

The Four “D”s of Discipleship

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Good evening,

I am an addict... and **you are all addicts.** We all belong to an “AA” group, actually an “AAA” group.

That is, we are all **Activity Addicts** and all belong to **Activity Addicts Anonymous.** We as men thrive on being super active or super busy and that is something that Satan loves.

Did you know that the acronym for **BUSY** stands for... “**Being Under Satan’s Yoke**” and he loves keeping us busy; too busy to be passionate disciples of Christ.

If we are going to be active and busy, we must be active and busy for Christ... in other words, it is not OK to belong to the “AAA” but it is OK to belong to the “**CAA**”, that is to be a **Christ Activity Addict.**

Do you want an **AAA** membership or a **CAA** membership?

I mentioned last month that we have only one round in our life’s fight. When that round is over, there is no second round. The Good News is that we are assured of victory by having Jesus Christ in our corner. But still we are called to fight the good fight.



The life-long Discipleship ‘fight’ begins with humility and submission to God and involves four “D”s. Yes, there are 4 “D”s in the word **Discipleship.**

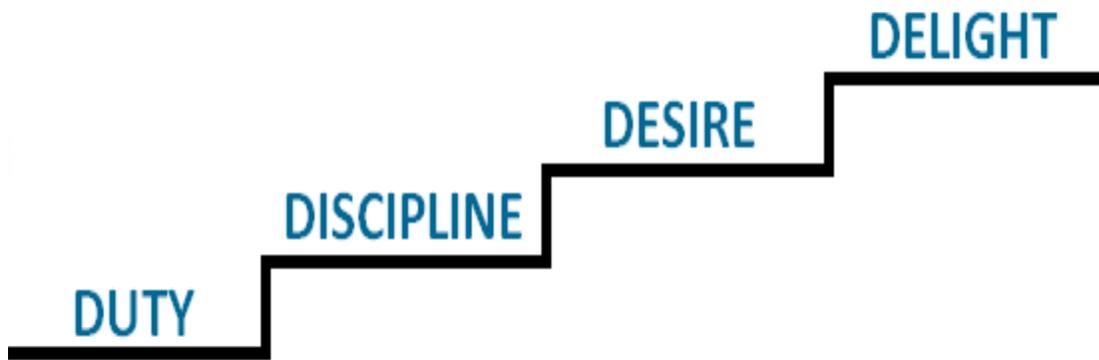
These four “**D**”s apply not only to discipleship but nearly everything else we do in our Christian walk... and I would say everything we do in life in general.

They are a **TEST** and form a big part of our Christian training.

So what are these four “**D**”s?

The four “**D**”s are:

DUTY, DISCIPLINE, DESIRE and DELIGHT.



2. DUTY:

What does **Duty** mean in our Christian walk?

Duty is often the mindset that says I should or I must do something. It is often, but not always driven by a sense of guilt or even shame. The key words in this type of interpretation of **duty** are: **should and must**.

Someone might say to you, “You really should be in the Word every morning at 06:00 in order to be a real Christian father or husband.”

Or, how about you say to yourself, “I must try harder to be more patient or I must try harder not to be so angry.”

 Duty often drives us incorrectly to do things that our heart is not ready for. The antidote for **Duty** is “do-ty”

The Bible says a lot about right or positive **Duty** and does not always attach negativity. Many duties are glorifying to God.

Look at the Israelites, who were chosen by Moses and performed their **Duty** in the tabernacle. [Numbers 31:47]

Or see that it is our **Duty** to help others as in Deuteronomy 22:4.

“If you see your fellow Israelite’s donkey or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it. Help the owner get it to its feet.”

You can replace donkey and ox with shopping cart, house move, car breakdown etc.

 Nike had it right by saying “Just Do It!”

3. DISCIPLINE:

Discipline follows **Duty** in that as a **Duty** is repeated, it becomes a **Discipline** or we could call it a **habit**.

Being in the Word may have started out as a **Duty** (a have to) but will quickly become a **Discipline** when repeated and you will benefit from this stage.

It is often said that something repeated daily at least 21 times becomes a habit. Three weeks may sound like a long time but a habit can be made (and broken) in that short period of time.

Discipline is life enhancing and we benefit from such habits in our Bible reading, our prayer time and even our involvement at church.

 **Duty will quickly give way to Discipline when it is frequently practiced.**

Sometimes it takes a brother to keep your 'do-ty' toes to the fire.

Sometimes it can be our wives. Care must be taken to accept encouragement from our wives as that and not as nagging. I fall prey to that.

4. DESIRE:

The next step on the upward stairs of Discipleship is **Desire**. We always do those things and spend time on things that we **Desire**, be they good and Godly things or not so good and ungodly things.

 Our Desires always reflect the condition of our heart.

*“Where your treasure (**desires, material things, self-importance**) is, there also will be your heart (**mind, emotion and will**).” [Matthew 6:21]*

 Our behaviour is always controlled by our mind and heart.

The Bible says that *“Since we are raised with Christ, we are to set our hearts and minds on things above, not on earthly things...”* [Colossians 3:1-2]

In the fight-ring of life, we need to be aware of our opponent, but we will only overcome him when our heart and mind is set on Christ.

The Bible also says in Romans 12:2a that we need to always “renew our minds” in order to be transformed.

If my desire to worship God, abide in God, serve God and love God is not happening, then **I must look into my heart.**

God said that *“He will give us the **desires** of our heart.”* but it is a conditional statement... He will only do this if we *“Take **delight** in the Lord.”* [Psalm 37:4]

5. DELIGHT:

Ah, **Delight!** The highest step in discipleship is **Delight**.

 Delight is rooted in contentment and obedience.

What do we really delight in in this life? Our wives, our family, our church, our jobs, our possessions? If we are not delighting in these things, then we are missing the final step to true Christian fulfillment and discipleship.

John Piper is quoted as saying:

 “God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him.”

Let's be most satisfied and be most **delighted** in Christ.

So, what are we to delight in?

- **Delight** in His Word. (Psalm 119:14)
- **Delight** in His Presence. (Psalm 16:11)
- **Delight** in His Deliverance (Salvation). (Psalm 21:1)
- **Delight** in His Righteousness and Wisdom. (Psalm 33:5)
- **Delight** in Doing His will. (Psalm 40:8)

 If you want to know how to delight in the Lord, read, study and meditate on the Psalms.

What else are we to delight in?

- We are to **Delight** in our spouse.
- We are to **Delight** in our children.
- We are to **Delight** in our jobs.
- We are to **Delight** in our circumstances.
- We are to **Delight** in our very lives.

6. ASCENDING THE 4-D STAIRS:

So, how do we start on and keep on ascending the Discipleship stairs?

Turn to **1 Corinthians 16, verses 13 and 14.**

I will read from the ESV with cross reference to the NIV. Paul is talking to the brothers in Corinth regarding Timothy and Apollos and other visitors going to Corinth.

He says...

Men of Corinth...

1. **BE WATCHFUL**, (or be on your **GUARD**)
2. **STAND FIRM** in the **FAITH**,
3. **ACT LIKE MEN** (or be **COURAGEOUS**)
4. **BE STRONG.**
5. **BE LOVING**: Let all that you do be done in **LOVE**.

Let's look at these in more detail.

1. How are we to be watchful or on our guard?

- Be in the Word – every day.
- Know the Word both in your head and in your heart.
- Apply the Word in your life, in all aspects of home, work and church

2. How are we to stand firm in the faith?

- Tell others that you are a believer and follower of Jesus.
- Tell others the Good News.
- Tell yourself that Jesus is the centre of my life above all else.
- Live like you have Faith in God.

3. How do we act like men or be courageous?

- Love your wife and family. (if single, love your parents and siblings)
- Protect your wife and family.
- Serve your wife and family.
- This can all be summed up by **CHELM** – Cherish, Honour, Encourage, Love and Minister to your wife

4. How are we to be strong?

- Be strong in your faith walk
- Be strong in your work ethic
- Be strong in your commitment to the brothers
- Be strong in your commitment to discipleship

5. How are we to do everything in love?

- All we need is Love, Love, Love.
- Love your God and desire His presence in your life.
- Love even when you don't feel like it.
- Love your family.
- Love your brothers in Christ.

Let's pray...

“Lord, help me to be a faithful, fearless and fruitful disciple of Jesus. In all things that are presently a **duty** Lord, train me to make them a **discipline**. Lord, take my **disciplines** and turn them into real **desires** that I will make my heart softer towards you. Lastly Father, take these **desires** and cause them to become a pure **delight** and joy in my life.

I never want to be satisfied resting on the bottom step. I need you Father to take me higher and higher up the steps of discipleship.

- But this will never happen until I desire to be in a more intimate relationship with you, Lord Jesus.
- This will never happen until I humble myself and submit myself to your teaching about what it means to be a passionate disciple.
- This will happen when I allow the Holy Spirit to reign supreme in my life.
- Remind us Lord that:

In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”