

## Disciples of the Master

The word “disciple” in our New Testament comes from a Greek word meaning a “learner or pupil” (J.H. Thayer). It is somewhat analogous to our “apprentice.” When reading the following verse, be on the lookout for three sets of disciples. “And John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: and they come and say unto him, Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?” (Mark 2:18). At this time, there was the Jewish Pharisaical sect, and there was some disconnect between John’s followers and the disciples of Jesus.

However, two of these groups would merge, for John declared about Jesus: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). As a harbinger, John prepared a group for Jesus. God desires all men to have but one Master. “Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ” (Matthew 23:10). Let’s consider some requirements for disciples of Jesus.

**Disciples must be drawn to the person of Jesus.** Jesus said: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself” (John 12:32). “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). One cannot be saved unless he believes that Jesus is who He claimed to be—the Christ (John 4:25-26) and Eternal God (John 8:23, 58).

**Disciples must be drawn to the teaching of Jesus.** After He concluded His sermon on the mount, “the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes” (Matthew 7:28-29). When some disciples were turning away from Jesus and following Him no more, Peter realized that Jesus was the only One Who had the words of eternal life (John 6:68). Those who cling to doctrines that arose after the first century should ponder the Lord’s words: “If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples” (John 8:31).

**Discipleship requires complete allegiance.** We live in a time when Christianity is widely portrayed as casual. Many claim allegiance to Jesus, but their actions indicate a religion of convenience. “So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). Those whose religious activity could be characterized as sporadic ought to consider the Lord’s view of them. “So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:16). It is possible to fool yourself, but not the Lord. Are you truly a disciple of Jesus? *By George Jensen*