

# KINGDOM FOUNDATIONS

## Part Six

### Discipleship

### The Responsibility of Knowing

**So why do you keep calling me Lord, Lord, when you don't do what I say?**  
**Jesus in Luke 6:46 New Living Translation**

#### I. The Problem

*The story is told of a mountain man visiting the big city for the first time. Upon entering the hotel restaurant, he noticed how much cooler it was inside than out, and asked the hostess about it. She pointed to the thermostat on the wall nearby, explaining how setting that device to the desired temperature was what kept everyone comfortable. Right there the mountain man knew he'd never go back home without having one of those. Rushing back to his cabin with the newly purchased thermostat, he excitedly nailed it to the wall of his one-room dwelling and set it for 70 degrees. He grew very angry when nothing happened.*

#### A. Losing Power

1. The American version of Christianity is in trouble. We make great “thermostats”, setting goals and espousing ethical “oughtness” for the culture.
2. Yet much of what passes for the real thing today is not the real thing-there is a serious disconnect between what *ought* to be and what *is*.
3. The fundamental problem is that the church is not doing what Christ commissioned her to do, which is “make disciples”. (Matthew 28:18-20)
4. We've lost the kingdom definition of discipleship and followed the way of the world.

#### B. Losing the Link between Knowing and Doing

1. Jesus connected *LORDSHIP* with *OBEDIENCE*...

**“Why keep calling me *LORD* if you don't *DO* what I say?”**

2. Remember that *LORDSHIP* issues are *KINGDOM* issues.
  - a. We're not talking about Jesus as Savior, or Christ...but as *LORD*.
  - b. The issue in the text is “knowing” without “doing”. We might say it this way:

***The problem is not “knowing what to do”.  
It's “not doing what we know”!***

3. We've reduced discipleship to just "knowing", instead of "knowing *and* doing"! Go back and re-read the "Great Commission"...

**Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

**Matthew 28:18-20 NLT**

4. Notice here that "*teaching*" implies "*obeying all the commands*" of the King!

5. When we simply "teach" or impart spiritual information without requiring obedience and responsive action, we are disobeying the primary reason the church exists!

6. In this regard, the Church is copying the world, *because ours is a generation where the link between "knowing" and "doing" has been severed.*

**We live in an age where never has so much been known  
and so little being done about what is known.**

**Os Guinness**

7. **The church has reduced discipleship to mere "learning"**; so we preach more sermons, attend conferences, read books and even enroll in Bible schools—failing to realize that not ACTING on what we KNOW is the essence of sin!

**Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.**

**James 4:17 NLT**

8. Knowledge in our society is exploding to such a degree that we can't handle it all, so we're told to become "specialists"...knowing more and more about less and less and losing the big picture of what it means to be human altogether!

**The problem in our world is not that so much is known,  
but that so little is done about what is known.**

**Os Guinness**

9. Knowledge has become "non-committal"—people today can **know**, and yet be at peace without **doing** anything about what is known!

a. I know it need to spend more time with my children....

b. I know I'm too fat...

c. The Lord has been dealing with me about my priorities...

But the big question is, "What are you doing about what you know to do?"

## **II. The Cure**

### **A. Returning to the Kingdom Version of Discipleship-Thinking "Christianly"**

1. Deeply embedded in the Hebrew mindset and the thinking of the early church was what we will call "*the responsibility of knowing*".
2. When we think biblically, we THINK RIGHT-and in the Bible, knowledge brings responsibility!
3. The verb "to know" in the Old Testament, was used to describe the sexual relationship between husbands and wives. But it also carries the meaning "to care".
4. To know something and not accept responsibility for it is *sin*. Compare the scriptures on this thought:

- If they knew the owner of a lost animal, they were required to return it.
- If they knew someone was a stranger, they were to be kind to the person.
- If a wife swore an oath overheard by the husband, he would require her to keep it.
- Sapphira died with her husband when it was established that she knew of the plot. (Acts 5)

5. The more educated we are, the more responsibility we have, because knowledge brings responsibility with it.

*\*In China, it takes 30 peasants 3 years each to put one liberal arts student through one year of university...90 "peasant years"...The student gains knowledge, but for what purpose? He knows it's to return and use his knowledge to help those who put him through school. In the West, the student gains knowledge to increase his chances of making more money, often without any thought of responsibility toward the parents who pay the bill.*

6. For the Christ-follower, our pursuit of "knowing" ought to carry with it a commitment to use what we know to help others!
7. Knowledge that does not produce responsibility is fueling the fires of cynicism and skepticism toward the church in our culture. The world looks at us and wonders why we don't DO more of what we say we KNOW!
8. Our young people see this disconnection in our lives-and can fall away from the faith because of it.
9. To "not know" is a real excuse. To know and not accept the responsibility the knowledge brings with it, is the essence of sin and self-deception.

**So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.  
But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.  
James 1:21-22 NLT**

### **III. Personal Application for the Church and the Individual**

#### **A. Ecclesiastical Capitulation**

"capitulation"-the act of surrendering.

1. As you read and study materials related to your own field, so pastors and church leaders do in theirs.
2. All pastors want their churches to grow. But many of the books and much of what's being done in the name of "success" in the church world is a capitulation to the world systems.
3. To have a church, or go to a church, where you are not taught foundational discipleship is a game you play with your own soul.
4. To call Jesus "Lord" and not do what He says is building on sand...and when storms come, you'll fall.

## **B. Discipleship: The Responsibility of Knowing**

1. The truly important things of life can't be put in a manual.
2. All the knowledge in the world won't make a disciple.
3. The term "disciple" is most commonly defined as "a learner"-this is precisely what's wrong. It's a reduction of Christianity to the place where it's not Christianity at all...it's a thermostat with no compressor...another religion...just a set of beliefs to compete with other systems of belief.
4. A better definition of disciple is:

"apprentice"=one who is learning by practical experience under skilled workers.  
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition

- a. A disciple is not only a "learner", but one who is learning by practical experience!
- b. A disciple is learning "under skilled workers".

5. Even Jesus couldn't fulfill His ministry by just sending us more information!
6. True discipleship is incarnational Christianity...it's not just the Word...it's the Word made flesh!

## **C. Close:**

1. Are you ready for kingdom-driven living? Are you ready to re-think your life upon a new foundation?
2. That's what our church is all about...a "call" to a "kingdom-driven life"; where we're all committed to knowing AND doing what Jesus said.
3. So what's He saying to you that you already know and aren't doing?
4. The more we know, the more we're responsible for!
5. Instead of wanting to know more, let's commit to being responsible for what we already know!

**Seek the Kingdom of God above all else,  
and live righteously,  
and God will give you everything you need.  
Matthew 6:33**

