

APPRENTICESHIP WITH JESUS

A Practical Guide to Following Christ

This guide was inspired in part by themes and language explored by John Mark Comer, Christian author and pastor in the book *Practicing the Way*, particularly the vision of discipleship as apprenticeship to Jesus.

What Is Apprenticeship to Jesus?

In the first century, disciples were more than students. They were apprentices. An apprentice arranged their life around becoming like their rabbi.

Jesus did not merely invite people to learn information. He invited them to follow Him.

“Follow Me.” — Matthew 9:9

The goal of apprenticeship to Jesus is:

- to be with Jesus
- to learn from Jesus
- to become like Jesus
- to reorder life around Jesus

Christianity is not merely believing facts about Jesus. It is following Jesus personally.

1. BE WITH JESUS - Presence

Before Jesus called His disciples to ministry, He called them to Himself.

You cannot grow close to someone you never spend time with.

Practical Steps

Establish a Daily Time and Place

Choose a regular time and place to meet with God.

Examples:

- early morning before work
- during lunch break

- evening before bed
- a chair in your home
- a quiet walk outside

The goal is consistency, not perfection.

Start Simple

Begin with:

- 10–15 minutes daily
- prayer
- silence before God
- worship music
- gratitude
- honest conversation with God

Helpful Questions During Prayer

- What am I anxious about?
- What am I grateful for?
- What sin do I need to confess?
- Where do I need wisdom?
- Who can I pray for today?

Supporting Scriptures

Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; John 15:4–5; Psalm 27:4

Key Truth - Apprenticeship begins with proximity.

2. LEARN FROM JESUS - Truth

Jesus is not only Savior. He is Teacher.

To follow Jesus means learning how He thinks, what He values, and what He says is true.

Practical Steps

Read Scripture Consistently

Start with:

- the Gospel of John

- the Gospel of Mark
- Psalms
- Ephesians

Use a Simple Pattern

Ask:

1. What does this teach me about God?
2. What does this reveal about people?
3. Is there a command to obey?
4. How should this shape my life?

Listen and Learn

- attend church consistently
- participate in a Life Group
- discuss Scripture with mature believers
- ask questions
- take notes during sermons

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 11:29; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 1:1–3

Key Truth - You cannot follow Jesus while ignoring what Jesus says.

3. BECOME LIKE JESUS - Character

The goal of following Jesus is not merely gaining knowledge. It is becoming Christlike.

Jesus changes:

- attitudes
- desires
- reactions
- priorities
- speech
- relationships
- character

Christlike Character Includes

- humility
- compassion
- integrity
- holiness
- patience
- forgiveness
- gentleness
- sacrificial love

Practical Steps

Identify One Area for Growth

Ask:

- Where am I least like Jesus right now?
- What relationship reveals that most clearly?

Invite Accountability

Growth happens in community.

Find trusted believers who:

- encourage you
- pray for you
- challenge you lovingly
- help you stay faithful

Practice Repentance Quickly

Following Jesus does not mean perfection. It means responding honestly when you fail.

Supporting Scriptures

Galatians 5:22–23; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 4:20–24; 2 Corinthians 3:18

Key Truth - The goal of following Jesus is not merely learning Christian information. It is becoming Christlike people.

4. REORDER LIFE AROUND JESUS - Allegiance

Jesus is not an addition to life. He becomes the center of it.

Following Jesus changes:

- schedules
- priorities
- habits
- relationships
- entertainment
- money
- goals
- identity

Matthew could not stay at the tax booth and follow Jesus at the same time. Following Jesus always requires surrender.

Practical Steps

Evaluate Your Priorities

Ask:

- What receives most of my time?
- What shapes my thinking most?
- What controls my emotions most?
- What would people say my life revolves around?

Remove Spiritual Distractions

Identify habits or patterns pulling you away from Jesus.

Examples:

- constant distraction
- unhealthy entertainment
- toxic relationships
- secret sin
- overcommitment
- isolation

Build Rhythms Around Jesus

Examples:

- weekly worship
- serving others
- Sabbath rest
- generosity
- fasting
- community
- evangelism

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 9:23; Matthew 6:33; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:7–8

Key Truth - You cannot follow Jesus while organizing life around something else.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS

“I need to fix myself first.”

Jesus said, “Follow Me.”
He forms people as they follow Him.

“Following Jesus is only for the super spiritual.”

Jesus repeatedly called ordinary, broken, and unlikely people.

“Going to church alone is discipleship.”

Church gatherings matter deeply, but apprenticeship to Jesus involves daily surrender and formation.

“Following Jesus means instant perfection.”

Growth is often gradual.
Faithfulness matters.
Keep following.

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Jesus does not wait for people to become perfect before calling them. He calls ordinary, broken, imperfect people to walk with Him. And as we follow Him, He changes us.

Christ does not help nobodies become somebodies. He makes them new.