



# Costs of Discipleship

John 7:1-7

Notes: The primary reference used in developing this Bible Study was the *Life Application Commentary*. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise indicated.

## 7:1 – Why did Jesus stay in Galilee, was He afraid of being taken by the Jewish religious leaders?

Jesus certainly feared no one. He knew that His time to die was not yet so he avoided actions that would have prematurely led to the cross.

The Lord going to the cross had to be done in God's timing. Certainly Jesus needed the time to establish the foundation for the church through the training of the disciples. And the timing of the Lord going to the cross was established in prophecy (Daniel 9).

## Given that Jesus waited on God's timing in Galilee, how should we know if we should also wait or take action?

As was the case with Jesus, we should not be driven by fear, impulsiveness, or ignorance. Sometimes obedience involves risk and sometimes it requires caution. If there is no compelling reason to take immediate action, it is usually the best to wait until the situation changes or new information emerges which signals God's timing.

## 7:2 – What do we know about the Feast of Tabernacles?

The Feast of Tabernacles was observed six months after the Passover celebration during the month of Tishri (September/October). This feast was in remembrance of the time when Israel wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents. Jews celebrated this festival by going to Jerusalem and living in temporary structures that they built (tabernacles). This celebration was a prophetic picture of the Lord Himself "tabernacling" with us.

## 7:3-4 – What did Jesus' family want Him to do?

Jesus' half-brothers wanted Him to take His miracle show to Judea. At this point, they were missing the point of why He performed miracles. They were expecting the Messiah to be a political deliverer as was Moses. They were no doubt anxious for Jesus to rise to public prominence since this would give them more clout by virtue of their relationship to Him.

## Why did Jesus have to go to Judea to show His disciples miracles?

Jesus' family was not referring to the 12 disciples that Jesus chose; they had in mind the crowds that followed Jesus wanting to see what He'd do next. They knew that Jesus

would draw even bigger and more influential crowds in Judea.

## 7:5 – Did Jesus' half-brothers believe He was the Messiah?

They certainly did not believe in Him and were probably skeptical about Him being the Messiah. Jesus was not doing what they expected the Messiah to do because they thought the Messiah had to be a political deliverer like Moses.

Mark 6:4 - Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." (NKJV)

## Did Jesus' half-brothers ever come to believe in Him?

We know who Jesus' half-brothers are because:

Matthew 13:55 - Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? (NKJ)

We also know that Jesus appeared to His half-brother James following His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7) and that James eventually became a believer because he was the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13) and wrote the book of James. We also know that Judas (Jude) was a believer because he wrote the book of Jude.

## 7:6 – Why didn't Jesus go to Judea at the taunting of His half-brothers?

The time of Jesus' crucifixion had not yet come. If you read on, you'll find out that Jesus did indeed go to Judea, but it was in God's timing, not immediately. Recall that there was another occasion where Jesus had a request made of Him where He responded that His time had not yet come: the wedding at Cana. These two occasions were very similar because in both cases miracles were asked of Him by family members and He chose to do them anyway despite them being made outside of God's timing.

## What did Jesus mean by saying that "for you any time is right?"

Their time-frame focus was on temporal activities in this world. Thus they viewed time as if it was theirs to squander basing their decisions only on immediate opportunities and showing no interest in fitting into God's plan.

In contrast, Jesus viewed every step on earth as having a purpose that needed to fit into God's timetable. Whatever Jesus did would be determined by the Father Himself and not by harassing relatives.

### **What guidelines does God give us for the right use of time in Ephesians 5:15-21?**

Ephesians 5:15-21 - <sup>15</sup>Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup>making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup>Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. <sup>18</sup>Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup>always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup>Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Being wise...

- Walk circumspectly – being careful about what we do, analyzing it in light of what God says we should do.
- Redeem the time – make good use of our time by acting in accord with God's will... we have limited days in our mortal bodies and how we use our time will have a bearing on our eternity.
- Not be drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit.

### **Why do we need to make the most of every opportunity?**

Because the days are evil – time is part of this world and it is passing away with the world. If we just bide our time in this world, we will have nothing of lasting value to show for it at the end of our lives. Instead, we should make good use of our time to accomplish things of eternal value...

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 - For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (NKJ)

### **Ephesians 5:17 – How may we avoid being foolish?**

In order to avoid being foolish, we need to understand what the will of the Lord is. Fools are those who act without giving any consideration as to what their purpose is in life.

### **Ephesians 5:18 – Why do you suppose God designed our lives to be filled with His presence?**

God desires a personal relationship with each one of us... that is why He created us in His image with will to freely choose a relationship with Him. Since we have the opportunity to spend eternity with Him, life is a test to determine first who wants a relationship with their Creator and second to what extent they want to experience what the Creator has to offer.

### **Why do you think Paul contrasted being controlled by the Holy Spirit with being controlled by wine?**

Drunkenness is an excellent analogy for not being in control of your life... People who are drunk are impaired, they say and do things that they would not consider if they were in control of themselves. They may think they have control but they are deceived by their intoxication. Those who are under the control of the Holy Spirit are in that state because they have chosen to be that way.

### **Ephesians 5:19-21 – What does Paul tell us is clear evidence that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit?**

- speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
- singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,
- giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- submitting to one another in the fear of God.

### **Who is the “one another” that we are to be filled with the Spirit in front of?**

Certainly this applies to those in church meetings but I believe that this also applies to those who are prospects for being part of the church... notice that it says, “*giving thanks always.*” There is no time when it is not to our advantage to being filled with the Spirit.

- Just like worship is not just for Sunday mornings, it is supposed to be a lifestyle; being filled with the Spirit should not be limited to church activities.
- Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost where 3,000 people were saved (Acts 2:4) and before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8).
- Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit when he witnessed to the proconsul on the island to Paphos (Acts 13:9).

### **What does it mean to speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs?**

I take this literally that we should sing together in corporate worship, but also this includes a deeper aspect...

- Psalms are expressions of what we have seen God doing in our lives, it is sharing a testimony of our personal relationship with God.
- Hymns praise God whether we speak with music or not... praise is always music to one's ears. God's people have reason to rejoice, and to sing for joy – our countenance should reflect our joy.
- Spiritual songs may contain a greater variety of matter including taking actions that glorify God... after all actions do speak louder than words.

### **What does it mean to sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord?**

We should get control of our thought life to think about things that glorify God... acknowledging Him for what He has done, praying to Him and meditating on His Word.

#### **How can we give thanks always for all things?**

We should continually be acknowledging the good things in our life and thanking the Source of these good things in our prayers.

James 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, (NKJ)

And this applies to all aspects of our lives, there is nothing about us that God is not interested in...

Matthew 10:30 - the very hairs of your head are all numbered. (NKJ)

As we grow in our attitude of gratitude, we will find ourselves being more aligned with God's perspectives and thus better able to do His will. In fact, we'll even be able to thank God for what He is doing in our lives when things don't go our way...

Romans 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (NKJ)

#### **Why should we submit to each other out of reverence for Christ?**

While it pleases our Father when we get along with each other by submitting, the reverse is also true, it displeases Him when we sow discord by not submitting. There will be a judgment regarding how we have done in this regard and so there will be eternal ramifications.

#### **How is it that we can gain control of our life by yielding to the Holy Spirit?**

God created us for a purpose and He wants us to fulfill that purpose. When we are yielded to the Holy Spirit, we are working toward fulfilling His purpose for us. This is the most rewarding thing we can do, it feels right and God will make us successful doing it.

#### **How do we apply what we've learned about being filled with the Spirit in our daily activities?**

- speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs – acknowledging the hand of God in the good things and the bad, doing things that represent Christ and Christians in a good light.
- singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord – involving God in our work praying about our needs and seeking His will in our decisions.
- giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ – thanking God for His help in our work.
- submitting to one another in the fear of God – having a servant's heart in the course of our work.

#### **What practical things can we do to be more yielded to the Spirit in our daily activities?**

Make sure that your priorities are set through an eternal perspective filter. Don't allow ourselves to become over-committed... we all need margin to take advantage of the opportunities that God presents us with and for our own well-being emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

#### **What does Colossians 4:5-6 have to say about how we should use our time?**

Colossians 4:5-6 - Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Be wise in the way we act toward outsiders, those outside the church who are not saved. Specifically, by letting our speech be seasoned with grace... We should only speak of things that are pleasing to God and directs people to Him.

Matthew 5:13 - You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

We should not allow our speech to be compromised by the world, we should always be truthful as Jesus was and it should be clear on Who's side we stand on by what we say.

#### **John 7:7 – Who hates Jesus and why is He hated?**

The world hates Jesus because He exposes the evil of the world. The world refers to the realm of non-believers who do not value a relationship with the Creator. Such people have their own world-view that excludes God from all things.

#### **What does the world think of Christians?**

The world also hates Christians because we represent Christ in the world...

John 15:18-20 - If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.

If unbelievers rejected and hated Jesus, they will also hate and reject us. The world sees our beliefs and life-style as narrow-minded, intolerant and prudish.

#### **How should we respond to the rejection we encounter in the world?**

We should not be surprised or bitter when we are rejected. Pagans rejecting Christians come as natural as breathing. Indeed we should praise God when this happens because the way we respond to rejection may be used by God to make a powerful impression on them.