

# What It Means To Be A Disciple Of Jesus

**Introduction.** Recruitment posters for the armed forces may emphasize seeing the world or getting financial help with college, but the harsh truth is that enlistment carries big risks. The crew and families of the USS Cole were reminded of that on October 12, 2000, when terrorists caused 17 deaths and injured dozens more while the ship was refueling in Yemen.

Likewise, do we dare present the gospel like a recruitment poster that talks about the “perks” of being a Christian without letting people know that one’s life is on the line for following Christ (cf. Luke 14:28-32)?

“Disciple(s)” occurs over 240 times in the gospels and Acts. A “disciple” is a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. To be a disciple was not merely to be a frequent listener to the teaching of Jesus, but to be “with him” (Mark 3:14), and to mold one’s life around the demands of Jesus. We cannot leave this to chance, so we need to know the operative responsibilities of being a disciple of Jesus, and gratefully He tells us!

## I. ***It Means Leaving Your Family***

- A. Luke 14:26.
- B. Matthew 10:37.
- C. Genesis 19:12-16.

## II. ***It Means Hating Your Own Life***

- A. Luke 14:26.
- B. Romans 8:13.
- C. 2 Corinthians 5:15.

## III. ***It Means Bearing Your Cross***

- A. Luke 14:27.
- B. Galatians 5:24.
- C. 1 Peter 2:20-21.

## IV. ***It Means Forsaking Your Possessions***

- A. Luke 14:33.
- B. Luke 12:15-23.
- C. Luke 18:18-25.

## V. ***It Means Continuing In Christ’s Word***

- A. John 8:31.
- B. Colossians 1:23.
- C. 2 Timothy 3:14.

## VI. ***It Means Loving One Another***

- A. John 13:35.
- B. Hebrews 13:1.
- C. 1 John 3:16-18.

## VII. ***It Means Bearing Fruit For God***

- A. John 15:8.
- B. Luke 6:43-44.
- C. Colossians 1:9-11.

**Conclusion.** The American women's relay race team was favored to win the gold medal in the 4-by-100 relay race in the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. The team featured Marion Jones, a sprinter who had won four gold medals at the previous games in Sydney. Indeed, the American team was off to a strong start when Jones took the baton for the second leg of the race. She gained ground as she ran her 100 meters and approached Lauryn Williams, who would run the third leg.

Williams began running as Jones got close, but when she reached back to receive the baton, the women could not complete the handoff. Jones thrust the baton forward three times, but each time Williams failed to grab it. Finally, on the fourth try, the runners made the connection. But by that time, they had crossed out of the 20-yard exchange zone and were disqualified. Everyone knew they were the fastest team on the track, but because they could not complete the handoff, they lost the race.

It is important for one generation to set the pace for others by living righteously, but at a certain point a handoff must be made to the next generation. That handoff is not as easy as it looks. It is the result of thousands of practice runs. "Practice runs" are done with people who live righteously as Christ's disciples.