

BEING TRANSFORMED THROUGH SCRIPTURE: THE DRAMA OF DISCIPLESHIP

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Kevin J. Vanhoozer*

Introduction: theology (knowing God) for transformation (godliness)

- A disciple is a follower of words: written (arguments, directions, the plot of a story) and living (the person of Jesus Christ).
- The drama of discipleship: the story of how we respond to the call “follow me”
- Theology: the ministry of faith seeking understanding of what God is doing in Christ

I. Part One: Scripture, the diet of doctrine, and the call of Christian discipleship

A. Doctrine and discipleship in the mirror of Scripture

1. The mirror of Scripture
“For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror ... and goes away and at once forgets what he was like”
2. The purpose of doctrine: a diet of truth
Greek *diata*: “a way of life.” A diet is a disciplined way of living.
3. The problem of discipleship: fast food secular nation

B. The prospect of discipleship: the vocation of a Christian

1. Vocation, *not* career
2. Vocation as loving God
“‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And [Jesus] said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind’” (Matt. 22-36-37).
3. Vocation as becoming Christlike
The drama of discipleship is about how a person responds to the call to image God by following Christ.
4. Vocation as getting real

III. Part Two: Four ways that Scripture transforms disciples into lovers of God

Discipleship (and loving God) is all about learning to desire, discern, deliberate, and do “according to the Scriptures” that attest the love of God for us in Jesus Christ.

A. Calibrating our loves: biblical desiring (“with all your heart”)

1. Orienting the heart
2. Schooling the heart: learning right desire
“Because our hearts are oriented primarily by desire, by what we love, and because those desires are shaped and molded by the habit-forming practices in which we participate, it is the ritual and practices of the mall – the liturgies of mall and market – that shape our imaginations and how we orient ourselves to the world” (J. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*)
3. Vocation as worship: loving God “with all your heart”

B. Cultivating virtue: biblical discerning (“with all your soul”)

1. Building the soul
2. Training in righteousness: learning right judgment
A theodramatic judgment is a decision about what course of action best “fits” in with our holy script and our present context.
3. Vocation as witness: loving God “with all your soul”

C. Converting the imagination: biblical deliberating (“with all your mind”)

1. Enlightening the imagination
2. Apprenticing the imagination: learning “canon sense”
Scripture “is an extended schooling for training our imaginations to grasp that virtually everything that we do has to do with God” (E. Peterson, *Christ Plays in 10,000 Places*)
3. Vocation as wisdom: loving God “with all your mind”

D. Conforming to Christ: biblical doing (“with all your strength”)

1. Strength training
2. Walking the way: learning to live in Christ (and to act Christ out)
Disciples do not act like Christ in order to approximate an exemplar outside them. Rather, disciples act from the inside out being in Christ.
3. Vocation as filial obedience: loving the Father “with all your strength”
Scripture’s ultimate purpose is to raise up sons and daughters who display the same filial obedience as Jesus, loving God the Father with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.