

# Discipleship training - intro

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## Justification

When you came to faith you became a child of God.

*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).* You were justified by God through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of all your sins. You became righteous in God's eyes; all your past sins have been removed. You are no longer condemned. You became a follower of Jesus and the Holy Spirit came to live in you. This process is called your justification, as the Bible proclaims *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved (Romans 10:10).* The faith we received is a gift of God, which we obtained by grace, as Ephesians 2:8 says: *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.* \*

## Sanctification

After your conversion you start your new life (2 Corinthians 5:17) walking with Jesus. In that process you are going to look like Jesus step-by-step. The apostle Paul writes to the young church in Thessaloniki *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).* We are to imitate Jesus, as Paul urges the same church *You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 1:6).*

## Discipleship

The two processes of justification and sanctification are mainly for our

own growth as a believer. However, the Lord Jesus commanded us to keep the Good News of salvation not for ourselves. We need to share it with others. Sharing our faith with non-believers is often not so easy. We all need to be trained. We need to have a strong foundation of our personal faith. And we need to overcome our natural fear. Many people think that sharing is for pastors, missionaries, and evangelists to do. We, as born-again believers, are all called to share our faith. We can say that we are students and teachers at the same time. The Lord Jesus Himself said that forgiveness of sins and repentance must be preached in His name to all nations (Luke 24:46-47).

The Great Commission by our Lord is pretty clear: *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:19-20).*

### **Count the cost**

When we obey Jesus's command to make disciples, we should count the cost first. We need to ask ourselves what our priorities are, both in terms of time and in terms of relationships. Luke 14:26 (NIV) may seem to be harsh: *If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.* The Contemporary English Version (CEV) says the same but avoids the word “hate” by saying: *You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters.* Sacrificing your own life is also a hard thing to do. But remember what Jesus did to save us. Shouldn't we respond with full commitment?

### **Submit under conditions**

Following Jesus is 100% voluntary. The Bible is clear that nobody is obliged to be a disciple. Experience tells that when a person receives the Holy Spirit after conversion, the desire comes to serve Jesus and His kingdom. In Luke 9:23-24, Jesus tells us: *Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.* So, we commit ourselves to Him and surrender to His conditions. Not our own conditions. Some disciples argued with Jesus about life's priorities. One of them said: *Lord, first let*

*me go and bury my father. Jesus answered: Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead (Matthew 8:21-22). No excuses.*