The Pathway to Intentional Discipleship

How does someone become an intentional disciple?

An individual transitions through three stages to become an intentional disciple:

1. They hear Jesus’ call to be His Disciple
2. They give their lives entirely over to Jesus, and they then begin...
3. To share in Jesus’ Redemptive Mission.

To Hear Jesus’ Call to Be His Disciple

At this stage, three movements occur:

• A person is able to trust or has a positive association with Jesus Christ, the Church, a Christian believer, or something identifiably Christian. This trust is NOT the same as personal faith. This trust does not indicate whether they have ever had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

• A person finds them self intrigued by or desiring to know more about Jesus, His life, and His teachings, or some aspect of the Christian faith. This curiosity can range from mere awareness of a new possibility, to something quite intense. In this part of the journey, a person is not open to personal change. This curiosity is often mistaken for serious seeking. Serious seeking is an active step rather than a passive one.

• A person acknowledges to them self and to God that he or she is open to the possibility of a personal and spiritual change. This is not intentional discipleship. Being open does not mean that a person is necessarily ready to change their life.

To Give Our Lives Entirely Over to Jesus

At this stage, two movements occur:

• The person moves from being essentially passive to actively seeking to know the God who is calling him or her. It is, if you will, “dating with a purpose”, but not yet marriage. Seekers are asking, “Are you the one to whom I will give myself?” Seekers are seeking Jesus. At this movement, a person begins to explore what it means and what it will cost to follow Jesus. This movement is not yet intentional discipleship.

• A person makes a decision to entrust their entire life to Jesus. A person makes a conscious and deliberate decision to follow Jesus in the midst of His Church as an obedient disciple, and reorders one’s life accordingly. This entrustment is not the end of the spiritual journey—it is the beginning of a long and fruitful journey toward heaven.

To Share in Jesus’ Redemptive Mission

At this stage, three movements occur:

• A person begins to share with others who Jesus is and the difference He can make in their life.

• A person begins to help make intentional disciples. They begin to take Jesus out into the secular world and share God’s sacrificial love with those who are far from God.

• A person actively begins to discern their personal call from Jesus (vocation) and their spiritual gifts (charisms).