

The profile of a disciple from Matthew

Based on my own reading and study of Matthew over the past few months, I have identified the following characteristics of maturing disciples in the context of SEND International.

Definition of a maturing disciple

1. **Demonstrated allegiance.** Matthew presents Jesus as King, and as King, he deserves and demands our full allegiance.
 1. Someone who is called by Jesus to follow him and to be sent out by him - Matt 4:19-20, Matt 9:9, **28:16-20**.
 2. Someone who seeks the kingdom of God as their first priority - Matt 5:6, 6:33.
 3. Someone with no other allegiances, no other master than Christ. - Matt 6:24, 10:37, 19:21, 22:37, 24:22-26
 4. Someone who is willing to leave family, property, comforts and security to follow Christ's call - Matt 8:19-22, 10:9-10, 10:37, 19:11-12, 19:27-29, 26:6-13
 5. Someone who expresses their allegiance to Christ by being united with and faithful to their spouse - Matt 19:4-9.
 6. Someone who is prepared to endure hardship and rejection for the Gospel - Matt 5:10-12, 8:18-22, 10:14-18, 10:37-39, 24:9-13, 26:39, 42.
 7. Someone who says "no" to themselves to follow Christ - Matt 16:24-25, 18:8-9, 26:42.
 8. Someone who takes the position of a servant, rather than seeking a place of honour - Matt 20:25-28, 23:8-11, 10:24-25, 24:45-46.
 9. Someone who worships Jesus as the victorious King with all authority - Matt 2:2-11, 14:32-33, 28:9, **28:17-20**
2. **Growing faith.** Matthew presents the disciples as doubting at times, but growing in their faith in both the identity and authority of Jesus.
 1. Someone who accepts that they need to grow in faith - Matt 6:30, 8:26, 14:31, 16:8, **28:17**.
 2. Someone who believes that Jesus is able and asks God to do the impossible - Matt 7:7-11, 8:8-10, 9:2, 22, 29, 14:28-31, 15:28, 17:20, 21:21-22.
 3. Someone who trusts the Lord to provide for their needs and does not worry about them. - Matt 6:25-34, 10:9-11.
 4. Someone who believes that the Lord will reward them for their sacrifice, and does not question the Lord's generosity or envy what God has given to others - Matt 6:18, 19:27-29, 20:1-16, 24:46-47, 25:14-30
 5. Someone who prays repeatedly, depending on God's strength to resist temptation and yielding to the Father's will - Matt 6:10, 13, 26:41, 26:39, 42, 44.
 6. Someone who trusts firmly in the truth that Jesus has all authority and is with them as they go forth to disciple the nations - Matt 18:19-20, **Matt 28:17-20**
3. **Lifelong learning and transformation.** A disciple is a learner, and a disciple of Jesus never stops being a disciple of Jesus, and therefore never stops learning from Jesus and seeking to become like him.
 1. Someone who regularly hears the word, remembers it, understands it and practices what the word says - Matt 13:23, 7:24-25, 23:3, **28:20**.
 2. A child, wanting to be taught by the Father - Matt 11:25, 18:3-4, 19:14.
 3. Someone who is not gullible, and test ideas against God's Word - Matt 4:1-11, 22:29-32, 24:4-5, 10-13, 23-27
 4. Someone who learns from and becomes like their Teacher - Matt 10:24-25, 11:29-30, 23:8

5. Not a hypocrite. They do not pretend to be righteous, criticizing others for their faults, while hiding their personal sin and self-indulgence. They tell the truth about themselves -Matt 6:1-8, 6:16-18, 7:1-5, 15:7-9, 23:23-28
 6. Someone who is willing to reconsider and change their position and act in accordance with a new understanding of what God is saying - Matt 3:1-6, 4:17, 18:2-4, 21:28-32, **28:17-18**
4. **Persevering obedience.** Matthew makes it clear at a disciple does not only know his/her Master's words, but obeys them, and obeys them faithfully until the Master returns.
1. Someone who responds promptly in obedience to the Father - Matt 1:24, 2:13-15, 7:21, 7:24-25, 12:49-50.
 2. Someone who loves God above all and loves their neighbour as themselves, even those who seek to harm them - Matt 7:12, 22:37-39, 5:38-47.
 3. Someone who takes the initiative to resolve conflicts and readily forgives those who sin against them - Matt 5:9, 5:25, 6:12, 6:14-15, 18:21-35
 4. Someone who takes initiative and risks for the Master - Matt 10:16-23, 18:15-17, 25:14-30.
 5. Someone who continues to do their God-assigned work, faithful to the end - Matt 10:22, 24:12-14, 24:44-46, 25:14-23, 26:39-46.
 6. Someone who goes where Jesus tells them to go - Matt 10:1-16, **Matt 28:16, 19**
 7. Someone who teaches others to obey Christ's commands, including the command to make disciples - Matt 5:19, **Matt 28:20.**
5. **Ongoing fruitfulness.** Matthew refers to bearing fruit more often than any of the other Gospels. Disciples are expected to bear fruit, and if they do not do so, they are not true disciples.
1. Someone who bears fruit for the Master - Matt 3:8, 10, 7:16-20, 12:33, 13:8, 23, 21:19, 21:41-43.
 2. Someone who remains true to their holy calling while becoming increasingly well known for doing good in the places where they live - Matt 5:13-16
 3. Someone who invites others to follow Jesus, including those who do not seem to be deserving - Matt 4:19, 10:6-7, 22:3-4, 22:8-10, 23:8-11, **28:19.**
 4. A forgiven sinner who identifies with sinners and spends time with them, seeking to point them to the one who can heal and forgive - Matt 3:13, 9:10-13, 11:19.
 5. A worker with a compassionate, shepherd's heart in the Lord's harvest field - Matt 9:36-38, 22:39, 23:3-4.
 6. A good person with a good heart, who talks about what their heart is full of - Matt 12:34-35, 7:20, 13:52.
 7. Someone who shares what he has learned, presenting truth from both the OT and the NT and doing so that demonstrates the value of both - Matt 5:17-19, 13:52, **28:19-20.**
 8. A servant of other disciples, meeting their needs, particularly those who are enduring hardship as they go out to make disciples. - Matt 20:25-28, 23:11, 25:34-40, 18:10, 18:5, 10:40-42.
 9. A disciple-maker of the nations - **Matt 28:16-20**

Note the prominence of the Great Commission passage in each major section above.