

# EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY DISCIPLESHIP

BY PETER SCAZZERO

Part 2:

## The Seven Marks of Healthy Discipleship

*Chapter 4: Follow the Crucified Not the Americanized Jesus*

“To ‘Americanize’ something is ‘to cause to acquire or conform to American characteristics’ or ‘to bring something under the political, cultural, or commercial influence of the United States. Within the church, to Americanize Jesus is to follow him because he makes my life better and more enjoyable.”

### **CAN YOU FOLLOW JESUS WITHOUT EMBRACING THE CROSS?**

Jesus began to explain the centrality of the cross halfway through his ministry. (Matthew 16:22-23)

Peter was Christ-centered but not cross-centered. Jesus wanted him to go deeper in his spiritual journey, but Peter resisted and was rebuked. (Matthew 16:24) God detests what most people enjoy. (Luke 16:15)

“It’s one thing to affirm that Jesus dies for our sins and rose from the dead, but it’s another to lead out of a discipleship deeply informed by the crucified Jesus and by the reality of the cross is not only the most important event in world history, but also the lens through which we follow him.”

### **WORLDLY DISCIPLESHIP VERSUS JESUS’ DISCIPLESHIP**

The question: What does it mean for us to be cross-centered?

#### **1. Be Popular versus Reject Popularity**

A common definition of popular: be liked, enjoyed, or admired by many people.

Satan tempted Jesus with popularity, but he refused. (Matthew 4:5-6) He refused to do a miracle on demand. (Matthew 16:1-4)

Jesus denounced activity that sought the approval or admiration of others. (John 5:44)

A disciple’s freedom from the need to be popular comes when he or she is content to be popular with Jesus alone. (Matthew 25:21)

## **2. Be Great versus Reject Greatness-ism**

We create definitions of greatness in our culture.

Jesus calls us to a greatness that is not worldly. In American culture, there is what could be called “*greatness-ism*.”

Jesus was not great by the religious and cultural standards of his day.

- Jesus’ beginnings were not great.
- Jesus’ disciples were not great.
- Jesus’ ministry was not great.
- Jesus’ impact was not great.

The pathway Jesus calls us to walk is an intentional move away from greatness-ism. (Matthew 18:4) Practice humility and servanthood by being with the marginalized, the unattractive, the socially nonstrategic, the elderly, the mentally disabled, the prisoner, the battered or the poor. (2 Corinthians 5:16) (Matthew 25:31-46)

## **3. Be Successful versus Reject Success-ism**

“Being a success may truly be the world’s most universal religion, one called *success-ism*.” “According to Jesus, success is becoming the person God calls you to become and do what God calls you to do—in his way, and according to his timetable.” Peter was misguided about success. (Matthew 26:51) Satan tempted Jesus on success. (Matthew 4:8-9)

The moment we do absolutely anything to keep our work for God from failing, we make our work God without realizing it and worship Satan.

## **4. Avoid Suffering and Failure versus Embrace Suffering and Failure**

Paul set the example. (1 Corinthians 2:2) (Galatians 6:16)

Suffering and failure transforms us. Jesus modeled it on the cross. (Matthew 27:40)

### **TAKE YOUR FIRST STEPS TO FOLLOW JESUS**

<p><b>Practice 1: Relax in Jesus</b> (John 6:28-29) (John 20:31)</p>	<p><b>Practice 2: Detach for Jesus</b> (John 17:21) (1 Corinthians 7:29-31)</p>	<p><b>Practice 3: Listen to Jesus</b> (Matthew 17:2, 5)</p>
--	---	---