

DEVELOPING MY SPIRITUAL GENEALOGY

Preparation for Discipling

- 28 Developing My Spiritual Genealogy
- 29 Early problems of a New Discipled

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to discuss various selection criteria that have been found to be effective in choosing the person to be involved with in discipleship.



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand that faithfulness is extremely important.
2. The disciple will understand that time is an important factor and will schedule sessions that are consistent with schedules of both the discipler and the disciple.
3. The disciple will see the value of “openness” in learning.
4. The disciple will understand commitment more fully, and will commit himself to discipleship.

Scripture Memory

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing.
2. Discuss readings.
3. Mutual sharing of Scripture memory verses.
4. Discuss new concepts for discipling.
5. Discuss thoroughly plans to begin meeting with the new disciple.

Considering Whom to Disciple.

Discipling takes time and I am commanded in Scripture to "make the most of the time because the days are evil," Ephesians 5:16. Whatever else this Scripture might mean, it does mean that I am to make the best use possible of my time.

- I. I have only 24 hours a day. Some of this time is needed to survive in the world—to sleep, eat, exercise, etc. I need to support myself which supports my ministry. I can't personally help everyone.
- II. The way I can approach helping everyone in my limited way is to be quite selective in relation to whom I disciple. Many people can become enthusiastic. A full-orbed ministry of discipleship tends to attract others who want to get on the bandwagon. Always remember, we want those who are faithful first of all. If they are also enthusiastic, this is fine.
- III. To know who is faithful, I need to know them more than simply in a casual way. I must know them well. I must spend time with them in many areas of their lives.
- IV. The process of getting to know people is somewhat time consuming. Be willing to spend this time simply for the purpose of not wasting time later. Remember, the one who becomes your disciple must not only meet the criteria of a disciple, but must also develop to do the same thing you are doing and share your heart's burden for an entire area, indeed for the world. Consider the following:
 - A. Jesus spent all night in prayer before He invested His life in 12 men, Luke 6:12-13.
 - B. "Do not lay hands upon anyone too suddenly" 1 Timothy 5:22. Consider for a bit of time and pray.
 - C. Can the person I am going to commit myself to be faithful in the basics, and will he be able to "teach others also?" 2 Timothy 2:2.
- V. Follow-up and Discipleship.
 - A. Follow-up is the process of helping a Christian grow personally in the basics. I follow-up a new believer, John 15:16.
 - B. Discipleship is the process of helping a Christian grow and help others grow in the same way. This involves the Lordship of Christ.
 - C. Follow-up can be done one-on-one or in small groups. In some cases, small groups may be better because of relationships that are built.
 - D. Discipling is best done "one-on-one."

Discipleship Evaluation

Questions to ask about future disciples:

1. When did the person trust Christ?
2. What is his/her educational background?
3. What is his/her work experience?
4. What major decisions have they faced?
5. What is the nature of their interpersonal relationships?
6. What ministry experiences have they had in the past?
7. What gifts or abilities do they have?

Present Circumstances

1. What areas are present struggles for him/her?
2. What are his/her present goals?
3. What are his/her ministry skills?
4. How is he/she doing in their work responsibilities?

Questions to ask yourself:

1. What gifts am I going to help him/her develop?
2. What kind of training situations have I considered for him/her?

3. What ministry skills will I be able to help him/her with?

What to Look for in a Timothy

For Man to Man (Follow-up as a Primary Focus)

1. With whom do I have a heart relationship?

What are the evidences of this?

2. Who evidences spiritual hunger?

What are the evidences of this?

3. Who demonstrates a heart for God?

Indicate evidences for this?

4. Who is available to receive personal help?

What makes you think this is true?

5. Who will respond to my modeling and leadership?

Why do you believe this?

6. Who is teachable? _____

List indications of this. _____

For Man to Man (Training as the Primary Focus)

1. Who demonstrates faithfulness to the basics? _____

Write those demonstrations. _____

2. Who demonstrates a heart for people? _____

What makes you think so? _____

3. Who demonstrates willingness for commitment of time to the ministry?

How is this demonstrated? _____

5. Who makes themselves available to help others? _____

How do they do this? _____

Remember, the person you spend time with must be able to "teach others also."
2 Timothy 2:2

Minimal Expectations for a Timothy

In anticipation of our discipling relationship, there are some minimal expectations I have which I will share with you right up front. These are the following:

- I. I expect to see the characteristic of commitment demonstrated overall in your life. This includes your being willing to do the projects assigned to you, the memory work (this is an absolute must), a willingness to learn how and engage in active discipling yourself, and to read the assignments given you.
- II. I expect you to be teachable. I also expect to learn from you in whatever ways the Holy Spirit sees fit to teach us. One of the ultimate goals is for both of us to have a servant's heart.
- III. I expect both of us to have a time commitment that is realistic. I will do my best to be on time for my appointment with you and I want the same from you. Time is of the essence in what we are doing. I am giving time—I expect it to be handled with care.
- IV. I want to be a helper in your life. While we are involved in this kind of relationship, please be as open with me as you can. I will do everything in my power to help you emotionally and spiritually. I want to see you grow and reach the place where you will be able to reproduce your life in the lives of others.
- V. Ask questions. Give suggestions. Help me know how I can be in your life in the most significant ways.
- VI. I want to learn from you while we are in this relationship. Feel that you can share your ideas with me. I want to learn from what **you** think.

A Strong Suggestion

Be sure you discuss and elaborate all of these ideas with the person you are about to begin discipling. We should not, of course, be harsh. But we need to be "up front" and as honest as possible. Discuss them freely and openly.

Encouraging Optimum Growth

How To Set a Proper Climate for Learning

When we work with our first Timothy, many will be somewhat lost in knowing exactly how to proceed. This is, of course, a natural feeling. Most are not nor have they ever been teachers. The purpose of this paper is to give a few encouraging suggestions that relate to learning and the promotion of growth.

- I. What is learning? Please consider that learning is not memorizing a number of facts and being able to restate them. Learning is the process by which we achieve higher forms of adaptive and creative behavior in our environment. It involves information that enables me to change how I function. Therefore, unless there is a change in my behavior, I haven't learned anything, even though I have in some way added some information to my present repertoire of facts.
- II. What kind of atmosphere most encourages learning? Several things need to be mentioned here.
 - A. Acceptance is crucial. This means that I take my Timothy at face value as he is. He is unable to grow unless I accept him and his limitations now. As I create an accepting atmosphere now, he is enabled to grow more readily. This is "grace" as an attitude.
 - B. Closely associated with acceptance is the "right to fail" in a situation. Failure is not ultimate failure. Have we not heard of "trial and error learning"? Extending the right to fail will enable one to be more willing to tackle a difficult situation. And this is what we all need. It is simply the right or opportunity to try difficult things without being condemned if we do not succeed.
 - C. The above principle implies that there may be some anxiety involved in situations that result in failure. This is true. In many ways anxiety is crucial in a situation if true learning is to take place. Actually an effort without anxiety usually doesn't teach us anything.
- III. Responsibility is an important factor if learning is to take place in a "one-on-one" session. It is the responsibility of the person being disciplined to be accountable. It is the responsibility of the discipler to create a learning and growing situation in each session that takes into account the uniqueness of the individual being disciplined—his needs, where he is in his walk with the Lord, and what his emotional state is. The discipler is to be willing to share his life significantly with the one being disciplined.
- IV. Remember! If you can help another grow emotionally and spiritually, you

*The things which you
have heard from me
in the presence of
many witnesses,
entrust these to
faithful men who will
be able to teach
others also.*

2 Timothy 2:2

have achieved something significant for eternity.

- V. Allow your disciple to participate. You are not giving a lecture. This might better be described as "interactive time."
- VI. Be sure to set an adequate example for all that you want a disciple to do. Modeling is significantly important in this ministry. Set the pace!
- VII. Be open—be transparent. Let your feelings show through.
- VIII. Don't expect any failures or dropouts.

An Atmosphere That Encourages Growth and Learning

Those of us who have responded to the individual needs of another are often asked to do something in that process that is new and difficult. Most of us do not think during the normal course of our lives about facilitating growth in another person. We simply interact in the course of our daily involvements and some people grow, others remain quite the same, and there are those who leave us and our interaction from time to time "the worse for wear."

I am not asked in the process of discipling another to make that person or shape that person into something I think might be good, nor am I asked by our Father to shape him into a "little me." And, while it is true that I will model things for the person I am involved with, it is also true that this person has a uniqueness about himself, and is to ultimately be a "little Christ," not a little Emery Nester (God forbid!) or whoever we might be.

It is imperative to remember that the Holy Spirit is in this person, and He is the ultimate **Shaper** and Teacher of this individual. If there is any role I play in the life of this individual, it is that of a facilitator of the Holy Spirit in his life. I am a very real person myself, in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, and fellowship is a true human need. The disciple needs to know me as a human who can work in cooperation with the Holy Spirit and facilitate the ground made ready by Him for change. I need to remember that it is His will to bring to completion the work He has begun. Indeed, Philippians 1:6 strikes this note loud and clear: *"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."* And in the process of that ongoing work, He develops the person exactly as God has purposed, in order that he might fit into the Body of Christ most effectively and efficiently.

The uniqueness of an individual in the Body of Christ is taught in Romans 12:3-6, where we are told that we each have different gifts and therefore different places in the Body. Hear the words as Paul says, *"And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them*

accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches in his teaching; or he who exhorts in his exhortation..." Without a willingness to develop someone uniquely, we can be responsible in unusual ways for the crippling or abnormal development of the Body of Christ, as well as for an individual being aberrant in his own development and functioning. Having said these things, let's look for a moment at the nature of learning.

What Is It to Learn?

Most of us have the idea that learning is the accumulation of facts that we "learn" and are able to regurgitate effectively when we are asked to do so. This idea is related to Thomistic concepts of learning embodied in a philosophy of education called Perennialism. Most of us have experienced this as an educational procedure in our formal school experiences.

While learning usually does involve a body of information, its true nature is much different. Please consider again that learning is not memorizing a number of facts and being able to "recite" them. Regardless of the amount of information I have, if it doesn't change my behavior, I haven't learned a thing. Therefore, let us define learning as the achievement of higher forms of adaptive and creative behavior. It involves information that enables me to **change how I function**, and when this change takes place, I have then learned something and function more efficiently. This is certainly not said in a way that would purposely disparage the accumulation of information. Information is a basis for our becoming aware, and it is important to receive and increase our pool of information. And when we consider Scripture, it is even more significant. Jesus said, *"The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life,"* John 6:63. In Hebrews 4:12, the writer says, *"For the Word of God is living and active,"* and in John 15:3, Jesus says, *"You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you."* It is doubtful (though theoretically possible) that many people could get the Word of God into them without that Word having some effect or impact for change in their lives. For this reason, memorization of the Scriptures is important. But true learning must result in more efficient behavior. Without the modification of behavior, very little learning has taken place though I may have added significantly to my present repertoire of facts or information.

Please allow me to illustrate this principle I have just been speaking of in the previous paragraph. I understand from Scripture that I am to be in relationship with Jesus Who is to be LORD of my life, Romans 10:9. *"That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus as Lord,"* ... says Paul. I understand from Romans 6 that I died with Christ and have risen to newness of life. These are facts—truths from the Word of God. But just knowing these things does not necessarily make me begin to live under the Lordship of Jesus. I must make a decision with my will—an act of my own volition, if you will, and begin to live

with Christ as Lord. As I do this, it might rightfully be said that I have learned something because my behavior is now changed in this respect.

Acceptance—An Overriding Principle

It would be ridiculous to ignore the centrality of the quality of the interpersonal relationship between discipler and disciple. Reviews of the literature that relate to effective learning and teaching indicate over and over again the importance of the interpersonal relationship between teacher and those who are considered students. Therefore, it is appropriate for us to look carefully at those things that will enhance the quality of the relationship. In the forefront of such variables is the matter of acceptance.

There is nothing that is as crucial as "taking a person as he is." My Timothy is a learner. He is not what he will be in the future. But he is at this very moment a real, live, and warm person with a heart for God and a desire to grow and serve. And I must love him for what and who he is, just as he is. When we look at Scripture, we see that this is descriptive of the love of God. Grace is receiving us without demands to be other than we are. And "grace" in the psychological sense is nothing more than simple acceptance. It is saying, "You are acceptable to me now," or "I receive you as you are at this moment." This kind of attitude must characterize the discipler or there will be very little growth and facilitation of the work of the Holy Spirit. Those we meet with must experience grace as an attitude and atmosphere if true growth and learning is to take place.

The Right to Fail

Throughout my sojourn with Christ, I have experienced failure. It is common to fall on one's face in dismay. But this is the experience of life and it has been true of everyone who is human. Failing is a sort of "right" we possess as human beings. There is an attitude relating to acceptance that has to do with failure. I have found that giving the right to fail—to be imperfect... to try again... to approach something in a different way, is a jewel in the entire saga of trying to learn and move toward maturity. Do we not know of "trial and error" learning? Does failure speak of ultimate failure? Are we attempting to teach that we should never fail in this entire process of growth and development? Having a somewhat unproductive meeting with a person because I did not think through well enough what we were to do does not mean that I will never try again. Nor does it mean that I am not nor cannot be an efficient discipler of people. It simply means that I must try another way to do what I want to do.

Criticism discourages the feeling of acceptance. **Description** of a situation, on the other hand, encourages the atmosphere of acceptance. Dislik-

ing because of failure, devaluing the worth of someone because he fails to quote a verse correctly, or harshly reprimanding someone because his preparation was not up to our expectations is not biblical exhortation, nor does that kind of behavior edify, build up, or encourage.

It is imperative that I give my disciple the freedom to fail in aspects of the work we do together. As I give him this, there will be more freedom to be creative and develop areas in his own life that will otherwise lie dormant. Remember the words of the Psalmist, *"When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the One who holds his hand"* Psalm 37:24. Are we to do less for a disciple who stumbles and fails?

Some may object to this and bring up the whole matter of excellence. It may be argued that to allow someone to fail is disregarding the goal of excellence. This is not true, of course. Excellence is not perfection. Nor is excellence the process, but rather the goal. If excellence for the Savior is a reasonable goal, surely it includes the development of our own uniqueness. I have been watching Kara, my granddaughter, begin to walk. She will stand for a while only to learn she is "bottom heavy" and down on her seat she goes. She will try again and go forward too fast and land on her tummy. Should there be a demand for excellence at this point in her learning to walk? Of course not. We laugh, pick her up and encourage her to try again. And she will eventually walk with excellence.

The Right to Fail and Anxiety

When the "right to fail" is talked about, it would be important to mention anxiety. When we try things that are new, there is almost always a certain amount of anxiety. Change produces anxiety, so growth which produces change in us spiritually and emotionally will also produce some anxiety, simply because it is new.

In many ways, this anxiety is crucial and important in the entire process of growth. For one thing, some anxiety calls from me more than I would ordinarily give to a new situation. And this is necessary, because if there is no anxiety at all, there will probably be very little change. One area where this is known to be true is in the area of self-concept (which is an area of concern in Scripture). Scripture tells me that I need to think of myself realistically, Romans 12:3. And remember Jesus telling us that we should "love our neighbor as ourselves." This certainly suggests that we should not derogate ourselves, but rather think positively of ourselves, as if to place a premium on improvement in the areas of self-image. And how does this improvement come? Certainly not through "self-talk." Trying to convince myself of something that I have not experienced is absurd! But to experience something different that has some anxiety connected with it, will change how I see myself. Actually an effort without anxiety usually doesn't teach us anything. But the

anxiety should not be overwhelming, nor should it be induced by the discipler.

The Importance of Cognitive Flexibility

If a situation is to produce learning to its fullest, there must be a willingness to meet the personal needs of the disciple. This means that although I have thought through what I am going to do for the session I have planned, it is going to be important that I be flexible enough to scrap those plans if my disciple has an apparent need in another area. This speaks to the need of our being "disciple-centered" rather than "discipler-centered." I will never say, "Let's shelve that and consider it at some other time." Interaction is important and it is crucial that I learn how to produce that interaction that becomes profitable for the growth of both my disciple and myself. Literature on effective teaching indicates that cognitive flexibility is extremely important in effective learning situations. So if I am to be an effective facilitator of learning, I must learn this spontaneous flexibility. And in this context, let me say that some of the most profound things I have learned as a discipler have been learned from someone I was spending time with in this kind of setting. The discipler is a learner as well.

A Word about Responsibility

Responsibility is a paramount factor in individual learning situations. It is important for me as a discipler to be responsible to get to know my disciple. It is crucial that I pay attention to him—to focus on him totally during the time we spend together. After all, what less could really be considered the sharing of my life? It is also necessary for me to be responsible for creating the atmosphere that will set the stage for growth to take place in the lives involved (his and mine).

In similar ways, it is the responsibility of the one being disciplined to be accountable for what he has agreed to do with his life. Being a disciple is not a *laissez-faire* type of situation. It is "taking up our cross and following Jesus." If one is not willing to be responsible, he is not ready to have another share his life with him in this way.



Summary and Key Concepts

I have endeavored to present some ideas related to creating an atmosphere that will truly help one grow—one in which significant learning can take place. There are some summary ideas I would like to add that are for our instruction and mutual encouragement.

If I can help or assist in the spiritual growth and productivity of another person, I have done something that will be significant for all eternity. There is **no** ministry any more significant than the investment of your life in the life of another to the end that that person becomes a disciple for Christ. John says in 3 John 4, *"I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."* In terms of investment, there is nothing we can do that brings greater satisfaction and joy, as well as lasting fruit for all eternity.

Our modeling is significant. Paul urged those he was involved with to be followers of him. This is a risky admonition. Few of us would dare make this suggestion to those we are discipling, yet we know the supreme importance of modeling. Water never runs higher than its source. I cannot expect those I am discipling to experience greater spiritual maturity than I have reached. On the positive side, however, my life lived in all diligence and faithfulness will have a positive impact on those with whom I am involved.

It is important that the discipler be transparent. No one can be well-rounded as a spiritual believer without learning to be honest—to be authentic. I need to be honest about my mistakes and failures and take responsibility for them. I need to let my feelings be present and under the control of the Holy Spirit. When I am sad, I need to be sad. When I am glad, I need to learn to jump up and down and appreciate the feeling of gladness. If I am angry, I may as well deal with it, because it will surely distort my life if I try to repress those feelings. Being in touch with these aspects of my life will enable me to live an honest life and teach my disciples to do the same. And in doing this, I help him know the all-pervasive attribute of God, TRUTH!

Learn to be a better listener than a talker. This means that I will allow my disciple to lead when we are together. In this way, I encourage his uniqueness and facilitate the work of the Holy Spirit as He seeks to develop this person. We are not to meet and give lectures. This is at best interactive time... a time of mutual sharing. This is extremely important to remember.

And finally, don't expect any failures or dropouts. Being a failure is not the same as failing. At this point we are talking about ultimate failure and never returning to the "plow." Somehow we can set people up by our expectations of them. If I just dismiss from my thinking that someone with whom I am meeting is going to be a dropout, it is less likely to happen. I eliminate "self-fulfilling prophecies," which are factors in the behavior of individuals.

Therefore, let us give honest and particular attention to "climates" that we create when we meet with another person. It is crucial that I involve myself in this as tenaciously as I can. All the preparation for meeting, excellent ideas to transmit, and the most eager heart can readily be neutralized by a climate that does not facilitate the work of the Holy Spirit and true learning.

Developing Your Spiritual Genealogy

In order to accomplish the task of total evangelism of an area, it is necessary to plan and organize for efficient movement toward the goal. One of the most important things needed is a plan to personally and efficiently give support to our developing spiritual "tree" which each will help bring into existence as our spiritual family enlarges.

When you become a disciple, you are a member of the spiritual genealogy of your discipler. Your discipler is responsible in many ways from this point for your spiritual care. When you become a discipler yourself, you are directly responsible to the one you are discipling for spiritual care, encouragement, exhortation, and anything else that might assist in his nourishment in the Body.

We want to list some things that are important for you to do perpetually. These are probably minimal. In whatever way you can creatively enlarge this list, by all means do it. Follow through with whatever you come up with. None of us has all of the good ideas concerning how to protect and nourish our spiritual genealogy.

- I. We need to pray regularly for those who have been discipled and who are part of our family tree.
- II. Keep in touch with them regularly and continue to help them in ways that will enable them to walk efficiently in the Spirit.
- III. Encourage person to person fellowship. Invite them to a dinner or luncheon, or breakfast, or something that will enable them to have continuing fellowship.
- IV. Write letters and use the telephone and e-mail.
- V. Learn to listen to them as they talk with you.
- VI. The needs of each person are unique. We need to learn to prepare special studies that will facilitate their learning in areas in which they have special need. An example of this might be the area of parent-

child relationships as taught in Scripture, or the area involving relationships with the government of one's own state or city. Every discipler should make a life-long project of adequately providing for the means of growth for each disciple.

- VII. There should be opportunities for you to give ongoing help to anyone having difficulty in their own discipling process. As you look over your spiritual descendants, make yourself available to anyone having problems in their own unique circumstances. You will share in this with other disciplers because each of us needs to be responsible to another for such help. When a discipler is farther removed, he should continue to be interested and involved.
- VIII. If you see a problem with someone you have responsibility for and do not know how to handle it, always feel free to ask someone else who is involved in this ministry. At some point, we are going to develop a "hot line" for disciplers. Until then, feel free to call Emery Nester or any of the board members or disciplers you feel might be able to help you.
- IX. Above all, trust Philippians 1:6. The Holy Spirit's interest in completing this work is much greater than our own interest and desires. He will bring to perfection and keep those in whom He has begun His work.
- X. Develop a spirit of independence in the sense that you can find materials or make materials that can meet the individual need of those you are discipling.

On the following pages you will find a spiritual genealogy for you to fill in. It will be important for you to keep track of your children in the faith and pray for and encourage them. When you experience times of discouragement, remember your genealogy. Only eternity will reveal the full extent of your investment in lives.

*"For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation?
Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus
at His coming?
For you are our glory and joy.*

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

MY SPIRITUAL GENERALOGY

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples	Date Begun	Date Completed
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples	Date Begun	Date Completed
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples Date Begun Date Completed

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples Date Begun Date Completed

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples	Date Begun	Date Completed
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____

Disciple _____ Date Begun _____ Completed _____

Follow-up Notes:

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

Date, and Purpose: _____

2nd Generation Disciples	Date Begun	Date Completed
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____
Name _____	_____	_____

EARLY PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY A NEW DISCIPLER

Preparation for Discipling

- 28 Developing My Spiritual Genealogy
- 29 Early Problems Encountered by a New Disciplex

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help the new discipler face some realities that relate to the new relationship he is about to undertake.



Objectives

1. The disciple will be able to understand your feelings and thoughts more clearly.
2. The new discipler will be able to encourage the new disciple and work through his problems scripturally.
3. The new disciple will be better prepared to keep this new relationship “on track.”

Scripture Memory

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.
Galatians 6:9



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing.
2. Discuss the worksheet.
3. Discuss the questions.
4. Review memory work.



Worksheet

This is a summary of typical problems encountered by the new discipler. The day has finally come when you are about to begin with your own person. Your spiritual genealogy is initiated. What are you feeling?

- I. You may have many things in your mind as you begin. Perhaps the most common thought is that of personal inability in doing this. "Can I really do this?" "Will I be able to answer all the questions that arise?" These are natural feelings and questions because most of us have never done anything like this before. New experiences that are different tend to traumatize us, especially if others are involved.

Read carefully the following verses: Amos 7:14-15; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 12:7-9. What enabling truths come from these verses from Scripture?

- A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____
 D. _____

When God chose an instrument to use in the hand of Aaron, He did not choose a "silver shaft." His choice was rather simply a stick! When He looks for men and women to use today, He looks once again for "sticks" that He might fashion. The latter part of 2 Corinthians 4:7 tells us why this is true. What does it say?

- II. A second problem discussed is a purely functional problem. The first thing a new discipler must do is set a time for the meeting. This will be more difficult than it seems, but once a time is set, it must be rigidly kept. Some of the problems involved are interruptions that come into a person's life. There are emergencies that no one can help. But it is also true that most interruptions are not emergencies, and if many of these interrupt a schedule, it will certainly impair the process and keep the benefit to a bare minimum. It can even become detrimental to the entire discipling process. So, it is important to begin with a firm commitment that will tolerate only a rare interruption. Anything short of this can be chaotic. In some cases, the

meeting time originally selected will become a problem. Rather than insisting on meeting at that time, seek a mutually agreeable time that will continue to meet your needs.

- III. Another common problem related to antiquated teaching processes is the belief that the discipler is to talk, to lecture, to "present a lesson." One of the serious errors is that of talking a lot, of trying to convince of a point in the session, and as a result end in dominating the session. Remember that interaction is your chief method in working with your disciple. Let him talk, question, elaborate, apply. Use the discussion questions that are found at the end of each session to facilitate this interaction.
- IV. A very common feeling a new discipler has is one of losing heart, or being discouraged. Galatians 6:9 encourages us in what way?

We are doing far more than simply being in the same geographic area as the person we are discipling. We are modeling faithfulness, and it is important to know that our disciple is learning from us what it is like to disciple by being disciplined himself. We are also developing the gift of exhortation in that we are learning to be with another person. It is common for spirits to lag, and feelings to sag. Pick yourself up and determine that you are not going to be the link that fails in our determined effort to win the world to Jesus Christ.

- V. Difficulty in Scripture memory is a common problem. This is why we are willing to give an individual about five months before we seriously considering dropping him for not memorizing Scripture. We know it is difficult for some to do.

The important thing is to model, as well as to keep encouraging and share the value of doing it in your own life. Remember that you will be really useful as a personal witness to others only as you are immediately prepared to share Christ and the Word in everyday situations. If one can remember his name, where he lives, and his telephone number, he can remember verses as well.

- VI. What are some of the problems you anticipate as a new discipler? List these and discuss them with your discipler.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

*Let us not lose
heart in doing
good, for in due
time we will
reap if we do
not grow weary.
Galatians 6:9*

Finally, it is important that there be some anxiety as you meet with another person. Without some anxiety, an experience usually gives us no movement in our personal growth and development. We seem to put more into an experience in which we are somewhat not totally at ease.

How to Impact the World Through Effective Discipleship

This is a thought that challenges me. I have been thinking of these issues for so many years. I am ashamed that I have not worked at this until the last two decades. We have set a goal to reach the entire world. That means that by the year 2013, every individual in our state will have been discipled. Our country comes next, and the world is within our reach because Jesus told us to do this, Matthew 28:19-20.

- I. The goal—is it reasonable or just presumptuous? Didn't Jesus describe the narrow gate as being something that few would find? What is the narrow way? _____ Matthew 7:14. Does the reality that few find it cause us to limit what God can do in our thinking? What are some of the reasons why we might limit God in our thinking? _____

Some will say, we are really _____ to accomplish a goal like that, 2 Corinthians 3:5. Yet our sufficiency should never be a consideration. God has told us to reach the _____ parts of the world with our message, Acts 1:8. We know that He has chosen the _____ things of world to _____ the things which are _____, 1 Corinthians 1:27. God delights to use those who are willing to submit to Him, irrespective of their abilities.

Some may complain that a plan such as we are using sounds like some businesses today. In reality, who is copying whom? _____

_____ The multiplication plan is found in Scripture in several places. Look, for instance, at 2 Timothy 2:2-3. What plan does this suggest? What plan did the apostle Paul use?

_____ Acts 19:9-10. As he ministered and taught daily, _____ heard the message.

A common complaint of some people is the lack of time. There just isn't the time in my schedule to do something like working to reach the entire world. Of course, we all have just 24 hours a day. Of course, we have to support our families. We are told that to not do this is to be worse than a heathen. A stark and direct question comes from Jesus concerning this. Mark 8:36 asks the question that unmistakably involves time. What does it _____ a man to gain _____ and lose his soul? If you are too busy with your work or schedules to participate in an effort to reach the world, you need to withdraw for a while, look at your life and reprioritize your life and goals. Indeed, if this is not at the forefront of your life, you are walking on the wrong path as far as the will of God is concerned.

The fact that Jesus spoke of few that would enter the narrow gate might be a problem that you have wrestled with. It is true that ultimately there will be fewer saved than those who come to Christ. That is the business of the Father, not mine. His sovereign power is ultimately the factor involved in any one coming to Christ. There is, however, a compelling factor that offsets this argument. For whom did Christ die? 2 Peter 3:9 says, "*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not _____ for _____ to perish, but for _____ to come to repentance.*"

Through the death of Jesus, God was _____ to Himself, 2 Corinthians 5:19. The moment Calvary was accomplished, reconciliation of God to _____ took place. The world needs to know this and you and I are the ambassadors to carry the gospel to them.

Some might ask the question "what about the Moslems, Hindus and

Buddhists? Are they not part of the throng for whom Christ died?” What do we see in 1 John 2:2? _____

Others might say that there is no way we can reach and disciple the entire world. If we cannot reach all, how about three fourths, or one half, as we try to reach them all? The chief way we can value His atonement is by attempting to reach all.

II. What are the hindrances to impacting or reaching the world?

- A. Lack of _____, Proverbs 29:18. Vision can provide motivation.
- B. Lack of _____ or concern, Romans 9:2-3.
- C. Lack of _____, Daniel 1:8. The resolve made by Daniel was a fitting thing to purpose in his heart. What are your commitments today?
- D. A lack of understanding of proper _____, 2 Corinthians 5:19-20. Why has the Father brought me to life?
- E. The “tyranny of the urgent.” Read that article in the appendix. (Book A)

III. What must we do? A summary!

- A. The principle of multiplication must be used.
- B. We must each share the burden of “lifestyle discipleship.” It must be part of our lifestyle. We must be committed to it for a lifetime.
- C. Every disciple disciples someone else without exception.
- D. Train each one to learn to witness.
- E. Emphasize the importance of knowing doctrine.
- F. Talk of total evangelism and work toward it.
- G. Make Scripture memory a lifetime goal: saturate yourselves with Scripture.
- H. Continually work toward solving the problem of not getting beyond the third generation. Brainstorm, plan, strategize.



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. For what reasons would God desire to use those who basically have very little or no ability in themselves?

2. The person you are discipling seems to continually need to move his appointment to another time. He will occasionally miss an appointment. What are some steps you can take to deal with this?

3. You are feeling rather discouraged and tired. There is a temptation to quit the ministry of discipling, or at least shelve it for a bit. What should you do?

4. How can someone having difficulty with memory work be encouraged?

5. If you have struggled through this session, what do you feel your heart is saying to you as you have done this assignment?

6. What valid excuses have we not covered? _____

7. What new commitments do you feel you can make?



Summary and Key Concepts

The task of discipling is something that must be learned, and in many ways, it is unlike other things we have done in our lives. Learning to disciple is being able to handle certain types of problems that are typical in every interpersonal relationship when one attempts to share his life with another person.

We feel that almost everyone can learn to share his life with another in this significant way. One of the problems often encountered, however, is the question "am I really able to do this?" It is good to remember that our God doesn't ask us to do things for which He has not equipped us. He has told each of us to be disciplers, and He is able to help us do that. We should remember that God typically chooses simple things to confound the wise. He chooses those in whom His power can be demonstrated. Simplicity or inadequacy is not a deterrent to becoming a good discipler.

The matter of time is also crucial. Everyone has just 24 hours a day in which to accomplish the necessary things of life. Missing appointments, or changing appointments often can be solved by reevaluating and increasing the level of commitment the individual has.

Another common problem has to do with "teacher centered" as opposed to "student centered" methods of meeting with another person. It should always be remembered that following the disciple and helping him with his needs is superior to making the disciple discuss what you want to discuss or listen to what you have to say.

Other problems relate to losing patience or growing weary, and having difficulty with the memory work at the beginning. Remember that growth takes lots of time, and getting involved adequately with Scripture memory is something we will struggle with for most of our lives. All of these things, as well as the anxiety they create, make discipling not only an enriching experience, but one that will truly shape other lives in honor and obedience to our Heavenly Father.

*Dwight L. Moody once said,
"The world has yet to see what God can do through one man who is completely surrendered to Him. By the grace of God, I will be that man!"
How about you?*

THE IMPORTANCE OF MY PERSONAL LIFE

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help you see how important you are as you live as a disciple and witness to the world. Your life is significant to both those who live around you and also to the Father.



Objectives

1. To help the disciple see that as an ambassador for Christ, it is important how we live.
2. To understand that we represent the King of Kings as we live in this world.
3. To understand that God has given us a message that we can both tell and live before others.
4. To grasp more fully that we belong to the King of Kings.

Scripture Memory

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

Matthew 5:13



Agenda

1. Prayer and mutual sharing.
2. Discuss questions.
3. Review memory work.
4. Present and discuss disciples testimony.

Introduction

The purpose of this session is to stress from God's Word the importance of the disciple's personal life. How the disciple conducts himself is relevant and of utmost importance. We have been chosen as heavenly ambassadors to bear His Word of love and grace. The following observations are simple, but they are direct and clear.

I. Believers (disciples) are:

- A. A chosen race, a royal priesthood...to proclaim His excellencies, 1 Peter 2:9
- B. Exalters of Christ — those who enable Him to be seen more clearly, Philippians 1:20.
- C. Epistles (letters) known and read by all men, 2 Corinthians 3:2.
- D. Lights in the world — reflectors of Christ, Matthew 5:14; 2 Corinthians 3:18.
- E. Christians — A little Christs,@ Acts 11:26
- F. The Asalt of the earth,@ Matthew 5:13. A preservative that also causes thirst.
- G. Examples, 1 Timothy 4:12.

How much folly does it take to ruin a testimony...to cause a life to be ineffective? Very little — Ecclesiastes 10:1; Hebrews 12:1

II. Who would be affected by the breakdown of my personal life?

- A. Myself — little things can sap our spiritual strength. Unwillingness to judge little things can render us useless. When spiritual strength is sapped we become mere decorations.
- B. Unbelievers — those who need Christ, 2 Timothy 2:21. We are responsible to the extent that we could have been used to reach others.
- C. Believers — young and/or weak Christians could be hurt, Hebrews 12:12.
- D. Last, but certainly not the least, God the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; and Ephesians 4:30. The Holy Spirit is grieved and quenched by our sinning. We can't grieve someone who doesn't love us.



Worksheet

In considering Living out the gospel,[@] there is a place to look at the importance of my life as a disciple. The object of this learning experience is to help an individual see that the nature of one's personal life can have a significant effect upon his ultimate discipleship ministry and effectiveness as a minister for Christ. This in no way means that I should give attention to the way I live only because of this ministry. To live a double or inconsistent life, or to tolerate a problem that is contrary to Scripture is to invite ruin, shame and dwarfed usefulness. It is important to see the uniqueness of believers and disciples as we are described in the Word of God. We can begin to do this by looking at the following verses and responding to the questions with the verses noted.

1. How are Christians described in 1 Peter 2:9? What seems to be our unique purpose in the world as described in this verse?

2. Philippians 1:20 tells us we are to _____

3. Paul, in 2 Corinthians 3:2 tells us we are a _____. In your own words, what significance does this have in relation to our behavior in the world? _____

4. What term was first used for disciples at Antioch? Acts 11:26 _____. What does this term mean in its biblical setting (speculate)? _____

5. In Matthew 5:14, Jesus calls the disciples _____. Compare this with John 8:12. What comments can you make on the similarities and differences taught in these two verses?

6. In Matthew 5:13, we are called _____ What are

some of the ways we are like this? _____

7. The final similarity or picture is found in 1 Timothy 4:12. What are we called in this passage? _____

To whom? _____

8. List the practical truths that come to mind as you read these verses describing Christians.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

9. In connection with the “race” I am running, what do I need to do according to Hebrews 12:1?

10. Most of us are somewhat aware by this time of what a sin is. What is an “encumbrance?”

A very personal question might be, what encumbrances are in your life that are hindering your effectively running of race? If you don’t know, ask God to show you, and list them.

11. What is the basic teaching or instruction from Ecclesiastes 10:1?

12. The following verses give some indication of who is affected by your personal life. As you think of your impact upon the world and those you

know, analyze these verses and write briefly who is affected by your life.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 _____

1 Corinthians 3:16, _____

Ephesians 4:30 _____

1 Thessalonians 5:19 _____

2 Timothy 2:21 _____

Hebrews 12:12-13 _____

13. Christians are not meant to be decorations. Little things can sap our strength and power, and we can end up “on the shelf,” 1 Corinthians 9:27. We need to judge things in our lives and keep “on track!” We cannot afford to let little things sap our power and usefulness. 1 Corinthians 9:27 tells us of what possibility? _____
- _____
- _____

14. We should note that the word translated “disqualified” means something other than losing one’s salvation. The word in the original Greek is “adokimos,” which was a word used by Greek housewives for cracked pottery which was no longer able to hold water. These pieces of pottery often ended up on an upper shelf where they contained things such as buttons and pin (in our culture). They were simply used ornamentally and for lesser uses than they had been destined for in their making.

What happens in the life of one of whom this is true? _____

How would you describe someone who is “on the shelf?” _____



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. In view of the theme and material included in this worksheet, what is the most important consideration for you and your life?

2. How can we develop a sensitivity to sin and behavior that would affect our witness?"

3. 1 Corinthians 9:27 tells me that we can be “put on the shelf,” or disqualified. What does this mean in terms of how you live your life?

4. From your life and personal testimony, what indications do you have that you have had an impact on another person?



Summary and Key Concepts

The purpose of this session is to show that the life I live as a Christian is desperately important if I am to be an effective ambassador. There are several figures of speech in Scripture that give adequate description of what I am and how I should be. It is important to give sufficient time in studying them to understand what a believer is and can be in this world. It is true that if I have a poor Christian testimony — if my life is grossly inconsistent with what it could

be otherwise, I will not be effective as far as my service is concerned.

It is also crucial to illustrate through the use of 1 Corinthians 9:27 that it is possible to be permanently disqualified from the race— to be “put on the shelf” and be of no more use to the Savior— if I persist in sin and do not confess and daily yield to His leadership.

Equally important is the truth that a “hypocrite” is not someone who does not live up to what he professes to be. Most of us would then be hypocrites. Rather, a hypocrite is someone who has *no intention* of living up to what he professes to be.

Be sure to see and understand the reality that we do not live our lives unto ourselves. Many people can be affected when we are negligent and live in sin. At this particular time, the lives of some of us who are Christians have become a joke to unbelievers. It may be important to look back to sessions on spirituality and maturity and do some reviewing of these important topics.



Life Application

Every Christian should have a well written and rehearsed testimony of what God through Christ has done for him, or her. (Peter 2:15). This week write out a ten minute testimony of your life: before Christ, how God brought you to Christ, and how your life has changed since receiving Christ. Use only three minutes or less in writing about your life before Christ. Plan to read it to your discipler. It is also helpful to develop a three minute testimony and a one minute testimony.

Notes

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN?

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- **31 Should a Christian?**
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to give you principles that will help you make biblical decisions concerning situations which are not clearly defined in the Word of God.



Objectives

1. You will understand that the Bible does not speak directly of every sin known today.
2. You will learn the principles taught in the Scriptures so that you can be helped to not sin.
3. You will be able to practice obedience to Christ more effectively.

Scripture Memory

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing
2. Discuss topics considered in this session.
3. Discuss the questions.
4. Read prepared testimony from last session.
5. Review memory work.

Introduction

This is an extension of the last session “The Importance of My Personal Life” and should be used in relationship with consideration of “doubtful things” I face in my behavior.

The following are certain criteria that can be applied to situations that are somewhat ambiguous in terms of my behavior and the exercise of my liberty. It is not healthy psychologically to be bound by an overly strict conscience. Nor is it healthy spiritually to have a conscience that is seared and insensitive to sin. Liberty in Christ is a glorious freedom. The following tests can aid our effective exercise of liberty.

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1,2

1. Can a Christian (_____) without sinning? Galatians 5:13. This is the most important of all my considerations. Is exercising my freedom in a certain area something that may cause me to sin?
2. Is there an “appearance of evil” in the situation, 1 Thessalonians 5:22?
3. Is it “of faith,” Romans 14:23?
4. Is it consistent with being “for the glory of God,” 1 Peter 4:11?
5. Does it cause a “weaker brother” to fall flat on his face, 1 Corinthians 8:13, Romans 14:3?
6. Might it possibly lead me to sinning, James 1:15?
7. Does it hinder me in my race as a Christian — is it an encumbrance (weight), Hebrews 12:1-3?
8. Does it do harm to my body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 3:17?
9. Is it in harmony with self-denial, Luke 9:23?
10. Does this activity consistently keep me from fellowship with the Body of Christ, Hebrews 10:25?
11. Would this behavior cause me to be ashamed before Him when He returns, 1 John 2:28?
12. Is it something that will create indebtedness? Romans 13:8?
13. Does it violate my conscience, Romans 14:22?



Worksheet

The following verses contain a study of principles from Scripture that are related to our conduct in the world. It is designed to assist a life of obedience to Jesus Christ. Some behaviors are not clearly “right or wrong.” Nevertheless they can get me into difficulty and become “weights” in my life. Analyze each of these verses and see if you can find a biblical principle that governs choices of behavior that become more pleasing to the Father.

1. Galatians 5:13 _____

What kinds of things might be considered “indulging in the sinful nature”?

2. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 _____

What are some things you have been confronted with that appear to be evil?

3. Romans 14:23 _____

What does this mean in a practical sense to you? _____

What problems come when we allow conscience to be our guide?

4. 1 Peter 4:11 _____

We might say that if something does not _____ God, it is not something for us to be involved with.

5. 1 Corinthians 8:13; Romans 14:3 _____

What kind of a brother would stumble and fall into sin when he sees me exercise liberty? See Romans 14:1 _____

What are some behaviors in your own life that you have felt might cause a “weaker brother” to stumble?

Remember what “stumble” means. It comes from the word that means “to fall flat on your face and not get up. This will be addressed again in the next session —“Three Laws for Effective Living.”

6. James 1:15 _____
This simply means that anything that leads to _____ should be avoided.

7. 1 Corinthians 3:17 _____
What temple is spoken of here? _____
See if you can name some behavior that might be involved with this principle. _____

8. Hebrews 12:1 _____
What race is referred to in this context? _____
What kinds of things are “weights?” _____

9. Luke 9:23 _____
According to this verse, what should characterize the life of a Christian disciple? _____

10. Hebrews 10:25 _____
This is a principle that really is interesting and important in this day of pleasure and hedonism.

11. 1 John 2:28 _____

_____ is a purifying hope.

12. Romans 14:22 _____

What would condemn us? _____

How can we deal with a condemning heart? Romans 14:22-23 _____

13. Romans 13:8 _____

This deals with a very practical side of my life. It relates to _____

What does “letting no debts be outstanding” mean? _____

Summarize the verses in this study and how each has spoken to you. What changes should I make in my behavior after doing this material?



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. In what ways do these biblical principles perfect our obedience and walk with God? _____

2. What is involved in the “appearance of evil”? _____

3. What are common “weights” in my life? _____

4. List a number of situations in your own life and experience where these principles might be helpful to you.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. What areas of your life are most needful of attention?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
6. React to the following statement. “When in doubt, don’t do it!”

7. What are your feelings after doing this session’s material and contemplating this subject? _____

8. What are some of the danger areas you sense in your own life after looking at these principles? _____

9. Who is a “weaker brother”? _____

10. What are some of the things that can cause us to defile the temple of the Holy Spirit?—our bodies? _____



Summary and Key Concepts

This is a session dealing with principles for behavior as a Christian that are not clearly spoken about in the Scriptures. Rather than finding direct statements, we have sought to find biblical principles that teach by inference how we should be in the world today.

One need not feel that simply because the Scripture doesn't mention specific contemporary sins that there are no problems with my participating in them. Nor am I to feel that simply because something I am involved with in my life holds me back but is not mentioned specifically as sin... that I should have no concern about it.

It is important to learn these principles as they will perfect my walk in obedience. They do not demolish my liberty in Christ, but rather enable me to walk in obedience more effectively. They are principles that will be appropriate for all time.

Notes

THREE LAWS FOR EFFECTIVE LIVING

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 **Three Laws for Effective Living**
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to teach various biblical laws that should affect the behavior of a Christian when the behavior is not clearly taught in Scripture.



Objectives

1. The disciple will experience freedom in Christ in his daily walk.
2. The disciple will learn the difference between a legalist and a weaker brother.
3. The disciple will learn to keep to the main issues when dealing with someone who does not know the Lord.

Scripture Memory

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15



Agenda

1. Mutual sharing and prayer.
2. Discuss the session materials.
4. Sharing of memory verse.
5. Discussion of any new terms.

*Christ is the
supreme issue in the
life of an unbeliever*

Introduction

The Lord obviously knew (He is omniscient) there would be situations throughout time that direct statements in Scripture would not cover. Because of this, He gave certain principles in His Word that would govern such situations. These are basically stated as "laws" and they govern all situations we might be confronted with in time—all situations that are ambiguous and not covered by direct statements of Scripture. Among these are the following three "laws":

The Law of Liberty, Galatians 5:1,13.

The "law of liberty" is the Scriptural principle that I am not to be governed by external law of any kind, but by an inner law of freedom that comes from Christ and the Holy Spirit Who indwells me, Romans 8:11. It states basically that in all areas of behavior, I have the privilege of doing things that are not specifically forbidden, if they do not fulfill the desires of the flesh. A further condition for the exercise of liberty is found in...

The Law of Love, Romans 14:14-23.

The "law of love" is an extension of the practice of the "law of liberty." This law says that my practice of liberty should not be such that would cause my "weaker brother" (one who doesn't understand liberty) to be grieved or to stumble. A further statement is to the end that my behavior should not "destroy" the work of God. These are harsh statements concerning what happens to the weaker brother. To stumble means to "fall flat on one's face," usually with the idea of not walking again. There is another consideration which is necessary and equally important. One cannot allow his life to become "other-directed," which is very unhealthy spiritually and psychologically. There are people everywhere who are against just about everything. Even the eating of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, because "the seed is mixed," and this is "forbidden in the Old Testament." The reality is simply this. I will have difficulty with a psychological variable related to health if I carry this law to the extreme and do nothing that a believer anywhere has a conscience against. There is, on the other hand, a need to model liberty in order that the "weaker brother" who doesn't understand liberty may grow.

The Law of Priorities, 1 Corinthians 10:23-33.

This is a law which says simply that I need to keep the issues clear. In the instance mentioned in 1 Corinthians, eating meat offered to idols was the consideration. If a heathen invites you to dinner and offers you filet mignon that has been offered to an idol, in the idol's temple, go ahead and eat it. Don't make an issue out of something that is not the chief issue with an unbeliever. Christ is the supreme issue in the life of an unbeliever—not abortion, liquor, or

the day on which one worships, etc. Keep the issues clear. If the heathen creates an issue, however, then you must deal with it. How would he do this? Simply if he would say, "Dear Christian friend, I have served you with meat offered to a heathen god. Are you going to eat it?" Then you can deal with the issue of the heathen god, moving the conversation to the chief issue which is one's relationship to Jesus Christ.



Worksheet

The purpose of this session and worksheet is to help you develop some ideas concerning principles that govern behavior that may be "doubtful." The Scripture does not cover explicitly every problem that occurs throughout all time. But it does through principles and implications. There is no behavior known to man to which the Scripture does not apply in one way or another. This is basically seen in the discussion of three laws that will be elaborated in this worksheet. Read Galatians 5, Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 10:23-33 carefully.

The Law of Liberty

One basic result of the new birth that I have experienced relates to a new freedom I have found through Christ. This is a freedom from external laws that would govern me. Galatians 5:1 tells me that I am to _____.
_____. What does this mean to you? _____

What function did the law serve for those who were in Old Testament times?
Galatians 3:23-24. _____

There are two words that can be translated "teacher" in the Greek language. The first of these is *pedagogues*. The second is *didaskolos*. An understanding of these two words is necessary in understanding the whole impact of the truth taught in this passage. The *paidagogas* was something of a tutor. In the Greek culture, he was given charge of the children and was responsible for their being in school. He saw that they were dressed, had clean ears, and if they hesitated to go to school, he would prod them in order to get them there. But once they were in school, they were under the supervision of the *didaskolos*. Perhaps it is becoming more clear now. The law was our *paidagogas* to bring us to Christ, our *didaskolos*. It was never intended to be our way of life, which

is inward rather than external.

What is the implication of Galatians 3:25? _____

The thought of these passages is that I am no longer under an external _____ or form of control. If control is no longer from without it must be from _____, and this control is brought about through the _____, Galatians 5:25. Therefore, the law of liberty is a law that says I have the right to do whatever is not forbidden explicitly in Scripture.

Surely the reality of _____ in my life does not encourage me now to sin more freely, Romans 6:1. Rather, grace teaches me:

_____ Titus 2:11-12.

Grace rightfully leads me to a more holy life. The law of liberty does not give me license to sin. The exercise of this law says I can make judgments concerning choices of behavior that are not explicitly forbidden in Scripture. But there are some governing principles regarding these choices. One of these is found in Galatians 5:13:

The second principle is found in Romans 14. As you read this chapter, what term is used to describe one who doesn't understand liberty? _____. What kinds of "doubtful behavior" were problems in the day Paul wrote these words, Romans 14:2,5? _____

What should we keep in mind concerning judging one another, Romans 14:7, 10, 12? _____

What could be "doubtful behaviors" today?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Still another governing principle that concerns the law of liberty is found in Romans 14:13. What is this? _____

What meaning do you attach to the word "stumble?" _____

What problems are initiated by true exercise of the law of liberty?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Law of Love

The law of love is one that restricts the exercise of the law of liberty. This law basically tells us to think carefully about "how" we exercise the law of liberty. We need to be careful and not cause a _____ brother to _____, Romans 14:2,13.

Remember that the weaker brother is one who doesn't understand _____. The meaning of the word "stumble" is to fall flat on one's face—to be scandalized. What are some descriptions of one who stumbles? What do they do? What are stumbling behaviors? List behaviors. See Romans 14:3, 15, 21.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The word "stumble" carries the idea of not getting up again. This certainly is stronger than having someone look at us and judge us for something that is perfectly legitimate and Scriptural, or even to be mildly offended. This practice of judging others is typical of immaturity and leads to sin. I need to be concerned that I do not set up a weak brother to sin, but there is also a need to help the weak believer learn how to be mature and live according to the law of liberty. I am **never** to exercise the law of liberty at the expense of the fragile

understandings of the "weak" brother, if it will seriously damage his faith. I should certainly be willing to give up the good for the better, looking carefully at anything that would hinder, block or slow down my effectiveness for Christ.

Another important consideration in the law of love is where it leaves me in the world of mental health. Am I "inner-directed" or "other-directed?" Most experts agree that to allow my life to be controlled by the expectations of others is unhealthy and impedes my functioning in the world. It sets me up for anger, feelings of futility and uselessness, and it most assuredly affects my growth as a person and a child of God. To allow my life, and my practice of liberty to be subjected totally to the whims of an immature "weaker brother" can be devastating upon my own life and ministry. Inner-directedness, on the other hand, is what my life in the Spirit should be. This includes the proper exercise of the law of love.

The Law of Priorities of The Gospel

This is a law that relates to my interpersonal relationships with the world. By the "world" is meant the world of non-Christians or unbelievers. I am to be in the world and it is important for me to relate to those who do not know the Savior, not only because they are people of worth, but because they are people who need to know the Savior. This is a law that says, "Keep the issues always clear!" And the issue for every unbeliever is only JESUS CHRIST and relationship with Him!

What was the issue in 1 Corinthians 10:23-33?

Look at the passage and try to discover for yourself the proper concepts taught in this passage, with the information you already have in the preceding paragraph. Write them in your own words:

1. _____
2. _____

Many years ago as a young pastor, I was faced with a situation that seriously challenged the exercise of the law of priorities. A member of my church had a neighbor who was involved in terrible conflict with his wife, and he asked me if I would call on them and "straighten them out." That is a terrible thing to ask a pastor to do. Particularly when the couple are not only non-members of one's church, but when there was no invitation or request on the part of the people who were involved. I have since learned that there is nothing more volatile than to stick my nose into someone's personal business, but nevertheless, I did.

My knock on their door was responded to by the husband, who happened to be of the Jewish faith. He was overjoyed to see me and to think that I would be concerned enough about them as persons to pay a personal visit. He said, "Oh pastor, come in and let me give you a glass of wine." Now under-

stand that I was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights in Aurora, Colorado, and wine had never passed my lips in my entire 33 years. But I had recently become acquainted with this principle and knew that I had to accept the token of friendship offered by this unbeliever, or stand the chance of making an issue out of something that was truly not an issue. Pictures flashed before my eyes. This man would say to the member that asked me to visit, "Your pastor came by last night and we sat down and drank a glass of wine and had such a good talk," and I would immediately lose my job. Fortunately for me, his kids got into a horrible fight and he forgot about the wine. But to make an issue out of that wine would be a violation of the law of priority.

What are some examples from contemporary life that would be covered by these principles, i.e., what are some of the things we might create as issues with unbelievers, when they are no issue at all?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

It is clear that sin is an issue, but it is not "the" issue with unbelievers. I need to always keep the issues clear.

A Very Special Problem—Legalism

One of the blights of the church and Christian world today is legalism. Legalism is a sometimes subtle action which adds to Scripture the thinking of men concerning behavior that supposedly is acceptable to God. There are those who do not understand liberty and are Aweaker brethren,@ and continue in their legalistic practices. Perhaps illustrating some situations which are legalistic, but not necessarily bad (indeed they are sometimes helpful) would aid understanding. They become legalistic when we make them biblical injunctions. In this session, I will suggest the practice of liberty in the presence of legalism even though it causes the legalist to judge me.

Legalism is making interpretations as "if from Scripture" things that simply are not in the Scriptures, and treating them as if they had equal value and importance in the Christian life. Some of the Jewish laws relating to the Sabbath were legalistic and certainly absurd. Certain laws relating to eating were legalistic. Many of these practices are carried on today in Israel by the orthodox Jew. Christians develop legalistic doctrines and practices as well.

We can bring to mind things we have in Christianity today. A strict

early morning devotional time when we meet the Lord is sometimes applied to all Christians as if it were the stated will of God, and one is in fault if he does not meet this requirement. This is legalistic. Research done by Craig Ellison demonstrates that in-depth Bible study done periodically does far more for a Christian and his well-being than daily devotions. This does not mean that meeting the Lord daily in the morning is not good. Rather, that it must not be legislated or forced upon another as a written standard from God.

Drinking an occasional glass of red wine is good for the heart. Yet some who are legalistic would judge one who does this and call him a Wine-bibber. The Scriptures certainly do not teach that. It will be interesting to see if our Lord was an abstainer, though He made water into the best wine at Cana.

We have scores of things we try to push on people that are in essence legalistic. These are things that usually relate to written policies that become sacred, as if they were the Scriptures. They are simply the laws of the Medes and the Persians.

What is the responsibility of the Christian who practices liberty when there is a legalist present who passes judgment upon him? Remember, the Law of love relates primarily to the weaker brother who is usually immature and doesn't understand liberty. In the Galatians account, Paul rebuked Peter (Galatians 2:11-14) when he withdrew from eating with the Gentiles because the Jews had arrived. Paul told him to be consistent in his actions and eat with Gentiles even if Jews were present. This should be an encouragement to us in calling for our exercise of liberty as a model for the weaker brother and others. Modeling is a very effective way of teaching. This is one way a weaker brother can learn to practice the glorious liberty he has in Christ. Christians put scores of things on each other that are simply pure legalism. We must be sure our application of principle does not take on the air of absolute authority.

Situations That Relate to Today's Discussion of Legalism

At the end of each illustration, choose all possibilities from this list that deals with the particular situations. Discuss your choices with your discipler.

- a. The Law of Liberty
 - b. The Law of Love
 - c. The Law of Priorities
1. Pastor Joe has a couple call him and ask for an appointment to try to work out problems they encounter during their relationship at home. The pastor agrees to see people for counseling and an appointment is given to them. During the first session, he discovers that the couple is not married...each having divorced a previous spouse. The pastor is faced with a dilemma be-

cause they are obviously living in a conjugal relationship as spouses. He also learns that neither is a Christian. Their relationship is sinful and runs crosscurrent to the beliefs of the pastor. What should the pastor do? Can you identify which of the above laws relates to the situation?

2. Jim and Lucy are Christians and members of a strong Bible-based church. They are celebrating their fifteenth wedding anniversary and include in the dinner arrangement a dessert drink that contains some alcohol. They are observed by another couple who are quick to judge them. When they return to their car to drive home, someone (perhaps the couple who saw them) wrote Awing-bibber@ on a piece of paper and put it under the windshield wiper of their auto. No other word was given as to who was the author of the critique. Analyze and state which laws are violated in this scene.
-

3. Peter and Pam are senior leaders in their church. One day they observe their pastor and wife attending the local movie theater. They call the pastor and admonish him and his wife to set a better example. Analyze and state which of the above laws are applicable.
-

4. Mrs. Smith is the local leader of an organization favoring women=s right to make choices concerning abortion (a planned parenthood association). One day she invites Mrs. Jones to lunch to get acquainted. Mrs. Jones is a Christian. Mrs. Smith is member of the local Bahai faith. Should Mrs. Jones try to convince Mrs. Smith that she is on the wrong side of the abortion issue? State the laws that govern this situation.
-

5. Bill is a brand new Christian. He is a recovering alcoholic. Ned is a member of the church they attend and knows of Bill's problem. They go to lunch together and Ned orders a beer with his lunch. Bill orders a beer also. He is confused inasmuch as he has considered beer one of his chief problems but now feels it may be all right after all. This situation at lunch has caused Bill to lapse into his old habit and he is once again held in its vice-like grip. Who has violated what law?
-

6. Mary is homecoming queen at the senior festivities of her school. She is a Christian. Because there is some dancing, and she will be involved in this dancing, she is considering taking part. Some of her friends from church are there also, and are confused about her taking part in the dancing festivities and have strong feelings against it. What laws apply for Mary?
-



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. What is the chief issue for any unbeliever? _____

2. What is the biggest problem in maintaining balance between the laws of liberty and the practice of the law of love?

3. React to this statement. "Christ Jesus has made me free. Now I can do anything I wish!" _____

4. How should I practice liberty in the relationships I have with "weaker brethren?"

5. Give a description of a "weaker brother." _____

6. Jim is a Christian from a very rigid and legalistic background. He believes that going to a movie is a sin and a poor witness. You desire to attend a movie and find it has a P.G. rating. Jim is your friend and knows you are going to attend and is ready to judge you. What should you do?



Summary and Key Concepts

This is a summary related to the three laws for effective living. Look this over and be sure you have included in your discussion the following important ideas.

These are laws that have to do with behaviors that are not clearly outlined in Scripture. Many of the things we include in the category of liberty are in gray areas because of cultural conditioning and the lack of a clear statement concerning that behavior.

The law of liberty gives me the right to choose my behavior in areas not clearly defined by the Word of God. I am released to be "inner-directed" by the Holy Spirit rather than by an external law. Two qualifying conditions are involved in the exercise of this law. The first is that whatever I choose to do is not to be for the fulfillment of the "lusts of the flesh." I am not to serve the "old man." The second is that my behavior is not to cause a weaker brother to stumble or "fall flat on his face." It is important to note at this point that I am to model liberty for the weaker brother, but I am not to model it at the expense of his turning away from Christ and finding his faith destroyed.

The law of love is a law that takes the weaker brother into consideration when I practice liberty. Remember that a "weaker brother" is any brother who doesn't understand liberty. It matters not whether he is a new Christian. If my behavior destroys him, I have not walked in love. But, as we noted in the previous paragraph, it is important that I practice liberty for weaker brothers and teach them to walk fully in the liberty with which they have been set free.

While the first two laws relate to believers, the last one—the law of priorities—is related to unbelievers. This is simply the principle that says that I must keep the issues clear before the unbeliever in the world. I am to "eat meat offered to idols" if he sets it before me. I should ask no questions. There are other things in contemporary society that are like the issue of meat. I am to keep issues clear at all times.

It is important to emphasize that this does not give me the right to sin in a situation involving an unbeliever. It is never right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right. But issues may rise that are really not chief issues with those who do not know Christ. I am to keep issues clear. There is no issue as significant as the issue of salvation, as far as the unsaved is concerned.

I need to model liberty but not to destroy a "weaker brother" by my practice of liberty, or use liberty to fulfill the desires of the flesh. And always keep the issues clear with one who doesn't know Christ.

Think Clearly...

The Law of Liberty refers to me and the new place of privilege and freedom I have in Christ.

The Law of Love refers to the weaker brother and how I practice liberty in his presence.

The Law of Priorities refers to the unbelievers and helps me keep the issue with them clear.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- **33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts**
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: When we enter the Body of Christ, something miraculous occurs. Not only do we enter eternal life, but we are given gifts. It is the purpose of this session to share some biblical information concerning this gifting.



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand what spiritual gifts are and how they may or may not differ from natural talents.
2. The disciple will know that these gifts are given sovereignly by the Holy Spirit.
3. The disciple will learn principles which will help determine what his gifts are and use them in the Body of Christ.

Scripture Memory

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7



Agenda

1. Mutual prayer and accountability.
2. Share Scripture memory.
3. Discuss questions.
4. Identify and discuss your spiritual gifting with your discipler.
5. Discuss the use of spiritual gifts by people in your church.

Introduction

Perhaps you have led someone to Christ. Perhaps you have struggled in your own life as far as usefulness is concerned. This topic is for every child of God and will help his personal functioning in the Body of Christ.

1. Every believer is given gifts when placed into the Body of Christ, Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Ephesians 4:7-16. We want you to understand what these gifts are. We will contrast a spiritual gift with a talent. Gifts can and need to be developed.
2. How can I determine what my spiritual gift(s) are? In relation to this, it is important to realize that in exercising spiritual gifts, I will be doing something I like to do. Or perhaps I am already doing something and really feel that I enjoy it. I am also somewhat successful at doing this thing with God's help. There has been validation from the Body of Christ. The church has affirmed me and encouraged me to continue.
3. There are some things that everyone can do: assisting in the church's Sunday School, letter evangelism, personal witnessing and learning to be a discipler. Many could do child evangelism, and street or park evangelism. Someone has said we all have the gift of "helps."
4. The problem of feeling inadequate in relation to spiritual gifts is often very real. Look at 2 Corinthians 3:5 if you have this kind of problem. God is actually pleased when our inadequacy causes us to trust Him. Some of the greatest men in the history of the Bible were men who felt inadequate. See 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; 2 Corinthians 9:8.
5. It may be good to make a distinction between sign gifts and those given to the church for its ongoing edification.



Worksheet

Three passages of Scripture speak of the gifts given by the Holy Spirit and Christ. These are in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, 14, and Ephesians 4. Although the Ephesians passage speaks of the gifts of Christ to the church, this is probably an alternative way of referring to the gifts of the Spirit. Please pause at this point and read carefully the four chapters mentioned in this paragraph. Now list the gifts in the following spaces.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____
11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____
16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____
21. _____ 22. _____ 23. _____ 24. _____ 25. _____

Now look at your list of gifts. Study it carefully. Try to think of how these gifts are manifested in the Body of Christ on earth today. Discuss these things with your discipler. _____

A Rationale Concerning Spiritual Gifts

First, let us consider what a gift is. We have already seen in our discussion of “bridge” that salvation is a gift. A gift is f _ _ _ . We don’t have to pay for something that is a _____. The word in the original language from which “gift” comes is the same word from which we get “grace.” A _____ is something that is given to me. It is something I am not in possession of as a human simply by virtue of being alive. In this session, we are discussing things that are given to us by the Holy Spirit. According to Ephesians 4:7-8, how many have received gifts? _____. If we are not born with these gifts, when do you feel we would receive them? See 1 Corinthians 12:11-13 _____

The giving of spiritual gifts seems to be associated with the baptism _____
_____, and this takes place at what point of my walk with Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13? _____

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? _____

An understanding of these questions is extremely important. There is much teaching today that sets forth the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a post-new birth experience...that one can become a babe in Christ without the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This text indicates that this baptism makes us members of the _____ of Christ, vs. 12. In this Body, we are all _____. There is one _____ which is the _____ of Christ, Revelation 19:7. It seems inconceivable that one can be a Christian without being “put into” the Body of Christ. The giving of spiritual gifts seems to be associated with our being put into that Body, 1 Corinthians 12:11-18.

The Nature of Spiritual Gifts

If I am a member of the Body of Christ, by virtue of faith in Jesus, I have been baptized by (in) the Holy Spirit. There is no way one of these statements can be true without the other being true!

Spiritual gifts are a very important subject. Some additional things need to be said about them. They are often equated with natural abilities or talents. This doesn't seem to be biblical.

Spiritual gifts are abilities given to us apart from our first birth. They equip us to function as members of the Body of Christ. An example of a talent or natural ability might be the ability to sing. Some people can have excellent natural ability, a wonderful instrument that has been given at birth, but they cannot nor do they really find the ability to minister when they sing.

On the other hand, others may or may not have good natural ability nor learned ability, but they deeply exhort and minister as they sing in the assembly of believers. Yet, another illustration might be in the area of teaching. There are those who have both natural and learned abilities to teach but do not have the gift of teaching the Word of God, and their teaching gives no sign of spiritual giftedness. There are others who have no training at all who are able to make the Scriptures live and be applicable for us in unusual ways. Finally, sometimes the Spirit gifts us in the areas of our natural abilities and both the gift and talents function together. A good example of this was in the ministry of Harry Ironsides, the late pastor of Moody Memorial Church, who had no formal training in teaching, but was a superior teacher of the Word of God.

We want to give a definition of a spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is “an ability supernaturally given to one who believes at the time of his new birth.” It is something that needs to be discovered and developed, in most cases, and it may or may not be permanent...depending upon the gift. It is for the purpose of helping the Body of Christ, the local church, function efficiently.

Edification and Sign Gifts

When the nature of spiritual gifts is considered, it is necessary to make a distinction between types of gifts. Let's distinguish between "edification" gifts and "sign" gifts. Gifts for edification seem to be those whose nature is to build up, encourage, and generally minister to the Body. Sign gifts are those that are more miraculous and may or may not be present in a permanent nature. It is important to remember that it is the Holy Spirit Who gives gifts as He wills. Man, irrespective of theological position and arguments cannot limit the Holy Spirit in the giving of any gift at any time. The gifts are "gifts of the Spirit," and not gifts of the thinking of mortals. He distributes gifts to the church, "severally as He wills."

Now look again at the major texts for this study and list the gifts that are more related to edification, and then list the gifts that could be more closely called sign or miraculous gifts.

Gifts of Edification

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Sign or Miraculous Gifts

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

List ways one can find their spiritual gifts:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Think! What effect does the practice of spirituality and maturity have on the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit?

2. Jerry is a young man with a measured intelligence score of 73. He doesn't see himself as very capable of serving God or ministering in the Body of Christ, although he has made a commitment to Jesus as Savior and Lord. Where does he stand with respect to spiritual gifts?

3. What evidence is there from Scripture that some sign gifts are present part of the time, but not necessarily all of the time?

4. What can be inferred from a study of spiritual gifts as far as the local church is concerned?

5. Some urge us to seek certain spiritual gifts. What are some of the dangers that come in seeking spiritual gifts over long periods of time?

6. What gift of the Spirit is most closely connected with discipleship? Why?

7. What are **your** spiritual gifts. List them below:



Summary and Key Concepts

We should remember that everyone and anyone in the Body of Christ has been given spiritual gifts. If a person has experienced new birth, he is a member of the Body of Christ and possesses a gifting of the Spirit.

When we experience regeneration, we are placed into the Body of Christ and uniquely gifted — equipped to function within that Body. We might say that the purpose of spiritual gifts is “to enable the church to function efficiently in the world.” A gift differs from a talent, although one may be both talented and gifted in the same area. Or one may be gifted in an area where he has no talent. Gifts need to be discovered and developed, and it is the responsibility of the mature to help a new Christian find and develop his unique gifts.

One may be gifted in many ways, but everyone is gifted in some way. Gifts are given arbitrarily by the Holy Spirit. It is possible to exercise gifts when one is carnal, but optimum exercise of gifts is possible when one is “keeping in step with the Spirit.”

Some gifts are more edifying to the church than others. Some are permanent, while others are more temporary in nature. (Paul could not always heal the sick.) The church needs to be supportive in its assistance in helping its members find their gifts.



Life Application

Spend some time in prayer and volunteer your services at your church. Be serious about your own spiritual gift(s) and seek to find that place where you feel God would have you serve.

Reading Assignment: . *Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts*. J.E.O’Day, InterVarsity Press, 1985. If this is not available, read something on the topic of your spiritual gifts.

Notes

HOW TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

Purpose: This session is intended to help you know the will of God for your life.

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- **34 How to Know the Will of God**
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions



Objectives

1. The disciple will learn what makes knowing the will of God difficult for some.
2. The disciple will learn some of the specifics and non-specifics about the will of God.
3. The disciple will understand the ways that God can help them when they make honest mistakes.
4. The disciple will learn some things that are involved in knowing God's will for themselves.

Scripture Memory

Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing.
2. Review Scripture memory.
3. Discuss worksheet.
4. Discuss the questions.

Introduction

Our Father has not placed us in this world without a concern about the place we are to fill and things we are to do. There is much written today about the will of God and its importance in our lives. A good book written on the subject is entitled *Decision Making and the Will of God*, by Gary Friesen. It is recommended to you for your broader reading.

Perhaps a general statement is in order. The will of God for me is not a highly specific plan that covers every detail of my life. There are choices I can make within the broad boundaries given to me in Scripture. There are also specific considerations that God has for me and wishes me to fulfill. This description represents the position of Lifestyle Discipleship. Some interpret Scripture differently on the issue of choices.

I. The will of God for me should be the chief aim of my life, 1 Samuel 15:22.

A. Some general things for my life and any life of a Christian today are:

1. We are to be witnesses of things we know, Acts 1:8.
2. We are to be delivered from this present evil age, Galatians 1:4.
3. We are to be sanctified (in a practical sense), 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
4. We are to learn to give thanks for all things, 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
5. We are ultimately to be with Him where He is, John 17:24.

B. General characteristics of the will of God, Romans 12:2.

1. It is good.
2. It is acceptable.
3. It is perfect (complete or adequate)
4. It is best, even if it is the most dangerous or most misunderstood.
5. It is ultimately the easiest and safest place to be.

II. What makes the will of God difficult to know?

- A. Lack of surrender to the Holy Spirit's control, Romans 6:13.
- B. Tolerating sin in my life, the lack of confession and forsaking of sin, Proverbs 28:13.
- C. Lack of a spiritual motive — wanting to know the will of God to consider it rather than to do it.

Not knowing the will of God can lead to wasted lives and often “second best,” frustration and sorrow.

III. How do we know the will of God?

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| A. Scriptural confirmation | D. Overall peace |
| B. Inward impulse | E. Godly Counsel |
| C. Trend of circumstances | F. Prayer |



Worksheet

Before you go any further, imagine you are in a situation that is far-reaching in its results and most difficult to make a decision about. How would you go about making this decision? What criteria would apply? Is it biblical to ask God for a “fleece?” (Judges, 6) Answer these questions before going any further with this session.

1. How much do our personal feelings and emotions play a part in our determining this aspect of the Christian life?

2. There is a bit of controversy in the church today over how specific the will of God might be. How specific is the will of God in your life? Answer in your own words from your own understanding at this time.

3. Some things are highly specific. Look up the following verses and write in

your own words what they teach about the will of God.

- a. We are to be _____, Acts 1:8.
- b. The Father purposes that we should be rescued _____
_____ evil age, Galatians 1:4. What does this mean?

- c. It is the will of God that we be _____, 1 Thessalonians 4:3.
- d. _____ is an important aspect of the will
of God, 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
- e. God has purposed (so it is His will) that _____

_____ John 17:24

It would be reasonable to say that everything God commanded that applies to me in the Scriptures can be considered the will of God for me. On the other hand, there is a framework within which I work in this world, and within that framework, I can make choices which are personal and more appropriate for me. To say that the will of God applies to every possible decision is probably being too specific.

4. General characteristics of the will of God are found in Romans 12:2. Read this verse carefully and list the characteristics in your own words.

- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
- If these are true, what reaction in me is appropriate? _____

5. The will of God is ultimately the safest, easiest, and most restful place to be, even if it is the most difficult. Some people have difficult times determining

the specific will of God for their lives. What could be some of the reasons for this difficulty?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

6. The will of God is more difficult to determine if one has not surrendered to God — if he is not practicing the Lordship of Jesus. It is also more difficult if I am tolerating a specific sin in my life that is continuing without being judged and confessed. A lack of a spiritual motive can also be a problem. Some seek to know the will of God to consider it, rather than to actually do it. It is doubtful if the Father would reveal His secrets to men under these circumstances. How God can override choices that are made contrary to His will is not fully understood. How does Romans 8:28 reveal that He can do this?

Structure From the Scriptures and Experience

What is known about the specific will of God? How do we find it? It is important that all these factors work together and that none be used in isolation.

- I. I need to consider what I think I would like to do. This could involve teaching, witnessing, or perhaps doing some physical activity in behalf of the church. Let us refer to this as an inward impulse. This is not valid in every case, however. Jonah is an example. His inward impulse was to flee.
- II. There will be Scriptural confirmation. By this is meant that there will be instruction from the Word of God. We must be sure that we follow the teaching of the Holy Spirit and never move contrary to the Word of God.
- III. The third thing is the trend of circumstances. This is simply an open door or an opportunity to do what I would like to do.
- IV. Overall peace is an important consideration. This means simply that I have a settled and good feeling about the whole situation. And I would certainly say that even with the previous three variables present, it would be foolish to consider the activity or direction inwardly unless an overall peace was available.
- V. The confirmation of the local church, is likewise important.
- VI. In each of these things, it is obviously assumed that prayer is involved...that we have sought His face and direction in each matter.

We should be careful about asking for a “fleece,” a sign, which may be an indication of unbelief.



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. React to these statements: “The will of God is very specific and includes every detail of my life.” “To miss the will of God is to miss God’s only and best plan for my life.”

2. What would be the best thing to do if you are in doubt about the will of God in your life?

3. List some things that you can be certain of as far as the will of God for your life is concerned.

4. What is the best thing to do if you feel you have gone in a direction that is not the will of God?

5. What should you do if what you **feel** is the will of God seems to be contrary to the revealed will of God in Scripture?



Summary and Key Concepts

There are many important concepts to learn concerning the will of God for our lives. Perhaps the first and most important is that God is concerned about His children and has plans for us.

Concerning the specificity of His will for us, there are many things that are specific; we should earnestly seek such things. He may have a will for us as well, that is more general and we should follow biblical principles in seeking it.

We should remember that it is always the will of God that we are obedient to His Word. There are many statements and principles in the Scriptures that apply to me, and it is **never** the will of God that we violate these. Whatever is inconsistent with Scripture is certainly inconsistent with His will.

But there are many things in our lives concerning which the Father has undoubtedly given us a choice, as long as they are consistent with the principles laid down in Scripture.

Certain things might impair our knowing the will of God for our lives. These include known sin, lack of a spiritual motive, and unwillingness to surrender our lives to Him.

The will of God is **always** best in my life. It is ultimately the safest, easiest and happiest place to be. We need to pray for guidance, of course. Then six things are important in our knowing the specific will of God for our lives. These include the confirmation of Scripture, inward impulse, the trend of circumstance, overall peace, godly counsel and prayer.



Life Application

Write an example of seeking the will of God in your life; share this with your discipler. If you have not sought the will of God specifically, begin asking and pray with your discipler using the principles mentioned in this session.

Notes

MY PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- **35 My Philosophy of Life**
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: As a Christian matures, there is often consideration of “why I am here” and “what is really important?” I hear challenges from the Word of God, and I see the world around me. I have the Scriptures as a guide for my daily walk. I see the two considerations just mentioned, and I feel a need to answer those for my own life.

One may refer to this as seeking a goal that is truly his and is attainable. Others refer to a mission statement. The statement describing this session involves the writing of one’s philosophy of life. Helping you build an adequate philosophy of life is the primary objective of this session.



Objectives

1. The disciple will be able to define things that are true of him.
2. The disciple will be able to make adjustments in his personal philosophy of life.
3. The disciple will have something on paper that can be read from time to time, make adjustments if necessary, and have his main purpose or goal constantly in mind.

Scripture Memory

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ...

Philippians 3:7-8



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing.
2. Discuss your philosophy of life that you have drafted.
3. Help the disciple in areas he found difficult.
4. Discuss new terms.
5. Mutual sharing of Scripture memory.

Everyone has some ideas about why he is here, what is really of significance to him, how he is carrying out such beliefs, and where and why he is failing. This is an exercise that can be ongoing for the rest of a lifetime. This is to help you begin such a task and make it ongoing. It is important because it involves one's behavior and how he best lives his life.

This is in reality the development of a philosophy of life. It is the unique statement of who I am and what I am about. The following materials are to help you begin working on this project.



Worksheet

1. What do I believe is *real*? — A question about reality. This involves simply stating what you believe about this subject. It may sound rather elementary but try to do it and see where your writing goes. For instance, is something real that I cannot touch? Is the spirit world real? Is this table real if I do not see it? Is what I experience my only reality? Don't worry at this point about being philosophically correct. Just write about where you are in terms of reality—what is real to you?

2. The second consideration involves answering the question, what do I believe regarding *truth*. Concerning this, you can define truth as you understand it. Is truth found in experience, is it absolute or relative, and where does it come from? Think your answer through carefully and write to the best of your ability.

3. The third question relates to your *goals in life* as well as *what you appreciate*. Perhaps stating the latter first would be an easier approach. What things do you most value and appreciate? Feel free to write honestly about this. Then it is important for you to know where you are going. What is most meaningful in your life? What are your goals for the next year? What are your goals for the next five years? What are your goals for the next ten years?



Life Application

On the following pages, write a personal and philosophical paper of two or three pages in length. In this paper, include the things mentioned above. Use Scripture in writing this. Make it truly a statement that applies to you and is uniquely yours. Although you write it now, and it represents where you are now, be tentative in your approach, always desiring to be more skilled in your life as a servant.

[illegible]



ADVANCED BIBLE STUDY METHODS

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- **36 Advanced Bible Study Methods**
- 37 Review Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to acquaint you with a good method or outline for study in any book of the Bible.



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand how to approach a chapter for deeper and more analytic study.
2. The disciple will understand more about parallel passages.
3. The disciple will learn how to find doctrinal truths systematically.
4. The disciple will learn more about making personal applications of practical truths.

Scripture Memory

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15



Agenda

1. Sharing of personal difficulties and prayer.
2. Work through the session material together.
3. Deal with new ideas.
4. Challenge the disciple to work at this method regularly in Bible study.
5. Review memory work.

The ABC Method

This method of study is designed to encourage the user to fulfill the command in 2 Timothy 2:15 regarding study. One should learn to search and “accurately handle” the Word of Truth. The Scripture used in this first attempt together is Romans 5:1-12. Pray before you begin, asking God to reveal more of His truth to you.

Book:

Chapter:

Application (s): In relation to God — in relation to man.
These should be personal, practical, and applicable. Those related to God will result in spiritual enrichment and be uplifting. Those related to man should challenge us to consistency in our lives.

Basic Passage(s): This involves the text around which the Scripture seems to be centered, or what seems to be the most important truth in light of the contents.

Cross References: The best commentary on Scripture is Scripture itself, and according to Isaiah 28:9-10, we will best understand a portion of Scripture when we allow other passages to throw light on it. Meditate and attempt to remember one or more Scriptures that help in the understanding of the passage being studied.

Difficulties: List all difficulties that you have personally with the passage, as well as all possible difficulties. Include the reference where the difficulty occurs.

Eminent Truth: Doctrinal truths should be listed at this point. State such truth as clearly as possible. Include the text where the truth is located.

Final Study: This involves either a summary or an outline in your own words. Simply state which you are using and then proceed.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Life Application

Do passages of your choice on the following pages.

Study Sheet

Book:

Chapter:

Application

Basic Passages

Cross References

Difficulties

Eminent Truth

Final Study

Study Sheet

Book:

Chapter:

Application

Basic Passages

Cross References

Difficulties

Eminent Truth

Final Study

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Living Out the Gospel

- 30 The Importance of My Personal Life
- 31 Should a Christian?
- 32 Three Laws for Effective Living
- 33 The Nature and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts
- 34 How to Know the Will of God
- 35 My Philosophy of Life
- 36 Advanced Bible Study Methods
- 37 **Review Questions**

Purpose: The purpose of the review questions is to give a summary or overview of the section that covers “Living Out The Gospel.”



Objectives

1. The disciple will be able to recall the specific problems dealt with in this section of the materials.
2. The disciple will have stimulated correct thinking in the areas covered by this section.

Scripture Memory

You did not choose Me but I chose you, an appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in my name He may give to you.

John 15:16



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing,
2. Discuss questions
3. Discuss new terms learned through these sessions.

1. Believers are represented in Scripture in many ways that indicate the importance of modeling. What are some of the figures or pictures used to represent what a believer is to those around him in the world?

2. In what ways are believers “lights” in the world?

3. How is a believer like “salt” to the world?

4. What is an “encumbrance”?

5. Who are affected by the lives that we live?

6. What would it mean to be “put on the shelf”?

7. What does “causing a brother to stumble” mean?

8. Elaborate on some of the principles that can be used to evaluate a behavior that may not be sin.

9 What is a “spiritual gift”?

10. . How does a spiritual gift differ from a natural talent?

11. When are spiritual gifts given to individuals?

12. Is it possible to have gifts that are undeveloped forever?

13. What is the difference between a permanent gift and a sign gift?

14. What is the relationship between the exercise of a spiritual gift and the practice of spirituality?

15. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

16. How specific is the will of God for an individual Christian?

17. What are some of the indicators of the will of God in the life of a Christian? (How can we test things we are not sure about?)

18. Name some general characteristics of the will of God.

19. What is the chief source of information concerning the will of God for a life?

20. John made a decision that reflected much prayer and introspection. He later saw that the decision was not best, although he had sought the will of God in His decision. What should John remember concerning himself? Concerning our heavenly Father? Concerning the circumstances?

Assignment:

Read the paper on Commitment in the Appendix

Begin reading *Disciples are Made, Not Born*, by Leroy Eims, Victor Books.

WHAT ARE WE WORKING TOWARD?

Follow-up and Discipleship:

- 38 What Are We Working Towards?
- 39 A Biblical Profile of a Disciple
- 40 Effective Interpersonal Relationships

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help the disciple understand more clearly the process and goals of this discipleship ministry.



Objectives

1. The disciple will see important aspects of true discipleship and reaffirm his own commitment to Jesus Christ.
2. The disciple will understand that what has been happening to him is perhaps the most important thing in his life. It is working toward fulfilling the Great Commission.
3. The disciple will understand the goals of discipleship as he begins to work with a new disciple.

Scripture Memory

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."
Luke 9: 23



Agenda

1. Prayer together for life and service.
2. Discuss paper "Commitment; a Burning Issue."
3. Discuss the worksheet material.
4. Review Scripture memory.

This paper was the last paper submitted to my doctoral committee in 1965. It was in response to a statement during my interview for admission to the doctoral program in psychology that I would not be a Christian when the faculty at ASU was finished with me.

*I was told ... to
be prepared to
"lose my faith."*

Commitment: A Burning Issue

As I begin to write, I recall the cliché, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." My subject — commitment — and the way I am about to expose my position, could be hazardous in academic circles. But write, I must, for the concept of "commitment" has been a banner over me for more than twenty years, and I must speak and declare my feelings related to this concept.

Twenty two years ago, during a period of ontological despair, I committed my life to Jesus Christ and claimed Him as my Savior and Lord. This commitment became the directional force of my life. It seemed to satisfy an insatiable longing heretofore experienced. Goals for my life — purpose in all of its happenings, appeared immediately available to me.

Three years ago, I was interviewed by the faculty of the College of Education at Arizona State University for admission to the doctoral program in Counseling Psychology. In the process of this interview, I was told by one of these esteemed interviewers to be prepared to "lose my faith." I was led to believe that I would need to revise my earlier commitment to this Person.

Today, I stand near the end of this rigorous program. I have tenaciously scrutinized and evaluated this commitment. I have grown in personal adequacy. I am becoming more open. I shun dogmatism. I must say also that I have found nothing that can represent a higher and more satisfying commitment. I remain committed to Jesus Christ.

The Nature of My Commitment

Gordon Allport has indicated the necessity of commitment as he couples it with tentativeness. Alone, tentativeness leads to disintegration. Yet one must be tentative in his approach to all of his beliefs. In this way, he resists encapsulation. One also needs the integrative factor of commitment. The two together comprise what Allport calls the "half-sure, whole-hearted" man. Commitment implies resolute abandonment.

When I speak of commitment, I am not speaking of agreement with principles, ideas, or procedures. It would seem that commitment is a vital and serious matter that involves the movement of our life's direction, and if com-

mitment is real, it is not simply a matter of convenience.

Commitment Leads to Appropriate Behavior.

It is foolish to talk about commitment without considering the behavior that is involved as a natural consequence. If, for instance, one is committed to the perpetuation of a certain type of social order, he will act in ways that enhance its continuance. If he committed to man as highest ideal, he will treat men with dignity and honor. Again, if man's right to make his own choice is of supreme value, and if one is committed to this ideal, he will never deny another his right to make his own unique choice. It follows that commitment should produce behavior commensurate with the commitment itself. If one is committed to a person, action will follow that will be such as would enhance the relationship desired with that person. Though one may fail, there is an ever pressing on toward the goal of his commitment.

Commitment Becomes the Reorganizing Core of Life.

When one is committed, this commitment brings direction to all of his life. It becomes the directional core of his behavior. It is indeed central in one's philosophy of life. Because man is capable of reasoned contemplation — awareness of the future — he needs purpose and direction. Commitment relieves the ambiguity of a directionless life. Life is more than a grasshopper dance off to oblivion. It is characterized by conflict, pain, and disappointment, as well as peace, joy and pleasure. Commitment can give purpose to the totality of these experiences.

*Because man is
capable of
reasoned contem-
plation—
awareness of the
future—
he needs
purpose and di-
rection.*

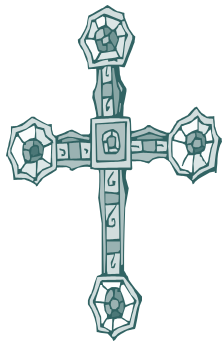
The Object of My Commitment

As I evaluate the commitment just mentioned — the commitment that is uniquely me — there are certain characteristics which need to be described.

My Commitment is to a Person.

Throughout history, men have been committed to ideas, principles, human beings, etc. My commitment is to a Person, first and primarily. By virtue of my commitment to Him as a Person, I am also committed to many principles and ideals.

I wish to elaborate this point. Being well aware of the philosophical controversy that permeates the field of psychology today — the controversy of relativism as opposed to absolutism — I must say that concerning this Man, I find Him flawless — impeccable! I will expand this in the next section. I also consider the dignity and worth of man to be an absolute, as is love. In terms of understanding truth, though such exists as an absolute in nature and in revelation, I can only approach it relatively. Concerning moral truth, there are many shadows today. In every society, taboos exist that are unique to its existence.



*Perfecting
humanness includes
both the qualities
of manhood and
womanhood in
perfect equipoise.*

There are certain environmental factors that create particular perceptions unique to every individual. In consequence, whatever approach one might have epistemologically — truth as existing “out there” to be discovered or, truth being those unique perceptions of a person at a particular moment, we can say that for man in his existential plight, it is relative.

The Uniqueness of this Person.

As one observes his fellows, he soon learns that all greatness has been marred by littleness, all wisdom possesses a flaw of folly, all goodness is tainted with imperfection. Yet in whatever portrayals of Jesus are available, He seems perfect in His Person. He was perfectly human — one with man, with all the qualities of manhood, yet with the perfections of womanhood as well. Farson has dared to write an article describing the feminine qualities that must be present in an effective counselor — qualities such as tenderness, love, and compassion. These qualities were present in the personality makeup of Jesus Christ, coexisting with His strength and manhood.

How often He has compassion — the “multitudes without a shepherd,” the hungry five thousand, and those who sorrowed at the death of a brother. These are just a few examples. He seemed to be compassionate without respect of persons, and even His method reinforces this. An example is His confrontation with the leper. He identified with this outcast — this dehumanized man — by touching him.

Gentleness is another characteristic of His Person. When He discussed personal problems with the woman at the well of Samaria, He pressed ever so gently the great ulcer eating at her heart. He addressed the woman taken in adultery with the same word “woman,” with which he spoke to His mother from the cross. His chief trophy at His crucifixion was a miserable dying thief.

I do not desire to belabor my argument and yet wishing to elaborate on the unique aspects of His character as I see Him, Jesus demonstrated uniqueness and perfection in the equipoise of His various perfections. Every quality of His unique character was in perfect balance. His gentleness is never weak— His courage never brutal.

The Breadth of My Commitment

Being committed to this man, I am therefore committed to His concerns. Jesus stated His mission in terms of “ministering to others” rather than being ministered unto. I feel that commitment to Him involves commitment to a “helping” relationship.

Jesus speaks of and demonstrates love. He urges us to love our

neighbors as ourselves. The counseling relationship is one in which the client is to be loved. Commitment to Christ is a commitment to love, both in and out of the counseling relationship. Jesus is the most brilliant example of this. He demonstrated the principle of acceptance as He moved among social outcasts and related to them in personal ways.

The worth of man is a commitment one shares with commitment to Christ. That Christ was committed in this direction is a truth that naturally follows all we have already said concerning Him. The crowning evidence of this, however, was His death—the offering of Himself for every man. To Him, not only the masses, but individuals were important, and He gave Himself freely to every person who ever sought Him. Commitment to Him makes commitment to man my commitment as well.

In truth, I can say that if William Shakespeare, Sigmund Freud, Saint Thomas Aquinas or Socrates would approach me, I would stand and honor them. But if Jesus Christ should so come near me, I would fall on my face and worship Him.

The Practicality of This Commitment

By way of personal reference, and after twenty-two years, I must say that this man has never failed me. In Him, there have been no disappointments, nor have I felt in evaluating other commitments there might be one superior for me. I have found in Him an adequate solution to the problem of existential guilt and anxiety. He offers a unique adequacy that becomes personal as one becomes one with Him. Notwithstanding Feuerbach's concept of alienation through submission to God, it has seemed to me that my commitment has been a deterrent to alienation, for this commitment is one for which I have been made.

Thank you for allowing me to develop as a counselor. I am equally pleased that I can write in this somewhat fragmented way of my personal commitment. I have allowed evaluation and encouraged actively a personal scrutiny of my own commitments. These are yet with openness as much as my perceptions allow me to be open. At this point in my development, I counsel from a theistic-humanistic frame of reference, if I can be allowed the privilege of combining two of Lowe's basic value orientations. I desire commitment to be real for me, yet I desire equally that I shall always possess the quality of tentativeness or perhaps flexibility.

I am still a Christian with a faith more firm than ever!

*Commitment to
Christ is a
commitment to
love.*

*But if Jesus
Christ should so
come near me, I
would fall on my
face and worship
Him.*

*Commitment
involves ... the
reorganization
of the core of
one's life.*

Thoughts on Discipleship

The purpose of this reading is to draw together some thoughts that can be used to present a challenge to others in the making and perpetuating disciples. These are not intended to be a scholarly presentation of the subject, but a drawing together of random ideas that will be useful and encouraging to others.

- I. Discipleship is involved in the great commission of our Savior before He ascended into heaven, Matthew 28:19, 20. This passage has been used to call the church to its work in the mission of propagating the Gospel throughout all nations. But the implications involve more than simply sharing the gospel — it says we are to make disciples and teach men and women.
- II. What is involved in discipleship?
 - A. Discipleship includes the ability and desire to help someone come in contact with and know the gospel in a very personal way. We believe that salvation comes through individual faith, rather than faith in an organization or family relationship, John 3:16. It is therefore important to help a person understand the Gospel clearly. If I am to disciple, I must know the Gospel in a clear communicable way so I can readily share it with another.
 - B. Discipleship is the process of helping another grow. This growth is to the end of spiritual maturity. The most fundamental aspect or basis for spiritual maturity or growth is involvement with the Scriptures, the Word of God. Babies are made men by the milk and meat of the Word, 1 Peter 2:2-3. The Word makes the difference between mediocrity and productivity in our life.
 - C. Discipleship demands a willingness to share your life with another, 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8. Jesus certainly illustrates this in His life spent with twelve disciples. He, above all, was willing to share Himself!
 - D. Discipleship demands an exemplary life, Luke 9:23; 1 Timothy 4:12-16. I will probably never be able to help a person walk any more effectively than I walk myself. Water never runs higher than its source.
 - E. Discipleship demands long commitment, Luke 9:62.

“The essential thing in ‘heaven and earth’ is... that there should be long obedience in the same direction: there thereby results, and has always resulted in the long run, something which has made life worth living.” F. Neitzche.

Commitment involves resolute abandonment, tenacity, singular

goals, appropriate behavior, and the reorganization of the core of one's life. The reason we have failed in the evangelization of the world is probably related to our lack of commitment to the principles of sharing the Gospel in a way that will truly produce disciples. May God help us to no longer be slack in our calling by majoring in the minor.

F. The ultimate goal of discipleship is to produce a spiritually mature individual who is himself reproducing. There should be:

1. Consistency.
2. A well-rounded devotional life — reading, studying, prayer life.
3. A strong grounding in truth:
 - a. The nature of God — His attributes and triune nature.
 - b. The Person of the Lord Jesus — hypostatic union and virgin birth.
 - c. The Person and work of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Christ's Lordship.
 - e. A clear understanding of the gospel and its presentation.
 - f. Assurance of salvation — how I know I am a son of God.
 - g. The nature and importance of the Scripture.
 - h. The reality of the two natures in the believer.
 - i. The second coming of Christ — the believer's blessed hope.
4. Emotional maturity and psychological well-being.
5. A quality life in Jesus — spiritually and psychologically.
6. Reproduction, 2 Timothy 2:2. Every disciple is to engage in a life long ministry of discipling others as a lifestyle. Doing it "one-on-one" will be the biblical way to reach the world.

G. The joy of discipling is beyond compare, 3 John 4. Think of the joy that can be ours through bearing spiritual children and seeing them reproduce! You may never know the joy of becoming a parent or grandparent in the physical sense. But you can have innumerable children in the spiritual sense, as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren.



How to Set Your Thinking

It is important to remember some basic principles as we begin the process of discipling another person. The following thoughts are to help you know

*Christ would
never have given
us the command
to do this
without the
possibility of
doing it.*

these things. Keep them before you, and pray about them.

- I. Discipling is learning how to be with another person significantly. Many things can be involved in this.
- II. Being with another person in a helping way is actually the gift of exhortation, Romans 12:8 (the word used is *paraclete*).
- III. We do not have to do a session in sequence that we have planned to share. It may be that the session will only focus on current events and prayer with review of Scripture memory.
- IV. Sometimes what we can most do for another is just listen to them. If you have not learned to listen at this point in your life, learn now! Somehow sharing your life as a listener can have a renewing affect and can truly help your person spiritually.
- V. Trust the Holy Spirit in the person you are discipling. In reality he belongs to the Lord and the Holy Spirit before he belongs to us. Follow the promise of Philippians 1:6 and claim it in relation to your "Timothy."
- VI. Remind yourself that you are never going to quit discipling. What you have will continue as a lifestyle. Who knows, you might disciple a Paul, Dwight L. Moody or a Billy Graham. Only eternity will tell the ultimate affect of what you do on a "man-to-man" basis.
- VII. Be wise as well as gentle. Your person may truly have a unique problem that hinders his progress. Follow the example of the Holy Spirit's commitment to each of us, as you follow through with your commitment to the one you disciple.
- VIII. Show him how to do things. Go places with him. Let him see how you function as an individual. Model effectively what you want him to learn to do.
- IX. Remember to continue to talk about the ultimate goal of discipleship and the necessity of doing quality work in the case of every person you work with. Pray for your disciple. Committed to the total evangelization of your local area. Don't let zeal be blunted, your enthusiasm dulled. Christ would never have given us the command to do this

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose I also labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. Colossians 1:28, 29.

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ...no longer to be children tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine...

Ephesians 4:13, 14a

without the possibility of doing it.

Follow-Up: What We're Working Toward

The following are some of the goals related to the “follow-up” of another person.

I. A well-rounded devotional life, including:

- A. Journaling.
- B. Daily Bible reading and systematic study.
- C. Active reading of books.
- D. Prayer.
- E. Taking sermon notes for critique and understanding.

II. Commitment to Christ as Lord— consistency, dependability, steadfastness, and ultimate faithfulness, Luke 9:23f:

- A. Persistence without the need to be pushed, Job 23: 12
- B. Dependability in attendance, giving, and service with respect to the local church, Hebrews 10:25.
- C. The kind of steadfastness that will never leave a person in doubt concerning spiritual life, Galatians 4:19,20.

III. Well-grounded in the teaching of Scripture, 3 John 4; Ephesians 4:14:

There are multitudes of false teachers in the world. The growing disciple should be able to defend himself against the onslaught of error, Acts 20:29, by knowing well these important truths.

- a. The nature of God — His attributes and triune nature.
- b. The Person of the Lord Jesus — hypostatic union and virgin birth.
- c. The Person and work of the Holy Spirit.
- d. Christ's Lordship.
- e. A clear understanding of the gospel and its presentation.

- f. Assurance of salvation — how I know I am a son of God.
- g. The nature and importance of the Scripture.
- h. The reality of the two natures in the believer.
- i. The second coming of Christ — the believer's blessed hope.

To be astute in these areas does not come easy. It is my responsibility to help my disciple become aware of the truth of these doctrines and to have a working knowledge of them.

IV. Emotional maturity and psychological well-being:

While the Lord has not made us all psychologists, there are things I can do to help others become more emotionally stable. An important thing is to enable this person to learn how to practice spirituality and how to be effective in that process so he can grow to maturity.

V. A fruit-bearing life of reproductive service is a chief goal:

It is the will of God that this person be active in the Body of Christ somewhere, as well as committed to a life of discipling until Jesus comes, 2 Timothy 2:2. It is the will of the Father that we bear fruit and that the fruit should continue on, John 15:16. I need to help him learn how to disciple another.



VI. Quality life in the Spirit, practicing spirituality and growing in holiness, Proverbs 4:18:

“The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter till the full day.”

These things are to become a reality in terms of the uniqueness of each individual, not in terms of how I would shape him or want him to be. I must always remember that this person is a child of God with his own uniqueness. His development must be uniquely his, not mine.

Worksheet

Some have no “game plan” when they meet to disciple another. It seems that this is either negligent or slipshod, and only on rare occasions should a meeting be simply for the purpose of “visiting.” The purpose of this worksheet is to help you think through some specific reasons for meeting with individuals in a more global sense. What are we trying to do with the disciple when we meet over a long period of time? What are we working toward?

What do we want to see our disciple become?

1. Before you look further, list some things that you have had as minimal goals as you have begun meeting with another person.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. Now look up the following verses and see if they tell you anything about the goals of working with another person.

- a. Job 23:12 _____

These words tell us that the person speaking had a certain attitude toward the Scripture that seems to be unique. What was this attitude?

How could we possibly build this kind of an attitude into a disciple? _____

What is there about Scripture that would assist in this? _____

- b. Luke 16:10 _____

How could you assist in this characteristic becoming real in a disciple?

- c. Galatians 4:19,20 _____

- d. Ephesians 4:14 _____

*A primary goal
of discipleship is
building a love
for Scripture*

Describe a person who would be firm in doctrine. _____

What truths would be necessary to know in order to be firm as described in this text? _____

e. 2 Timothy 2:2 _____

John 15:16 _____

This is what discipling is most concerned about and these things are very central. It is the goal of any discipling ministry that men and women become _____.

3. It is the goal of a discipling ministry to enable the individual who is being disciplined to experience “grace” in a very practical sense. This will cause him to grow emotionally and psychologically. “Grace” in this sense is to provide him an atmosphere of acceptance which would facilitate his growth.

a. Proverbs 4:18 gives an interesting description of the life of the “righteous.” What do you see in this passage of Scripture that would be a possible goal of a discipler? _____



Write a paragraph on your personal goals in discipling another believer.

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. What has been the most significant aspect of your discipling to this point?

2. How would you describe the nature and degree of commitment in your life at this moment?

3. How would you handle someone who was consistently late for meetings or was slipshod in memory work?

4. What doctrine(s) do you feel weakest in at this point?

- a.

- b.

- c.

5. What personal variable would most likely cause you to “take your hand from the plow and look back?” (Luke 9:62 paraphrased)

-
- 6 Describe the greatest fear or point of weakness you sense in yourself as you have begun to disciple.
-
-

7. What is your greatest joy in doing this work?
-
-
-

To Perpetuate and Multiply Emphasize These

1. Being a disciple of Jesus is a lifetime choice. Commitment to being a servant—a disciple— is something that one must see as a permanent commitment. Jesus said, “no one, after putting his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God,” Luke 9:62.
2. To disciple effectively and see the results of discipleship is the greatest joy possible for a Christian. This joy is greater even than introducing one to the Savior. The greatest joy in my temporal life is not to bring a child into the world, but to rear the child effectively and see his life become productive and useful. 3 John 4 says. *“I have no greater joy than this to hear of my children walking in truth.”* There is no joy like that of experiencing the faithfulness for God in the life of one I have discipled.
3. Discipleship involves the sharing of **yourself**— your **life** — with another person. It is not simply sharing the Gospel and Jesus. I Thessalonians 2:7,8 speaks of Paul being such an example. He was willing to share not only the Gospel but His own life also. Just as Christ gave Himself, so are we to give ourselves. One who is not willing to be with another person — to share his life with that person — will never be fully effective as a discipler.
4. Don’t let your head run away with “adding” to your discipleship ministry more people than you can effectively handle. An occasional group is all right, but our work loses power as we cease our individual work. The world will never be reached by “adding,” but it is possible through multiplying. You will always do best as you share your life with one person individually. This may be the only time in that person’s life that he has the complete attention of another person. The power of this surpasses our comprehension.
5. Do thorough work. Do not be involved with the link that breaks the chain of

ultimate and total evangelism. Do not become the breaking link yourself. See to it that your person has the best you can give him. None of us are experts. We all are learning. We will be sharpened as we work and learn. Be thorough! If you need to spend more than fifteen months and considerable follow-up with a person, be willing to give it. Make this your primary ministry on earth.

6. PLOD, PLOD, PLOD! The ultimate goal is to reach your area and the world. Pray for the Lord of the harvest to grant us wisdom as we try to keep on schedule. *"The Lord is... not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance."* 2 Peter 3:9

A Summary of an Article by Gordon McDonald on Discipleship Abuse The Discipleship Journal, Issue 30

Gordon McDonald says that in a discipling relationship, there is much potential for harm as well as for good. This is a summary of an article published in 1985.

There are many kinds of abuse known in society today. Child abuse, police brutality, and others. The author speaks of a type of abuse not often spoken of today. We thought this article is appropriate for our discipleship manuals as a warning to the discipler. This is a type of abuse that all of us could be guilty of and we should be aware of it.

1. The danger of corrupted intimacy.

Disciple making or "person growing" is a relationship that has profound intimacy. Be aware that it can become sour and carry much abuse.

2. The five dimensions of discipling.

- The calling/commitment encounter where the relationship begins.
In this period we should not seek to dominate or control a person, but to grow him. This desire to control can happen easily and we should avoid it.
- The mentoring process where learning takes place.
The stated goal of healthy discipleship is to point the person toward spiritual growth that is measured by Christ-likeness. Abuse happens when the person doing the mentoring does it to make the disciple like himself.
- The broadening effort in which the discipler opens new opportuni-

ties by exposing the disciple to responsibilities.

In the broadening effort, there has been much abuse. This happens when the discipler attempts to exercise control of all that the disciple does. The leader feels that he must approve everything. This can happen unnoticed when we pressure the person to do this or that to please us.

- The releasing dimension in which the formal discipling process is terminated.

The releasing/sending period is also a time when abuse can occur. It occurs when the disciple-maker refuses to let go of the disciple. An example in another relationship is that of children and parents. Some parents find it extremely difficult to let their children go.

- The affirming dimension in which the formal discipling becomes long term friendship.

The final stage as discussed by Gordon McDonald is that of confirming affirmation/appreciation. When we are finished with the formal discipling, we should keep in touch rather than to drop out in silence that hurts the new disciple. To simply disappear from the relationship causes much pain and can be abuse.

In each of these dimensions there should be great care shown in order that the process does not become people-crippling.

How to avoid disciple abuse...

- We must realize that the disciple possibly sees much more meaning in your life than you ever realized. You as his discipler have given something that most never get.
- We must remember that we are not out to change people but to grow people; to present every man complete in Christ, Colossians 1:28.
- We must be the temporary conveyer of the words, "well done thou good and faithful servant." Christ will ultimately say this, but in the meanwhile, we must say of them.

A BIBLICAL PROFILE OF A DISCIPLE

Follow-up and Discipleship

- 38 What are We Working Toward
- 39 A Biblical Profile of a Disciple
- 40 Effective Interpersonal Relationships

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to help you understand the term “disciple” and show operationally the distinct characteristics of such a person.



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand that a disciple is more than a believer in Jesus Christ.
2. The disciple will understand that being a disciple involves dedicated discipline and pursuit of the purposes of our Heavenly Father.
3. The disciple will see that discipleship is both an Old and New Testament principle.
4. The disciple will experience a reinforcement of the principles Jesus had in mind for reaching the world.

Scripture Memory

But Jesus said to him, “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and, looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:62



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing
2. Discuss topic for this session.
3. Discuss questions.
4. Interact over the book *Disciples are Made — Not Born*, Leroy Eims.
5. Review Scripture memory.

Making Disciples

- I. The Lord put great emphasis upon teaching and the making of disciples in His Great Commission to the Church. See Matthew 28:19-20.
 - A. Make disciples (more than believers).
 - B. Baptize.
 - C. Teach.
- II. What is a disciple? A learner who submits to discipline, or one who becomes a disciplined learner.
 - A. Must be willing to suffer ridicule, Matthew 10:24-25
 - B. Must be willing to forsake earthly ties, Luke 14:26.
 - C. Must be willing to lay down his life in following Jesus, Luke 14:26.
 - D. Must be willing to forsake things, Luke 14:27.
 - E. Must be willing to continue in His Word, John 8:31.
 - F. Must bear fruit, John 15:8.
 - G. Must be teachable, John 14:26.
 - H. Must be one whose life is characterized by love, John 13:35.
- III. Discipleship is modeled in Paul's ministry with Timothy, 2 Timothy 2:2.
 - A. Commit (entrust) to others what you have heard. The privilege of receiving the Word bears the responsibility of sharing it as well.
 - B. Faithful men are to be involved — not necessarily enthusiastic men, but those who persist.
 - C. They are to be committed with the idea of passing the Gospel on to others, Acts 19: 9-10.
- IV. Moses used this method in the Old Testament, Exodus 18:18, 21, 22.
- V. Christ's relationship with His disciples is a further and brilliant example, John 17.
 - A. He chose a few — twelve.
 - B. He dealt with them on the basis of the Word, John 17:8, and "they received them."
 - C. He prayed for them, John 17:9.
 - D. He invested everything He had in them, John 17:19.
 - E. He devoted all of His time to them, yet one proved to be untrue.
- VI. Hence, if we are going to win men, we are obligated to care for them spiritually, Colossians 1:28-29; John 15:16.

VII. So what is really involved in the making of disciples and caring and nurturing them?

- A. Praying for them, having patience and showing grace toward them.
- B. Giving clear instruction from the Word of God.
- C. Making the teaching practical — teaching them how to do things.

The Essentials of a Reproductive Disciple Making Ministry

WHAT	WHY	EMPHASIS
Evangelizing	<p>God desires that all be saved.</p> <p>1 Timothy 2:4: <i>“Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”</i></p>	Conversion
Establishment	<p>God desires that all grow.</p> <p>Colossians 1:28: <i>“We proclaim Him, admonishing every man, and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.”</i></p>	Christ-likeness
Equipping	<p>God desires that all serve.</p> <p>1 Peter 4:10 <i>“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”</i></p>	Contribution

The following variables are descriptions of a disciple— one who truly follows

*Are you a true
disciple of Christ?*

Jesus.

- I. A disciple is a learner, Proverbs 9:8-10; Matthew 4:19; John 6:60-66. As such, he is open and teachable. He does not have an attitude of “knowing it all.” Learning and growing is a lifetime venture.
- II. A disciple is one who has made a firm commitment to the Lordship of Jesus, putting Him first in every aspect of his life. This commitment is for a lifetime, Matthew 6:9-13, 24, 33; Luke 9:23; John 13:13; 2 Corinthians 5:15.
- III. A disciple is committed to a life of obedience, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:22-5:5.
- IV. A disciple has a daily devotional time and is developing his prayer life, Psalm 27:4; 42:1-2; Mark 1:35; Luke 11:1-4.
- V. A disciple demonstrates faithfulness and a desire to learn and apply the Word of God through hearing it preached and taught, reading it frequently, Bible study, Scripture memory, and meditation on the Scriptures, John 8:31; Acts 17:11; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:15.
- VI. A disciple has a heart for witnessing, gives his testimony clearly, and presents the Gospel regularly with increasing skill, Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:4.
- VII. A disciple is a regular attendee of church services, where his spiritual needs are met, and where he makes a contribution to the body of believers, Psalm 122:1; Acts 16:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 10:25.
- VIII. A disciple fellowships regularly with other believers, 1 John 1:3.
- IX. A disciple is a servant and is actively engaged in helping others in practical ways, Act 6:1-4.
- X. A disciple honors God with his finances, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.
- XI. A disciple practices spirituality and demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit in His life, Galatians 5:22-23.



Worksheet

This is a careful look at Scripture and what it means to be a disciple. You are encouraged to look up the following verses and see the characteristics of a disciple. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus has told us to go into all

the world and make _____. We might look at the word **disciple** itself and see that it is the word from which we get the word _____ pline. Discipling suggests something more active. We are told in 2 Timothy 2:3 to _____ as a good soldier. It is interesting that the word “suffer” is the word *hupomeno*, which means to “bear up under.”

There are many fitting descriptions of a disciple in Scripture. Look up these verses of Scripture and see characteristics of a Biblical disciple. Study each verse carefully and see if you can identify the characteristic of a disciple.

1. Proverbs 9:8-10 say that I will be _____ if I am truly a disciple.

Being **teachable** involves a willingness to submit to another. It acknowledges a need to learn _____ through the fear of the Lord. A disciple, therefore, does not have the attitude of “knowing it all.” He is open and teachable. Jesus said, “_____,” Matthew 4:19.

According to this verse, what is involved in following Him?

In summary, then, a disciple might be called one who is a disciplined _____. Surely, there is a willingness to continue to _____ throughout one’s lifetime, Matthew 11:29.

2. Read John 13:13; 2 Corinthians 5:15; and Luke 9:23. What thread of truth concerning what a disciple is can be found in these verses?

Having thought this through, what can be inferred about the behavior of a disciple that would typify one who is a genuine disciplined learner?

3. Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16, and Matthew 28:18-20 suggests another aspect of a true disciple. See if you can find this characteristic and state it clearly.

What practical steps are you taking in your own life, being a disciple, to fulfill this characteristic of true discipleship? _____

List the names of others you are actively praying for and witnessing to.

If you could not answer the question immediately preceding this, please indicate your reason for not being able to answer.

4. Hebrews 10:25 and Psalm 122:1 indicate that true disciples will be faithful in _____

5. Matthew 10:24 seems to imply that a disciple is a _____ and that as a servant, he is willing to minister in very basic ways. What are some “servant” behaviors you have been willing to do?

See also Acts 6:1-4. _____

6. Luke 14:26 tells us some very difficult things to hear. How do you explain this Scripture in ways that describe a disciple? _____

7. John 13:35 says the mark of discipleship is _____ one another.

What problems do you have loving others?

8. John 8:31 says that a mark of a disciple is one who _____ in the Word. This involves not only study but obedience to the Scriptures.

9. John 15:8 indicates that _____ is a mark of discipleship. What kind of fruit is this? _____

This is one of the chief ways we demonstrate we are His disciples.

10. Acts 11:26 says that disciples were first called _____ at Antioch. What does this indicate concerning being a disciple?

11. Acts 13:52 says that the disciples were filled with _____ and the _____. Does this mean that there is never a lapse in the life of a true disciple? _____ What should a disciple do if he finds himself devoid of joy and lacking the fullness of the Spirit?

See Session 9 on spirituality and meditate on Galatians 5:22-23.

12. 1 Corinthians 16:1,2 tells us that we should _____ and this probably translates itself into a simplicity of life for disciples. Certainly disciples through the centuries have not lived complicated lives, nor have they been tied into the world system. There is a need today to live uncomplicated lives and move toward simplicity. What does Colossians 3:1-3 say to us about simplicity and the urge to have? _____

See also Luke 12:15 and write briefly about what it says concerning the atti-

“He is a fool who is unwilling to surrender that which he cannot keep in order to gain that which he can never lose.”

Jim Elliot—*Through Gates of Splendor* (paraphrased)

tude of us who are His disciples regarding money and earthly possessions.

To be a disciple of Christ is quite different from the walk of most of us in the world. It is choosing to be different. It is intentionally moving toward a different dimension than adjustment to the world-system which is all around us. After doing this session, write some of the most difficult things involved from your standpoint.

For future Scripture memory: Luke 12:15; Colossians 3:1-3; John 15:8; and John 8:31.

“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” Luke 6:46.

Questions for Review and Discussion



1. List some people you know who fit this description of a true disciple?

a. _____	b. _____
c. _____	d. _____

2. What will be the major adjustments in your life related to your becoming a true disciple of the Lord Jesus?

3. Some have considered the cost of discipleship too great. Where are you in relation to this cost? _____

4. Joe desires to go to heaven when he dies. He has come to believe in God, and he goes to church each Sunday morning except when something special comes up. He has said that he doesn't want to "mix his religion" with his daily and weekly activities. Comment on Joe's spiritual condition.



Summary and Key Concepts

Being and making disciples is not an optional decision we make. The imperative of the Great Commission is that, as we are going, to make disciples, baptize them and teach them. We are not to consider bringing Christ into our lives in some incidental way. Choosing to be a disciple is a choice that we commit to in a radical way. Each one of us is in this world to live for Jesus Christ and do His will straight forwardly without reserve. This may bring us to a simple lifestyle with spiritual concerns as our primary focus. We need to remember—our Lord had no place to lay His head.



Life Application

Write a paragraph on how your life is going to be different after this session. Think deeply and speak of how your life's commitments are changing. What aspects of a true disciple seem to be most difficult for you at this point. What are you going to do about these things?

Notes

EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Follow-up and Discipleship:

- 38 What Are We Working Toward?
- 39 A Biblical Profile of a Disciple
- 40 **Effective Interpersonal Relationships**

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help the disciple in his interpersonal relationships.



Objectives

1. The disciple will learn the bases for good interpersonal relationships.
2. The disciple will learn how a good relationship with God enhances our interpersonal relationships.
3. The disciple will learn the importance of good interpersonal relationships to enhance his work with others.
4. The disciple will learn the value of openness.
5. The disciple will learn the relationship between self-concept and good interpersonal relationships.

Scripture Memory

Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

Romans 12:16



Agenda

1. Mutual accountability and prayer.
2. Discuss the questions.
3. Review Scripture memory.
4. Discuss any new terms.

One of the keys to effective discipleship is to be able to relate effectively with others. We all need to develop and upgrade our skills in interpersonal relationships if we are to effectively win, disciple, and train laborers for Christ.



Worksheet

The Bases of Good Interpersonal Relations

Reconciliation

Certain things must be true if quality interpersonal relationships are to be experienced. Romans 15:5-6 says God has granted you to be of _____. John 13:34-35 speaks of having _____. Being of one mind, and loving one another will make for more effective interpersonal relationships. These things will bring about reconciliation of present difficulties and past difficulties. Write in your own words the meaning of reconciliation. See Romans 5:11 and 2 Corinthians 5:19-20. _____

It goes without saying that if God has been able to reconcile you and me to Himself, there is no “problem Christian” against whom I am holding things that makes reconciliation impossible. Reconciliation is one of the bases of good interpersonal relationships.

Dependence, Independence and Interdependence

The above variables are important to consider when we think of close interpersonal relationships. Two of the above are more unhealthy (dependence and independence), while only interdependence is healthy.

1. Dependence is excessive leaning on another person. It implies demanding and taking. When needs aren’t met, we can become very angry if we are dependent. We may create more dependence in another person if we do more than listen to them. Giving lots of advice to a person with problems is really not helping. Rather, I make him dependent upon me.

2. Independence, on the other hand, implies distance, little effort to truly relate, and even aloofness. It says, “My problems are my own business.”

“You deal with yours, I’ll deal with mine.” This is not consistent with good interpersonal relationships.

3. Interdependence is something quite different. It is recognition that someone in difficulty must surely _____, Galatians 6:5. It also is a willingness to stand beside another person and help him in his burden-bearing, Galatians 6:2. I can do this most effectively when I simply listen. Often, however, there are problems in sharing with another.

What Hinders Open Communication With Another Christian?

Write in your own words what you feel are the greatest hindrances to open communication with another Christian.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How can the process of being open with others be facilitated?

1. _____
2. _____

Be sure to give confidentiality and **never** tell another what your disciple shares in private.

Relationship With God and My Interpersonal Relationships

Read the following verses and summarize what they teach about interpersonal relationships.

1. Galatians 5:22-23 _____

2. Romans 12:5 _____

*Be of the same mind
toward one another;
do not be haughty in
mind, but associate
with the lowly.
Do not be wise in
your own estimation.*

Romans 12:16

3. 1 John 3:14 _____

4. Genesis 4:3-8. What was Cain's basic problem? _____

My Unique Way of Seeing Myself and Interpersonal Relations

My self-concept will affect how I relate to others. Self-concept is the organization of all the ways I see myself. Some of these are good and some are not so good.

Some of the effects of a negative self-concept are:

1. I will become easily threatened.
2. I will be less open.
3. I will tend to compare myself with others. What does 2 Corinthians 10:12 say about comparing myself with others?

4. Self-condemnation. Yet I am not condemned as a Christian. Write Romans 8:1.

What is biblical in relation to how I see myself? What should this be like?

Romans 12:3 _____

(This implies neither an under evaluation nor an over valuation. It calls, rather, for a proper evaluation. This is true self-acceptance.)

What Does The Father Think of Me?

1. I am _____, John 1:12.

2. I have been _____, Romans 5:1.

Write in your own words what these mean to you.

3. He has made me a _____, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

4. He considers me to be uniquely _____, Romans 12:3-8.

Openness and Vulnerability

1. Explain what it means to you to be vulnerable and authentic.

2. What qualities are necessary in another person to facilitate your openness? What must be true of them before you will risk yourself with them? _____

3. What is the primary meaning of the word “encourage” in Hebrews 3:12-13? (Check the worksheet on spirituality) _____

4. What are we taught about a teachable spirit in Ecclesiastes 4:13?

5. What reasons might we be hesitant to be open with a brother?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

6. Yet healing comes from _____,
_____, James 5:16a.

7. Acceptance in the secular world is the same as “grace” in the Christian world. What does acceptance mean to you? _____



Questions for Review and Discussion

- 1 When we meet with our disciple, a relationship should develop into something fine and trusting. During such a relationship, Joe who is being disciplined by Bill, senses caring by Bill. Joe has a longstanding problem that he is very sensitive about. He has not broken the law, but he hurts continuously and needs to talk with someone. He finally shares the problem with Bill. Bill, sensing the severity of the difficulty of the problem, goes to a group of people and asks that they pray for Joe. What problems does this cause?

2. What does the Word of God have to say to a Christian who has a generally negative self-concept?

3. John is always sharing his problems with other people. He ultimately gets around to you and unloads on you. What would be your response?

4. How does holding a grudge affect interpersonal relationships? _____

5. List some things that make interpersonal relationships difficult for you.

6. What kind of interpersonal situations are most difficult for you to handle?

7. Describe your own uniqueness in the Body of Christ.

8. React to this statement in as honest a way as you are able. "Once I became a Christian, I have never had a poor self-concept."

9. How can one deal with his feelings of vulnerability in an effective way?

10. Why is simply becoming a Christian inadequate as far as changing one's self-concept is concerned.

11. How can we assist a brother in carrying his burden?



Summary and Key Concepts

In order to be a disciple who is effective in the world, in witnessing, discipling another and in whatever he does, it is important to be effective in interpersonal relationships. This study is one that has emphasized this reality. We are ambassadors for Christ and should represent Him well in this “foreign land” in which we live.

Important variables are dependence, independence and interdependence. We are to work toward being interdependent, which carries with it the idea of autonomy. Dependence and independence are both poor variables for effective interpersonal relationships.

Central in interpersonal relationships is the quality of my self-concept. Self-concept is the organization of all the ways I see myself. It is characterized by stability, as well as fluidity. It is important because I will interpret what goes on around me in my world based on how I see myself. Simply becoming a Christian does not change my self-concept or move it to being more positive. Our Father wants us to see ourselves realistically. He also wants us to move to positive ways of seeing ourselves.

It is important to practice acceptance of others. This is the same as exercising grace toward them. Acceptance is “grace” in action. This acceptance should enable one to become more vulnerable and enter relationships more authentically.

THE NATURE AND BODY OF CHRIST

Importance of the Local Church:

- 41 The Nature and Body of Christ
- 42 My Relationship to the Local Church
- 43 Making Sense of the Church Scene Today

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to focus on the significance of the local church .



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand the true nature of the local body of Christ.
2. The disciple will understand the difference between the church today and the Old Testament saints.
3. The disciple will understand the unique relationship of the church to the Lord Jesus.
4. The disciple will learn the unique mystical union all believers have with each other.
5. The disciple will understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit more clearly.
6. The disciple will understand the implication of membership in the local church body.

Scripture Memory

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13



Agenda

1. Prayer and sharing.
2. Recite memory verses.
3. Review session material
4. Discuss questions.
5. Discuss new terms.

“It is important for everyone to appreciate the place and extreme significance of the Church in the life of a Christian.”

Introduction

It is not uncommon for those who get individual or personal help through discipleship to feel that those from whom they get help are the only ones who really have something worthwhile to say, and that they are the only ones who are doing anything as far as helping spiritual growth is concerned. This is not true, of course. It is important for everyone to appreciate the place and extreme significance of the Church in the life of the Christian. This section is primarily for the purpose of helping and encouraging involvement and commitment to the local body of Christ, which is the expression of the Church on earth—the Church militant!

- I. The meaning of the word "church" is derived from and understood in the light of the original Greek--the word "ekklesia" or "the called out ones." The word never relates to buildings for worship. Nor in a true sense, could "church" ever be a description of a Buddhist organization or an organization like the Unity Society or Christian Science or a lodge.
- II. The nature of the true Church.
 - A. The Church is the mystical Body of believers, 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:13-22, that is brought about through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.
 - B. The Church began on the day of Pentecost. It is a unique Body that did not exist in the Old Testament, and it is unique to this present day.
 - C. The Church is the Bride of Christ, Ephesians 5:30-32.
 - D. The Church expresses itself in local assemblies, Revelation 2, 3.
 - E. It is a Body that transcends all denominational boundaries. Not all church members of any denomination are members of the true Bride of Christ, nor is every true member of the Body of Christ a member of some local denomination. To be a member of the Church—the Bride—the mystical Body, one must have experienced the new birth and the baptism that is the experience of all who have experienced new birth. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.
 - F. To be related to the local church, one must be willing to submit to the pastoral authority of that local body, and to its discipline. Biblical qualifications are the new birth and submission to the authority and doctrine of the body. Every new believer should submit to water baptism, but this is not an absolute condition for local church membership.
 - G. Christ's relationship with the Church. He is the Founder, Matthew 16:18; the Chief Cornerstone, Ephesians 2:20; the Head, Ephesians 5:23; the Savior of, Ephesians 5:23; and the Bridegroom, Ephesians 5:30-32.



Worksheet

This is a brief study to acquaint you with the Church, the Body of Christ. It is hoped that you will leave this study understanding that the Church is a unique organism in the world, certainly of a different nature than a lodge, a philanthropic organization, business organization, or groups like Hindus, Buddhists, Christian Science or the Unity organization.

1. The meaning of the word "church" is important to understand. Because there is no way to teach this in a study other than to just tell you what it means, let us simply define it. It is the word "ekklesia" in the original language and it comes from two words—ek" which is a preposition that means "out of" and "kaleo" which means "to call". Putting them together expresses what the true Church is—a group of "called out ones". It is basically a New Testament organism.

2. When did the Church begin? There is some controversy about this question in the thinking of people today. How did Jesus teach that the Church would originate in New Testament times? Matthew 16:18 _____

3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 2:13-22, and Acts 1 carefully. See if you can answer the following questions from these verses.
 - a. How many Christians are members of the one true Church? _____

 - b. What puts us into the Body of Christ, the Church? _____

 - c. When did the Church begin, and what evidence is there for this? _____

 - d. Which denomination today is the true Church? _____

e. What baptism is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12:13, and when does that baptism take place? _____

f. In your own words, state what you believe the Church is. _____

The Church is a group of "called out" believers who have been placed into one Body by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of their salvation. There is a mystical union of this Body so that similar bonds bind us all together. These bonds transcend denominational boundaries.

4. There is one true Church which is not denominational. That Church is the all-inclusive Body of Christ. But part of that Church is in heaven and the rest of it is on earth.

a. The Church in heaven is called the "church triumphant."

b. The Church on earth is called the "church militant."

c. The Church militant expresses itself in local assemblies. This has been true throughout the church age, Revelation 2, 3. What were the local churches in these two chapters?

d. Write the names of some of the local churches you know of today.

5. Now we want to look at some of the qualifications for membership in New Testament local churches. Read the following verses and write your answer concerning the particular condition for membership.

a. Acts 2:47 _____

b. Acts 2:38-41; Matthew 28:19 _____

c. Acts 2:42 _____

In summary, all who are members of every denomination are not members of the one true Church, nor are all members of the one true Body members necessarily of a local church or denomination. To be a member of the Body of Christ that has mystical union, one must have experienced regeneration and the "one" Baptism (of the Holy Spirit) which puts him into that Body.

6. Now let's spend a few moments looking at Christ's relationship to His Church. From the following verses, write the word that denotes His relationship to the Church.

Matthew 16:18 _____

Ephesians 2:20 _____

Ephesians 5:23 _____

Ephesians 5:23 (again) _____

Ephesians 5:30-32 _____

7. Finally, we want to consider briefly the chief purposes of the true Church in the world as it is expressed in local congregations. From the following verses, what is God's purpose for the Church?

a. Ephesians 1:4-6 _____

b. Ephesians 4:11-15 _____

c. Acts 1:8 _____



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. How does the Church differ from organizations such as the Unity Society, Christian Science, Buddhism, etc.?

2. React to this statement. "I am not going to church. I am going to the place where the Church meets each Lord's Day."

3. What do you feel is involved in the chief mission of the Church on earth?

4. What is the meaning of the last part of Matthew 16:18?



Life Application

Summarize the meaning and significance of the local church in your own life.

MY RELATIONSHIP TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

Importance of the Local Church:

- 41 The Nature and Body of Christ
- 42 My Relationship to the Local Church
- 43 Making Sense of the Church Scene

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help the disciple understand that his relationship with the local church is important and desired by Christ.



Objectives

1. The disciple will understand that the church is the local expression of the body of Christ.
2. The disciple will understand conditions for membership in this local body.
3. The disciple will understand the value of fellowship and his own contribution to the local church.
4. The disciple will understand the value of a united effort on earth to carry out the Great Commission.

Scripture Memory

I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Matthew 16:18



Agenda

1. Mutual sharing and accountability.
2. Prayer.
3. Discuss session material.
4. Share Scripture memory.
5. Discuss possible new terms.

Introduction: You and the Local Church

- I. Every Christian should be a faithful member of a Bible-believing church.
 - A. The Bible teaches it, Acts 2:41,47.
 - B. For the sake of our testimonies we should be united, Romans 12:4-5.
 - C. For the sake of our submission and willingness to submit to the discipline of the body, 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.
 - D. For the sake of our service.
 - (1) The Great Commission was given to the Church, Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.
 - (2) For the basic exercise of our spiritual gifts which enable the Body of Christ to function efficiently, Ephesians 4:7-12.
 - E. For the sake of our sharing, contributing ideas and understanding.
 - F. For the development of support groups and fellowship which we all need in this present evil age.
- II. Every Christian should be faithful in church attendance.
 - A. Scripture command it, Hebrews 10:25.
 - B. Jesus gave us the example during His lifetime, Luke 4:16, 1 Peter 2:21.
 - C. Christ is uniquely present in the midst of the Church, Matthew 18:20.
 - D. Christian fellowship is valuable; we give and receive, Romans 12:12.
 - E. There is power in united prayer, Acts 1:12-14.
 - F. Because of the value of regularly hearing the Word, Romans 10:17.
- III. Conditions for local church membership.
 - A. Regeneration—a true experience of "new birth".
 - B. An open profession of faith—a willingness to make open acknowledgment of Christ, Romans 10:9; Psalm 66:16.
 - C. Evidence in the life and a willingness to submit to the pastoral leadership and authority, 1 Timothy 3-4.



Worksheet

It is extremely important that the disciple be involved in a local church where he can serve and be identified with a body of believers. All too often the church is considered unimportant, or important only in the sense of the importance attached to a school, lodge, or some other organization. This study will deal with the importance and significance of membership in the local church. If you are not already associated in this way with a body of Bible-believing people, we hope you will make it your priority to do so in the near future.

Let's first look at the value of faithful involvement (attendance) in a local assembly. Perhaps the most compelling reason is stated in Hebrews 10:25 where we are encouraged to _____. We might even state that this is more than encouragement. It is a _____. We need to remember that this is a mark of _____ the Savior, John 14:21. Therefore I might say that faithful involvement in a local _____ is a mark of my _____ and therefore of my love for _____.

Another approach to regular involvement can be seen in the example of Jesus. 1 Peter 2:21 tells us that we are _____. Following His example is not an easy thing to do. It can never be done without the Holy Spirit's control of our lives. But there are things we can emulate. What did He do regularly? _____ Luke 4:16. What statement in this verse seems to denote regularity in the attendance at the house of God? _____

Matthew 18:20 speaks of something unique about the gathering of Christians. What is stated about this gathering? _____
 _____ What seems to constitute the conditions for the presence of Christ in a local assembly? See Matthew 18:20 once again. _____. What divine attribute of Christ is taught in Matthew 28:20 _____. What bearing does this have on the statement in Matthew 18:20? _____

*"Come and hear,
all who fear God,
and I will tell what
he has done
for my soul.
Psalm 66:16*

Another aspect of the Christian life is found most fully when we are in relationship with the local body of Christ. Romans 1:12 says that when we are together we are _____ by the faith of each other. This is really nothing more than *koinonia* (fellowship), and we should attempt to help each other experience it in the local _____. If the church serves the purposes destined by Christ, we will experience significant _____ when we meet together as a body of believers called the _____.

Three things take place regularly when the church meets that are essential for continued efficient functioning both personally and corporately. They are found in Acts 1:12-14 and in Acts 20:7. What are these three things?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Both prayer and preaching have power. United prayer is extremely important and the house of God is to be known as a house of _____. Faith comes by _____, and hearing by the _____, Romans 10:17. So regular attendance in the house of God can strengthen our _____.

Conditions for Membership in the Local Church

To be a biblical church, there are certain qualifications necessary for those who are the members. Membership is truly important and biblical. Acts 2:47 states that the Lord _____ to their number _____ those who were being _____. What qualification seems most important in this passage?

Surely if the Church is the Body of Christ, and the local church is a local expression of the Body of Christ, all members need to be "born again". This would infer that regeneration is an absolute necessity for being a member of the _____ and none who have not experienced new birth should be admitted to membership until this experience becomes a reality.

What does Romans 10:9-10 say about our willingness to be open about our relationship with Jesus?

How do we express our willingness to be open about our relationship with Jesus?

What does Psalm 66:16 say we should be willing and able to do? _____

There is one further consideration. There should be a willingness to give testimony to one's faith through _____, Acts 2:41 (See also Acts 2:38). This was baptism following regeneration—baptism that spoke of death, burial, and resurrection. This baptism seems to be by _____, and might be called believer's _____.

To summarize my relationship with a local church, let's look at reasons for involvement once again.

1. To whom was the Great Commission given, Matthew 28:19-20?

2. How can regular participation in the local assembly increase our understanding of the Scriptures, Romans 10:17? _____

3. Who exercises discipline for believers, Titus 1:5-9? _____

4. What does involvement with other believers do for us, Psalm 55:14?

*I also say to you that
you are Peter,
and upon this rock
I will build My church;
and the gates of Hades
will not overpower it.*

Matthew 16:18

5. Regular attendance gives a picture of _____ that Christ prayed for His own in the Garden, John 17:11, 21-23. We are not to be fragmented, but rather one.

Evaluate your relationship with your local church. If you are not attending regularly, plan to do so. Become a member, if that has not already happened. Every believer needs to be active in the local church, which is the expression of the Body of Christ on earth.



Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Analyze the following often given reasons for not being involved and arrange them in rank order in terms of their importance as reasons for continuing to be a non-involved individual. Also, react to each of these excuses in your own words.

- a. "The church has people in its membership who don't live up to what they profess. Most members are hypocrites. "

- b. "I really don't have enough time to do the things I want to do."

- c. "The church wants every member to give money, and I am just not able to do that at this time."

d. "I don't find what the minister is saying really important to me."

e. "I want to be active, and there isn't anything for me to do in the church."

Summary: What are your own attitudes toward baptism and local church membership?

Notes

MAKING SENSE OF THE CHURCH SCENE TODAY

Importance of the Local Church:

- 41 The Nature and Body of Christ
- 42 My Relationship to the Local Church
- 43 Making Sense of the Church Scene Today

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to give the disciple an understanding of the differences between denominations and other groups that assume the name of “church.”



Objectives

1. To understand something about world views and the bases of various groups in the religious world today.
2. To understand that true Christians can be somewhat different in their approaches to certain teachings of the Scripture.
3. To identify some of the approaches that are different from the disciple’s own.
4. To have a beginning of understanding the different systems within the church, and why some are different than yours. This will help to clarify your own belief system.

Scripture Memory

And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Hebrews 10: 24-25



Agenda

1. Mutual sharing and prayer.
2. Discuss the session materials.
3. Scripture memory work.
4. Discuss meaning of new terms.

Introduction

This is an overview of the ecclesiastical scene in our country today. It is not complete with small splinter groups, but it will help you understand some of the terminology used—terminology you will become familiar with if you move in the evangelical church movement today.

Two Main Systems of Thought Among Evangelicals

There are two broad systems of theology held by evangelicals. They are the teachings of John Calvin and those of his student Arminius.

Calvinism

Calvin developed a system of thought that emphasized the sovereignty of God. It can be remembered by the acrostic “T U L I P.” The main points are:

Total Depravity

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Perseverance of The Saints

- A. The total depravity of man carries the idea that man is affected by sin in every area of his life. It does not mean that a man is as sinful as he might be. Man is in the condition of death and is helpless to deal with this condition. He is born a sinner and sins because of his pitiful condition. Scriptures such as Romans 3:23 and Isaiah 53:5-6 speak of this condition.
- B. Unconditional election grows out of this first condition. Man is helpless and God must take the initiative with respect to salvation. He purposes to deal with sinners through His sovereignty. He calls whomever He determines to call according to His foreknowledge of what He will do. If there were no calling from Him, all would be lost.
- C. Limited atonement is a teaching that restricts the benefits of Calvary to the elect. His atonement is limited and efficacious only for the

elect. For other than the elect, Christ's work has no meaning because the propitiatory sacrifice is not for them.

- D. Irresistible grace is the teaching that God's call is always effectual. He is the "hound of heaven" and His Spirit will break down the barriers and reach the hearts of all the elect, bringing them to life and causing them to believe.
- E. Perseverance of the Saints is the teaching that those who have been called will continue steadfast to the end and ultimately be saved. Although one may fall, he will not lie in the lap of carnality but will rise and walk effectually again. He will persist to the end. This is an emphasis on the Lordship of Jesus in the life of a believer. Scriptural passages such as Romans 8:38-39 and 1 John 2:19-20 are used to support these teachings.

Christians are somewhat split on these points, but they are firmly taught by churches that are Reformed in their theology. Presbyterian and Reformed churches, Evangelical Free, Grace Brethren, and a great many Baptists are in this camp. Most Baptists usually accept three of the five points, being somewhat tentative about unconditional election and quite unsure about limited atonement.

Arminianism

Arminius was a student of Calvin. Following Calvin's death, he moved more to the position of the free will of man and away from the sovereignty of God. As time went by, he developed a system held to by Methodists, Holiness and many Charismatics today. The two groups of denominations mentioned here are not exhaustive but rather representative.

The chart on the following page will help you understand approximately where churches are in terms of basic theology. It has been developed on a continuum with the more Calvinistic movements at the top moving toward those which tend to be more Arminian at the bottom.

Please remember that these are general classifications of denominational belief. They in no way reflect the individual positions of a particular local church or individual in that church.

More Calvinistic	Charis- matic	Non- Charismatic	Mixed	Holiness
Reformed		X		
Presbyterians			X	
Plymouth Brethren		X		
Baptists			X	
Grace Brethren		X		
Evangelical Free		X		
Calvary Chapels			X	
Christian & Missionary Alliance		X		
Missionary Baptist Church		X		
Mennonite Brethren		X		
Christian Church		X		
Church of Christ		X		
Evangelical Covenant		X		
Lutherans			X	
Moravians		X		
United Church of Christ		X		
Assemblies of God and Foursquare	X			
Wesleyan Methodists		X		X
Church of God	X			X
Church of the Nazarene		X		X
United Methodists		X		
Salvation Army		X		X
Pentecostal Church of God	X			X
Pentecostal Holiness	X			X
Freewill Baptists		X		
Seventh-Day Adventists		X		
Episcopal Church			X	
Roman Catholic			X	
Less Calvinistic				

Note: Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints and other major cults are also basically "works" oriented.

Some will distinguish between Pentecostals and Charismatics. Both generally accept the position that all of the gifts of the Spirit are available to the church in any age in the same way they were present in the early church.

As a rule, Pentecostals are a denomination, whereas Charismatics cut across most denominational boundaries. Some Charismatics are more Arminian in their theology, and sometimes will hold views concerning the coming of the Lord that uniquely relate to their teaching concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

There are differing positions in terms of the church and the coming of

the Lord and the method of interpreting the Scripture. The major views might be summarized as dispensational and covenant theology, or Pre-millennial or Amillennial.

Then there are global differences stated in terms of basic theological positions that have to do with the miraculous nature of the Scripture as opposed to the rejection of the supernatural. These divisions can be summarized as:

1. The Fundamentalist— accepts the basic teachings of Scripture in a literal and dogmatic way and is somewhat exclusive and separate. The fundamentalist believes in the supernatural, the deity of Jesus, and the authenticity of the Scripture.
2. The Evangelical —accepts the basic teachings of Scripture, generally in a literal sense. The evangelical tends to be more open than the fundamentalists, believes in the supernatural, the deity of Jesus, and the authenticity of the Scripture. The basic difference between evangelicals and fundamentalists is one of attitude.
3. The Liberal —denies the supernatural aspects of Scripture and spiritual life. There is usually a denial of the physical resurrection of Jesus and His miraculous life. If there is belief in life to come, it is often belief that corresponds with Universalism (the doctrine that all will ultimately be saved).

A note regarding the doctrine of "holiness". The holiness doctrine, or complete sanctification, is the teaching that through a post- salvation experience, one is able to attain sinless perfection. Those churches (see preceding chart) marked with an "x" under holiness are those that teach perfection through a second work of grace.

Contemporary Christianity Today

Fundamentalists, Evangelicals and Liberals

In understanding the church scene today, it is best to see churches as in one of the above groups. Although these terms apply basically to Protestants, some overlap into Catholicism.

Fundamentalists

The fundamentalist believes in the dictation theory of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, often stating loyalty to the King James Version of the Bible. The term describes those who believe basic Bible truths that are taught in the Word of God. Two things cause them to differ from evangelicals — they are usually dogmatic about everything they teach and they tend to be militant in

their approach and outlook. Some Baptists, Pentecostals and a few Presbyterians could be termed fundamentalists.

Evangelicals

The beliefs of an Evangelical do not vary much from those of the fundamentalist. Attitude seems to be the biggest difference. Although dogmatic on the distinct basic doctrines of Scripture (see theological hierarchy), they are willing to fellowship with those who are true believers who hold to the fundamentals of the Christian faith. Although there may be difference in certain doctrines they hold to the essentials, where there are no significant differences that would hinder fellowship. Among these one would find Baptist, Evangelical Free, some Presbyterians, Grace Brethren, some Lutherans and some Pentecostals. Some Reformed churches would fit this description, as well as some Catholics and Reformed Episcopalians and others.

Liberals

These churches usually deny the supernatural, the inerrancy of Scripture, many tenets of the historic faith, and tend to preach a social gospel. They would often teach a salvation by works and deny the need for the new birth. A definite need for commitment to Christ as Lord and Savior is not emphasized and often not considered important. Most Methodists, many Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians and, with a few exceptions, the United Church of Christ would be considered liberal today.

Theological Systems Today

We want to go a step further and define systems according to their teaching concerning the millennium. This will help in your understanding of some of the practices in various churches.

The word “millennium” comes from a Latin word which means “a thousand.” It is used to speak of a time recorded in Revelation 20:1-10 when Christ will reign as King over all the earth. During this time, Satan is bound and he is cast into the bottomless pit. This time is accompanied by the resurrection of saints who have died. They reign on earth with Christ for 1,000 years. Teachings about the millennium usually include death, immortality, judgments, and the end of the world as we know it today. It concerns the chronology of coming events that involve the human community on earth. There are three views or approaches that are central in the consideration of theological approaches.

Premillennialism

The premillennialist believes the coming of the kingdom of Christ will be brought about by sudden cataclysmic events that involve the personal return of Christ to earth. This return will be preceded by signs such as wars, earthquakes, a great departure from the faith, the restoration of Israel to the land, and the appearance of the anti-Christ. The time will be a period of peace and righteousness when Christ will rule with His saints on earth from Jerusalem. This rule is established suddenly through supernatural methods and the Jewish nation will be restored to Christ's favor as described in Romans 11.

Two approaches are held by premillennialists.

Historic Premillennialism holds the view concerning the end time as follows. The church is the initial phase of Christ's kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament. The church may win some victories, but it will ultimately fail and become corrupt as world-wide evil increases. The church will go through the tribulation (Jacob's Trouble) which will be the end of contemporary history. Christ returns at the end of the great tribulation, conducts the Bema, fights Armageddon, binds Satan and establishes a worldwide kingdom with Satan bound and in the bottomless pit.

At the end of this period, Satan is loosed and there is a huge battle with God intervening. The resurrection of the lost with their judgment takes place and the eternal order begins.

Leading individuals who espouse this view included Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Erdman, Godet, Torrey, Ladd and J. Barton Payne.

Dispensational Premillennialism teaches that Christ's offer to the Jews of the Davidic Kingdom was rejected and therefore postponed until the future. The church is a parenthesis with different programs for Israel and the Church. Toward the end time, there will be a turning from correct doctrine.

The return of Christ is in two phases. The first phase is the rapture of the church. The second phase is to establish a literal kingdom that will be ruled from Jerusalem for 1,000 years. Satan is bound for this time and he cannot oppose God or the saints. Another way to speak of His coming is to say He is first coming "for" His saints and secondly, with the saints. Satan is released at the very end of the 1,000 year period of time.

When Satan is loosed, he attacks Christ and His saints. Jesus calls down judgment from heaven. The second resurrection takes place (the resurrection of the lost), and the judgment of these unbelievers at the Great White Throne will end all time.

Advocates of these concepts include Barnhouse, Darby, Geisler, Ironsides, Ryrie, Pentecost, Walvoord, Swindoll and others. The release of the Scofield Bible in the early part of the twentieth century was the instrument

that resulted in these ideas being widespread.

Amillennialism

Another system that takes a different view of the millennium is called amillennialism. The augment “a” means no literal millennium. The kingdom is simply spiritualized. There will be no literal reign of Christ on earth. The major principles of this system are:

The church is the kingdom era prophesied in the Old Testament. Therefore, Old Testament and New Testament saints are all one body. In most forms of amillennialism, infant baptism brings children into a covenant relationship with God.

Christ reigns in the hearts of believers and inasmuch as He does, there will be an influence on culture. Toward the end of the growth of evil, the personal anti-Christ and great tribulation will come. Christ will then end history by His return. Judgment will bring about the eternal reward of the saints.

Advocates of these concepts and approaches include Berkouwer, J. Adams, Hoekema, Walke, and Boettner. Most Reformed theologians hold to these approaches.

Postmillennialism

This is the third approach that is somewhat less popular than the former two. The main teachings of this system are:

The messianic kingdom was founded on earth during the ministry of Christ. The church became the Israel of God. The kingdom is redemptive and spiritual rather than physical. It exercises transformational influences in history and will gradually expand without Christ’s presence on earth. Fulfilling the Great Commission succeeds in the Christianizing of the entire world, after which Christ will return.

Those who have advocated these positions were Augustine, Calvin, Eusebius, Machen, Hodge and Strong. Differences are not only in belief about the millennium but also in the nature of the church and the restoration of Israel.

Additional Differences

We have covered a brief description of some of the differences. There are a few more distinct differences that result from interpretive methods and systems.

Hermeneutics is the science of biblical interpretation. This science dif-

fers among various systems in that while Dispensationalists tend to be futurists and interpret the Scriptures literally and at face value, covenant theology (amillennialist) tends to see things allegorically. Major differences of belief that are rooted in methods of interpreting Scripture involve the judgments, the church, the return of Christ and the meaning of baptism.

In spite of these differences, amillennialists, premillennialists, and post-millennialists are counted as evangelicals and/or fundamentalists. There is a firm holding of the fundamentals of the faith and sound doctrine.

For additional information read Introduction to Dispensational Teaching, in the Appendix.

Notes