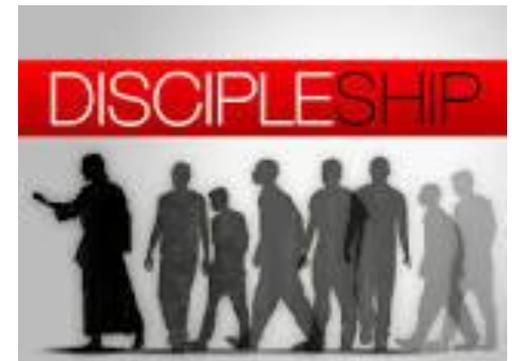


THE IMPORTANCE OF GROWING INTO A MATURE DISCIPLE AS A BELIEVER

Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of making disciples in the Great Commission. Jesus said,

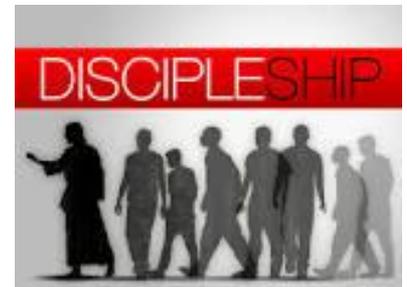
“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen”

(Matthew 28:19-20)



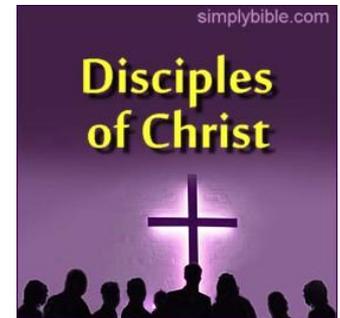
- When we come to Christ as a new believer there are many benefits and privileges (Promises) that we become entitled to.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” (2 Corinthians 1:20)



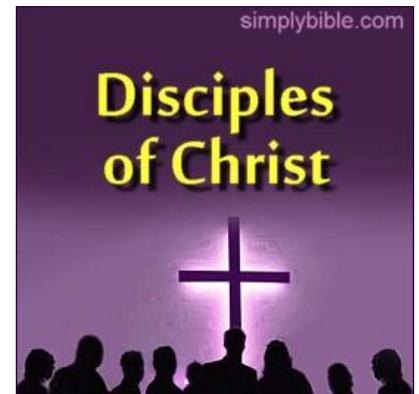
- To help us to obtain an understanding of what these benefits and privileges are, it is important for us to grow and mature as a Christian.

- When we first become Christians we are like ‘babes’ in Christ and as such we need to grow to maturity in our walk with the Lord.
- How quickly we grow depends entirely upon ourselves: We grow at our own pace.
- The objective is to become more like Jesus everyday and to do the things that Jesus did, so that we can be a living example of how Jesus can change the life of every person who has a personal relationship with Him

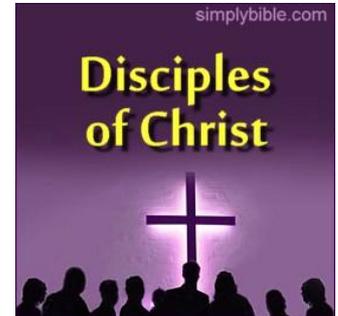


The Apostle Paul wrote,

“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. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” **(Romans 8:28-30)**



There are many reasons why it is so important to grow in maturity in our walk with the Lord as a believer. Some of these include:



1) It is a key to fulfilling our full life potential in Christ (God has so much planned for our life)

Jesus Himself said, "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

The word of the LORD came to the Prophet Jeremiah in prison,

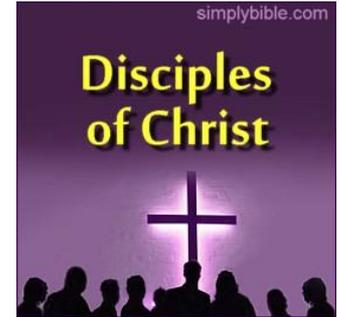
“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” (Ephesians 3:20)

2) It is a key to our lives making an impact on the lives of others for eternity

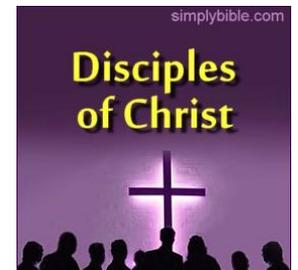


- The way that we live our life greatly determines the degree to which we impact the lives of others. For many our lives are the only bible that they will ever read
- If we demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in our lives it will help to attract others to Christ

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

As believers we are meant to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world as we help to lead others to Christ through the way that we love others and live our life

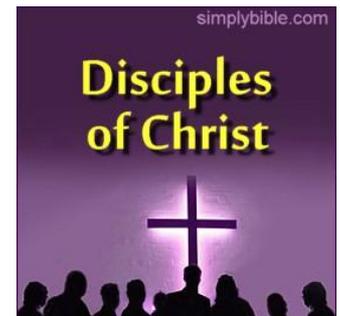


3) It helps us to continually remain strong during life's trials and challenges so that we continually bear fruit in our lives

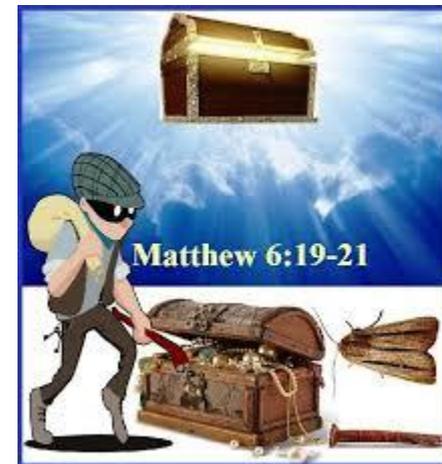
The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” (Ephesians 6:10)

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)



4) It helps us to live with eternity in mind and to keep our focus on storing up treasures in heaven – We have one life to make a difference in this world for eternity – One day Jesus will reward us for all that we have done for His Kingdom cause



Jesus Himself said,

“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.” (Matthew 16:24-27)

5) We will always be ready and prepared for the Lord's return and the rapture of all true believers just prior to the great tribulation



Jesus Himself said,

“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”
(Luke 21:34-36)

6) We will finish our walk with the Lord strongly (We are now living in the perilous times that the Apostle Paul spoke of)



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” **(2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

Jesus Himself said,

“And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

(Matthew 24:10-13)



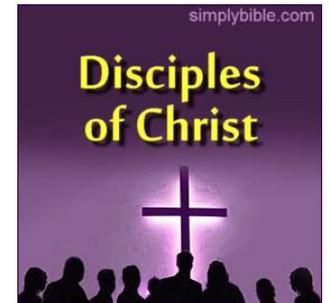
**Like the Apostle Paul we need to be able to say
at the end of our time here on earth,**

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)



A pastor in Australia did a study on what Jesus taught and commanded His disciples to do to help them to become mature disciples

In this study He found that though Jesus taught and commanded his disciples to do around 350 things, he noticed that all of these could be summarised into just 7 core values of a mature disciple



I will now just quickly finish by looking at what these 7 core values of a mature disciple are

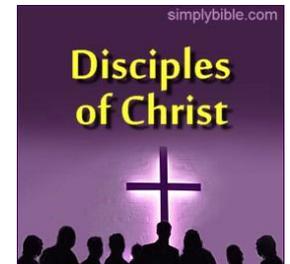
A MATURE DISCIPLE:

1) Loves God

Jesus said, “And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.” (Mark 12:30)



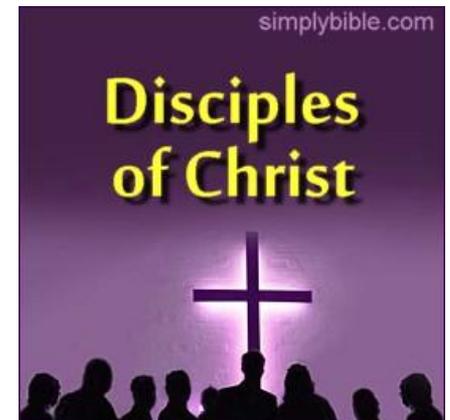
- **They know that fullness of joy comes from being in the presence of God (*Psalm 16:11*)**
- **They have a great hunger for God and love meditating on His Word (**Psalm 1:1-3**) (**Psalm 37:4**)**
- **They love worshipping God in Spirit and truth (*John 4:23-24*) (*Ephesians 5:19-20*) (*Colossians 3:16*)**
- **They have a great desire to walk in Obedience to God's plan for their life. Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home with him." (**John 14:23**)**

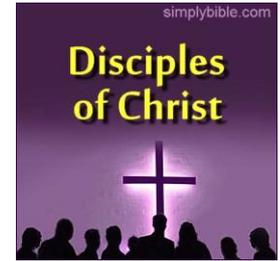


A MATURE DISCIPLE

2) Loves People

**Jesus said, “And the second, like it, is this:
‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’
There is no other commandment greater than
these.” (Mark 12:31)**



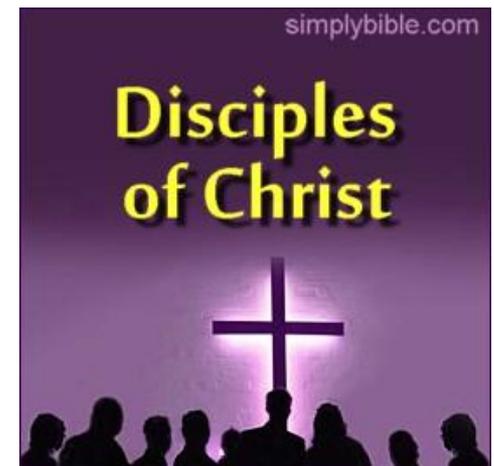


- **They have a genuine love for others**
(Ephesians 4:32-5:2)
- They have a desire to serve and encourage others **(Matthew 20:26-28)**
- **They have a desire to live for others**
(Philippians 2:3-4)
- They extend grace towards others and aim to look for the best in others. **(James 3:18)**
(Romans 13:8) (Colossians 4:6) Love covers a multitude of sins **(James 5:20)**
- **They have learned to practically help those who are in need** ***(1 John 3:16-17) (Acts 2:44-45)***

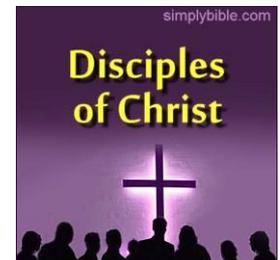
A MATURE DISCIPLE

3) Loves a Godly Lifestyle

**Jesus said, “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”
(Matthew 5:48)**



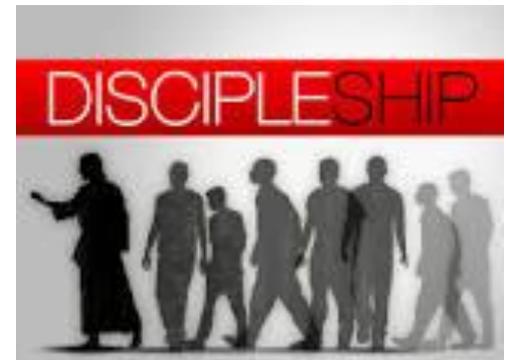
- They have a genuine desire to glorify God with their lives (**Matthew 5:13-16**)
- They have a desire to walk in obedience and to follow God's ways and plans for their life (**Romans 8:14**) Those who love the Lord have a desire to keep God's Word (**John 14:23**)
- They no longer have a desire to live for the things of this world (**1 John 2:15-17**)
- They have a great desire to live for the Lord and to encourage other believers (**Galatians 2:20**)
- They have a great hunger for the things of God (**Colossians 3:2**)



A MATURE DISCIPLE

4) Loves Telling Others

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’”
(Mark 16:15)



- They have a great love and compassion for the lost
- They have been equipped to share their faith effectively with others and can clearly communicate the gospel message to others
(2 Timothy 2:15)
- They have a great desire to reach out to the lost with the gospel message. The Apostle Paul tried all means to win people to Christ.
(1 Corinthians 9:19-22)

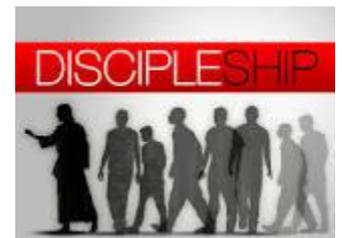




The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law, to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” **(1 Corinthians 9:19-22)**

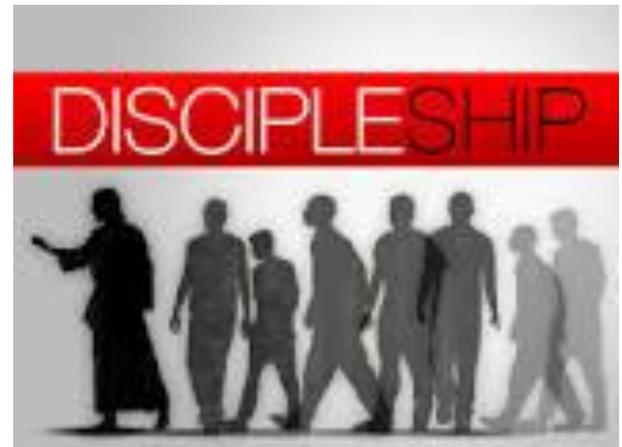
- They pray for all their family and friends to be saved and for God to open up opportunities to lead people to Christ
- They look for every opportunity to share the hope that they have in Christ with others. They are always prepared to share the gospel in season and out of season **(2 Timothy 4:2)**
- They have great joy when seeing people come to Christ



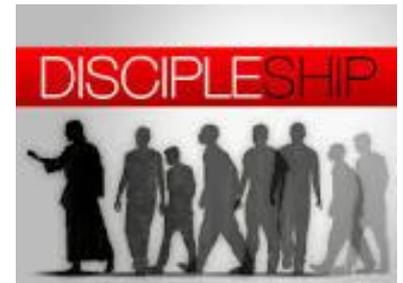
A MATURE DISCIPLE

5) Loves God's Family

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
(John 13:35)



- They have a genuine love for their brothers and sisters in the Lord (**1 Peter 1:22**) (**1 John 3:14**)
- They have a great desire to encourage and to build up those Christians who are struggling in their faith
- They look for opportunities to bless and encourage other believers
- They love to have fellowship with other believers



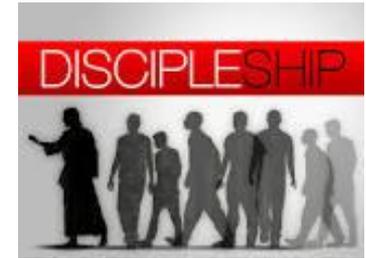
A MATURE DISCIPLE

6) Loves God's Kingdom

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:33)**



- They have a great love for the things of God (**Philippians 3:7-8**)



- They love the things of God more than the things of this world and desire to store up treasures for eternity (**Matthew 6:19-21**)
- They are more concerned about the eternal things rather than the temporal things of this world
- They have a full appreciation that it is only God's plan for their life and knowing Him that will truly give them purpose and meaning in life

- They know that all the promises of God in Him (Christ) are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” **(2 Corinthians 1:20)**
- They have a great love for the church and for seeing God’s Kingdom expanded here on earth.
- They have a great desire to see God’s Kingdom values transforming their communities.
(Matthew 6:7-10)

AND



A MATURE DISCIPLE



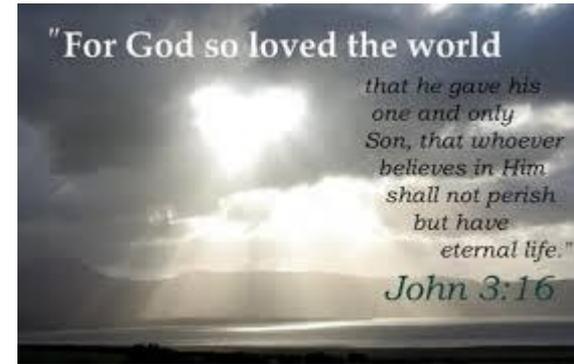
7) Loves to Give

Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

(Luke 6:38)



- God's Kingdom is all about giving. God gave His best, His only Son Jesus. "For God so loved the world that *He gave His only begotten Son...*" **(John 3:16)**



- They have a real joy in giving to the work of the Kingdom and to giving to those who are in need – They are generous in the use of their time, talents and resources for the things of God
- They have an understanding in their heart that it is more blessed to give than to receive **(Acts 20:35)**

- They generously give as the Lord purposes on their heart to give
- They know that you can never out give God
- How much we love God is truly reflected in our approach to giving.

