



February 17, 2023

“Get out of the Way!”

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

I remember once working an accident scene in South Central Wisconsin, being bent over a man trying to get him stabilized before transporting him to the hospital ER. The weather conditions were definitely less than favorable, bitter cold, windy, icy, and by all means not a day to be out driving if possible. All of a sudden I heard a sheriff deputy yell “Get out of the way!” Barreling towards us was a car driven by someone intoxicated who had missed two fire engines and one ambulance already, headed straight towards me sliding on the ice!

You and I are just a little over 6 weeks out from this year’s Passover. As I’ve been studying and analyzing the events up until the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ our Savior, I’ve also been thinking about what it must have been like to be a member of the early church.

There are a number of names or descriptors of the members of the early church. The foundational members were of course the apostles. The followers and supporters of John the Baptist and his message were called disciples. *"Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples."* (John 1:35) Some of John's disciples became known as disciples of Jesus. *"One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him [Jesus], was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."* John 1:40, 43) Once they arrive in Galilee, those who have followed Jesus are referred to as His disciples. *"Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding."* (John 2:2) The Greek word *mathetes* (translated disciple or disciples) is found over 200 times in the Gospels. The word continues to be found in the book of Acts, and is applied to the original group of disciples and to

the expanding church of God. The Online Bible Greek Lexicon comments on # 3101 *mathetes*: "a learner, pupil, disciple" from # 3129 *manthano* 1) to learn, be appraised 1a) to increase one's knowledge, to be increased in knowledge 1b) to hear, be informed 1c) to learn by use and practice.

The "to learn by use and practice" caught my attention. There is a message in this for all of us. We need to continue to be a learner, increase our knowledge from God and His Word, and continue to learn by using that knowledge in our daily lives by repenting, overcoming, and simply living what we are acquiring. This is a process we need to continue throughout our lives. It must become part of us. (Galatians 2:20, Philippians 2:5).

The apostles were a select group of disciples. "*And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.*" (Luke 6:13) The apostles and others were appointed by Christ to serve the church, each other, and the rest of the disciples. "*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*" (Ephesians 4:11-12)

The disciples were described as "the Way" or "of the Way."

Now here is what is interesting. Sadly, a growing portion of society no longer wishes to truly be a disciple of Christ, follower of the true God, or live under His laws and instructions. In fact, many purposely desire to have God eradicated from our lives. That push is growing stronger and stronger.

Saul, before his conversion, was intent on finding and persecuting those "*who were of the Way, whether men or women.*" (Acts 9:2) Paul addressed the high priest and elders while under arrest at Caesarea. "*But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.*" (Acts 24:14) The word translated "way" is the Greek word *hodos*. The Online Bible Greek Lexicon comments on *hodos*: "a travelled way, road, a course of conduct." Christ taught about the road or way. "*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and*

broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13-14) This way is based on living by the Scriptures as Paul affirmed when he was on trial. It is a way of life that must be revealed to a disciple as opposed to the way of living that most of humanity is travelling along. It is a way that requires submission, discipline, endurance, humility and faith. This way of life is described as "*the way of truth*" (2 Peter 2:2) and "*the way of righteousness*" (2 Peter 2:21).

Just as I was warned by the sheriff deputy, a larger part of society is also yelling "get out of the way!"

How many are willing to learn truth and unlearn error? How many are willing to "swim upstream" and "go against the crowd" in living by laws and instructions that go against human nature? Jesus said it was "*the few.*" We will look at more descriptions of disciples next time...

Some thoughts to meditate on and consider as we near the end of another week, and look forward to God's Sabbath.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



Scott Hoefker
Pastor, CGM

Church of God Ministries (CGM)
(*Ministerios de la Iglesia de Dios*)
tshoefker@cogministries.org
www.cogministries.org
P.O. Box 983
Daphne, AL, 36526-0983
251-930-1797 Office