

Stage 2: Following Disciple

After the critical foundation of your spiritual life as disciple of Jesus Mashiach as been laid, as you learn to *live by faith in him* as your Lord and Life-giver, repenting and being sanctified of your old fleshly life. Now, it is time for you to start walking with the Lord in this earthly world.

Developmentally, infants who learn to walk move from the private safety of the home into the wider world, as they follow the lead of their parent. In this way, a whole new world opens for you, as a disciple, as you learn to *follow Jesus Mashiach* and see how his restoring power as the Son of Man releases people that they might move from darkness into light!

And, as little children walk with their parents through this world, they need to be assured that they are safe in the powerful protection of their

parents that they might discover this new world before them!

The Son of Man has Authority:

In your second stage of growth as a disciple, you will learn first to follow Jesus Mashiach as the Son of Man. When Jesus refers to himself as “the Son of Man,” he does not just mean that he is human, which he is, of course. Rather, if you think of all the “sons” who have been born, Jesus is “the” son, the Firstborn and Heir of all the sons, of all humanity. Being our human family’s “firstborn” Son and Heir, Jesus has a responsibility from God.

At the very beginning of our story, when our first parents Adam and Eve sinned and cast all our generations into *sin and death*, snatched from God’s family and thrown into the kingdom of darkness and death (Isaiah 9:2), the Lord God promised that our Firstborn, the “Seed of the

woman” (Genesis 3:15), would crush the enslaving Serpent’s “head” to restore us to God.

So, as you learn to walk with Jesus Mashiach through this broken world, as you follow him to the people who need his healing touch, learn of how Jesus as “the Son of Man” has the power and authority from God to *restore* what sin and Satan have held in bondage.

As a disciple who learns to “follow” Jesus Mashiach, learn how we are meant to bring freedom and restoration to people in their brokenness and bondage.

Key Verse.

¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, “**Follow me,** and I **will make you become fishers of men.**” ¹⁸ And **immediately they left** their nets and **followed** him” Mark 1:17-18

¹⁰ But that you may know that **the Son of Man** has **authority** on earth to **forgive sins**”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” Mark 2:10-11.

Developmental Disciple Stage:

Picture the development of infants as they transition from helpless and immobile babies to infants able to stand, to take their first steps, and then to walk! This newfound skill they practice in the safety of the home, until finally, they are able to hold the hands of their parent and to venture outside to explore the wide world!

Importantly, the infant does not become a free agent, an emancipated and autonomous individual the first step out the door. Rather, she stays close to her parent, who has the power to lead, protect, and teach her about this big new world.

Now, consider your second stage of development as a *disciple* who learns to follow Jesus Mashiach as your Lord, the restoring “Son of Man.” Now that you are *alive and thriving* in Jesus, it is time for you to “walk” with him in this earthly world.

Do not fall into the *folly* of many, who do not think that the Lord Jesus has a place in your real, everyday life. That his “Lordship” has little to say as you interact, talk with, work, negotiate, and spend time with the people of this world who don’t know him.

Rather, it is this very *real life* in this broken and dark world, in which people are “bound” by oppressive spiritual powers, they are weighed down in unforgiveness and conflict, they are broken by injuries, by sins, and by addictions and afflictions beyond their control. Follow Jesus Mashiach as he draws near to restore and free these needy people!

See, as a disciple in your *infancy*, the start of your *new and eternal life* in Jesus Mashiach, you need to be convinced in your mind that your Lord Jesus can make a difference.

Your flesh will tell you that it is better for you to traverse this world alone. That once you are able to stand on your own “two feet,” you are well-capable and qualified to walk alone. But, consider this. As a disciple, yes, you do not walk as a *human infant* in a *physical world*. Rather, you walk in this earthly world of flesh as a disciple living in a spiritual reality. The surrounding spiritual reality, this dark kingdom which covers this earth, is far deadlier than any urban *crime zone* to an infant. In this world of *spiritual darkness and death*, when you walk alone, you face:

- **Oppressive spirits:** in these upcoming accounts, you will encounter human lives infested with and even controlled by “unclean spirits”—spiritual powers that

oppose God and seek to *defile* you with sin and addiction. They seek to take over your life, to keep you alone in slavery.

- **Bondage of Sin:** When our sins are not forgiven, they weigh our hearts down with guilt and are the disease that kills our life with God. In these encounters, we will see that sin is like an untreatable, hidden disease that paralyzes the soul. In the world, there is no relief from sin's bondage.
- **Broken Souls:** through the flesh, our souls are *bound* to this world and he injuries, pains, and afflictions which we experience. When our bodies our lives are afflicted by this world, our souls are also bound up in these afflictions. Without the Lord's healing power, there would be no freedom for these broken souls.

So, in this second stage of your discipleship, you will learn a valuable life-lesson which will stay with

you while you walk this earth. You will learn to follow the Lord Jesus Mashiach, obeying his Word and waiting for his Spirit's leading as you pass through this broken world together.

Following the Lord Jesus closely by *living in His Word* and walking by His Spirit will teach you about him, as you see his heart moved by the people he touches and heals. You will know his comfort, as he bears your burdens as well (Matthew 11:28-30). Like a little child *bonding* with her parent as she walks with him to places familiar and strange, inhospitable and pleasant, so you will learn to stay near to him.

Remember, though you will soon pass into the next stage of your development as a disciple, you must never stop walking with and following the Lord. For, your entire time on earth are but scant moments in the Kingdom's eternal scope, and a lifetime is far too short a span to spend hand-in-hand with your Lord.

Case Study: Walking alone in Omaha.

My early years as a disciple were spent surrounded with brothers in Christ and filled with the sweet fellowship of my youth group. We had competed as athletes, worshipped at the same church, spread the Gospel, and graduated together from high school.

But, as I stepped off the plane onto the tarmac at Omaha, Nebraska to the drone of cicadas and stifling humidity, I knew I was suddenly alone. In the midst of the very immediate fellowship, I had neglected my walk with the Lord. Now, I had to re-learn what it meant to take his hand, to listen for his voice, to recall his Words to direct, correct, and guide.

After a while, his familiar voice drew near to me, and I answered. He called, and I followed. We walked alone through empty classrooms late at night. We met privately in the chapel. Soon, we brought the gospel to six, fourteen, thirty.

Everyday for a whole semester, we talked and helped the broken.

We continued to walk together as he led me to a summer in Taiwan and ministering to fifty. Then an auditorium of hundreds of high school students. Then, into synagogues throughout Chicago. And, a congregation with close to eighty nationalities as a microcosm of the diverse family of God. And, I expect that he will still be holding my hand when he comes to lead me home. We never outgrow following Jesus with child-like face. For, in the eternal spans of the Kingdom, even the oldest among us are as the littlest of children!

Milestone/ Abilities:

For the infant learning to follow her parent, bonding is *becoming like* the parent, as the familiarity of how they respond in every situation

gives the child an intimate view of how they should live in this world.

So, as you follow Jesus Mashiach as the Son of Man, you will get to know him and his authority and mighty power to restore, free, and forgive. As you share life together, a mutual trust will form, and you will show the Lord that what he asks, you will do. Bonding means you become like your Lord Jesus, sharing in his calling and mission to restore people in this world of brokenness.

A. Knowing/ Responding to Jesus:

First, endeavor to know the Lord in the power of his authority. You will find that there is nothing that saturates your life with his power than *obeying his command*. As it says in Joel: “the Lord utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful” Joel 2:11. Simon Peter discovered this

power, when he asked Jesus to *command* that Peter come to him on the water, and he walked on the frothy waves! (Matthew 14:28).

Make this your *life prayer* as you follow the Lord: “Lord, command me to come to you!” as you pass through the trials and extreme hardships of this world. Ask him to command the impossible, and you will do it!

Following him is simple but can be complicated by the flesh. First, follow him by obeying his Words (John 14:21). Resist the *debased and fleshly deceit of religion* which allures you to follow anything but the authoritative person of Jesus. Yes, follow doctrines religiously; follow precepts, rules, customs, traditions, dogmas, and even entire theologies. Follow the popular Bible study teachers, the trendy lesson plans. Follow these, and the Lord himself will be shut out of your life, knocking to get in (Revelation 3:20). And, follow his Spirit and not the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

B. Living in His Household:

Second, as a member of the *royal house* of Jesus Mashiach, learn to *draw near* in prayer to offer yourself to the Father and to the Lord Jesus. To follow Jesus Mashiach will not just involve your mind, your actions, or your heart, but it will require you offer your whole life to him to follow.

As you learn to follow him, be especially keen to hear when he *calls you to follow him away, to leave* the comforting fellowship, the burgeon of the crowd—follow him to the quiet place, the lonely place where he will call to you and you will give yourself as an offering to him. He will claim you as his own, like David, a “man after God’s own heart.”

Jesus himself drew near to the Father to devote himself to him, giving his life as an offering to his God. You give yourself to Jesus, a life spent to honor him, like the “guests” of the bridegroom

giving themselves over to the *surpassing celebration* of the Son of Man, the “bridegroom” who inherits all of *heaven* and *earth* (Mark 2:19).

C. Establishing His Throne and Kingdom:

Finally, as you follow the Lord Jesus as his disciple, you will be like the Physician’s aid, showing him the afflicted ones, the suffering, the broken, the hurt, bringing them to Jesus, the “physician,” that he might call them into the healing comforts of his Kingdom.

Assessment Question:

As a disciple learning to Follow Jesus Mashiach in this dark and testing world, consider whether you are indeed “bonding”—becoming closer to know the One who is calling you? Take stock of the key ways that you walk with him in this life.

Further Discovery: