

IPM INTERNATIONAL
PRISON
MINISTRY

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50th Anniversary



Chaplain Ray

October, 2022

Dear Friends of IPM,

In Matthew 28:19, the Lord left his followers with one all-encompassing command. *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."* In other words, He wants His followers to go and make disciples. This certainly includes reaching out to prisoners.

Everything that believers are involved in is to be related to discipleship. Discipleship is following Jesus. It is coming after Him to learn and obey and serve and be transformed. The first issue involved in discipleship is denying self. In Luke 9:23, Jesus gives a call to discipleship that has far-reaching implications in our lives. *"And He said to them all, if any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."* The Lord calls us to say no to our independent self-life. We are to refuse the self-centered way of living that is all caught up in its own will, its own glory, its own resources, and its own fulfillment.

This call to discipleship runs so contrary to our culture and its so-called wisdom. Much of humanistic, worldly wisdom is based on the false premise that people's problems are a result of their low self-esteem and the solution is to seek counsel from "professionals" trained in man's worldly wisdom who can help them raise it. The sad tragedy is that such humanistic reasoning has infiltrated into most churches. Such thinking is the opposite of true discipleship, which begins by denying self, not esteeming self. Developing self esteem has no place in true discipleship. We must obey the Lord when He calls to deny ourselves.

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The next important issue of discipleship is taking up our cross. Jesus calls us to completely lose our own life for His sake. *"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it"* (Luke 9:24). We are to lay down our own life and then find an entirely new life in Him, as we obey the command to *"(come) follow Me."* In following our Lord, we increasingly find in Him *"...all things that pertain unto life and godliness"* (2 Peter 1:3). Everything we will ever need to grow in godliness and to disciple others is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we learn to deny ourselves, lay down our own lives, and follow Jesus, the Lord will be faithful to bring us onto the path of discipleship and to move us further along that path throughout our lives with Him. As IPM reaches out to countless inmates, many respond with praises to the Lord for this ministry and are so grateful that IPM is being used of the Lord to reach out to them to disciple them in the truth of God's word.

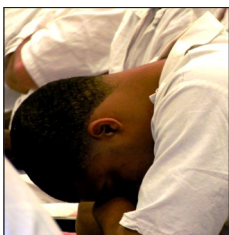
Making Disciples Behind Prison Bars,



Heidi Hoekstra-Ceballos

(for all of our "Chaplain Ray Family" and the IPM team)

P.S. Our appreciation gift this month is The One Necessary Thing, an audio CD study by Bob Hoekstra.



"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it"
- Luke 9:24