

Romans: A Letter to Disciple-making Disciples
Seven Key Traits of Disciple-making Disciples and the Disciples They Make: *doulos*
Servants Serve
Romans 1:1; John 3:16

I. Reminder

A. Value of Reminders

1. In the day to day world
 - a. “To Do” list on computer
 - b. Post-it Notes
 - c. Linda
2. In Scripture
 - a. **2 Peter 1:12 (ESV)** *Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.*
 - b. **Jude 1:5 (ESV)** *Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.*
3. Reminders keep important information in the forefront of our thinking so that we can access it as we need it.

B. Reminder: Commitments Requested for Romans

1. Pray
2. Read (Scripture Journals)
3. Learn
4. Adopt and Apply (*doulos* of Jesus Christ)
 - a. Paul describes the real identity of a follower of Jesus
 - (1) **Colossians 3:3 (ESV)** *For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*
 - (2) **Romans 1:1 (ESV)** *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,*
 - (a) Our identity in Christ is the identity of one whose previous identity has been utterly consumed in the likeness of Jesus
 - (b) Our identity in Christ is the identity of one whose life is utterly dependent on the character of the Master
 - (c) Our identity in Christ is the identity of those who have come in joy and love to growing realization of the goodness and grace of God in all things.
 - b. Paul expects these *douloi*, these slaves of Jesus Christ, you and me, to fulfil our identity, to fully and wholeheartedly be the people God saved and redeemed us in Christ to be.
 - (1) Being a *slave of Jesus Christ* assumes not merely an identification but a mission, a motive, and a method as well.
 - (a) Example

- i) A Passport identifies you
- ii) You conduct characterizes you
- (b) In Romans
 - i) The mission is mission - get the gospel right and get the gospel out
 - ii) The method is the gospel
 - iii) The motive is the Master
 - a) Jesus said, "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master." (Mat 10:24)
 - b) **We should expect our service in Christ to have the character of Christ's service to the Father.**
 - c) **Philippians 2:5-10 (ESV) *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a doulos, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.***
 - 1) He took on the form of a doulos
 - 2) He obeyed
- (2) **The expectation of Romans is that we will get the gospel right AND that we will get the gospel out in the faithful obedience of a slave to the beloved Master, just as Jesus did.**

II. What does service to Jesus as a *doulos*, a slave, look like in the real world?

A. John 3:16 (ESV) *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

B. Four Characteristics of Christ-like Service

1. Our service is characterized by God's love for His glory, His Son, and His world.
2. Our service is characterized by active engagement in the will of God.
 - a. God sent, Christ served
 - (1) **Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) *In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,***
 - (2) Of what use is predestination if what is predestined never occurs?

- b. God actively engaged in the planned salvation of a lost world for His glory and Christ actively engaged, in life and death and resurrection, in the divine plan for salvation.
 - c. Of what use is being labeled a Christian
 - (1) if love, forgiveness, holiness, and service are absent from our lives?
 - (2) if our lives offer nothing different to the world than the world offers to the world?
 - (3) if our lives are led by self-will and self-reliance rather than utter reliance on God's will?
 - d. The call to service as slaves of Christ is a call to **active engagement** with the will of God on a perpetual basis while we live in the world.
 - (1) Members of a country club can sit back and rely on the servants to serve
 - (2) But we are not members of a county club
 - (a) We are the church of Jesus Christ
 - (b) We are the servants
3. Our service is characterized by proclamation of the gospel.
- a. Jesus said, "whosoever believes in Him will never perish."
 - b. Paul asks a poignant question
 - (1) **Romans 10:14-15 (ESV) *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"***
 - (2) Servants of Jesus, *douloi*, how pretty are your feet?
 - c. In order to believe in Christ, Jesus had to give people something to believe and reason to believe.
 - (1) Jesus could not simply sent to wander the streets and hope people would catch on just because He existed in time and space.
 - (2) Some of you think just because people know you exist they will come to faith in Jesus. It doesn't work that way!
 - (a) Jesus lived, preached, taught, prayed, healed, bled, died, and rose again.
 - (b) Jesus announced the kingdom.
 - (c) Jesus revealed in word and deed the content of the gospel.
 - (d) Everything in Jesus' life served the Father and the Father's plan to glorify Himself through the salvation of sinners.
 - i) What are YOU living for?

- ii) What is YOUR life purpose, *doulos*?
- iii) **A slave of Jesus Christ serves to make Him known in the world.**

4. Our service is characterized by an expectation of eternity.

a. **A slave serves in expectation of eternity.**

- (1) Odd that people with no interest in Christ or serving Him think they will go to heaven and spend eternity with Him, worshiping Him and serving Him.
 - (a) Why would anyone in their right mind want to spend eternity at the feet of Christ the King, worshiping Him and serving Him forever when they spent their entire lifetime ignoring and rejecting Him?
 - (b) How can they think they would be happy in that environment when they find no joy in Him now?
- (2) Sometimes people create their own erroneous idea of what heaven will be like, but let me share with you three inescapable aspects of heaven from God's word.
 - (a) There will be no secrets in heaven.
 - i) **1 Corinthians 13:12 (ESV) *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.***
 - (b) There will be true justice in heaven
 - i) **1 Corinthians 3:12-13 (ESV) ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.**
 - ii) **Romans 2:6-10 (ESV) *He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek.***
 - (c) There will be just one love in heaven
 - i) **Colossians 1:15-20 (ESV) *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all***

creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

ii) Heaven is for Christ and He will have the preeminence.

b. **A slave serves Christ today in expectation of eternity.**

- (1) **Matthew 25:23 (ESV)** *His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’*
- (2) We ought to think long and hard about the things in our lives, those things that serve Christ and those things that deny and defy Christ.
 - (a) The loves in our heart
 - (b) The thoughts in our mind
 - (c) The inclinations in our soul
 - (d) The direction of our will
 - (e) The conduct of our bodies
- (3) We ought to give careful consideration to anything and everything over which Christ cannot and will not say, “Well done!”
- (4) What is not like Him, what does not serve Him and prepare ourselves and others for eternity with Him, should be abandoned and not taken up again.

III. Invitation

A. **To become wholeheartedly, intentionally, personally a slave of Jesus Christ**

1. **Deuteronomy 15:16-17 (ESV)** *But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.*
2. If you love Him, if you realize your utter dependence on His utter reliability, if you embrace that you are not your own, you are bought with a price, then come to the doorpost of faith and present yourself to Him His servant forever. Then, serve.