciples in Other Words

*Following up:*

1. Which term, teaching, or metaphor is most significant for you in seeing the continuity of discipleship from the Gospels to the Epistles? Why?
2. How have you followed the example of Christ? Do you imitate him? Explain.
3. Could you tell the people to whom you minister, “Imitate me, as I imitate Christ”? Wouldn’t it sound somewhat arrogant for us to say it? What did Paul mean by it? What would you mean by it? Give examples.

## Apostolic Fathers: Martyrs for the Name

*Following up:*

1. What suffering have you experienced in your life? How has it helped you to grow as a Christian? How would you advise others to handle similar kinds of suffering?
2. What should we do when various kinds of difficulties come our way? Should we avoid them, should we eagerly encounter them, or what? Explain how your answer relates to realistic Christian living.

## Jesus' Discipleship Expectations

*Following up:*

1. What were your expectations of what it meant to be a disciple prior to reading this book? How have they changed? How have they remained the same?
2. Are there areas of your life that you have not considered to be in the realm of concern for discipleship? Explain. What areas of your life do you believe have been affected most by discipleship growth?
3. What would your church or ministry be like if all involved lived out the message that the expectations of discipleship found in the Gospels are expectations for all Christians, not just for a few committed ones? What can you do to help bring this about?

## Walking with the Master in Your World

*Following up:*

1. How could each of these discipleship groups that existed in Palestine when Jesus came on the scene have retained the strengths of their background while becoming disciples of Jesus?
2. What signs of institutionalism can be found in your church or group? In your own life? What can be done to create discipleship to Jesus, instead?
3. Are you more comfortable among Christians or non-Christians? Why?
4. In what ways are you currently helping your own group of “surfers” to walk with Jesus in the world?