

VIRTUOUS DISCIPLESHIP – [Sermon on Podbay](#)

Romans 1:29-32

Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. They know God's justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.

You can't simply equate discipleship with correct living or right behaviour. What you hold in your heart and thoughts is much more important in terms of discipleship than what you actually do. Being a disciple includes heart and commitment to following Jesus, even before our actions change. Discipleship includes actions that head in the direction of following the teaching and practices of Jesus; but we don't live perfectly.

- (1) God wants from us, even more than he wants perfection, authenticity. He wants us to be authentic disciples. This is a matter of the heart leading toward the impacting of behaviour.

Kelly's paraphrase from Matthew:

"Do not murder, but I say don't lose your temper, don't call anyone a fool, don't hold grudges and don't refuse to attempt reconciliation when relationships are broken."

"You have heard it said, do not commit adultery, but I say to you, getting caught up in the extreme sexual fixation of our society is going to ruin you. You need to deal, as a Christian, with your pornography addiction, to say nothing of your office affair, because your heart is being impacted in ways you can't begin to know."

God wants us to be different *inside* so that things are different on the *outside*.

- (2) Right living is not just something that we practice in isolation from the world, or in antithesis to it so that we separate ourselves from it. We must practice it in the world, as we still remain not of the world

Jesus ate with tax collectors, prostitutes, drunkards and thieves. He taught them as he ate with them and their lives were changed.

- (3) Sins of omission are just as bad as sins of commission. Jesus said, "You should feed the poor, you should give some of your money to the church, you should take care of widows and orphans, you should talk to the world about me."

There are some things that we are commanded to do and not doing them is just as bad as doing the things that we are not supposed to do.

- (4) One of the things we have to know about righteousness is that we actually can do better than we think. We have the Holy Spirit to help and guide us!

Read Romans 8 and Galatians 5 to be encouraged and inspired to be a better disciple.