



KINGDOM CULTURE VIDEO TRANSCRIPT WEEK SEVEN

Teaching Video Transcript | Week 7: Kingdom Culture Leans Into Discipleship

Earlier this year there was "A new report from the Global Wellness Institute, a nonprofit focused on research in preventative health and wellness, (and it) found that Americans spent \$264.6 billion dollars on physical activity in 2018, far more than any other nation. (In fact) The United States leads the world in spending for every segment, including fitness classes (\$37 billion), sports and recreation (\$58 billion), apparel and footwear (\$117 billion), equipment and supplies (\$37.5 billion), mindful movement--such as yoga (\$10 billion), and related technology (\$8.1 billion). And yet, according to the academic journal *The Lancet*, for all of this spending, we rank 143rd globally for actual participation in physical activity. More than 40 percent of Americans fail to meet the global standard of 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity (e.g., fast-paced walking, gardening) or 75 minutes per week of intense physical activity (e.g., running, strength training)."¹

It would seem like as a nation we like the idea of being physically active, and particularly, buying the gear and wearing the clothes and having the cool technology, but we just aren't committed to living a physically active life.

I wonder if we did a study of Christianity if we would find a similar disconnect? We want Jesus to be our Savior so that we will have eternal life, but we're not sure we want to follow him every day as our lord and king. "Dallas Willard shares a story from a pastor who challenged his congregation to become disciples. In response to this challenge, a woman said to (this) pastor after worship, I just want to be a Christian. I don't want to be a disciple. I like my life the way it is. I believe that Jesus died for my sins, and I will be with him when I die. Why do I have to be a disciple?"²

Wow! That's so revealing! What about you? Maybe you've had that same kind of thought. Do you just want to be a Christian and not a disciple? Of course the reality is that neither Jesus nor scripture give us that choice. A Christian is a disciple of Jesus who follows him and his teaching in their day to day life.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus makes it very clear saying: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? (Matthew 16:24-26, NIV) The kingdom culture is counter cultural, and we see it in these three things that Jesus says his disciples must do.

First, he says disciples must deny themselves. A disciple sets aside their will to follow God's will. It's like the difficult and even life-threatening choices that Jesus faced when he was tempted to escape his crucifixion, but instead he said to God "Your will be done." A disciple says the same thing to God. (Mt 26:39) In fact, a disciple of Jesus denies their will to do God's will.

Next Jesus says his disciples take up their cross. Jesus is intensifying the command of self-denial. Roman executions used the cross to carry out the death penalty and the condemned criminal would be forced to carry the horizontal bar of the cross to the place where their execution would take place. Jesus is magnifying the idea of self-denial by showing how a disciple does God's will by putting their will to death daily to live for Christ and God's will.

And then finally, Jesus says follow him. Yes we follow his example of self-denial, but we also follow his teachings. Following Jesus requires that we know who he is, what he stands for and what he taught. There are things in this world, like people, causes and worldviews that are continually fighting for our time, attention and allegiance. Following Jesus will require regular, if not daily, time in scripture to continually reorient our worldview and our identity to what God's word says.

Let's talk about how we see things: "On February 26, 2015, a picture of a black and blue dress was posted to the social networking site Tumblr. However, thousands of viewers didn't see the dress as black and blue but as gold and white. In the first week, more than 10 million tweets address the starkly different perceptions of the same image. Theories to explain this mystery abounded: perhaps it had something to do with the

different ways humans perceive color, or the simple fact that the dress might look different depending on the device it was viewed on. ...the incident is a clear illustration of how people can look at the same thing and see it quite differently. As tempting as it is to insist that our way is the only way, we must intentionally begin to see the world as Jesus would have us do."³

That means seeing that the culture of this world is constantly trying to turn us into being a disciple of the ways of the world rather than of Jesus. Followers of Jesus must reject the culture of the world and embrace the culture of the kingdom. To that end the Apostle Peter's words are as relevant today as they were 2000 years ago. He writes:

13 So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. 14 So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. 15 But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. 16 For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:13-16, NLT)

Being a disciple requires mental preparation so we must be students of God's word. Being a disciple means we exercise self-control, that means we will have to deny ourselves some of the things of this life. Being a disciple means putting our hope in Jesus, who is with us now and will be forever. It means being obedient. Following Jesus requires faithful obedience. It means avoiding the old desires. We know our weaknesses and areas of temptation so we must do whatever it takes to create a barrier between ourselves and those old desires. And finally, Peter says be holy. Being holy is setting ourselves apart for God rather than the things of this world.

Jesus invited you into his kingdom. When we accepted the invitation and became a Christian we became a disciple of Jesus. That day that you said you believed in him you were also saying you would follow him. The kingdom culture is a culture of discipleship, so lean into it every day.

Valley Brook Community Church All Church Study: Video Transcript Week Seven

¹Brad Stulberg, "The Great Fitness Scam," *Outside* (2-12-20)

²Greg Ogden, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*, IVP, © 2016, p.28

³Ed Stetzer, *Christians in an Age of Outrage*, Tyndale, , © 2018, pp.133, 162

