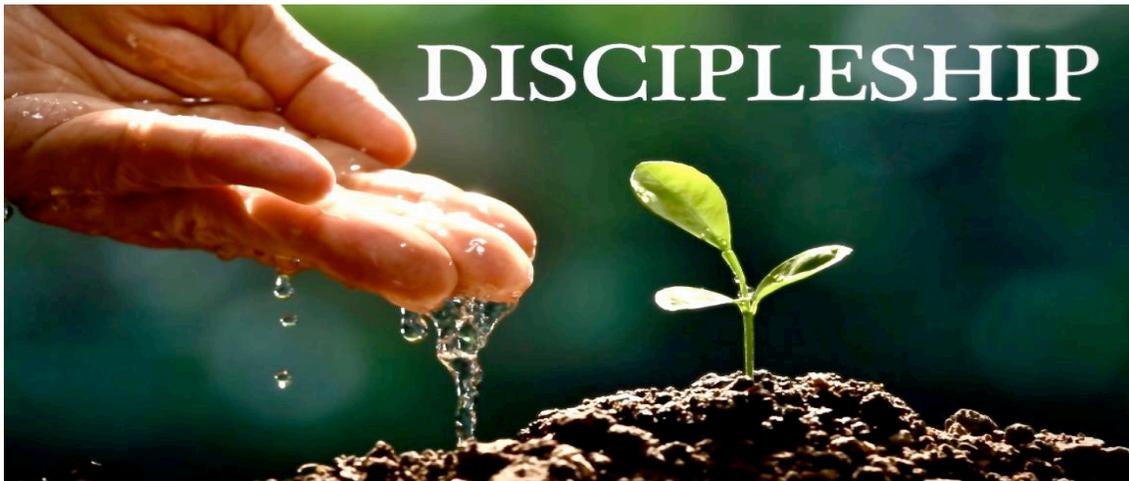


“Christ Follower”

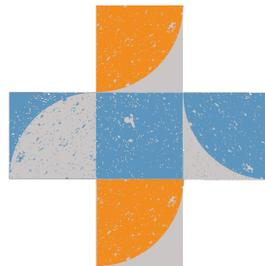
UNASHAMED

Discipleship For Life



A Life For Discipleship

• CORE TWO •



Set Free Ministries

Jesus... nothing more, nothing less!

• Student •

www.SetFreeCollege.org

“Christ Follower”

UNASHAMED

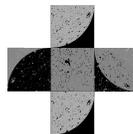
“The School of Jesus”



Meaning of Christ Follower

*A follower of Jesus Christ
One who belongs to and is devoted to Jesus Christ
To be Christ-like*

*A Mind through which Christ Thinks
A Voice through which Christ Speaks
A Heart through which Christ Loves
A Hand through which Christ Helps*



Set Free Ministries

Jesus... nothing more, nothing less!

“Christ Follower”

UNASHAMED

BIBLE STUDY

Everything we do at Set Free Ministries is a direct result of God’s influence in others, in us, and many times through us. Much of what we prepare as Bible Studies, teachings, and writings are a direct result of these great men and women of God and their influence in our lives.

What we do, teach, write and share is a reflection of the influence of other authors in and through us. Amen!

Our prayer is that through these Bible Studies, *you will find more hope and faith in the One Who is faithful, Jesus Christ.* He is the Giver, and we are the receivers.

May God Bless you as you are a blessing to others...

Tim

Pastor Dr. Tim Parker and the team at Set Free!
www.SetFreeCollege.org

FOR THIS BIBLE STUDY WE WILL BE USING
THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATIONS OF THE
WORD OF GOD.

- **New American Standard Bible (NASB)**

New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

- **New International Version (NIV)**

Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

- **Amplified Bible (AMP)**

Copyright © 2015 by The Lockman Foundation, La Habra, CA 90631. All rights reserved.

- **Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)**

Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation

So, What's Next?

There are a few things that a New Believer or Follower of Jesus Christ should do right away.

- First, thank Jesus Christ for saving you.
- Next, tell someone that you have made a decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Savior, Lord and Master.
- Now, get baptized (full water submersion). Baptism is an outward expression of an inward change. We get baptized out of obedience to God and to share with family, friends and the rest of the world that we are now a child of God. We have accepted Jesus Christ into our life and He has completely changed us and filled us with His Holy Spirit.

In **1 Corinthians 5:17** it says, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”* Part of the new is being baptized.

As we work through this Bible Study, we will identify other things that will happen because you have given your life to Jesus Christ.

Through this Bible Study, all of us will grow together in our Faith and Trust in Jesus Christ. Thank you for taking this journey with us!

MEMORIZE THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES

2 TIMOTHY 1:8 (AMP)

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord or about me His prisoner, but with me take your share of suffering for the gospel [continue to preach regardless of the circumstances], in accordance with the power of God [for His power is invincible]...

- Be Bold In Christ •

HEBREWS 6:1 (NASB)

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching (the beginning Word) about the Christ (the Messiah), let us press on to maturity (perfection), not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God...

- Grow in Maturity •

“Christ Follower”

UNASHAMED

“The School of Jesus”

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 What are the next steps for a new believer?	Page 8
Chapter 2 What is a Disciple of Jesus?.....	Page 23
Chapter 3 Ten Bible verses about making disciples	Page 46
Chapter 4 The Joy of the Lord.....	Page 68
Chapter 5 What is the doctrine of the Trinity?	Page 85
Bibliography	Page 100

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS AS A NEW BELIEVER?⁽¹⁾

<https://www1.cbn.com/new-horizons-life-new-believer>

"Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths." - Micah 4:2

Where New Horizons Begin

When you asked Jesus into your life, you probably prayed something like this:

"Jesus, I ask you to come into my life. I want to turn from sin and living my life under my own control. Come now and live your life in me. Forgive me and cleanse me from my sins. I receive you as my Lord and my Savior. I will live for you and serve you all the days of my life. Amen."

Has the reality of what you did sunk in yet?

What really did happen when you asked Jesus to come into your life?

What's Real

You're Forgiven! You're starting fresh!

The first thing God did when you made Jesus Christ your Savior was wipe the slate clean.

What was wiped away? Sin -- your disobedience to God, which would have separated you from Him forever. Everything you have ever done to offend God has been erased! Your failures have been forgiven!

How can this be? Because when Jesus died on the cross, He paid the penalty for all your sins -- past and future.

Of course, God doesn't want you to sin anymore. He has put His Holy Spirit in you to give you the desire and the ability to overcome sin. But if you should fall short, just admit to Him your failure and turn away from sin. By doing this, every day can be a fresh start!

"I didn't feel the impact of my prayer until the next day. I was driving when the thought hit me, 'I now have a heavenly Father who won't ever leave me like my real father did!' God had filled a void I didn't even know was there." -- Mark

God's Child

You've been "born again" into God's family.

When you accepted Jesus' payment for your sins, God's Holy Spirit came into you and made you spiritually alive! That's what it means to be born again.

Think of the awesome privilege of just being in your new family!

Scientists try to discover the secrets of nature -- but HE made it all. And this very same Being -- God Almighty -- says He is your Father!

The apostle John was overwhelmed by this. He spoke for all of us when he exclaimed, *"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).*

Your new Father has already made provisions for the rest of your life.

He has given you His Word, the Bible, to show you how to "grow up" in your new life with Him. He has issued an open invitation to come and talk to Him regularly in prayer. And He has created a family of brothers and sisters -- fellow Christians who will encourage you.

"My biggest question was where would I go when I died. When I prayed it was like the heavens opened. And such incredible peace and joy flooded my room." -- Ken

Eternal Life

You will live in God's loving presence forever!

One of the most wonderful gifts God gives His children is eternal life with Him. When you leave this life through physical death, immediately you will be with Him in a glorious new life in heaven.

But the full, abundant life God gives you doesn't start when you die. *It starts right now!*

Before you gave your life to Jesus, it was like you were traveling alone, doing your best to find the right path. You had no map and most of the time you walked in dense fog. Whether you realized it or not, you weren't sure where you were going with your life -- or even exactly where you were.

But God knows. And his plans for your life include a specific, eternal purpose, one only you can fulfill.

Each day, let God guide your way. His route will be perfect for you. With Him in control, you will discover a peace that is beyond all understanding in this life. And you'll have the joy of knowing you will be with Him forever.

"When I prayed I didn't feel a thing. I thought something was supposed to happen -- but nothing did. Afterwards I got depressed and felt like God had totally rejected me. The next day I called a Christian friend. She said, 'How does it feel to be a Christian?' It clicked in me. 'I AM a Christian!' But still I didn't feel anything. Over the next weeks and months as I started spending time praying and reading the Bible, I started growing in my faith." -- Kim

You really ARE starting on a new life with God, but what's next?

Fitness for the Climb

God promises you that as you come to Him, He will teach you His ways. However, there are certain things you need to do. These are practical steps that draw you to God and allow Him to teach you.

1. Prayer

Talk to God

Most citizens of a country do not have access to its leader. But God's sons and daughters do have access to Him. Through Jesus Christ you have access to the throne of the King of kings any time you need it.

You actually have the right to come before the Ruler of the Universe and visit with Him; to share with Him your intimate thoughts, desires and fears. After all, you're His child.

Talk to Him. That's what prayer is -- simply talking to your heavenly Father.

You don't have to be on your knees or in a church when you talk to God. You can pray anywhere.

You can talk to God in the midst of your daily activities, but you also need to set aside a quiet time free of distractions to be alone with Him every day.

Use this time to read His Word, the Bible, and to talk to Him. As you do this, you will begin to grow in your new life with God.

Jesus taught us how to pray

One of Jesus' followers asked Him how to pray. He responded by sharing what is called The Lord's Prayer. This was not meant to be recited over and over with no thought to the words. Rather, it's a guide to help us know the kinds of things we can and should talk with God about on a regular basis. Use it as a guide for prayer in the quiet time you set apart each day to get to know God.

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.

Remind yourself that He is your Father. But He is also Holy, and we need to worship Him. As we focus on who He is, it gives us a proper perspective for the rest of our prayer.

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

Next, ask God for HIS plan and HIS will to be done in your life. Ask for His will to be done in the lives of your family and friends, too. This is the most loving, caring prayer you can pray for them.

GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

Now ask Him to meet your needs for today. If you have a special need, ask Him for it.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS.

Give to God any hurt you have received from anyone. Forgive those who have wronged you. And ask God to forgive you where you have failed.

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE.

Ask God to protect you from the temptations and attacks that come from the world, the flesh, and from evil spiritual forces (Satan).

FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER. AMEN.

Conclude as you began your prayer, in worship, acknowledging that all belongs to God.

2. Bible Reading

Find out what God says

The Bible is the main way God has chosen to tell us about Himself.

It's also the main way God has chosen to tell us about ourselves -- who we are, His promises to us for now and for the future, and how we are to live successfully.

More than 30 men wrote the Bible over a period of time from about 1400 B.C. up to approximately A.D.90. These men wrote chronicles of history, poetry, letters to other people, and more. But each one wrote as he was inspired in a special way by the Holy Spirit.

Though written as 66 individual works, they fit together as a comprehensive whole -- the Bible, God's Word to us.

Learning what God says in the Bible is a very important part of your new life.

How to Read the Bible

Find a Bible that is easy for you to read.

The Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek. Today you can choose from a number of different English translations.

You may find the everyday language in the New Living Translation (The Book), the New King James Version, and New American Standard Version of the Bible comfortable to read.

Start reading!

The book of John is a good place to start. You may want to follow it with the book of Luke, the book of Acts, and then the rest of the New Testament.

First, read each passage or book like you would anything else.

You may want to begin by first reading a book of the Bible straight through from beginning to end.

Then go back and read it again more closely. What does each passage say about God? What does it say about you?

Ask God to show you how various passages apply to your life.

"A man who loves his wife will love her letters and her photographs because they speak to him of her. So if we love the Lord Jesus we shall love the Bible because it speaks to us of Him." -- John R.W. Stott

3. Fellowship

Join with other born-again Christians

God has just plugged you into the most spiritually-powerful entity on earth -- the Church.

When you gave your life to Jesus Christ you became a vital part of God's family. And there's more to God's family than most people ever imagine!

One of the images the Bible uses to describe God's family -- the Church -- is a body. The Bible says Jesus is the head and each person who has truly given his or her life to Jesus makes up a part of the body. Everyone is dependent on others -- and everyone has something to contribute to the entire body.

You receive strength and encouragement from others in the Church. But you also give something vital to the whole. That's one reason why local church involvement is so important -- and why the Bible says not to neglect meeting together.

But the church does more than help the individual members. Together, as members of one body, the Church has tremendous spiritual power against the evil in this world.

How to Find a Good Church

First, ask the Lord to guide you.

Look for a church where the people love Jesus Christ and serve Him as Lord, and where the doctrine, teaching, and practice of that church are in accordance with the Word of God.

Beware of churches that:

- Place Jesus Christ as less than or not equal to God the Father;
- Revere a book other than or in addition to the Bible;
- Place an undue emphasis on one person, leader, or founder;
- Emphasize salvation by works rather than as a free gift through faith; and
- Control members and require service to the organization or leader rather than voluntary service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Responsibilities as Part of God's Family

God intends for you to contribute to the family of God in a unique way. Along with fulfilling your unique role, you -- and every other member of God's family - - have a responsibility to:

1. Draw close to God through prayer, Bible study and fellowship. Only then will you recognize and use the gifts God has given you in the ways God intended -- to make an eternal difference in the lives of others.
2. Pray for your church, your pastor, other believers, and people who need to give their lives to Jesus -- both locally and worldwide.
3. Give of your time and talents. Participate in at least one ministry activity through your church or a ministry. It may be stuffing envelopes, or sharing Jesus on the street. As you give of yourself, you will be blessed and will continue to grow in your relationship with God.

4. Give of yourself materially. The Bible teaches that we should give at least a tenth of all we receive to Him. Giving him the first 10 percent is our recognition that all we have comes from God.

TEST - CHAPTER ONE

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS AS A NEW BELIEVER?

1. Where do we find in scripture, *“So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord or about me His prisoner, but with me take your share of suffering for the gospel [continue to preach regardless of the circumstances], in accordance with the power of God [for His power is invincible]...”*

2. When you asked Jesus into your heart what did you say?

3. What really did happen when you asked Jesus to come into your life?

4. What was the first thing God did when you made Jesus Christ your Savior?

5. What was wiped away?

6. How much of what you had done wrong against God in the past has been erased?

7. What has happened with your failures?

8. How can this be?

9. Of course, God doesn't want you to do what anymore?

10. What has God put into you to give you the desire and the ability to overcome sin?

11. But if you should fall short, what should you do?

12. By doing this, every day can be what?

13. You have been “what” into God’s family?

14. What happens when you accepted Jesus' payment for your sins?

15. Think of the awesome_____of just being in your new_____!

16. The apostle John was overwhelmed by this, what was it?

17. Where is this verse found in Scripture?

18. What has your new Father already made provisions for?

19. What has He given you?

20. Why has he given you the Bible?

21. He has issued an open invitation to come and do what with Him on a regular basis?

22. And He has created a family of brothers and sisters -- fellow Christians who will do what with you?

23. You will live in God's loving presence for how long?

“ _____ ”

24. What is one of the most wonderful gifts God gives His children?

25. When you leave this life through physical death, how soon will you be with Him in a glorious new life in heaven?

26. When does the abundant life God gives you start?

27. Before you gave your life to Jesus, it was like you were doing what?

28. But God knows. And his plans for your life includes what?

29. What will God do each day?

30. His _____ will be _____ for you.

31. With Him in control, what will you discover?

32. And you'll have the _____ of knowing you will be with Him _____.

33. What does God promise you will happen as you come to Him?

34. However, there are certain _____ you need to do. These are _____ steps that _____ you to God and allow Him to _____ you.

35. Most _____ of a country do not have _____ to its leader. But God's sons and daughters do have access to _____. Through _____ Christ you have access to the throne of the _____ of kings _____ time you need it.

36. You actually have the right to come before the Ruler of the Universe and visit with Him; _____, _____ and _____. After all, you're His child.

37. What is prayer?

38. Where can you pray?

39. When can you pray?

40. Use this time to _____ His Word, the _____, and to _____ to Him. As you do this, you will begin to _____ in your new life with God.

41. Who taught us to pray?

42. One of Jesus' followers asked Him how to pray. Jesus responded by sharing what is called...?

43. This prayer was not meant to be what?

44. Rather, it's a guide to what?

45. Use it as a _____ for prayer in the _____ time you _____ apart
_____ day to get to _____ God.

46. **OUR FATHER IN _____, _____ BE YOUR NAME.**

47. Remind yourself that He is your But He is also _____, and
we need to _____ Him.

48. As we focus on who He is, it gives us something. What is it?

49. _____ **KINGDOM COME, _____ WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT
IS IN HEAVEN.**

50. Next, ask God for what?

51. Ask for His will to be done in the lives of whom?

52. _____ **US _____ OUR _____ BREAD.**

53. Now ask Him to meet your needs for what?

54. _____ **US OUR _____, AS _____ ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN
OUR _____.**

55. Give to God _____ hurt you have received from
those who have _____ you. And ask God to forgive _____ where
_____ have failed.

56. **AND _____ US NOT INTO _____, BUT _____
US FROM THE _____ ONE.**

57. Ask God to protect you from what?

58. **FOR _____ IS THE _____ AND THE _____ AND THE _____**
_____ . AMEN. _____ as you began your
prayer, in _____, acknowledging that _____ belongs to _____.

59. What is the main way God has chosen to tell us about Himself?

60. The Bible is also the main way God has chosen to tell us about what?

61. More than how many men wrote the Bible?

62. The Bible was written over a period of time from about what timeframe?

63. These men wrote chronicles of _____, poetry, and _____ to other
people, and more.

64. But each one wrote as he was what?

65. How many books are there in the Bible?

66. How important is learning what God says in the Bible?

67. What kind of Bible should you find?

68. The Bible was originally written in two languages, what were they?

69. There are three Bible translations mentioned, name them.

70. Where is a good place to start reading in the Bible?

71. How should you read each passage or book?

72. What does _____ passage say about _____? What does it say about _____?

73. Ask God to show you how various passages apply to what?

74. What is the most spiritually-powerful entity on earth?

75. You become something when you gave your life to Jesus Christ. What did you become?

76. What is one of the images the Bible uses to describe God's family -- the Church?

77. Who does the Bible say is the head of the body?

78. The Bible says everyone is dependent on _____ - and everyone has something to contribute to _____.

79. You receive _____ and _____ from others in the Church. But you also _____ something vital to the _____. That's one reason why local church _____ is so important -- and why the Bible says _____ to neglect _____ together.

80. But the church does _____ than help the _____ members. _____, as members of one body, the Church has _____ spiritual power _____ the evil in this _____.

81. Look for a church where the _____ love _____ Christ and serve _____ as Lord, and where the doctrine, _____, and practice of that church are in _____ with the _____ of God.

82. Beware of churches that:

- Place Jesus Christ as _____ than or not _____ to God the Father;
- _____ a book _____ than or in _____ to the Bible;
- Place an _____ emphasis on one person, _____, or founder;
- Emphasize salvation by _____ rather than as a _____ gift through _____; and
- Control members and _____ service to the _____ or leader rather than _____ service to the Lord _____ Christ.

83. How does God intend for you to contribute to the family of God?

84. How do you draw close to God?

85. Who should we pray for?

86. Give of your _____ and _____.

87. How should you give of yourself?

88. The Bible teaches that we should give at least a _____ of all we receive to Him. Giving him the _____ 10 _____ is our _____ that we have comes from God.

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS? ⁽²⁾

By: Hans Kvalbein

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/go-therefore-and-make-disciples-the-concept-of-discipleship-in-the-new-testament/>

The great commission in **Matthew 28:18–20** has a magnificent structure. It starts with a declaration of power: ‘All authority ... has been given to me’. It sounds like the enthronement of a king. This powerful king has an important message to his people. The message consists of two sentences. *The first is an order*: ‘Go therefore and make disciples ...’. *The second is a promise*: ‘And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.’

The order Jesus gives his disciples is longer and has a more complicated structure than the first and last sentence of the great commission. In the Greek text the main verb is ‘make disciples’. This main verb is supported by three participles: ‘going’, ‘baptizing’ and ‘teaching’. The main verb describes the aim of the work of the disciples. The participles describe the means to reach this aim. The disciples are asked to make disciples by going out, by baptizing and by teaching.

The structure of the great commission can be summarized as follows:

I.	Declaration of power	All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me.
II.	Commission	Therefore go and
	a) goal	<i>make disciples</i> of all nations
	b) means	<i>baptizing</i> them in the name of the
		Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and
		<i>teaching</i> them to obey everything I have

		commanded you.
III.	Promise	And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

In this article I want to concentrate on the main verb in the great commission. What does it mean to ‘make disciples’ or to be a disciple? Very much has been said and written on the other parts of this basic text for the understanding of the mission of the church. Books and articles on Christology deal with the character of Jesus’ authority as described in the NT. The command to ‘go out’ has been a main concern in the missiology, defining mission as crossing borders in order to proclaim the gospel for people who still have not heard it. Lots of research has been done on the meaning of baptism and on the question of basic teaching of Christian faith. The promise of Jesus has been the center of innumerable devotions and meditations to encourage believers in an age of indifference and resistance to the gospel.

By comparison with these elements of the great commission, very little has been said and written on the meaning of the main element of this command from the risen Lord. The biblical concept of discipleship has in our church tradition been replaced by other concepts and other words. Perhaps we might learn something about our position as Christians by *considering again what it meant to be a disciple in the time of Jesus and in the early church*. Jesus’ call to discipleship is a challenge to modern men and women—and to our traditional church life and Christian life-style.

I will put my points in the form of 13 theses with some comments added. I start with some linguistic observations.

1. ‘Disciples’ was the first name for the Christians

The Greek word *mathētēs*, pl. *mathētai*, is used about the church in Jerusalem, **Acts 6:1**, and in Ephesus, **Acts 19:9**. In **Acts 11:26** we find a very interesting sentence: ‘In Antioch the *disciples* were for the first time called *Christians*.’ From this we learn that the word we use most often, ‘Christians’, was not the first name for this new group. They were first simply called the ‘disciples’. This makes it clear that the group consisted of the first followers of Jesus during his ministry in Galilee and Judea, and that the newcomers to the group regarded their relationship to the risen Lord Jesus in some way similar to the relationship of the first disciples to the earthly ‘rabbi’ Jesus.

2. The verb *mathēteūo*, ‘make disciples’, is seldom used in the NT and has different meanings

The use of this verb in **Acts 14:21** is most close to the use in the great commission: Paul and Barnabas visited Derbe, where they ‘preached the gospel and *made many disciples*’. The preaching of the gospel is here the means to make disciples, corresponding to ‘baptizing’ and ‘teaching’ in the great commission.

A striking parallel to the great commission is found in **John 4:1**, where ‘baptizing’ is the means to ‘make disciples’ (here not expressed by the verb *mathēteuo*, but by the expression *poiei mathētas*) during the earthly ministry of Jesus. We cannot discuss this passage at length here. In my opinion it shows that the continuity between the followers of John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus is somehow the key to the question of the origin of Christian baptism. The Great Commission itself has not the form of an institution of baptism as a new ritual, as it is traditionally understood in many churches. It refers to baptism as a well-known act of initiation.

In **Matthew 27:57** Joseph from Arimathea is described as a person who had ‘been made a disciple’. But we don’t learn anything about the character or the conditions for his discipleship.

Very special is the context of the verb in **Matthew 13:52**: ‘a scribe who *has been trained for the kingdom of Heaven*’. Normally the word ‘scribe’ refers to opponents of Jesus. But here it is used positively of his adherents. The ‘training’ for the kingdom refers to some ‘school’ activity among Jesus and his followers similar to the teaching activity of the Jewish scribes. The saying must refer to a special group of teachers in the Jesus group who had functions similar to the scribes. The children of the kingdom can be described as a ‘school’ with ‘scribes’.

This leads us to the basic meaning of the word ‘disciple’ in the NT:

3. ‘Disciple’ (*mathētēs*) means ‘learner’, ‘student’. For his adherents Jesus alone is Teacher and Master, Rabbi. A Christian is always and only a student in relation to Jesus

The highest hope of a student in a rabbinic ‘school’ was to become a rabbi like his own teacher. The rabbis tried to educate disciples that in their turn might become rabbis and pass the traditions on to new disciples who could become teachers for still a new generation. This was the basic pattern for the Jewish, rabbinic tradition. It was a great honor to become a rabbi, and the position as a disciple of a famous rabbi gave the possibility to advance to be a famous rabbi yourself.

The relationship of Jesus to his disciples was different. Jesus had a unique position that could not be transferred to his disciples. ‘But you are not to be called “Rabbi”, for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth “father”, for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called “teacher”, for you have one Teacher, the Christ’ (**Matthew 23:8–10**). This text shows very clearly that the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is compared to teacher and pupils in a school. But it also very clearly shows the

difference. It is necessary to have a teaching function in the church. There are 'scribes trained for the kingdom of Heaven'. But these scribes or teachers have no special position in relation to Christ. He is always the supreme teacher. Basically all members of a church or a theological seminary are fellow students in the school of Jesus. In this respect there is no difference between pastor and layman or between professor and student.

The name 'disciples' reminds us that the church from the beginning was the '**school of Jesus**'. Therefore the teaching function must be very important in the church. But the only real teacher is Jesus himself. The church is basically a fellowship of his students.

4. A disciple learns by (a) hearing his Master, and (b) doing like his Master

Our modern word 'teacher' is often associated with a person involved mainly in theoretical instruction. But it may also imply practical training. A teacher of a handicraft should have the skill to do the work in a way that the learner can imitate. In the activity of Jesus as a teacher we find his disciples both learning by hearing and learning by doing.

The Sermon on the Mount describes a typical situation of Jesus as a teacher. Jesus is sitting, like the preacher in the synagogue, and he teaches his disciples by talking to them (**Matthew 5:1-2**). Their activity is listening and memorizing his words. A similar situation is described in **Luke 10:38-42**. Mary takes the position of a disciple listening to the teacher. Martha is not rebuked for worldly worries, and not at all for her activities in the kitchen *per se*, but for neglecting the instruction of Jesus as rabbi. Compared to his contemporaries Jesus was quite radical when he in this way included women among his disciples. Many times in the gospels we meet Jesus preaching the gospel and teaching in the synagogues and in public places, discussing with his disciples and with his adversaries in order to instruct them about the will of God and about the gospel of the kingdom. In all these situations the disciples are learning by listening to their Master.

Less obvious are the many references to the disciples when they are learning by doing. But the Sermon on the Mount and the many stories about Jesus' healings are in fact followed by an instruction for the disciples to do the same as their Master: to preach the message of the kingdom and to heal the sick (**Matthew 10:7-8**). The total mission of the disciples is in this way put under the heading: They should do like their Master. Jesus is an example to be imitated by his disciples.

This is stated explicitly in the story about the washing of the disciples' feet: 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you' (**John 13:13-15**). This symbolic act points to the death of Jesus. His real service for his disciples is his death for them. He is the kernel of wheat that falls to the ground and dies in order to bear a rich fruit (**John 12:24**). As an atoning death for the many, the death of Jesus is

unique and cannot be imitated. But as an example of selfless service and unlimited love it has set a standard for the life of his followers. 'Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (**Matthew 20:26–28**).

These words correspond to the way Jesus is preached as an example for his followers in the early church. The epistles never encourage the believers to imitate some specific action of Jesus' public ministry or some special aspect of his personality. Jesus is referred to as an example because of his incarnation and his death. These show his humility, love and radical readiness to serve others, and this is applied as a call to Christian people to tolerate and honor each other (**Phil. 2:1–11**), to share money with each other (**2 Cor. 8:7–9**), to suffer unjustly if necessary for the gospel (**1 Peter 2:18–25**), or to help brothers in material need (**1 John 3:16–18**). In this way Jesus is seen as a teacher not only through his words, but also through his actions. He doesn't only give a 'doctrine', but also a new self-understanding and a new life-style to be preserved by his followers.

To be a disciple of Christ in this way is therefore not only a matter of 'inner' qualities like faith and convictions. It concerns our whole life in word and deed.

5. The disciples are chosen by Jesus

This thesis is very short, but very important. Normally a student is the one who chooses his teacher. He can come and ask for a place in a school or he can go to another. This was not the way of Jesus. He called his disciples to follow him. The stories of Jesus calling his disciples are well known. The disciples could only give an answer to his initiative. They left everything behind and followed him. But they might also have said 'no' to his call. The rich man was called to follow Jesus, but he 'went away sad'. A man can answer the call, but only Christ himself can call to discipleship. According to **John 15:16**, this was important: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit.'

This corresponds to Jesus' unique character and to the unique character of the church. He has chosen the disciples in a way similar to the way God chose Israel to be the blessed people and to be a blessing for others. They are not chosen because of their own abilities, but by his grace alone. The disciples should not thank their own deliberation and decisions for the privilege of being his disciples, but his undeserved choice.

6. In the earthly ministry of Jesus we should distinguish between the disciples in a narrow sense—those who literally followed Jesus—and a broader group of adherents and sympathizers

Luke 10:5–7 gives an interesting picture of the way the disciples were sent out by Jesus. They had no money, no extra shoes or clothes, and they were sent from village to village in order to preach the gospel. In other words, they were totally dependent on the hospitality of the people they met. They were in no way beggars, but they expected to be supported by those who received their message. They brought the

good message of the kingdom, and they received food and shelter. The people receiving them were not made disciples in the narrow sense of 'people who followed Jesus and served him full-time'. But through their hospitality they did not only receive the messengers and their message, but Jesus himself (**Luke 10:16; Matthew 10:40–42**). They belonged to a broader group of adherents and sympathizers. Without such a group of supporters who did *not* leave their homes to follow Jesus, the ministry of Jesus and his disciples would have been impossible. Jesus had power to multiply the bread and fish in the desert. But he did not use that power every day.

Luke 8:3 gives us a hint that some prominent women were among these supporters of Jesus. And even if the gospels are more concerned about Jesus' relationship to the disciples in the narrow sense, we get some glimpses of people supporting Jesus without leaving their homes. We have already mentioned Martha and Mary who received Jesus and served him in their own home. Zacchaeus exerts a similar function and has a similar position according to **Luke 19:1–10**. He receives Jesus and his followers for a meal in his home, but no hint is given that he left home and profession in order to be a literal 'follower' of Jesus. Perhaps people like Joseph of Arimathea (**Mark 15:43**), Nicodemus (**John 3:1ff., 19:39**), and many of those who experienced the healing power of Jesus and his disciples, belonged to this broader group of supporters.

The distinction between these two groups has been elaborated from a sociological point of view by G. Theissen in his book *The First Followers of Jesus* (1977).

7. In the early church only the disciples in the narrow sense and their 'following' Jesus were the models for being a Christian. It is basically wrong to think of the 'disciples' as models for some special or 'higher quality' Christians among other Christians

A Roman Catholic scholar (H. J. Degenhardt) has tried to apply the distinction between the following disciples and the resident supporters of Jesus as an argument for a distinction between ministers (*Amtstraeger*) and laymen in the church. This corresponds to an old Roman Catholic tradition of separating the 'religiosi'—priests and monks and nuns—from the laity of the church. This interpretation has been refuted as unhistorical by other scholars, including Roman Catholic scholars. In the book of Acts the word 'disciples' is without any doubt used about all the believers, not only about a limited number of them. There is a continuity between the 'disciples' in the ministry of Jesus and the primitive church in Jerusalem and the subsequent churches. They did not look upon themselves as supporters, but as disciples of Jesus, even if they were not able to 'follow' him geographically like the first disciples in his earthly ministry. All believers have this position, and every attempt to make some basic distinction between 'disciples' and 'ordinary' Christians is contrary to the biblical sources.

This observation is not only a challenge to the classical 'High Church' distinction between clergy and laity. It is also a challenge to the use of the word 'disciple' in some modern renewal movements. There is a tendency to distinguish active 'disciples' from ordinary Christians. In charismatic movements this terminology also

can be used to distinguish the charismatic, Spirit-filled, Christians from the others. This is in fact just another way of putting Christians in two different classes, which very easily are given different value as first- and second-class Christians respectively. Such distinctions cannot be supported from the biblical concept of discipleship. On the contrary, the words of Jesus in **Matthew 23:8–10** should warn us not to make differences of honor and position in the church. The church is the school where Jesus alone is teacher, and where we all are students only, helping each other with our different gifts to become better students.

8. The call to be a disciple meant in Jesus' lifetime to leave family, profession and properly

When James and John, Peter and Andrew, were called to be Jesus' disciples, they left their boats and could not pursue their profession as fishermen (**Mark 1:16–20**). In the same way Levi had to leave his tax collector's booth and give up his profession to be a full-time follower of Jesus (**Mark 2:14**)

The disciples also had to leave their families in order to follow Jesus (**Mark 10:29**). In many ways and on many occasions Jesus spoke about the cost of following him (**Luke 9:57–62, 14:26–33, 18:22**). The disciples were invited to share his conditions on earth. 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'

These radical demands for discipleship have always been felt as a challenge to the traditional churches. Some Christians have seen these words as a personal call to themselves. They have left family, profession and property in order to serve the Lord full-time in a new place. Others have applied them to a new community. Monks and nuns have been inspired by these demands to renounce marriage and private property. Some have even seen literal obedience to these demands to be real Christian living in opposition to the 'secularized' patterns of church life of our time.

Even if individuals have received a genuine call to literal obedience to these words, it cannot be right to make them a general standard of the church. They cannot be separated from other important parts of the testimony of the NT.

9. A literal 'exodus' like this was not expected in the early church. Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurates a new time with new requirements for the disciples

In his last discourse with his disciples according to Luke, Jesus refers back to the time he sent them out 'without purse, bag or sandals'. The disciples assure him that they didn't lack anything at that time. Then Jesus says: 'But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one' (**Luke 22:36**). This word clearly speaks of a new period, which is different from the previous period. The task of the disciples—to preach the gospel of the kingdom—is not changed. But the conditions are changed. They are now allowed to bring what formerly was forbidden. The situation is now different. They must be prepared to meet resistance, and their Master will be taken away from them.

It should be evident that the content of 'following' Jesus and being his 'disciple' has new content when it no longer refers to a relationship with a bodily present Master but with the risen, invisible Lord. When the disciples cannot literally 'follow' him from place to place, they don't in the same literal way need to leave profession, family and property. This is made clear when we see how these requirements are followed up in the early church.

10. In the early church we find exhortations, (a) to live a family life 'in Christ', (b) not to leave work and profession, and (c) to share generously and to care for the poor

Jesus' call to his disciples to leave their family and even 'hate' father and mother, wife and children (**Luke 14:26**) is of course no general command of unlimited validity. It only has relevance when these relationships prevent an absolute obedience to him. It cannot make invalid the command of the Decalogue: 'honor your father and your mother', which is confirmed both by Jesus (**Mark 10:19**) and by the apostle (**Eph 6:2**). We find no hint that the early church encouraged people to leave their family in order to serve the Lord. On the contrary, we find many exhortations to live a family life 'in the Lord'. The new way of 'disciple' life and 'following' Jesus is fully compatible with matrimony, child education and care for the whole family (**Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Peter 2:18-3:7**). Paul knows that the other apostles, including James and Peter, are married (**1 Cor. 9:5**). But he also personally prefers the single state for himself and for those who have a special service for the Lord and a gift for living single (**1 Cor. 7:32-35**).

In a similar way the first Christians in Thessalonica are encouraged to stay in their professions and work with their hands (**1 Thes. 4:11; 2 Thes. 3:6-13**). Even if they remembered how the first disciples had 'left everything', this was not regarded as an example to be followed literally by everybody. Disciple life after the death and resurrection of Jesus is different. It is compatible with a secular profession.

In **Acts 2:44f. and 4:32-37** many scholars have found reason to assume that the primitive church in Jerusalem abandoned private property and lived in a community of full property fellowship. But we don't find references to such a fellowship in property elsewhere in the NT. The indications in Acts should probably not be taken as general descriptions of the property conditions in the church. They generalize what occasionally happened when church members shared their property to relieve the need of the poorest among them. It was no sin to have property in the early church. But there are many warnings against greed, and the rich are encouraged to be 'rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share' (**1 Tim. 6:17-19**). The many exhortations to care for the poor show us that the first Christians in general were not dependent on the support of others, and that most of them had a surplus they could share with the needy. On the other hand they also show us that there were many poor people in the churches needing support from the more affluent. In Jesus' lifetime the disciples literally had to leave their property to follow Jesus. This could not have the same literal meaning in the church. Perhaps the expression 'give up' or 'say farewell to' everything in **Luke 14:33** indicates the way this picture of the disciples was transferred to the early church: the call is to an inner detachment with different practical consequences. Jesus had warned against

Mammon as an idol, and he encouraged practical love for neighbors in need. This encouraged a new altitude to money and property in the early church.

Through these examples we see that the radical demands for the disciples in the ministry of Jesus are not simply abandoned in the early church. They are transformed for a new situation where literal 'following' is no longer possible. Some scholars have looked upon this process as a sort of decline, due to relaxed eschatological expectations and the secularization or 'Verbuergerlichung' of the church. I think it is better to look upon this as a necessary and right development. The 'school' of Jesus simply had to change character when the Master was no longer present in the body but only in the Spirit.

11. Life as a disciple is now 'death and resurrection' with Christ, inaugurated in Christian baptism

We have noticed that the exhortations concerning family, profession and property are related to the formula *en Christo*, 'in Christ'. This is a reference to the new dimension of Christian life given in baptism. **Romans 6** explains that baptism is to be joined with Christ and to die and live with him. This is the basis for Christian life. It corresponds to the way Jesus talked about 'carrying the cross' to follow him or to say no to one's own life. In **Mark 8:34-37** this is closely linked with Jesus' prediction of his death and resurrection. The unity of Jesus' death with the 'death' of his followers is also made clear in the comparison with the kernel of wheat in **John 12:23-26**. Death and service for others is here connected in the same way as when Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

There is a continuity between the concept of discipleship in the gospels and the baptismal exhortations and ethical teachings of the letters. Baptism in the early church corresponds to the call to discipleship in the ministry of Jesus. Therefore it is not by accident that the Great Commission explains baptism and ethical instruction to be the means to 'make disciples' of all nations. The expression 'teaching them to obey everything I commanded you' is in the gospel of Matthew evidently a reference to the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 5-7**. This corresponds to the fact that the ethical instructions in the letters of the NT have more references to this text than to any other text in the gospels, and that the tradition behind the Sermon on the Mount according to Didache has been a catechetical tradition in the early church.

Baptism is therefore initiation into discipleship giving admittance to the 'school' of Jesus and starting a new life in obedience to him and his commands.

12. To be a disciple is to be called to make new disciples

This is the evident implication of the Great Commission in **Matthew 28:19**. The disciples are told to make disciples. The concept of 'discipleship' is a dynamic concept. It implies multiplication. When the disciples were sent to preach the gospel of the kingdom for Israel, they were not asked to make disciples. But now this is included in their mission. The word 'disciple' has got a new and a broader meaning than referring to those following their Master in Galilee and Judea. All nations are invited to this new fellowship. And therefore all disciples are called to this mission.

This corresponds to the words of Paul in **2 Corinthians 5:18**, when he so closely connects the gift of being reconciled with God with the ministry of reconciliation. Those who have received reconciliation are also Christ's ambassadors, urging others to 'be reconciled with God'. Being a disciple is to become the co-worker of Christ in his worldwide mission. 'He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world' (**1 John 2:2**).

13. The disciples have fellowship with Christ in life and death and are the inheritors of the kingdom of God

A disciple is called to give up his own interests in order to obey the call of Jesus. He is also called to the worldwide, overwhelming task of making all nations disciples. Confronting this great task and his own limited resources, it is easy to lose courage and simply give up.

Therefore it is good to see that the Great Commission does not stop with the command, but with a promise. The risen, almighty Lord is with them—not only when they feel it or when they succeed, but always, to the very end of the age. The disciples live under the promise that the kingdom of God belongs to them (**Luke 12:32**). They are chosen for this destination by God's own will. Therefore they should not fear nor despair. To be a disciple of Christ is a great privilege. Christ is still calling us to 'leave everything' and follow him.

Literature

Degenhardt, H.-J. *Lukas—Evangelist der Armen. Besitz und Besitzverzicht nach den lukanischen Schriften*(Stuttgart, 1965).

Grassi, J. A., *Jesus as Teacher. A New Testament Guide to learning the 'Way'* (Winona, Minnesota, 1978).

Hengel, M., *Eigentum und Reichtum in der fruehen Kirche. Aspekte einer fruehkirchlichen Sozialgeschichte*(Stuttgart, 1973).

Hengel, M., *Nachfolge und Charisma. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Studie zu [Mt 8:12f](#) und Jesu Ruf in die Nachfolge* (Berlin, 1968).

Larsson, E., *Christus als Vorbild (ASNU 23, Uppsala, 1962)*.

Rengstorf, K. H., Article on *mathētēs* in *TDNT*.

Riesner, R., *Jesus als Lehrer: Eine Untersuchung zum Ursprung der Evangelien-Ueberlieferung* (Tübingen, 1984).

Schulz, A., *Nachfolgen und Nachahmung im Neuen Testament.*

Studien ueber das Verhaeltnis der neutestamentlichen

Juengerschaft zur urchristlichen Vorbildethik (StANT, Munich, 1962).

Theissen, G., *Soziologie der Jesus-Bewegung (Munich, 1977).*

TEST - CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS?

1. The great commission in **Matthew 28:18-20** has a magnificent structure that starts with what?

2. Identify the two sentences that this message consists of.

_____ : 'Go therefore and make disciples ...'

_____ : 'And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.'

3. The _____ Jesus gives his _____ is longer and has a more complicated structure than the first and last sentence of the great _____.

4. What is the main verb in the Greek text?

5. This main verb is supported by three participles. Name them.

6. What does the main verb describe?

7. What do the participles describe?

8. The disciples are asked to make disciples by doing what?

9. The structure of the great commission can be summarized as follows:

I.	_____ of power	_____ authority on _____ and _____ has been given to _____.
II.	_____	Therefore _____ and _____ <i>disciples</i> of _____ nations
	a) goal	

	b) _____	_____ them in the _____ of the _____ and the _____ and the _____ and _____ to obey _____ I have commanded _____.
III.	Promise	And _____ I _____ be with you _____, to the very _____ of the age.

10. Perhaps we might learn something about our position as Christians by doing what?

11. What was the first name for the Christians?

12. What is the plural (pl.) Greek word for *mathētēs*?

13. In which city were the *disciples* first called *Christians*?

14. From this we _____ that the word we use most often, ' _____ ', was not the first name for this new group. They were _____ simply called the ' _____ '.

15. This makes it clear that the _____ consisted of the _____ followers of Jesus during his ministry in _____ and _____, and that the

_____ to the group _____ their relationship to the risen Lord _____ in some way _____ to the relationship of the _____ disciples to the _____ 'rabbi' Jesus.

16. The verb _____, 'make disciples', is seldom used in the NT and has different meanings.

17. Where in Scripture is the use of this verb most close to the use in the great commission?

18. Paul and Barnabas visited _____, where they ' _____ the gospel and made many _____.'

19. The _____ of the gospel is here the _____ to _____ disciples, corresponding to ' _____ ' and ' _____ ' in the great commission.

20. A striking _____ to the great _____ is found in _____, where ' _____ ' is the means to 'make _____' (here not expressed by the verb *mathēteuo*, but by the expression _____ *mathētas*) during the earthly ministry of Jesus.

21. The author states, "In my opinion it shows that the continuity between the followers of John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus is somehow the key to the question of what?"

22. The Great Commission itself has not the form of an institution of baptism as a new ritual, as it is traditionally understood in many churches. It refers to what?

23. In **Matthew 27:57** a man is described as a person who had 'been made a disciple'. Who is this man?

24. Very special is the context of the verb in **Matthew 13:52**: 'a _____ who has been _____ for the kingdom of Heaven'. _____ the word 'scribe' refers to _____ of Jesus. But here it is used _____ of his _____.

25. The ' _____ ' for the kingdom refers to some ' _____ ' activity among _____ and his _____ similar to the teaching activity of the Jewish _____.

26. 'Disciple' (*mathētēs*) means ' _____ ', 'student'. For his _____ Jesus _____ is Teacher and Master, Rabbi. A Christian is _____ and _____ a _____ in _____ to Jesus.

27. What was the highest hope of a student in a rabbinic 'school'?

28. The rabbis tried to _____ disciples that in their turn might _____ rabbis and pass the _____ on to _____ disciples who could _____ teachers for still a _____ generation. This was the basic pattern for the Jewish, rabbinic tradition.

29. It was a great _____ to become a _____, and the position as a _____ of a famous rabbi gave the possibility to advance to be a famous rabbi _____.

30. The relationship of Jesus to his disciples was _____. Jesus had a unique position that _____ be _____ to his disciples. 'But you are not to be called "Rabbi", for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth "father", for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called "teacher", for you have one Teacher, the Christ' (**Matthew 23:8-10**).

31. This text shows very clearly that the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is compared to what?

32. Who is always the supreme teacher?

33. Basically _____ members of a church or a theological _____ are _____ students in the _____. In this respect there is no difference between pastor and layman or between professor and student.

34. The name ' _____ ' reminds us that the church from the beginning was the ' _____ ' _____.

35. What must be very important in the church?

36. Who is the only real teacher?

37. What is the church is basically?

38. A disciple _____ by (a) _____ his Master, and (b) doing _____ his Master.

39. Our modern word ' _____ ' is often associated with a person involved mainly in theoretical _____. But it may also imply _____ training.

40. What should a teacher of a handicraft have?

41. In the activity of Jesus as a teacher we find his disciples doing two things. What were they?

42. The Sermon on the Mount describes a typical situation of Jesus as what?

43. Their activity is _____ and _____ his _____.

44. A similar situation is described in **Luke 10:38-42**. _____ takes the _____ of a _____ listening to the teacher.

45. Martha is not rebuked for worldly worries, and not at all for her activities in the kitchen *per se*, but for what?

46. Compared to his contemporaries Jesus was quite radical when He in this way included whom?

47. Many times in the gospels we meet Jesus preaching the gospel and teaching two mentioned places. What were they?

48. In all these situations the disciples are learning in what way?

49. What is a less obvious way the disciples learned?

50. But the Sermon on the Mount and the many stories about Jesus' healings are in fact followed by an instruction for the disciples to do the same as their Master: to preach the message of the kingdom and to heal the sick. Where in Scripture is this example found?

51. What heading would you put the total mission of the disciples under?

52. Who is the example to be imitated by the disciples?

53. Which mentioned example represents this kind of imitation?

54. 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, what should you do?

55. This symbolic act points to what?

56. What is His real service for His disciples?

57. Who is the kernel of wheat that falls to the ground and dies in order to bear a rich fruit (**John 12:24**).

58. But as an example of _____ service and _____ love it has set a standard for the life of his followers. ' _____ wants to become great among you must be your _____, and whoever wants to be _____ must be your _____ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, _____, and to give His life as a _____ for _____ ' (**Matthew 20:26-28**).

59. These words correspond to the way Jesus is preached as an example for his followers where?

60. The epistles never encourage the believers to imitate some specific action of Jesus' public ministry or some special aspect of his personality. Jesus is referred to as an example because of His _____ and His _____.

61. These show his humility, love and radical readiness to serve others, and this is applied as a call to Christian people to do what?

_____ (**Phil. 2:1-11**)
_____ (**2 Cor. 8:7-9**)

_____ (**1 Peter 2:18-25**)
_____ (**1 John 3:16-18**)

62. In this way Jesus is seen as a teacher not only through his words, but also through what?

63. He doesn't only give a 'doctrine', but also a _____ and a _____ to be preserved by his followers.

64. To be a _____ of Christ in this way is therefore not only a matter of ' _____ ' qualities like _____ and convictions. It concerns our _____ life in word and _____.

65. Who chose the disciples? Jesus. Normally a _____ is the one who _____ his teacher. He can _____ and ask for a place in a school or he can _____ to another.

66. This was _____ the way of _____. He _____ his disciples to _____ him. The stories of Jesus calling his disciples are well known.

67. The disciples could only do what to Jesus calling?

68. What did the disciples leave behind when they followed Jesus?

69. But they might also have said 'no' to his call. The _____ man was called to follow Jesus, but he 'went away _____'.

70. A man can _____ the call, but _____ Christ himself can _____ to _____.

71. According to **John 15:16**, this was important: ' _____ did _____ choose me, but _____ to go and bear fruit.'

72. This corresponds to Jesus' unique character and to the unique character of the church. He has chosen the disciples in a way similar to what?

73. They are not chosen because of their _____ abilities, but by his _____.

74. The disciples should not thank _____ own deliberation and _____ for the _____ of being his _____, but his _____ choice.

75. In the earthly ministry of Jesus we should distinguish between the disciples in a narrow sense—those who _____ followed Jesus—and a broader group of _____ and _____.

76. Where in Scripture does it give an interesting picture of the way the disciples were sent out by Jesus? They had no money, no extra shoes or clothes, and they were sent from village to village in order to preach the gospel. In other words, they were totally dependent on the hospitality of the people they met. They were in no way beggars, but they expected to be supported by those who received their message. They brought the good message of the kingdom, and they received food and shelter. The people receiving them were not made disciples in the narrow sense of 'people who followed Jesus and served him full-time'. But through their hospitality they did not only receive the messengers and their message, but Jesus himself (**Luke 10:16; Matthew 10:40-42**).

77. They belonged to a broader group of what?

78. Where in Scripture do we find a hint that some prominent women were among these supporters of Jesus?

79. In the book of _____ the word ' _____ ' is without any doubt used about _____ the believers, not only about a _____ number of them. There is continuity between the 'disciples' in the ministry of Jesus and the primitive church in Jerusalem and the subsequent churches.

80. They did not look upon themselves as _____, but as _____ of Jesus, even if they were not able to 'follow' him _____ like the first disciples in his earthly ministry.

81. _____ believers have this position, and every attempt to make some basic distinction between ' _____ ' and ' _____ ' Christians is _____ to the biblical sources.

82. There is a tendency to distinguish active ' _____ ' from ordinary Christians. In _____ movements this terminology also can be used to distinguish the charismatic _____, Christians from the _____. This is in fact just another way of putting Christians in _____ different classes, which very easily are given different value as first- and second-class Christians respectively. Such distinctions _____ be supported from the _____ concept of discipleship.

83. On the contrary, the words of Jesus in **Matthew 23:8-10** should warn us _____ to make differences of _____ and _____ in the church.

84. The church is the school where Jesus _____ is _____, and where we _____ are students _____, _____ each other with our different _____ to become _____ students.

85. When James and John, Peter and Andrew, were called to be Jesus' disciples, they _____ their _____ and could not pursue their _____ as fishermen (**Mark 1:16-20**). In the same way _____ had to leave his tax _____ booth and give up his _____ to be a _____-time follower of Jesus (**Mark 2:14**).

86. The disciples also had to leave something else in order to follow Jesus (**Mark 10:29**). What was it?

87. In many ways and on many occasions Jesus spoke about what?
_____ (**Luke 9:57-62, 14:26-33, 18:22**).

88. What were disciples invited to share in with Jesus?

89. In his (Jesus) last discourse with his disciples according to Luke, Jesus refers back to a certain time, what was it?

90. The disciples assure Him that they didn't lack what at that time?

91. Then Jesus says: 'But now if you have a purse, _____ it, and _____ a bag; and if you don't have a _____, sell your cloak and _____ one' (**Luke 22:36**).

92. This word clearly speaks of a _____ period, which is _____ from the previous period.

93. The task of the disciples—to preach the gospel of the kingdom—is _____. But the _____ are changed.

94. They are now allowed to bring what?

95. They must be _____ to meet _____, and their Master will be _____ away from them.

96. It should be evident that the content of ' _____ ' Jesus and being his 'disciple' has _____ content when it no longer refers to a relationship with a _____ present _____ but with the _____, invisible Lord.

97. When the disciples cannot _____ 'follow' him from place to place, they don't in the same _____ way need to leave _____, _____ and _____. This is made clear when we see how these requirements are followed up in the early church.

98. In the early church we find exhortations, (a) to live a _____ life 'in Christ', (b) _____ to leave work and profession, and (c) to _____ generously and to _____ for the poor.

99. The new _____ of 'disciple' life and 'following' Jesus is fully compatible with _____, child education and care for the whole _____ (**Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Peter 2:18-3:7**).

100. Disciple life _____ the death and resurrection of Jesus is _____. It is compatible with a secular _____.

101. It was no _____ to have property in the _____ church. But there are many _____ against greed, and the rich are encouraged to be 'rich in good _____, and to be _____ and _____ to _____' (**1 Tim. 6:17-19**).

102. The many exhortations to care for the poor show us that the first Christians in general were what?

103. On the other hand they also show us that there were many poor people in the churches needing support from whom?

104. In Jesus' lifetime the disciples literally had to do what to follow Jesus?

105. This could not have the same literal meaning in the church. Perhaps the expression '_____' or '_____' everything in **Luke 14:33** indicates the way this picture of the disciples was _____ to the early church: the call is to an inner detachment with different practical consequences.

106. Jesus had warned against _____ as an _____, and he encouraged _____ love for neighbors in need.

107. This encouraged a new attitude to what in the early church?

108. The 'school' of Jesus simply had to change character when the Master was what?

109. We have noticed that the exhortations concerning family, profession and property are related to the formula *en Christo*, which means?

110. This is a reference to the new dimension of Christian life given in what?

111. Where in Scripture does it explain that baptism is to be joined with Christ and to die and live with him?

112. This idea of baptism is to be joined with Christ and to die and live with him is the basis for what?

113. It corresponds to the way Jesus talked about '_____ the cross' to _____ him or to say no to one's own life. In **Mark 8:34-37** this is closely linked with Jesus' _____ of his death and resurrection. The unity of Jesus' death with the 'death' of his _____ is also made clear in the

comparison with the _____ of wheat in **John 12:23–26**. Death and service for others is here connected in the same way as when Jesus _____ the disciples' feet.

114. There is continuity between the concept of _____ in the gospels and the _____ exhortations and ethical teachings of the letters. _____ in the early church corresponds to the call to _____ in the ministry of Jesus.

115. Therefore it is not by accident that the Great _____ explains _____ and ethical instruction to be the _____ to 'make disciples' of _____ nations.

116. The expression 'teaching them to obey everything I commanded you' is in the gospel of Matthew evidently a reference to what sermon?

117. Baptism is therefore an initiation into what?

118. To _____ a disciple is to be _____ to make _____ disciples. This is the evident implication of the Great Commission in **Matthew 28:19**.

119. The disciples are told to do what?

120. The concept of 'discipleship' is a dynamic concept. It implies what?

121. The word 'disciple' has got a new and a broader meaning than referring to those following their Master in what two towns?

122. All nations are invited to this new...

123. And therefore _____ are called to this mission.

124. This corresponds to the words of Paul in **2 Corinthians 5:18**, when he so closely connects the gift of being _____ with _____ with the _____ of _____.

125. Those who have received reconciliation are also Christ's _____, urging others to 'be _____ with _____'.

126. Being a disciple is to become what?

127. 'He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for whom?

128. A disciple is called to give up what in order to obey the call of Jesus?

129. He is also called to the _____, overwhelming task of making _____ nations disciples. Confronting this great task and his own limited resources, it is easy to lose courage and simply give up.

130. Therefore it is good to see that the Great Commission does not stop with the command, but with what?

131. Who is with them?

132. They are _____ for this destination by God's own will. Therefore they should not _____ nor _____.

133. To be a disciple of Christ is what?

134. Christ is still calling us to do what and follow him?

CHAPTER THREE

TEN BIBLE VERSES ABOUT MAKING DISCIPLES! ⁽³⁾

<https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog-and-stories/disciple-making-bible-verses.html>

A disciple is completely devoted to a teacher. The relationship goes beyond a student or an apprentice. They don't simply master a trade or a subject; they learn to emulate their teacher's life.

As Christians and Christ Followers, we become disciples, striving to live according to the teachings of Jesus through the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit that indwells us upon believe on Jesus the Christ.

For this chapter we will be doing word studies so to understand what these verses are saying word by word and then looking to see what the rest of the chapter the verse tells about each verse. We will also be using four translations for comparison. New American Standard Bible (**NASB**), New International Version (**NIV**) and Amplified (**AMP**) and Amplified, Classic Edition (**AMPC**).

You will need a Strong's Concordance and Internet access for www.blueletterbible.org

THE GREAT COMMISSION (MATTHEW 28:19-20)

NASB ¹⁹ ^[a]Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to ^[b]follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you ^[c]always, to the end of the age."

Footnotes

- a. Matthew 28:19 Or *Having gone* (Gr aorist part.)
- b. Matthew 28:20 Or *keep*
- c. Matthew 28:20 Lit *all the days*

NIV ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

AMP ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and*

of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always [remaining with you perpetually—regardless of circumstance, and on every occasion], even to the end of the age.”

AMPC ¹⁹ Go then and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them ^[a]into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

²⁰ Teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you ^[b]all the days (^[c]perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion), to the [very] close and consummation of the age. ^[d]Amen (so let it be).

Footnotes

- a. [Matthew 28:19](#) Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies*.
- b. [Matthew 28:20](#) John Wycliffe, *The Wycliffe Bible*.
- c. [Matthew 28:20](#) *Webster’s New International Dictionary* offers this phrase as a definition of “always.”
- d. [Matthew 28:20](#) Some manuscripts do not contain this ending.

• • • • •

Arguably **Matthew 28:19-20** is the most famous Scripture on making disciples, the Great Commission is where Jesus sends His 11 apostles around the known world to spread the gospel. In this passage, Jesus also shares what He means by making disciples: baptizing people and teaching them to obey His commands.

Matthew 28:19: “Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” First, notice that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinguished as distinct Persons. We baptize into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Second, notice that each Person must be deity because they are all placed on the same level. In fact, would Jesus have us baptize in the name of a mere creature? Surely not. Therefore each of the Persons into whose name we are to be baptized must be deity. Third, notice that although the three divine Persons are distinct, we are baptized into their name (singular), not names (plural). The three Persons are distinct, yet only constitute one name. This can only be if they share one essence.

(What is the doctrine of the Trinity? **By: Matt Perman**)

WORD SEARCH

Go – G4198 – Continue the journey I have been preparing you for.

And make disciples – G3100 - Therefore, teach what you have been taught continually.

Of all the Nations – G1484 – To everyone everywhere

Baptizing – G907 – Immerse them in what I have taught you and submerge them in water representing My death, burial and resurrection

Name - G3686 - By the name and all it is attached to

Teach - G1321 - Instruct them by how you live so they will live this way too just as I have taught you to live.

End of the age - G165 - I am with you wherever you go even into eternity

TRANSLATION (EXAMPLE)

••• Continue the journey I have been preparing you for. Therefore, teach what you have been taught continually to everyone everywhere. Immerse them in what I have taught you and submerge them in water representing My death, burial and resurrection by the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Instruct them by how you live so they will live this way too just as I have taught you to live. I am with you wherever you go even into eternity. •••

LIFE APPLICATION

Since this is how a Christ follower's life should be lived (by having the Holy Spirit living and dwelling within them)... is this how you're living your life today and every day? *If so, why and if not, why not?*

MARK 16:15

NASB ¹⁵ *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.*

NIV ¹⁵ *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.*

AMP ¹⁵ *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.*

AMPC ¹⁵ *And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news (the Gospel) to every creature [of the whole [a]human race].*

Footnotes

a. Mark 16:15 Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. *(Dictionary)



Mark’s parallel account of the Great Commission adds “the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His word by signs that accompanied it” (**Mark 16:20 NIV**).

WORD SEARCH

Go - G4198 -

Into - G1519 -

All - G537 -

World - G2889 -

And Preach - G2784 -

Gospel - G2098 -

To all - G3956 -

Creation - G2937 -

TRANSLATION

...

...

LIFE APPLICATION

Are you afraid or embarrassed to share what Jesus has done in your life? If so, why?

ACTS 1:8

NASB ⁸ *but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth."*

NIV ⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

AMP ⁸ *But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

AMPC ⁸ *But you shall receive power (ability, efficiency, and might) when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends (the very bounds) of the earth.*

•••••

Here Jesus calls the disciples His witnesses, exhorting them to share the things they've seen and heard in His presence.

As we make disciples, we can share not only the accounts of what the disciples saw, but our own accounts of what we've personally experienced as we have followed Jesus.

WORD SEARCH

You will receive - G2983

Power - G1411

When - G1904

Holy - G40

Spirit - 4151

Has come - G1904

Upon - G1909

You - G4771

You shall be - G1510

My - G1473

Witnesses - G3144

Both - G5037

In - G1722

Jerusalem - G2419

All - G3956

Judea - G2449

Samaria - G4540

Even to - G2193

The remotest part - G2078

Earth - G1093

TRANSLATION

...

LIFE APPLICATION

ROMANS 10:14- 15

NASB ¹⁴ *How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ But how are they to preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written: "How BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO ^[a]BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"*

Footnotes

a. Romans 10:15 Or *preach the gospel*

NIV ¹⁴ *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"^[a]*

Footnotes

a. Romans 10:15 Isaiah 52:7

AMP ¹⁴ *But how will people call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how will they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher (messenger)? ¹⁵ And how will they preach unless they are commissioned and sent [for that purpose]? Just as it is written and forever remains written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"*

AMPC ¹⁴ *But how are people to call upon Him Whom they have not believed [in Whom they have no faith, on Whom they have no reliance]? And how are they to believe in Him [adhere to, trust in, and rely upon Him] of Whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?*

¹⁵ *And how can men [be expected to] preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings! [How welcome is the coming of those who preach the good news of His good things!]*

•••••

The Good News of Jesus Christ and the redemption He offers are for everyone. Paul highlights the importance of making disciples by pointing out the obvious: you only believe in Jesus because someone shared the gospel with you. Making disciples stems from our own faith-which we only have because someone shared the gospel with us.

Making disciples is about continuing the cycle of redemption, passing on the faith that was passed to you!

WORD SEARCH

How - G4459 -

Will they call on Him - G1941 -

In - G1519 -

They have not - G3756 -

Believed - G4100 -

In Him whom - G3739 -

They have not - G3756 -

Heard - G191 -

Without - G5565 -

A preacher - G2784 -

How - G4459 -

Will they preach - G2784 -

TRANSLATION

...

...

LIFE APPLICATION

All believers are called to work together to get the story of Jesus out into the world. By all believers working together, at home, in our towns and cities, at work, on vacation and into other cities, states and countries Jesus story will travel everywhere. Some believers are senders and others are those that are sent. The Holy Spirit has gifted each and every believer perfectly to accomplish this command.

So, where has the Holy Spirit placed you in the sending of His story and are you willing and desiring to be used to share the gospel story of Jesus Christ?

JOHN 1:45

NASB ⁴⁵ Philip *found Nathanael and *said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses wrote in the Law, and the prophets also wrote: Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth!”

NIV ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the Law. The prophets also wrote about him. He is Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

AMP ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the One Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote about—Jesus from Nazareth, the son of Joseph [according to public record].”

AMPC ⁴⁵ Philip sought and found Nathanael and told him, We have found (discovered) the One Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote about—Jesus from Nazareth, the [legal] son of Joseph!

• • • • •

When Philip encountered Jesus and discovered who He was, he immediately wanted to share it with his friends. Our desire to make disciples should stem from obedience, but also love for others—if we believe Jesus is who He says He is, why should we keep it to ourselves?

WORD SEARCH

Philip - G5356

Nathanael - G3482

We have found -G2147

Him of whom -G3739

Moses - G3745

Law - G3551

Prophets - G4396

Jesus - G2424

Nazareth - G3478

The Son - G5207

Of Joseph - G2501

TRANSLATION

...

...

LIFE APPLICATION

JOHN 15:16

NASB ¹⁶ *You did not choose Me but I chose you, and 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.*

NIV ¹⁶ *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

AMP ¹⁶ *You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed and placed and purposefully planted you, so that you would go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit will remain and be lasting, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name [as My representative] He may give to you.*

AMPC ¹⁶ *You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed you [I have planted you], that you might go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit may be lasting [that it may remain, abide], so that whatever you ask the Father in My Name [as ^[a]presenting all that I Am], He may give it to you.*

Footnotes

a. [John 15:16](#) Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*.

[John 15:16 in all English translations](#)

•••••

As disciples, we are growing in maturity. This can only happen if we are spiritually empowered. Jesus says He is the vine, and His disciples are the branches (**John 15:5**). He chose His disciples for a purpose, and in order to fulfill that purpose they had to remain connected to Him, the vine (**John 15:6**).

WORD SEARCH

Did not - G3756

Choose - G1586

Appointed - G5087

Would go -G5217

Bear - G5342

Fruit - G2590

Would remain - G3306

So that - G2443

Whatever - G3739

You ask - G154

In - G1722

Name -G3686

He may give -G1325

To you - G4771

TRANSLATION

...

...

LIFE APPLICATION

EPHESIANS 4:16

NASB ¹⁶ *from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together ^[a]by what every joint supplies, according to the ^[b]proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

Footnotes

- a. Ephesians 4:16 Lit *through every joint of the supply*
- b. Ephesians 4:16 Lit *working in measure*

NIV ¹⁶ *From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

AMP ¹⁶ *From Him the whole body [the church, in all its various parts], joined and knitted firmly together by what every joint supplies, when each part is working properly, causes the body to grow and mature, building itself up ^[a]in [unselfish] love.*

AMPC ¹⁶ *For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in love.*

• • • • •

When you become a follower of Jesus, you become part of Christ's body (**1 Corinthians 12:27**). The body of Christ depends on each member doing its work. We were each made for a particular purpose, and as disciples, we all play a role in advancing the kingdom.

IT'S YOUR TURN

Now go to www.Blueletterbible.org and put in the verse or verses you are reading /searching and make the translation the NASB. Then click on the tools tab to the left of the verse (once it loads) and identify the words in the verse and the correlating Greek (New Testament) or Hebrew (Old Testament) number (example G4100) and click on the number. It will then take you to the word and potential definitions. The rest is up to you.

As you consider which of the potential definitions for the words should be used, compare to the four different translations of the verse above. It will be a good starting guide.

Once you have completed the word study, start to expand the meaning of the original verse with the expanded meanings you have found for each word. This goes under the Translation section.

MATTHEW 4:19- 20

NASB ¹⁹ *And He *said to them, “[a]Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people.”* ²⁰ *Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.*

Footnotes

- a. Matthew 4:19 Or *Come after Me*

NIV ¹⁹ *“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”* ²⁰ *At once they left their nets and followed him.*

AMP ¹⁹ *And He said to them, “[a]Follow Me [as My disciples, accepting Me as your Master and Teacher and walking the same path of life that I walk], and I will make you fishers of men.”* ²⁰ *Immediately they left their nets and followed Him [becoming His disciples, believing and trusting in Him and following His example].*

Footnotes

- a. Matthew 4:19 The concept of “follow” can represent three separate possibilities: in the early stages of His ministry, (1) walking with Him physically (literally), that is, merely being in His presence regardless of personal belief or commitment, (2) accepting and identifying with the salvation He offered; and later on, (3) being identified with Him by being subject to the scorn and rejection of unbelievers because of personal belief and commitment to Him.

AMPC ¹⁹ *And He said to them, Come [a]after Me [as disciples—letting Me be your Guide], follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men!*

²⁰ *At once they left their nets and [b]became His disciples [sided with His party and followed Him].*

Footnotes

- a. Matthew 4:19 Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*.
b. Matthew 4:20 Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*.

•••••

Many of the original disciples were fishermen. Jesus took something they were intimately familiar with—their profession—and made it new. He used a word picture they could identify with to call them away from their old lives.

When we invite others into discipleship, Jesus can use what they know to accomplish things they never imagined.

2 TIMOTHY 2:2

NASB ² *The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful ^lpeople who will be able to teach others also.*

Footnotes

a. 2 Timothy 2:2 Or men

NIV ² *And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*

AMP ² *The things [the doctrine, the precepts, the admonitions, the sum of my ministry] which you have heard me teach ^lin the presence of many witnesses, entrust [as a treasure] to reliable and faithful men who will also be capable and qualified to teach others.*

Footnotes

a. 2 Timothy 2:2 Lit through.

AMPC ² *And the [instructions] which you have heard from me along with many witnesses, transmit and entrust [as a deposit] to reliable and faithful men who will be competent and qualified to teach others also.*

• • • • •

Paul reminds Timothy that he cannot do all the work of ministry on his own. He needs to build up disciples that he can delegate the work of disciple making to. Appointing others to appropriate roles and delegating work is an important part of making disciples who, in turn, will make disciples.

WORD SEARCH

TRANSLATION

...

...

LIFE APPLICATION

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT
MAKING
DISCIPLES, HAVE YOU GOTTEN STARTED?**

CHAPTER FOUR

THE JOY OF THE LORD: HOW TO EXPERIENCE IT EVERY DAY! ⁽⁴⁾

By: Mark Altrogge

<https://theblazingcenter.com/2019/03/joy-of-the-lord.html>

Let me be totally honest for a moment. I don't experience the joy of the Lord very often.

When the Bible talks about the joy of the Lord being my strength, I have a hard time relating to it.

I think a lot of it has to do with my personality. I struggle with depression and anxiety, both of which make me see the world through grey tinged glasses.

But I want to experience the joy of the Lord, and I'm convinced that God wants me to experience it as well. As David said in **Psalm 34:4**:

"Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God."

David said that God was his *exceeding joy*. I too, want God to be my exceeding joy. I want the joy of the Lord to be my strength.

Of course, all this raises the question: how can I grow in the joy of the Lord?

WHAT IS THE JOY OF THE LORD?

The Joy Of The Lord Is My Strength: 5 Methods For Growing In The Joy Of The Lord

1. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through Prayer
2. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through God's Word
3. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through The Holy Spirit
4. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By Meditating On The Character of God
5. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By Meditating On The Gospel

IT IS GOOD FOR CHRISTIANS TO BE HAPPY

Let's make sure we're all on the same page regarding the joy of the Lord. The joy of the Lord *is not* primarily a feeling of happiness. It's not some sort of Zen feeling. It's not the warm fuzzy feeling you get when watching "The Joy of Painting" with Bob Ross.

In other words, the joy of the Lord isn't primarily a feeling. If it was, then it would be impossible to experience it in moments of grief or in the depths of trials.

No, the joy of the Lord is much more sturdy and unbreakable.

Ultimately, this joy comes from Jesus himself. I experience the joy of the Lord specifically because I am united to Jesus Christ.

As John Piper says:

“The reason your joy can now be as full as it is and moving toward perfect fullness when all our battle with sin is over is because in union with me, the branch in the vine, you no longer enjoy merely your joy. You now have my joy in you and you enjoy what I enjoy as your joy, as you abide in me.”

This joy of the Lord is my strength, and it works itself out in very practical ways in my life.

The joy of the Lord is the firm, unshakeable conviction that God loves me, is for 100% for me, and is working everything for my good.

It is the unbendable belief that God is my Father, and that he loves me more deeply than I could possibly imagine.

It is the rock-solid belief that God is with me, even as I walk through fiery trials and deep waters.

However, all this still leaves me with the critically important question: how do I experience and grow in the joy of the Lord?

THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH: 5 METHODS FOR GROWING IN THE JOY OF THE LORD

If the joy of the Lord comes specifically from Jesus, then it follows that the primary way I grow in the joy of the Lord is by deepening my fellowship with Jesus. In other words, the more closely I am connected to Christ, the more consistently I'll experience God's joy.

HOW DO I STAY CLOSELY CONNECTED TO CHRIST?

1. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through Prayer

Prayer is my lifeline to Jesus. Through prayer, I come to the throne of grace and there I meet Jesus himself. Jesus gives me exactly what I need in every struggle and trial and battle. When I come to the throne of grace, I am filled with the joy of the Lord that is my strength.

As it says in **Hebrews 4:16**:

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

I'm so profoundly grateful that Jesus not only invites me to the throne of grace, but he commands me to come to him. Jesus wants me to experience the true, lasting joy that only he can give. And so he calls me to come running to him.

I love how Paul Miller talks about prayer in his book *The Praying Life*:

“Write out your prayer requests; don't mindlessly drift through life on the American narcotic of busyness. If you try to seize the day, the day will eventually break you.

Seize the corner of his garment and don't let go until he blesses you. He will reshape the day."

If I want to experience the joy of the Lord that is my strength, I must seize the corner of Jesus' garment. I must cling to him through prayer, asking him to reshape my day and give me his overwhelming, satisfying joy.

2. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through God's Word

Again and again throughout Scripture, God's word held forth as a primary source of the joy of the Lord. As David says in **Psalm 119:14-16**:

"In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word."

Why did David delight so much in God's word? Why did he treat it as more valuable than even the greatest of riches? Because in God's word he met God himself, and when he met God he experienced the sweet joy of the Lord.

It was in and through God's word that he discovered God has his "exceeding joy". If I want to be able to say, "The joy of the Lord is my strength," then I need to go to the fountain where that joy is found. I need to immerse myself in God's word. To drink deeply of it and savor the fellowship with God I experience through it.

3. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through The Holy Spirit

In **Ephesians 3:18-19**, Paul prays that the Ephesians would:

"...have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would have the supernatural strength required to comprehend the staggering heights and depths of the love of Christ. He wanted the Ephesians to be filled with ALL the fullness of God.

In other words, he wanted them to experience the joy of the Lord. How could the Ephesians (and I) know God on such a deep, profound level? How could they possibly comprehend the height and depth and breadth of the love of Christ? How could they be filled with all the fullness of God?

Only by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the one who reveals Christ to us. The Spirit opens our eyes so that we can comprehend the glorious things to which we've been called.

And when the Spirit opens our eyes, we truly are filled with the overwhelming joy of the Lord. How can we not be overflowing with joy when we truly understand the great salvation to which we've been called? How can we not be bursting with joy when we're filled with all the fullness of God.

The joy of the Lord is my strength, and I experience that joy through the power of the Holy Spirit. If I want to experience more joy, I simply need to ask the Spirit to reveal more of Christ to me.

4. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By Meditating On The Character of God

Lamentations 3:21-23 says, *“But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

How do I experience hope, which is another form of the joy of the Lord? By intentionally calling to mind and meditating upon the character of God. On the flip side, if I don't call to mind the character of God, I will be sorely lacking hope.

This passage is a beautiful reminder of who God is. He is steadfast and his love never ceases. Every morning he pours out new, fresh mercies that are custom tailored for the day. He is always, 100% faithful in everything he does. There is never a moment when God isn't faithful to me.

When I call these things to mind, I am filled with hope and the joy of the Lord that is my strength. I am encouraged to keep pressing on in God. I'm reminded that God is 100% on my side and that nothing can ever change that.

5. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By Meditating On The Gospel

In **Luke 7:47**, Jesus says, *“Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”*

Few things create more joy than meditating upon the staggering blessings I've received in and through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Think about it with me for a moment.

In Christ...

- Every one of my sins, past, present, and future has been paid for in full.
- There is no judgment left for me, only mercy.
- I am an adopted son of God and will receive an inheritance from God.
- I have been freed from the power of sin and now have power to obey.
- I call God, “Abba, Father,” and have an intimate relationship with him.
- I am part of God's forever family and uniquely joined to his people.
- I have life everlasting and will eventually experience the new heaven and new earth.

And so much more...

In Christ, I have blessing after sacred blessing. The gospel truly is a fountain of joy. When I drink from the fountain of the gospel, I experience the joy of the Lord that is my strength.

It Is Good For Christians To Be Happy

Charles Spurgeon said:

“Why should Christians be such a happy people? It is good for our God; it gives him honor among men when we are glad. It is good for us; it makes us strong. “The joy of the Lord is your strength” (**Neh. 8:10**). It is good for the ungodly; when they see Christians glad, they long to be believers themselves. It is good for our fellow Christians; it comforts them and tends to cheer them.”

I want to honor God by being a happy Christian. When people see me full of the joy of the Lord, it ultimately points them to God, who is the source of all true joy.

The joy of the Lord is my strength, and I want to experience that joy consistently.



TEST - CHAPTER FOUR

THE JOY OF THE LORD

HOW TO EXPERIENCE IT EVERY DAY!

1. Let me be totally honest for a moment. I _____ experience the joy of the Lord _____ often.
2. When the Bible talks about the joy of the Lord being my _____, I have a hard time _____ to it.
3. I think a lot of it has to do with what?

4. I struggle with depression and anxiety, both of which make me see the world through what?

5. But I _____ to experience the joy of the Lord, and I'm _____ that God _____ me to experience it as well.
6. What is it that David said in **Psalm 34:4**? _____

7. What did David say that God was?

8. I too, want God to be my _____ joy. I want the joy of the Lord to be my _____.
9. The Joy Of The Lord Is My Strength: 5 Methods For Growing In The Joy Of The Lord
 1. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through _____
 2. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through _____
 3. Experience The Joy Of The Lord Through _____
 4. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By _____
 5. Experience The Joy Of The Lord By _____
10. The joy of the Lord *is not* what?

11. Ultimately, this joy comes from_____. I experience the joy of the Lord specifically_____.
12. This joy of the Lord is my_____, and it works itself out in very _____ ways in my life.
13. The joy of the Lord is the firm, unshakeable conviction that God does what?

14. It is the unbendable belief that...

15. It is the_____ - _____ that God is_____ me, even as I walk through fiery_____ and deep waters.
16. If the joy of the Lord comes specifically from Jesus, then it follows that the primary way I grow in the joy of the Lord is by what means?

17. In other words, the more_____ I am_____ to Christ, the more _____ I'll experience God's_____.
18. _____ is my lifeline to Jesus. Through_____, I come to the throne of grace and there I meet Jesus himself.
19. Jesus gives me_____ what I need in_____ struggle and trial and _____.
20. When I come to the throne of grace, I am filled with what?

21. What does it say in **Hebrews 4:16**?

22. What does Jesus want me to experience?

23. If I want to experience the joy of the Lord that is my strength, what must I do?

24. I must_____ to him through_____, _____ him to reshape my day and _____ me his_____, satisfying_____.

25. Again and again throughout Scripture, God's word held forth as a primary source of something. What was it?

26. Where in Scripture do we find, *"In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word?"*

27. Why did David delight so much in God's word? Why did he treat it as more valuable than even the greatest of riches?

28. It was in and through God's word that he discovered God has his what?

29. If I want to be able to say, "The joy of the Lord is my strength," then I need to go where?

30. I need to _____ myself in God's _____. To drink _____ of it and _____ the fellowship with God I _____ through it.

31. In **Ephesians 3:18-19**, Paul prays that the Ephesians would:

32. Paul wanted the Ephesians to be what?

33. How could the Ephesian's (and I) know God on such a deep, profound level? How could they possibly comprehend the height and depth and breadth of the love of Christ? How could they be filled with all the fullness of God?

34. The Spirit is the one who reveals what to us?

35. The Spirit opens our eyes so that we can do what?

36. And when the Spirit opens our eyes, we truly are filled with what?

37. How can we not be _____ with joy when we _____ understand the great _____ to which we've been _____?

38. How can we _____ be _____ with joy when we're _____ with all the _____ of God?

39. The _____ of the Lord is _____ strength, and I experience that joy through _____ the _____ of the Holy Spirit. If I want to experience *more* joy, simply need to _____ the Spirit to _____ more of Christ to _____.

40. **Lamentations 3:21-23** says what?

41. How do I experience _____, which is another form of the _____ of the Lord?

42. By intentionally calling to mind and meditating upon the character of Whom?

43. On the flip side, if I don't call to mind the character of God, what will I be?

44. This passage is a beautiful reminder of what?

45. He is _____ and his love never _____. Every morning he pours out new, fresh mercies that are custom tailored for the day.

46. He is always what?

47. When I call these things to mind, I am filled with what?

- _____
- _____
- _____

48. In **Luke 7:47**, what does Jesus say?

49. Few things create more joy than what?

50. In Christ...

- _____ one of my _____, past, present, and future has been _____ for in _____.
- There is _____ judgment left for me, _____ mercy.
- I _____ an adopted _____ of God and _____ receive an _____ from God.
- I _____ been _____ from the power of _____ and now have power to _____.
- I _____ God, "Abba, _____," and have an _____ relationship with him.
- I _____ part of God's _____ family and uniquely _____ to _____ people.
- I _____ life _____ and will eventually experience the _____ heaven and new _____.

51. The gospel truly is what?

52. When people see me full of the joy of the Lord, it does what?

53. The joy of the Lord is my _____, and I want to _____ that joy _____.

TEN WAYS TO GET YOUR JOY BACK (4)

By: John Lindell

<https://jamesriver.church/blog/10waystogetyourjoyback>

Not long ago Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University published the World Happiness Report. The report showed that the United States, one of the world's economically richest countries came in #15 on the Happiness Scale; and our level of happiness has gone down since 2005.

The findings from that report remind us of Jesus words in **Luke 12**, "*a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*"

Followers of Christ understand that joy and happiness are not the same. Happiness is the feeling you get when things are going well; it's based on your circumstances. Joy, on the other hand, is a deep sense of pleasure, delight, gladness and well-being that is independent of circumstance. Joy flows from a deeply rooted conviction that not only does God cause all things to work together for the good of those who love Him; but inherent in joy is the sense of delight in God that can cause our heart to smile even if things on the outside seem to be falling apart. In all of life's circumstances it's valuable for us to ask ourselves, "Am I relying on my happiness, or does my strength come from the joy of the Lord?"

The word "joy" is used 93 times in the O.T. It's a Hebrew word that means "glee" or "exceeding joy." God wants you to be joyful! Perhaps, you feel as if you have lost your joy; how do you get your joy back?

10 PRINCIPLES THAT CAN HELP YOU WALK IN JOY:

1. Joy is something God can restore

PSALM 51:12, "*Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.*" (ESV)

God can cause our heart to smile even if things on the outside seem to be falling apart.

Do you remember when you got saved? You were filled with joy. That same joy is not only available to you today but is God's will for your life. Every day His desire is that we would know His joy in our hearts in such a way that it becomes obvious to people around us... especially those who live with us!

2. Joy is found in God's presence

PSALM 16:11, "*You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*" (ESV)

If you lack joy, make a determined effort to spend time in God's presence. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, consider His incredible kindness, celebrate how great and powerful God is and you will experience His joy.

3. Joy is the result of righteousness

PSALM 97:11, *“Light shines on the godly, and joy on those whose hearts are right.”* (NLT)

ECCLESIASTES 2:26, *“God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who please him.”* (NLT)

If you have unaddressed sin in your lives, it will diminish your joy. On the other hand, when we are walking with God with a clear conscience, joy increases.

4. Joy is found in delighting in God’s Word

PSALM 119:111, *“Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.”* (NIV)

I like the way The Message reads, *“I inherited your book on living...”*

Some people wish they had a rich old aunt or uncle who would leave them a huge inheritance. Honestly, the best that kind inheritance can bring is a temporary happiness, but the Bible is an inheritance from the Lord; it is better than gold, diamonds, or rubies, and it has been passed down to you. When we see the Bible as treasure we have inherited, invariably, that mindset will lead to joy.

When our words are filled with wisdom, it produces joy.

5. Joy is the result of speaking with wisdom

PROVERBS 15:23, *“To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!”* (ESV)

Have you ever experienced a time when you were involved in a conversation, and suddenly you realized that God had given you wisdom to speak and there was no other explanation other than God was speaking through you? God’s desire is that every one of us who walks with Him would speak life-giving words to the people around us. When our words are filled with wisdom, it produces joy.

6. Joy is produced by righteous hope

PROVERBS 10:28, *“The hope of the righteous brings joy...”* (ESV)

What is hope? For the Christian, hope is the anticipation that God will do something good! God has done good to us through His Son Jesus and He will continue to do good in more ways than we can count. Develop the habit of anticipating God’s goodness in your life, and you will have joy!

7. Joy is found in answered prayer

JOHN 16:24, *“Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”* (ESV)

Answered prayer brings joy, but you can’t have answered prayer if you don’t pray. And you won’t pray as much if you don’t have a prayer time! Making time to pray is key to making room for joy!

8. Joy is produced by the Holy Spirit

Hope is the anticipation that God will do something good!

GALATIANS 5:22, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...”* (ESV)

GALATIANS 5:25, *“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”* (NIV)

One measure of the Spirit’s working in your life is joy. If the Spirit is not producing joy in your life, then it’s important to consider that something in your life may, in fact, be blocking the work of the Spirit in you. Ask the Lord to identify that blockage and remove it so that His joy may flow in your heart.

9. Joy fills our heart as we remember the good things God has done through the people He has placed in our lives

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5, *“I thank my God for you every time I think of you; and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel from the very first day until now.”* (GNT)

When I think about the people God has put in my life, who they are and what they’ve done, it brings me joy. Refuse to focus on the unkind words and hurts that have come to you from other people. Instead, spend your time thanking God for the people who have developed you, encouraged you, served with you, and you will have joy.

10. Joy comes when we trust the Lord

PSALM 40:4, *“Oh, the joys of those who trust the Lord...”* (NLT)

Placing our trust in God brings joy. We have a God who loves us more than we can imagine, a God who is more powerful than we can comprehend, and who has promised to help us if we put our trust in Him. Settle it in your heart God wants to help you!

TEST - CHAPTER FOUR

THE JOY OF THE LORD

TEN WAYS TO GET YOUR JOY BACK

1. What did the report show about the United States Happiness Scale?

2. The findings from that report remind us of Jesus words in **Luke 12**, which says...

3. Followers of Christ understand what?

4. Happiness is the _____ you get when things are going _____;
it's based on your _____.
5. Joy, on the other hand, is a _____ sense of _____, delight,
gladness and _____ that is _____ of circumstance.
6. Joy flows from a deeply rooted _____ that not only does God
_____ all things to work together for the good of those who love Him;
but inherent in joy is the sense of delight in God that can cause our heart to
_____ even if things on the _____ seem to be falling _____.
7. In all of life's circumstances it's valuable for us to ask ourselves what?

8. How many times is the word "joy" is used in the O.T.?

9. The Hebrew word means

10. **PSALM 51:12** says,

11. Do you remember when you got saved? You were filled with what?

12. Every day His desire is that we would what?

13. In Scripture it is written, *"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."* (ESV) Where is this found in the Bible?

14. If you _____ joy, make a determined _____ to spend time in God's _____. Enter His gates with _____, consider His incredible kindness, _____ how great and powerful God _____ and you _____ experience His joy.

15. Joy is the result of what

16. **PSALM 97:11** says, "*_____ shines on the _____, and joy on those whose _____ are _____.*" (NLT)

17. **ECCLESIASTES 2:26** says,

18. What will diminish your joy?

19. When we are walking with God with a clear conscience it produces what?

20. Joy is found in _____ in God's _____.

21. **PSALM 119:111**, "*Your _____ are my heritage forever; they are the _____ of my _____.*" (NIV)

22. The Bible is an inheritance from the _____; it is better than _____, diamonds, or _____, and it has been passed down to _____.

23. When we see the Bible as treasure we have inherited, invariably, that mindset will lead to what?

24. When our words are filled with wisdom, it produces what?

25. Have you ever experienced a time when you were involved in a conversation, and suddenly you realized that God had given you wisdom to speak and there was no other explanation other than God was speaking through you?

Yes _____ No _____

26. What is God's desire?

27. What is hope for the Christian?

28. God has done _____ to us through His Son _____ and He will _____ to do good in more ways than we can count. Develop the habit of anticipating God's goodness in your life, and you will have joy!

29. **JOHN 16:24** says,

30. Answered _____ brings joy, but you can't have _____ prayer if you _____ pray. And you won't pray as much if you don't have a prayer time! Making time to pray is key to making room for joy!

31. Joy is produced by the Holy _____

32. In our text it states that **GALATIANS 5:22** says, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...*" (ESV), complete this verse.

33. One measure of the Spirit's working in your life is what?

34. If the Spirit is not producing joy in your life, then it's important to consider what?

35. Ask the Lord to _____ that blockage and _____ it so that His joy may _____ in your heart.

36. Joy fills our heart as we remember the good things God has done through whom?

37. Where do we find written in Scripture, "*I thank my God for you every time I think of you; and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel from the very first day until now?*" (GNT)

38. Spend your time thanking God for the people who have what?

39. Joy comes when we _____ the Lord.

40. _____ our trust in God brings _____.

41. We have a God who _____ us more than can we imagine, a God who is more _____ than we can comprehend, and who has _____ to help us if we put our _____ in Him. Settle it in your heart God wants to help you!

CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY? ⁽⁵⁾

By: Matt Perman

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity>

The doctrine of the Trinity is foundational to the Christian faith. It is crucial for properly understanding what God is like, how he relates to us, and how we should relate to him. But it also raises many difficult questions. How can God be both one and three? Is the Trinity a contradiction? If Jesus is God, why do the Gospels record instances where he prayed to God?

While we cannot fully understand everything about the Trinity (or anything else), it is possible to answer questions like these and come to a solid grasp of what it means for God to be three in one.

ONE GOD, THREE PERSONS

The doctrine of the Trinity means that there is one God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons — the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Stated differently, God is one in essence and three in person. These definitions express three crucial truths: (1) the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, (2) each Person is fully God, (3) there is only one God.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons. The Bible speaks of the Father as God (**Philippians 1:2**), Jesus as God (**Titus 2:13**), and the Holy Spirit as God (**Acts 5:3-4**). Are these just three different ways of looking at God, or simply ways of referring to three different roles that God plays? The answer must be no, because the Bible also indicates that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons.

For example, since the Father sent the Son into the world (**John 3:16**), he cannot be the same person as the Son. Likewise, after the Son returned to the Father (**John 16:10**), the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit into the world (**John 14:26; Acts 2:33**). Therefore, the Holy Spirit must be distinct from the Father and the Son.

In the baptism of Jesus, we see the Father speaking from heaven and the Spirit descending from heaven in the form of a dove as Jesus comes out of the water (**Mark 1:10-11**). **John 1:1** affirms that Jesus is God and, at the same time, that he was “with God,” thereby indicating that Jesus is a distinct Person from God the Father (see also **John 1:18**). And in **John 16:13-15**, we see that although there is a close unity between the three persons, the Holy Spirit is also distinct from the Father and the Son.

The fact that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons means, in other words, that the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father. Jesus is God, but he is not the Father or the Holy Spirit. The

Holy Spirit is God, but he is not the Son or the Father. They are different Persons, not three different ways of looking at God.

The personhood of each member of the Trinity means that each Person has a distinct center of consciousness. Thus, they relate to each other personally — the Father regards himself as “I” while he regards the Son and Holy Spirit as “you.” Likewise, the Son regards himself as “I,” but the Father and the Holy Spirit as “you.”

Often it is objected, “If Jesus is God, then he must have prayed to himself while he was on earth.” But the answer to this objection lies in simply applying what we have already seen. While Jesus and the Father is both God, they are different Persons. Thus, Jesus prayed to God the Father without praying to himself. In fact, it is precisely the continuing dialogue between the Father and the Son (**Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 5:19; 11:41-42; 17:1ff**) that furnishes the best evidence that they are distinct Persons with distinct centers of consciousness.

Sometimes the Personhood of the Father and Son is appreciated, but the Personhood of the Holy Spirit is neglected. Sometimes the Spirit is treated more like a “force” than a Person. But the Holy Spirit is not an “it,” but a “he” (see **John 14:26; 16:7-15; Acts 8:16**). The fact that the Holy Spirit is a Person, not an impersonal force (like gravity), is also shown by the fact that he speaks (**Hebrews 3:7**), reasons (**Acts 15:2**), thinks and understands (**1 Corinthians 2:10-11**), wills (**1 Corinthians 12:11**), feels (**Ephesians 4:30**), and gives personal fellowship (**2 Corinthians 13:14**). These are all qualities of personhood.

In addition to these texts, the others we mentioned above make clear that the Personhood of the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Personhood of the Son and the Father. They are three real persons, not three roles God plays.

Another serious error people have made is to think that the Father became the Son, who then became the Holy Spirit. Contrary to this, the passages we have seen imply that God always was and always will be three Persons. There was never a time when one of the Persons of the Godhead did not exist. They are all eternal.

While the three members of the Trinity are distinct, this does not mean that any is inferior to the other. Instead, they are all identical in attributes. They are equal in power, love, mercy, justice, holiness, knowledge, and all other qualities.

Each Person is fully God. If God is three Persons, does this mean that each Person is “one third” of God? Does the Trinity mean that God is divided into three parts?

The doctrine of the Trinity does not divide God into three parts. The Bible is clear that all three Persons are each one-hundred-percent God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each fully God. For example, **Colossians 2:9** says of Christ, “*in him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form.*” We should not think of God as a “pie” cut into three pieces, each piece representing a Person. This would make each Person less than fully God and thus not God at all. Rather, “the being of each Person is equal to the whole being of God” (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1994, page 255). The divine

essence is not something that is divided between the three persons, but is fully in all three persons without being divided into “parts.”

Thus, the Son is not one-third of the being of God; he is all of the being of God. The Father is not one-third of the being of God; he is all of the being of God. And likewise with the Holy Spirit. Thus, as Wayne Grudem writes, “When we speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together we are not speaking of any greater being than when we speak of the Father alone, the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone” (Ibid., 252).

There is only one God. If each Person of the Trinity is distinct and yet fully God, then should we conclude that there is more than one God? Obviously we cannot, for Scripture is clear that there is only one God: “*There is no other God besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other*” (**Isaiah 45:21-22**; see also **Isaiah 44:6-8**; **Exodus 15:11**; **Deuteronomy 4:35**; **6:4-5**; **32-39**; **1 Samuel 2:2**; **1 Kings 8:60**).

Having seen that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, that they are each fully God, and that there is nonetheless only one God, we must conclude that all three Persons are the same God. In other words, there is one God who exists as three distinct Persons.

If there is one passage which most clearly brings all of this together, it is **Matthew 28:19**: “*Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*” First, notice that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinguished as distinct Persons. We baptize into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Second, notice that each Person must be deity because they are all placed on the same level. In fact, would Jesus have us baptize in the name of a mere creature? Surely not. Therefore each of the Persons into whose name we are to be baptized must be deity. Third, notice that although the three divine Persons are distinct, we are baptized into their name (singular), not names (plural). The three Persons are distinct, yet only constitute one name. This can only be if they share one essence.

IS THE TRINITY CONTRADICTIONARY?

This leads us to investigate more closely a very helpful definition of the Trinity which I mentioned earlier: *God is one in essence, but three in Person.* This formulation can show us why there are not three Gods, and why the Trinity is not a contradiction.

In order for something to be contradictory, it must violate the law of non-contradiction. This law states that A cannot be both A (what it is) and non-A (what it is not) at the same time and in the same relationship. In other words, you have contradicted yourself if you affirm and deny the same statement. For example, if I

say that the moon is made entirely of cheese but then also say that the moon is not made entirely of cheese, I have contradicted myself.

Other statements may at first seem contradictory but are really not. Theologian R.C. Sproul cites as an example Dickens's famous line, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Obviously this is a contradiction if Dickens means that it was the best of times in the same way that it was the worst of times. But he avoids contradiction with this statement because he means that in one sense it was the best of times, but in another sense it was the worst of times.

Carrying this concept over to the Trinity, it is not a contradiction for God to be both three and one because he is not three and one in the same way. He is three in a different way than he is one. Thus, we are not speaking with a forked tongue — we are not saying that God is one and then denying that he is one by saying that he is three. This is very important: *God is one and three at the same time, but not in the same way.*

How is God one? He is one in essence. How is God three? He is three in Person. Essence and person are not the same thing. God is one in a certain way (essence) and three in a different way (person). Since God is one in a different way than he is three, the Trinity is not a contradiction. There would only be a contradiction if we said that God is three in the same way that he is one.

So a closer look at the fact that God is one in essence but three in person has helped to show why the Trinity is not a contradiction. But how does it show us why there is only one God instead of three? It is very simple: All three Persons are one God because, as we saw above, they are all the same essence. "Essence" means the same thing as "being." Thus, since God is only one essence; he is only one being, not three. This should make it clear why it is so important to understand that all three Persons are the same essence. For if we deny this, we have denied God's unity and affirmed that there is more than one being of God (i.e., that there is more than one God).

What we have seen so far provides a good basic understanding of the Trinity. But it is possible to go deeper. If we can understand more precisely what is meant by essence and person, how these two terms differ, and how they relate, we will then have a more complete understanding of the Trinity.

ESSENCE AND PERSON

Essence. What does essence mean? As I said earlier, it means the same thing as being. God's essence is his being. To be even more precise, essence is what you are. At the risk of sounding too physical, essence can be understood as the "stuff" that you "consist of." Of course we are speaking by analogy here, for we cannot understand this in a physical way about God. "God is spirit" (**John 4:24**). Further, we clearly should not think of God as "consisting of" anything other than divinity. The "substance" of God is God, not a bunch of "ingredients" that taken together yield deity.

Person. In regards to the Trinity, we use the term “Person” differently than we generally use it in everyday life. Therefore it is often difficult to have a concrete definition of Person as we use it in regards to the Trinity. What we do not mean by Person is an “independent individual” in the sense that both I and another human are separate, independent individuals who can exist apart from one another.

What we do mean by Person is something that regards himself as “I” and others as “You.” So the Father, for example, is a different Person from the Son because he regards the Son as a “You,” even though he regards himself as “I.” Thus, in regards to the Trinity, we can say that “Person” means a distinct subject which regards himself as an “I” and the other two as a “You.” These distinct subjects are not a division within the being of God, but “a form of personal existence other than a difference in being” (Grudem, 255; I believe that this is a helpful definition, but it should be recognized that Grudem himself is offering this as more of an explanation than definition of Person).

How do they relate? The relationship between essence and Person, then, is as follows. Within God’s one, undivided being is an “unfolding” into three personal distinctions. These personal distinctions are modes of existence within the divine being, but are not divisions of the divine being. They are personal forms of existence other than a difference in being. The late theologian Herman Bavinck has stated something very helpful at this point: “The persons are modes of existence within the being; accordingly, the Persons differ among themselves as the one mode of existence differs from the other, and — using a common illustration — as the open palm differs from a closed fist” (Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God* [Banner of Truth Trust, 1991], page 303).

Because each of these “forms of existence” are relational (and thus are Persons), they are each a distinct center of consciousness, with each center of consciousness regarding himself as “I” and the others as “you.” Nonetheless, these three Persons all “consist of” the same “stuff” (that is, the same “what” or essence). As theologian and apologist Norman Geisler has explained it, while essence is what you are, person is who you are. So God is one “what” but three “who’s.”

The divine essence is thus not something that exists “above” or “separate from” the three Persons, but the divine essence is the being of the three Persons. Neither should we think of the Persons as being defined by attributes added on to the being of God. Wayne Grudem explains,

But if each person is fully God and has all of God’s being, then we also should not think that the personal distinctions are any kind of additional attributes added on to the being of God. Rather, each person of the Trinity has all of the attributes of God, and no one Person has any attributes that are not possessed by the others. On the other hand, we must say that the Persons are real, that they are not just different ways of looking at the one being of God. The only way it seems possible to do this is to say that the distinction between the persons is not a difference of ‘being’ but a difference of ‘relationships.’ This is something far removed from our human experience, where every different human ‘person’ is a different being as well. Somehow God’s being is so much greater than ours that within his one undivided

being there can be an unfolding into interpersonal relationships, so that there can be three distinct persons. (253–254)

TRINITARIAN ILLUSTRATIONS?

There are many illustrations which have been offered to help us understand the Trinity. While there are some illustrations which are helpful, we should recognize that no illustration is perfect. Unfortunately, there are many illustrations which are not simply imperfect, but in error.

One illustration to beware of is the one which says, “I am one person, but I am a student, son, and brother. This explains how God can be both one and three.” The problem with this is that it reflects a heresy called modalism. God is not one person who plays three different roles, as this illustration suggests. He is one Being in three Persons (centers of consciousness), not merely three roles. This analogy ignores the personal distinctions within God and mitigates them to mere roles.

SUMMARY AND APPLICATION

Let us quickly review what we have seen:

The Trinity is not belief in three gods. There is only one God, and we must never stray from this.

THIS ONE GOD EXISTS AS THREE PERSONS.

The three Persons are not each part of God, but are each fully God and equally God. Within God’s one undivided being there is an “unfolding” into three interpersonal relationships such that there are three Persons. The distinctions within the Godhead are not distinctions of his essence and neither are they something added onto his essence, but they are the unfolding of God’s one, undivided being into three interpersonal relationships such that there are three real Persons.

God is not one person who took three consecutive roles. That is the heresy of modalism. The Father did not become the Son and then the Holy Spirit. Instead, there have always been and always will be three distinct persons in the Godhead. The Trinity is not a contradiction because God is not three in the same way that he is one. God is one in essence, three in Person.

The Trinity is first of all important because God is important. To understand more fully what God is like is a way of honoring God. Further, we should allow the fact that God is triune to deepen our worship. We exist to worship God. And God seeks people to worship him “*in spirit and truth*” (**John 4:24**). Therefore, we must always endeavor to deepen our worship of God — in truth as well as in our hearts.

The Trinity has a very significant application to prayer. The general pattern of prayer in the Bible is to pray to the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit

(Ephesians 2:18). Our fellowship with God should be enhanced by consciously knowing that we are relating to a tri-personal God!

Awareness of the distinct role that each Person of the Trinity has in our salvation can especially serve to give us greater comfort and appreciation for God in our prayers, as well as helping us to be specific in directing our prayers. Nonetheless, while recognizing the distinct roles that each Person has, we should never think of their roles as so separate that the other Persons are not involved. Rather, everything that one Person is involved in, the other two are also involved in, one way or another.

TEST - CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY?

1. The doctrine of the Trinity is what?

2. It is crucial for properly understanding what?

3. But it also raises many difficult questions. Name 3 of them.
 - _____
 - _____
 - __________
4. While we cannot fully understand everything about the Trinity (or anything else), it is possible to answer questions like these and come to what?

5. What does the doctrine of the Trinity mean?

6. These definitions express three crucial truths: Name them.
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
7. The Bible speaks of what?

8. Are these just three different ways of looking at God, or simply ways of referring to three different roles that God plays?

9. For example, since the Father sent the Son into the world (**John 3:16**), he cannot be the same person as whom?

10. Likewise, after the _____ returned to the Father (**John 16:10**), the _____ and the Son sent the Holy _____ into the world (**John 14:26; Acts 2:33**).
11. Therefore, what must the Holy Spirit be?

12. In the baptism of _____, we see the _____ speaking from heaven and the _____ descending from heaven in the form of a dove as _____ comes out of the water (**Mark 1:10-11**). **John 1:1**
13. This affirms that Jesus _____ God and, at the same time, that he was “_____ God,” thereby indicating that Jesus is a _____ Person _____ God the Father (see also **John 1:18**).
14. Where in Scripture do we see that although there is a close unity between the three persons, the Holy Spirit is also distinct from the Father and the Son?

15. The fact that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons means, in other words...

16. Jesus is God, but he is not who?

17. The Holy Spirit is God, but he is not who?

18. They are different Persons, not what?

19. The personhood of each member of the Trinity means...

20. How do they relate to each other?

21. The Father regards himself as “_____” while he regards the Son and Holy Spirit as “_____.”
22. Likewise, the Son regards himself as “_____,” but the Father and the Holy Spirit as “_____.”
23. Often it is objected, “If Jesus is _____, then he must have prayed to _____ while he was on earth.” But the answer to this objection lies in simply applying what we have _____ seen. While Jesus and the Father

is _____ God, they are different _____. Thus, Jesus _____ to God the _____ without praying to _____.

24. Sometimes the _____ of the Father and Son is _____, but _____ of the Holy Spirit is _____.

25. Sometimes the Spirit is treated more like something more than a Person. Name it.

26. But the Holy Spirit is not an “_____,” but a “_____” (see **John 14:26; 16:7-15; Acts 8:16**).

27. The fact that the Holy Spirit is a Person, not an impersonal force (like gravity), is also shown by the fact that he _____ (**Hebrews 3:7**), _____ (**Acts 15:2**), _____ (**1 Corinthians 2:10-11**), _____ (**1 Corinthians 12:11**), _____ (**Ephesians 4:30**), and _____ (**2 Corinthians 13:14**). These are all qualities of personhood.

28. In addition to these texts, the others we mentioned above make clear that the Personhood of the Holy Spirit is what?

29. Another serious error people have made is to think...

30. Contrary to this, the passages we have seen imply that God always was and always will be what?

31. There was never a time when one of the Persons of the Godhead did _____ exist. They are _____.

32. While the three members of the Trinity are _____, this does not mean that any is _____ to the other. Instead, they are all _____ in _____.

33. They are equal in what areas?

34. What is each Person

35. If God is three Persons, does this mean that each Person is “one third” of God?
Does the Trinity mean that God is divided into three parts?
Yes_____ No_____
36. What doesn't the doctrine of the Trinity do?

37. The Bible is clear that all three Persons are what?

38. **Colossians 2:9** says of Christ,
“
_____”
39. We should _____ think of God as a “pie” cut into three pieces, each _____ representing a Person. This would make each Person _____ than _____ God and thus not God at all.
40. Rather, “the _____ of _____ Person is _____ to the _____ being of _____” (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1994, page 255).
41. The divine essence is not something that is _____ between the three persons, but is _____ in _____ three persons _____ being divided into “_____.”
42. Wayne Grudem writes,
“

_____” (Ibid., 252).
43. Having seen that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, that they are each fully God, and that there is nonetheless only one God, we must conclude what?

44. In other words, there is one God who does what?

45. There is one passage which most clearly brings all of this together, name it.

46. First, notice that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are what?

47. Notice that each Person must be _____ because they are all placed on the same level. In fact, would Jesus have us baptize in the name of a mere

creature? Surely not. Therefore each of the Persons into whose name we are to be baptized must be deity.

48. Notice that although the three divine Persons are distinct, we are baptized into their name (_____), not names (_____).

49. The three Persons are_____, yet only constitute_____ name. This can only be if they share one essence.

50. This leads us to investigate more closely a very helpful definition of the Trinity which I mentioned earlier:

51. This formulation can show us what?

52. In order for something to be_____, it must_____ the law of non-contradiction. This law states that A cannot be_____ A (what it is) and non-A (what it is not) at the same time and in the same relationship. In other words, you have contradicted yourself if you_____ and _____ the same statement. For example, if I say that the moon____ made entirely of cheese but then also say that the moon_____ made entirely of cheese, I have contradicted myself.

53. Other statements may at first seem contradictory but are really not. Theologian R.C. Sproul cites as an example Dickens's famous line, "It was the _____ of times, it was the_____ of times." Obviously this is a contradiction____ Dickens means that it was the best of times in the _____ that it was the worst of times. But he avoids contradiction with this statement because he means that in one_____ it was the best of times, but in _____ sense it was the worst of times.

54. Carrying this concept over to the _____, it is_____ a contradiction for God to be both three and one because he is not three and one in the_____ way. He is three in a _____ way than he is_____.

55. We are not saying that God is_____ and then_____ that he is one by saying that he is_____. This is very important:

56. God is one_____ three at the_____ time, but_____ in the_____ way.

57. How is God one?

58. How is God three?

59. Essence and _____ are _____ the same thing. God is one in a certain way (essence) and three in a different way (person).
60. Since God is one in a _____ way than he is three, the _____ is _____ a contradiction. There would only be a contradiction if we said that God is three in the same way that he is one.
61. So a closer look at the fact that God is _____ in essence but _____ in person has helped to show why the Trinity is not a contradiction. But how does it show us _____ there is _____ one God instead of three?
62. It is very simple: All three Persons are one God because, as we saw above, they are all the same what?

63. "Essence" means the same thing as what?

64. It is so important to understand that all three _____ are the same _____. For if we deny this, we have denied God's unity and affirmed that there is more than one being of God (i.e., that there is more than one God).
65. If we can understand more precisely what is meant by essence and person, how these two terms differ, and how they relate, what will happen then?

66. What does essence mean?

67. Essence can be understood as what?

68. Of course we are speaking by _____ here, for _____ cannot understand this in a physical way about _____. "God is _____" (**John 4:24**).
69. Further, we clearly should not think of God as "consisting of" anything other than what?

70. The " _____ " of God is God, not a bunch of " _____ " that taken together yield _____.
71. In regards to the Trinity, we use the term "Person" differently than what?

72. What we do _____ mean by Person is an " _____ individual" in the sense that both I and another human are _____, independent

individuals who can _____ apart from one another.

73. What we do mean by Person is something that regards himself as what?

74. So the Father, for example, is a different Person from the Son because he regards the Son as a “_____,” even though he regards himself as “_____”

75. Thus, in regards to the Trinity, we can say that “Person” means what?

76. How do they relate? The relationship between _____ and Person, then, is as follows. Within God’s _____, _____ being is an “unfolding” into _____ personal _____. These personal distinctions are modes of _____ the divine _____, but are _____ divisions of the divine being. They are personal _____ of existence other than a difference in _____.

77. Because each of these “forms of existence” are _____ (and thus are _____), they are each a distinct center of _____, with each center of consciousness regarding himself as “_____” and the others as “_____.” Nonetheless, these three Persons all “_____ of” the same “_____” (that is, the same “what” or _____).

78. The divine essence is thus not something that exists “_____” or “separate from” the three Persons, but the divine essence is the _____ of the three _____. Neither should we think of the Persons as being defined by attributes added on to the being of God.

79. Each person of the Trinity has all of the attributes of God...

80. On the other hand, we must say that the Persons are real, that they are not just different ways of looking at the one being of God . . . the only way it seems possible to do this is to say what?

81. This is something far removed from our human experience, where every different human ‘person’ is what?

82. Somehow God’s being is so much _____ than ours that within his _____ undivided _____ there can be an unfolding into interpersonal _____, so that there can be _____ _____ . (253–254)

83. The Trinity is not belief in what?

84. There is only _____ God, and we must _____ stray from this.

85. The three Persons are not each part of God, but are what?

86. Within God's one undivided being there is an "unfolding" into what?

87. The distinctions within the Godhead are not distinctions of his essence and neither are they something added onto his essence, but they are what?

88. There have always been and always will be what?

89. Why is the Trinity is not a contradiction?

90. We exist to do what?

91. And God seeks people to worship him in what way?

" _____ " **(John 4:24)**.

92. Therefore, we must always endeavor to deepen our worship of God — in truth as well as in what?

93. The Trinity has a very significant application to prayer. The general pattern of prayer in the Bible is to pray to whom?

94. Everything that one Person (Trinity) is involved in, the other two are also involved in, what?

Bibliography

CHAPTER ONE - **What Are the Next Steps As a New Believer?**

<https://www1.cbn.com/new-horizons-life-new-believer>

CHAPTER TWO - **What is a Disciple of Jesus?** By: Hans Kvalbein

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/go-therefore-and-make-disciples-the-concept-of-discipleship-in-the-new-testament/>

CHAPTER THREE - **Ten Bible verses about making disciples!**

<https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog-and-stories/disciple-making-bible-verses.html>

CHAPTER FOUR - **The Joy of the Lord**

How to experience it every day! By: Mark Altrogge

<https://theblazingcenter.com/2019/03/joy-of-the-lord.html>

Ten ways to get your joy back By: John Lindell

<https://jamesriver.church/blog/10waystogetyourjoyback>

CHAPTER FIVE - **What is the doctrine of the Trinity?** By: Matt Perman

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity>

A COUPLE QUESTIONS...

DID YOU FIND THIS BIBLE STUDY HELPED YOU?

- Grow your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Yes: _____ No: _____
- Helped you better relate to life's challenges Yes: _____ No: _____
- Changed your life to trust God more Yes: _____ No: _____
- Grew your knowledge and understanding of what God's Word and words mean Yes: _____ No: _____

WHAT PART OF YOUR LIFE DID THIS BIBLE STUDY EFFECT? (Please checkmark all that apply)

- Prayer _____
- Forgiveness _____
- Trust _____
- Faith _____
- Growing in the Bible _____
- Family _____
- Work _____

THE PRACTICALITY OF THE BIBLE STUDY

Please score the following questions from 1-10, with 1 being the least and 10 being the most.

1. Was I able to understand what was taught? _____
2. Am I willing to act on what I have learned? _____
3. Am I looking for and desiring Life Change? _____
4. Was this Bible Study clear in what the Bible is instructing us to do with what we have been taught? _____

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO SHARE WHAT GOD IS TEACHING US AND THROUGH US!

If you have found this Bible Study changed your Christian walk with the Lord for the better, please consider making a donation today. Any amount will help!

If it did not help your walk with the Lord, please let us know why not!!

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT WWW.SETFREECENTER.ORG OR WWW.INITFORTHECAUSE.ORG OR MAIL YOUR DONATION TO:



Set Free Ministries
Jesus... nothing more, nothing less!

116 N. CORTEZ STREET • PRESCOTT, ARIZONA • 86301 • (480) 353-1125
(Tax ID Number • EIN 32-0363396)