

Primary Steps to Discipleship



Ten Steps to Maturing Discipleship in Jesus Christ

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Primary Steps to Discipleship

(Each meeting lasts 75 minutes)

Ten Sessions to Personal Growth as a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

1. What is a Christian Disciple?
2. Four Practices of a Disciple.
3. How to Properly Understand the Bible.
4. The Plan of Salvation.
5. The Claims of Jesus.
6. The Mission of Believers.
7. The Trinity: Seven Key Passages.
8. The Priority of Prayer
9. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
10. Leading Others to Faith in Jesus.

Introduction to Methodology

While there are many high-quality discipleship studies available this study is different in that it attempts to focus on the basic foundations of a new disciple. This includes how to study the bible, Biblical characteristics of a disciple, clarification of our mission, the Witness of the Trinity, how to love and serve one another, and bringing others to faith in Jesus.

Each lesson is designed to stimulate discussion and biblical discovery of the great truths of the Bible. This study can be accomplished either one on one or in a small group setting. Each lesson is designed to be approximately sixty-minutes in duration. The more the group discusses the chapter outlines and reviews the biblical texts included the better will be the outcome.

The second ingredient of this study is to leave the study and actually practice each truth immediately. The Bible is emphatic in stating: James 1:22, *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* The immediately application of the truth leads to maturity and even greater spiritual growth and formation.

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LESSON 1: DISCIPLESHIP

Goal:

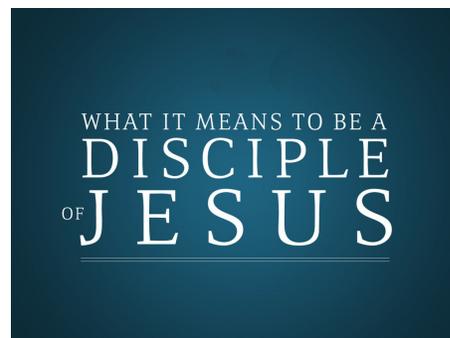
To discover and understand how the Bible defines a disciple of Jesus Christ.

What is a Christian Disciple?

Answer: By definition, a disciple is a follower, one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. A Christian disciple is a person who accepts and assists in the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ.

Christian discipleship is the process by which people grow in the Lord Jesus Christ and are equipped by the Holy Spirit, who resides in our hearts, to overcome the pressures and trials of this present life and become more and more Christ-like. This process requires believers to

respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting to examine their thoughts, words and actions and compare them with the Word of God. This requires that we be in the Word daily — studying it, praying over it, and obeying it. In addition, we should always be ready to give testimony of the reason for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15) and to disciple others to walk in His way. According to Scripture, being a Christian disciple involves personal growth characterized by the following:



- Why do you desire to be Jesus' disciple?
- Share how Jesus has redirected your life.

1. PUTTING JESUS FIRST IN ALL THINGS

(Mark 8:34-38). ³⁴And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.³⁵ For whoever would save his life³⁴ will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷For what can a man give in return for his soul?³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

The disciple of Jesus needs to be set apart from the world. Our focus should be on our Lord and pleasing Him in every area of our lives. We must put off self-centeredness and put on Christ-centeredness.

- How are you putting Jesus first in your life? **Jesus only**

- What are you doing to deny yourself and saying “yes” to Jesus?

2. FOLLOWING JESUS' TEACHINGS

(John 8:31-32). ³¹*So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

We must be obedient children and doers of the Word. Obedience is the supreme test of faith in God (1 Samuel 28:18), and Jesus is the perfect example of obedience as He lived a life on earth of complete obedience to the Father even to the point of death (Philippians 3:6-8).

- Jesus calls us to obey his teachings. How are you incorporating his teachings into your life?
- What are some of those teachings you are trying to obey?
- What teachings are you struggling with today?

3. FRUITFULNESS FOR JESUS

(John 15:5-8). ⁵*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*

Our job is not producing fruit. Our job is to abide in Christ, and if we do, the Holy Spirit will produce the fruit, and this fruit is the result of our increasing surrender to Jesus. As we become more obedient to the Lord Jesus and learn to walk in His ways, our lives will change. The biggest change will take place in our hearts, and the overflow of this will be new conduct (thoughts, words and actions) representative of that change. The change we seek is done from the inside out, through the power of the Holy Spirit. It isn't something we can conjure up on our own.

- What fruit (changes that look like Jesus) are emerging in your life?
- What do you believe Jesus is calling you to do with your life?

4. LOVE FOR OTHER DISCIPLES

John 13:34-35 ³⁴ *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.* ³⁵ *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

We are told that love of other believers is the evidence of our being a member of God's family (1 John 3:10). Love is defined and elaborated on in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. These verses show us that love is not an emotion; it is action. We must be doing something and involved in the process. Furthermore, we are told to think more highly of others than of ourselves and to look out for their interests (Philippians 2:3-4). The next verse in Philippians (verse 5) really sums up what we are to do when it comes to everything in life: "our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." What a perfect example He is to us for everything we are to do in our Christian walk.

•Identify three practical ways you can love and

•How are you showing love to others even when you don't emotionally feel like it?

5. EVANGELISM - MAKING DISCIPLES OF OTHERS

Matthew 28:18-20 ¹⁸ *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^u the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

We are to share our faith and tell nonbelievers about the wonderful changes Jesus Christ has made in our lives. No matter what our maturity level in the Christian life, we have something to offer. Too often, we believe the lie from Satan that we don't really know enough or haven't been a Christian long enough to make a difference. Not true! Some of the most enthusiastic representatives of the Christian life are new believers who have just discovered the awesome love of God. They may not know a lot of Bible verses or the "accepted" way of saying things, but they have experienced the love of the living God, and that is exactly what we are to share.

•Name two people, who don't know Jesus, that you would like to bring to faith in Jesus.

•How are you going to reach out to them?

Making Disciples - One Conversation at a Time by D. Mike Henderson

LESSON 2: FOUR PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE



Goal:

To identify the “FOUR DEVOTIONS” of the early church and to apply those devotions to our live today.

Acts 2:42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

And they devoted themselves....

What are the characteristics of someone who is devoted?

- **How are you organizing your spiritual growth in Jesus?**
- **Name three specific ways are you disciplined?**
- **In what ways are you committed to Jesus and his mission?**

to the apostles' teaching

Below are the major teachings of the apostles. Discuss and decide why each one is of vital importance:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| •The Lordship of Jesus Christ | •The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus |
| •Justification by Grace through Faith | •Faith in Jesus Alone |
| •Jesus' Second Coming | |

and the fellowship

The fellowship is another name for the church, fellow believers.

- **Identify at least four ways that devotion to other believers looks like?**
- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 3. |
| 2. | 4. |

to the breaking of bread

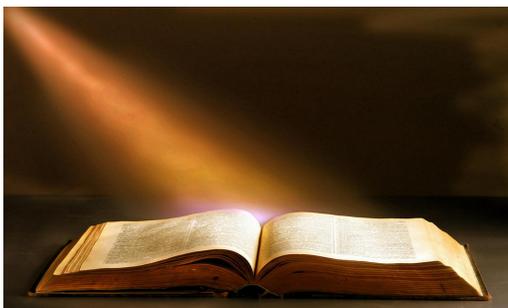
While we have narrowly defined “the breaking of bread” to Holy Communion the early church celebrated the Last Supper of Jesus along with the Agape Meal (Love Meal).

- **Why did they make the “breaking of bread” part of the Agape meal?**
- **What is the message to us?**

and the prayers.

A disciple puts great confidence in prayer.

- **How often do you pray?**
- **How often do you pray with other believers?**
- **Why ought we to be praying together? See Matthew 18:19-20**



LESSON 3: HOW TO PROPERLY UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

Goal:

To make every effort permitting the message of the Bible to guide and direct us without reading into the Bible our ideas and biases.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR BIBLE INTERPRETATION:

STEP 1. WHAT DOES THE TEXT ACTUALLY SAY?

Make sure you define all the words within the context of how the Bible defines that word or phrase.

- Define all words or phrases from the Biblical context not current usage.
- What do the verses prior and after a particular text say that sheds light on the passage?
- Does a promise contain conditions for fulfillment in other verses?

Read the following verse (7) by itself. Then read it again starting back at verse and identify conditions we must meet in order for the verse to be fulfilled.

STEP 2. REMEMBER THAT *SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE*.

Since the Bible is the Word of God and God cannot lie or contradict Himself (*Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:18*), then one passage will never contradict another passage. This principle is useful for several reasons.

First, not all Bible passages are equally clear. So, a clear passage can be used to shed light on a difficult, not-so-clear passage. There are many obscure verses in Scripture where you might wish the writer would have provided more details. *1 Corinthians 15:29* is a classic example. Right in the middle of the chapter on the Resurrection of Jesus and the future resurrection of believers, Paul asked, “*Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?*” Several ideas have been suggested to explain what Paul meant about baptism for the dead, but because this is the only verse in all of

Scripture that mentions this concept, we may not be able to reach a firm conclusion about its meaning.

However, by comparing this verse with other Scripture, we can reach definite conclusions about what it *does not* teach. We know that Paul did not instruct the Corinthians to baptize people for the dead, because Paul and other biblical writers unequivocally taught that salvation is only by God’s grace and can only be received through faith alone in Christ alone (*Ephesians 2:8–9*). We can also be sure that those who practice such a thing are not accomplishing what they hope to accomplish—the salvation of an unbeliever who has already died. Hebrews 9:27 states, “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”

Second, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we have a system of checks and balances to help us stay on the right track. There will likely be times when, for whatever reason, we incorrectly interpret a given passage. By studying other passages that shed light on the same issue, we can recognize our error. It is crucial for us to humbly approach Scripture and realize that if we believe we have found a contradiction, then it is our interpretation that is flawed, not God’s Word.

<https://answersingenesis.org/hermeneutics/how-we-interpret-the-bible-principles-for-understanding/>

- Explain what Scripture Interpreting Scripture means?

STEP 3. WHAT DID THIS TEXT SAY TO THE FIRST READERS?

The Bible was written to real people in real life situations. What were they facing and how did the Lord help them?

Example: Most Bibles gives the reader an introduction to a particular book. This introduction most often contains the following outline.

I Thessalonians

- Background of the Thessalonian Letter
- Author, date, and place of writing
- Thessalonica: the City and the Church
- Purpose of Writing
- Theme
- Outline

- Check your Bible to see if you have a similar overview of each book.

- Always ask: “How would the original readers have interpreted these verses.”

STEP 4. NEVER READ THE OLD TESTAMENT WITHOUT SEEING WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT DOES WITH IT'S TEACHING.

Jesus was continually clarifying the teaching of the Old Testament. It is vital to see what he said and did with it.

Note how the following verse from Matthew clarifies this rule:

Answer these questions as you read the text:

- What does the Old Testament teach?
- What does Jesus teach?
- How does the rule apply?

Matthew 5: 38 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

- Apply the three questions above to Matthew 5:38-42 and state what Old Testament taught and what Jesus does with that teaching.

STEP 5 READ THE BIBLE WITH THE ATTITUDE OF A LEARNER.

Let it speak to you and then immediately put into action what it calls you to do.

Read the following text and then answer two questions:

1 Peter 2:9, But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

- According to the Bible who was chosen as his people in the Old Testament?
- Peter was writing to new Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, which would be modern day Turkey. This church was made up of both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). What is Peter's message?

- What is his message to those who are believers today?

STEP 6. ASK JESUS IN PRAYER TO INTERPRET AND GUIDE YOUR STUDY.

Colossians 1:16 says, “*For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*”

The Bible affirms that Jesus himself is the author of the Bible so he is also the best interpreter. Talk to Jesus as you read his word. Ask him questions for insight and clarification.

Summary:

How will you apply these six steps to your study of scripture from this time forward?

LESSON 4: THE PLAN OF SALVATION (THE ROMAN ROAD)



Goal:

To learn and memorize the six passages from the Book of Romans that systematically lays out the plan of salvation.

How to use these passages:

Become familiar with these six passages below that outlines the Plan of Salvation. Knowing and sharing these six passages gives the seeker of Jesus all they need to know to be saved.

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

We all have sin in our hearts. We all were born with sin. We were born under the power of sin's control. - *Admit that you are a sinner.*

Define "sin."

What is "God's glory?"

Romans 6:23a "...The wages of sin is death..."

Sin has an ending. It results in death. We all face physical death, which is a result of sin. But a worse death is spiritual death that alienates us from God, and will last for all eternity. The Bible teaches that there is a place called the Lake of Fire where lost people will be in torment forever. It is the place where people who are spiritually dead will remain. - *Understand that you deserve death for your sin.*

The Bible talks about two kinds of death: physical and spiritual. What is spiritual death?

Romans 6:23b "...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Salvation is a free gift from God to you! You can't earn this gift, but you must reach out and receive it. - *Ask God to forgive you and save you.*

What is "eternal life?"

Why does it come through Jesus alone?

Romans 10:13 "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved!"

- *Call out to God in the name of Jesus!*

What does "calling out to Jesus look like?"

Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!"

When Jesus died on the cross He paid sin's penalty. He paid the price for all sin, and when He took all the sins of the world on Himself on the cross, He bought us out of slavery to sin and death! The only condition is that we believe in Him and what He has done for us, understanding that we are now joined with Him, and that He is our life. He did all this because He loved us and gave Himself for us!
 - Give your life to God the Father... His love poured out in Jesus on the cross is your only hope to have forgiveness and change. His love bought you out of being a slave to sin. His love is what saves you -- not religion, or church membership. God the Father loves you!

Why it is more important to trust in the love of God in Jesus Christ than it is to try to be good enough?

When did Jesus die for you?

Romans 10:9,10 " ...If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." - *If you know that God is knocking on your heart's door, ask Him to come into your heart.*

How do you "confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord?"

How do you "believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead?"

A Visual Way to Remember the Roman Road!



Practice together the presentation of the Roman Road attempting to utilize only the visuals. It is not necessary to give chapter and verse references unless asked. The goal is to present the content of the Roman Road much the same way the Apostle's would have presented it.

LESSON 5: THE CLAIMS OF JESUS

Goal:

To understand from the Bible the claims of Jesus that set him apart as God in human form and the only way of forgiveness and salvation.

JESUS CLAIMED TO LIVE A SINLESS LIFE

John 8:28-29 *"So Jesus said, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.'"*



John 8:46-47 *"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."*

- Why did Jesus claim to be without sin?
- Apart from God who is without sin?
- What does this proclaim to us about Jesus?

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE THE ONLY WAY TO GOD

John 14:6 *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me."*

Matthew 11:27 *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."*

Note: No other world religious leader, such as Buddha, Confucius, or Mohammed ever made this claim.

- Why is Jesus so exclusive in his claim to be the only way to God?
- How does this make Jesus unique?

JESUS CLAIMED TO HAVE SHARED THE GLORY OF GOD IN HEAVEN

Jesus claimed to have pre-existed the people he spoke with. The apostle John wrote that Jesus was with God in the very beginning, and that "all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being."(John 1:1-5)

John 17:5 *"And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."*

- If Jesus always existed then what does this tell us about his claim to be God?
- John states that Jesus is also the creator of all things. What insight does this give us about the nature of Jesus?

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE ABLE TO FORGIVE SINS

One of the reasons that the Jewish leaders were so angry with Jesus was his continual practice of forgiving people's sins. The religious leaders understood clearly that since sins were rebellion against God Himself, only God could forgive sins.

Luke 5:20-21 *"When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.' The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, 'Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?'"*(emphasis: web author)

Luke 7:48-49 *"Then Jesus said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven.' The other guests began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?'"*

- Why would Jesus believe he had the power to forgive sins?
- Why were the guests astonished at his ability to forgive sins?

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE A HEAVENLY KING

Luke 22:69 *"But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God."*

Luke 23:1-3 *"Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, 'We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king.' So Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'Yes, it is as you say,' Jesus replied."*

John 18:36-37 *"Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.' 'You are a king, then!' said Pilate. Jesus answered, 'You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.'"*

- What truth is Jesus testifying to?
 - If Jesus is the King of the Universe then what does that make us who believe?
-

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE ABLE TO GIVE EVERLASTING LIFE

Jesus didn't just tell people how they could find everlasting life, or deepen their own life experience. He actually claimed to give life from himself.

John 6:40 *"For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

John 6:47 *"I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life."*

John 10:28-30 *"I give [my followers] eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."*

John 11:25 *"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die...'"*

- What power does Jesus claim to possess?
- What assurance and hope does this give you?

JESUS CLAIMED THAT HE WOULD DIE AND COME BACK TO LIFE

John 10:17 *"Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

John 12:32-33 *"But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.' He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die."*

John 16:16 *"In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."*

Luke 18:31-33 *"Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, 'We are going up into Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.'"*

- Why could death not hold Jesus?
- What authority does Jesus claim to have?

JESUS CLAIMED THAT HE WOULD RETURN AGAIN TO JUDGE THE WORLD

Matthew 24:27-30 *"So as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man... At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear*

in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory."

Matthew 25:31-32 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep and the goats."

Mark 14:61-62 "Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?' 'I am,' said Jesus. 'And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

- What kind of return entrance will Jesus make one day?
- What does Matthew mean when Jesus says he will separate the sheep from the goats?

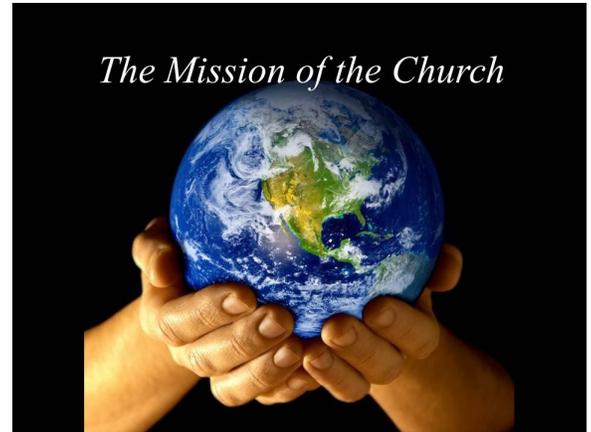
Summarize the claims of Jesus in your own words.

LESSON 6: THE MISSION OF BELIEVERS

Goal:

To understand that the church and all believers in Jesus Christ have one primary mission.

18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians. 5:18-21)



Vs. 18a Define “reconciled.” Identify the steps involved in this reconciliation.

Vs. 18b Since God the Father’s mission is reconciliation he has in turn made that our mission. What does that mean for you and me?

Vs. 19 What is another name for Christ? (Messiah) What part of speech is Christ? (A title)

Vs. 19 What is the tool, the means, the method of this reconciliation? (Christ-Jesus).

Review the Apostle’s Creed and identify the steps of Jesus’ life and Ministry.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come again to judge the living and the dead.

Vs. 19 What is the message of “reconciling the world?” (It is for all people.)

What is the major purpose of this reconciliation? (not counting trespasses against them-the forgiveness of sins.)

What are we told is our purpose a second time? (entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.)

Vs. 20 What authority does an “ambassador” have?

Vs. 20 What does Paul say that our ambassadorship is in fact God the Father making his appeal of reconciliation through us?

Vs. 20b What is our message? (We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.)

Vs. 21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* This is called “the great exchange.” What are the elements of that exchange?

(Jesus exchanged our sin and rebellion for his perfection and righteousness)

What did Jesus actually become so that we might be forgiven and reconciled? (He Became SIN.)

What does it mean that we are the “righteousness of God?” (We are declared Righteous, guiltless, because of Jesus’ sacrifice.)

In your own words write a summary of the Mission of the Church in the world!

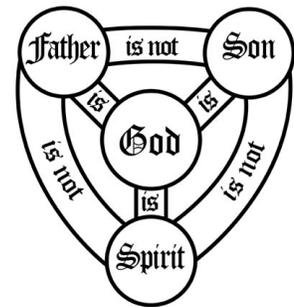
LESSON 7: THE TRINITY - SEVEN KEY PASSAGES

Goal:

To clearly see that the New Testament identifies the one true God as three persons in one.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been a central teaching of Christianity since the 4th century A.D.

1. The Father (YHWH of the Old Testament), the Son (Jesus Christ/Messiah) and the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost, or the Paraclete) comprise the Godhead, or God, in His entirety.
2. Each of these divine Persons, individually, is at the same time *also* fully God in His/Its own right, nevertheless.
3. Each of these divine Persons is also fully *distinct*, having functions or duties totally unique to Him.
4. Yet, even though they function *separately*, and are *independent* beings, they are nevertheless *united* in purpose and action, and *united* as one God.



<http://www.earlychristianhistory.info/trinity.html>

Why is the Trinity important to Christianity?

The doctrine of the Trinity is important because the Bible puts emphasis on Jesus being more than a mere man. Jesus is both man and God at the same time. A mere man's death on the cross would be insufficient to forgive the sins of the world. Jesus, being both God and man, had the power to live a sinless life and to be the one and only person who could die for our sins as God and also have the power to bodily rise from the dead. The Holy Spirit is also seen and proclaimed as God and is the means by which we are spiritually enlightened to the truth of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Read the passages below and then identify how each passage reveals the reality of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 13:14 *May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

- Why would St. Paul put Jesus Christ first in this doxology?

Matthew 3:16-17 *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

- Who are the three main entities revealed in this verse?

Hebrews 9:14 *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

- What power is there in the blood of Jesus Christ?

1 Peter 1:2 *who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.*

- The Father, Son and Holy Spirit work in harmony. Explain how that harmony functions?

Matthew 28:19 *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,*

- This constitutes the early baptismal formula of the church. Why didn't Jesus just say to baptize in the name of God?

John 14:26 *But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

- What does it mean when someone comes in someone else's name?

Ephesians 3:16-17 *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,*

- Paul is speaking about God the Father in this verse. How does he include God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?

LESSON 8: THE PRIORITY OF PRAYER

Goal:

To become a disciple of prayer who learns to both ask from Jesus and to listen to Jesus so that our prayers align with his will.

Prayer is primarily learning to be still and listen to the voice of Jesus through his word, people and circumstances. It is asking in line with God's revealed will in Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:14 *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*

•How do we go about determining His will?

•What does "he hears us" mean?

Luke 9:35 *A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."*

•How does a disciple of Jesus listen to Jesus?

•How do you know when you have heard his voice?

A Recommended Process to Listen in Prayer

Psalm 37:7 *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.*

Psalm 119:48 *I lift up my hands to our commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.*

•Review each step below and come to an agreement of what this means and how to do it.

•Clear Your Mind Except for God's Word. This means that we need to memorize several or many verses that the Holy Spirit can bring to mind. We also need to be reading the Word on a daily basis so that we can receive new insights.

•Be still. Settle down internally and externally.

•Let His Word speak to Your Heart. Permit the words you have recently read or a scripture verse you have memorized roam around in your heart and mind.

- Keep Your Heart Open.** Drop your preconceived ideas about how God is supposed to act and be prepared for new insights.
- Expect Jesus to Speak.** Be prepared for a small inner voice, a vision, a new understanding.
- Ask Him to Reveal to You what He Wants.**
- Give Time Each Day to Listening.** Continue to repeat this process day after day. Let it become a normal part of your Christian life.

**PRAYER TOPICS WE NEED TO DISCIPLINE
OURSELVES TO FOCUS ON:**

All of us need a discipline of prayer topics that direct us in all areas of potential focus. The list below is designed to give the disciple a cross-section of prayer topics that are vital to the Mission of Jesus Christ.

Review each topic area of prayer. Read each one together and agree on how to incorporate this topic into your prayers.

PRAISE: The act of Divine Adoration

Praise and Worship is an expression of admiration and devotion to Jesus Christ.

Psalm 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

STILLNESS: The act of Sour Surrender

Psalm. 37:7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!

CONFESSION: Admitting our sins and need for forgiveness.

1 John 1:9-10 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

SCRIPTURE PRAYING: Praying the Word back to Jesus.

2Tim. 3:16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*

INTERCESSION: Lifting up the needs of others.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live*

peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

PETITION: The act of praying for Personal needs.

Philippians 4:6 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

THANKSGIVING: The act of Expressed Appreciation

1 Thess. 5:18 *Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

PERSECUTION: The act of praying for Suffering Believers worldwide.

Hebrews 13:3 *Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

LISTENING: Hearing the voice of Jesus.

Ecclesiastes 5:1 *Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.*

FINAL THOUGHTS

Prayer is primarily learning to be still and listen to the voice of Jesus through his Word, people and circumstances. Jesus desires to speak to you and guide you as you walk with him by faith. He is not silent!

Keep your spiritual eyes and ears open for his actions, his voice, and his movement. Often he will speak to us in the voice of a child, an elderly person, the circumstances of our life, even in the midst of a failure.

The key to hearing Jesus is to be listening in the first place. The more we practice listening the more we will hear.

**TAKE TIME TO PRAY TOGETHER UTILIZING
THE TOPICS LISTED ABOVE.**

LESSON 9: THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

Goal:

To recognize and affirm that New Testaments witness that just as Jesus rose from the dead he will in turn return to this earth as Lord, Savior and Ultimate Judge of all mankind.

As you read each passage below underline the key words and phrases that proclaim Jesus is coming again. Once completed discuss how these passages offer hope in a world of chaos and how we ought to live as a result.

Revelation 1:7 - *Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.*



Matthew 24:36 - *As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”*

John 14:3 - *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

Matthew 24:30 - *Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

Colossians 3:4 - *When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

Acts 1:11 - *and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”*

Titus 2:13 - *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

Matthew 24:27 - *For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*

1 Thessalonians 4:17 - *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

Matthew 24:42-44 - *Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

1 Thessalonians 4:16 - *For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

Hebrews 9:28 - *so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.*

•What hope do these passages offer us?

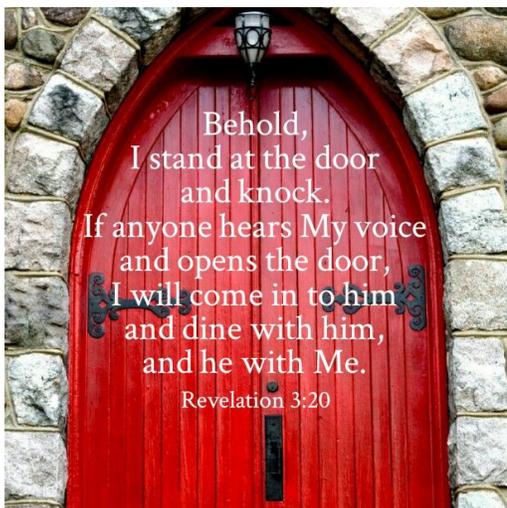
•How should we now live knowing that Jesus is coming again?

LESSON 10: LEADING OTHERS TO FAITH IN JESUS

Goal:

**The mission of the church is to
*KNOW JESUS CHRIST, TO BE HIS DISCIPLE,
AND TO MAKE DISCIPLES.***

The follow steps provide a logical biblical outline of witness, leading others to faith in Jesus Christ and to direct them in life-long discipleship.



One of the great privileges and terrors of being a believer in Jesus Christ is the fact that we have the right, the message, and the responsibility to lead unbelievers to Jesus. The thought of talking to someone about Jesus and enabling them to receive him into their life seems overwhelming to most Christians. Too often we are content to let the “professionals” in Christianity do the witnessing and win the lost. There is just one problem! That is not Jesus’ plan or expectation for those who claim his name.

The truth is that Jesus is calling YOU to be his bold witness and ambassador of the good news. If we claim Jesus as Lord and Savior then we are responsible to build his kingdom through converts to faith. Too many Christians fail to take the time to learn the process and methods for telling others about Jesus and leading them to a life long commitment.

So what do we need to do to be prepared and equipped to share Jesus with others and fulfill the Great Commission? The following five steps need to be understood, learned and put to work in every Christians life.

STEP 1: KNOW THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Romans 3:23	<i>For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.</i>
Romans 6:23a	<i>The wages of sin is death.</i>
Romans 6:23b	<i>But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.</i>
Romans 10:13	<i>Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.</i>
Romans 5:8	<i>But God demonstrated his own love for us, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us.</i>
Romans 10:9	<i>If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believer in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.</i>

STEP 2: LISTEN FOR THE RIGHT LANGUAGE

Listen to others and let them tell you their needs.

Listen for key words or phrases,

“Why is life unfair?”

“I feel like this world is coming apart.”

“Sometimes I wish I had never been born.”

“Why does God allow such suffering?”

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

When key words or phrases are spoken then it is the time to share your personal story.

Explain how you have come to terms with the unfairness of life, why the chaos of life is not a threat any longer, share that you know why you were born, or understand the reality of pain and suffering.

STEP 4: INVITE THEM TO DISCOVER THE REAL ANSWERS TO LIFE

Summarize the Plan of Salvation in your own words.

Invite others to call on the name of Jesus for forgiveness and Purpose.

STEP 5: INVITE THEM TO ASK JESUS INTO THEIR LIFE (A.B.C.D.)

The A.B.C.D. model is an easy to remember procedure for prayer in leading someone to first time commitment to Jesus. Share the A.B.C.D. with them and then ask them to pray it after your line by line.

A - I **accept** what the Bible says about my sin and I ask forgiveness.

B - I **believe** what the Bible says about Jesus as the one and only savior.

C - I **confess** Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

D - I **decide** to become Jesus' life-long **disciple. Amen**

STEP 6: CONNECT THEM TO OTHER CHRISTIANS in the local church. (Keep introducing and connecting them again and again)

STEP 7: INVITE THEM TO WORSHIP. (Keep inviting them over and over.)

STEP 8: CONNECT THEM TO A MIDWEEK SMALL BIBLE STUDY GROUP.

(Invite, invite, invite)

STEP 9: KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THEM. (Phone them twice a month and ask how you may pray for them.)

STEP 10: PRAY FOR AND WITH THEM. (Pray using their name and their specific request)

•Agree together (as a small group) upon a plan for learning and practicing this presentation of the Gospel so that you are comfortable and competent with each step and can share it with others.

Confidence comes from knowing what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. The above process works but is only as good as your willingness to put each step to work. When you follow the steps outlined you can love, witness and lead others into a life-long commitment to Jesus Christ.