

Evidence of Discipleship

*Whoever claims to live in him
must walk as Jesus did. - I John 2:6*

*To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you,
leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. - I Peter 2:21*

*Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord
will enter the kingdom of heaven.- Matthew 7:15-29*

Introduction

(ie) Recent murder mystery - did he do it? Let the evidence speak.

CSI - Crime Scene Investigation - most popular TV show on CBS

“There is always a clue” - something is left behind that proves the suspect was there.

There are clues to whether you are a true Christian - a disciple of Jesus, or just a nominal Christian, who goes with the crowd.

The Clues (Blues Clues)

- If you are a disciple, how could you prove it?
- If you had to show evidence in a court of law, that you are a true disciple, what evidence would you point to?
- Would it stand up in court? Or is it just circumstantial?
- Would you be convicted as a Christian, based on the evidence? (hung jury?)

Jesus said in Matthew 7 that there would be specific, discernable clues to whether someone was truly a disciple (ie a Christian) or not.

The Evidence (You have been weighed and found wanting)

- Are you leaving a trail of evidence behind?
- Is his DNA on you?
- Has Jesus left an imprint on you?
- Has your walk changed since you met Jesus?

Read him his Miranda rights:

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can, and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed to represent you.

The Court

You have just been arrested and accused of being a Christian. An investigation has been done and evidence has been gathered. The court is now in session. How do you plea? Are you guilty of being his disciple, or would that be hard to prove?

The Interrogation (The Questions)

1. Do you believe in Jesus?
2. Have you repented of your sins?
3. Have you invited Jesus to come in?
4. Have you been born again?
5. Are you committed to live for him?

The Cross Examination (Under oath)

1. Do you meet him in secret?
2. Do you obey his commands?
3. Have you hidden his word in you?
4. Do you love, worship him only?
5. Do you meet with other disciples?
6. Do you speak of him to others?

The Witness Stand (Other Witnesses)

1. Have you heard him speak of Jesus?
2. Has he ever done anything to make you think he was, or was not a Christian?
3. Have you seen evidence of a changed life?
4. Does his behavior, or lifestyle betray him?

What is the verdict on your discipleship?

Guilty, not guilty, or a hung jury?

As for me, I want to be found guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt. I want no reasonable doubt about where I stand, and who I follow. I follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am not ashamed to do so. I want them to find traces of his blood that washed me whiter than snow. I want them to see his fingerprints, the handiwork of God, all over me. I want them to find the DNA of Jesus in my life and living room. I want eyewitnesses to bear testimony that I have been with Jesus and my life has been transformed. I want to be guilty by association. I am his and he is mine forever!

How about you? Is there any question about your guilt or innocence in belonging to that motley crowd of

Closing Song

I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS

I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me,
The world behind me, the cross before me,
The world behind me, the cross before me,
No turning back, no turning back.

Tho' none go with me, still I will follow
Tho' none go with me, still I will follow
Tho' none go with me, still I will follow
No turning back, no turning back.

Who Was Miranda, or the Miranda Rights?

Answer:

Ernesto Miranda was a man who lived in Arizona and was convicted of raping a woman in the early 1960s. The conviction was based, in part, on Miranda's confession of the crime to the police. His attorneys appealed the conviction, arguing that Miranda was not told he had the right not to answer the police officers' questions.

The United States Supreme Court agreed and said that police officers must tell suspects in custody of their rights. Whenever a person suspected of a crime is in police custody or his freedom has been "significantly deprived" by the police, the officer must tell the suspect he has the following rights:

- 1) You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can, and will, be used against you in a court of law;
- 2) You have the right to consult with an attorney and/or to have one present when questioned by the police; and
- 3) If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed to represent you.

These rights are now called Miranda rights because the requirement to read them to suspects is the result of the Supreme Court's decision in *Miranda v. Arizona*.

Ernesto Miranda was retried after his conviction was overturned by the Supreme Court. He was convicted based on other evidence and served several years in prison. After his release from prison, he made money by selling Miranda rights cards with his signature on them. He died in 1976 after being stabbed in a bar fight. The man suspected of killing him invoked his Miranda rights and refused to talk to police. He was released and never charged with Miranda's murder.

Scriptures

Matthew 7:15-29

15. "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17. Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

21. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23. Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

24. "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

I John 2:6

He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. - NKJV
Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. - NIV

I Peter 2:21

21. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Luke 6:46-49

46. "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? 47. I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. 48. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. 49. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

Luke 9:46-49/ 57-62

57. As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."
58. Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." 59. He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 60. Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." 61. Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." 62. Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 14:25-35

25. Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26. "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple. 27. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. 28. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? 29. For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, 30. saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' 31. "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32. If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. 34. "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35. It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Matthew 10:32-42

32. "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. 34. "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-- 36. a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' 37. "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; 38. and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.