**Being a Disciple**

***18****While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.****19****And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”****20****Immediately they left their nets and followed him.****21****And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them.****22****Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. (Matthew 4:18-22, ESV)*

 Following Jesus means leaving our past and moving forwards, following after the Lord. Greetings dearly beloved as we talk today about the important subject of discipleship. All of us believers, whether we like it or not, are automatically disciples of Jesus as well as the adopted children of God the Father through the Lord Jesus. What does being a disciple mean, however? How are we supposed to live out our lives in the discipleship context? Today, we’re going to answer those important questions. Again, following Jesus means leaving our past and moving forwards, following after the Lord. Let’s talk, then, about this important facet of our faith life…

 A believer in Jesus needs to decide to follow Him and leave behind every obstacle in the way. The word “disciple” means someone who follows a teacher, a leader, or a philosopher, generally. The “following” is very personal in nature. Following requires a decision, as well as perseverance afterwards. In the case of the disciples, Peter and Andrew along with James and John were already busy men with their jobs. They were already busy with their nets on the sea. What’s more, James and John were not only busy with their work, but it seems that they were part of a family business. In other words, in the case of the first two disciples, they had to leave their jobs to follow after Jesus. In the case of the second group of brothers, they had to leave behind both work and a father. Why is that? It is because they could not keep their lives functioning the same way once they had decided to follow Jesus. If they were truly going to be disciples, the obstacles had to be removed from their path. In all four of their cases, they did exactly that; because they recognized the One who was calling them. The person who recognizes God’s voice cannot follow the Lord half-heartedly. He or she must follow after Jesus with everything they’ve got.

 Once upon a time, the famous preacher Moody said the following about discipleship: “It is better to train ten people than to do the work of ten people. But it is harder.”

 Today, as we meditate on the response of Jesus’ disciples, it is a good time to ask ourselves the following:

 Are we in still in the fishing boats, or did we leave our (past) comforts and follow after the Messiah? What does our state of discipleship look like, now? Are we following Jesus, or are we a bystander on the street, watching Him go by, and then returning back home to conduct our business? How do we express ourselves as believers (in Him)? Who is our Leader? Is it the Lord? If not, is it we ourselves? Or is it someone else? Have we heard the Lord’s voice that calls us to follow Him? Have we realized Who it is that is calling us? Today is the day to leave our past behind us and wholeheartedly embrace following after the Son of God. If we are going to follow Him, then, no job, family member, success, failure, financial or ideological situation can take the throne of our hearts.

 The Lord says to each of us, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” – not to devour people, but so that they will not die. A believer in Jesus needs to decide to follow Him and leave behind every obstacle. Following Jesus means leaving our past and moving forwards, following after the Lord. The Lord bless you. Amen.