

PREFACE

A word for pastors

*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same **commit thou to faithful men**, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2.2)*

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the **perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, for the **edifying of the body of Christ**. (Ephesians 4.11-12)*

A primary duty of every pastor is to disciple faithful men so they can become pastors. Yet pastors should also make disciples of everyone in the church. Discipling is “*the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” so the local church and every Christian can bring the maximum amount of glory to God.

A pastor’s “*lips should keep knowledge, and they (congregation) should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts*” (Malachi 2.7). He is to feed the flock so everyone thirsts and longs for the Word (John 1.1) as a newborn baby cries for milk:

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. (1 Peter 2.2)

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? (Psalm 42.1-2)

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. (Psalm 63.1)

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah. (Psalm 143.6)

As saints are disciplined they will grow in faith, and be able to give an answer to everyone who asks them what they believe:

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3.15)

Husbands and fathers need to be disciplined so they can disciple their wives, sons and daughters:

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons; specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. (Deuteronomy 4.9-10)

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 11.18-19)

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (Psalm 78.3-7)

Mothers need to be disciplined so they can assist their husbands:

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. (Proverbs 1.8)

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. (Proverbs 6.20)

INTRODUCTION

This book is designed to assist all believers in Jesus Christ to disciple themselves and others. Discipleship is extremely important because every Christian is to do everything for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10.31). A Christian cannot serve God fully and bring the ultimate amount of glory to Him without being disciplined first.

We encourage every believer to follow the steps in this book to grow to maturity. We also encourage every father to be disciplined and then disciple his wife and children. If you have difficulty in following the steps or need help ask your pastor, assistant pastor or a deacon to help you.

Everyone who believes in Jesus is a *disciple* and needs to learn what that involves. This book explains what a *disciple* is and what he should do. Read through this book carefully and complete as many steps as you can. Every Christian should be able to complete the first ten steps. The remaining steps are harder and some will not be able to complete them. Do not lose heart. Complete as many steps as you can and then maintain your spiritual fitness program. Try to continually increase your intake of the Word until you go home to be with the Lord.

Jesus commissioned His *disciples* to be witnesses to His resurrection, and to make *disciples (teach all nations)*:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28.19-20)

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1.8)

That commission applies to all true believers. Once a person is saved, by trusting in Jesus Christ alone and in nothing else, he is a *disciple* of Jesus. Yet even though every believer is technically a *disciple* one needs to live like a *disciple*. A Christian lives like a true *disciple* by engaging in several spiritual activities on a daily and a regular basis:

- 1 - **Pray** (Matthew 7.7-11; Luke 18.1-8; John 14.13-14; 16.24; Ephesians 6.18; James 1.5; 1 Thessalonians 5.17).
- 2 - **Listen** to Scripture (Deuteronomy 4.9-10; Proverbs 8.34; 23.12; Luke 8.15, 21; 11.28; James 1.22; Revelation 1.3).
- 3 - **Read** Scripture (Deuteronomy 17.19; Psalm 42.1-2; 63.1; 143.6; Revelation 1.3).
- 4 - **Study** Scripture (Deuteronomy 8.3; Matthew 4.4; Proverbs 2.1-5; 8.34; 22.17; John 5.39; Acts 17.11; Romans 15.4; 2 Timothy 2.15; 3.15).
- 5 - **Memorize** Scripture (Deuteronomy 6.6; 11.18; 30.14; Psalm 37.31; 40.8; 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1, 3; 4.1, 21; 6.21; 22.18; Isaiah 51.7; Ezekiel 3.10; Romans 10.8; Colossians 3.16).
- 6 - **Meditate** on Scripture (Joshua 1.8; Job 22.22; 23.12; Psalm 1.2; 4.4; 19.14; 63.6; 77.12; 104.34; 119.15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148; 143.5; Colossians 3.16; 1 Timothy 4.15)
- 7 - **Fellowship** with the brethren (Psalm 22.22; 105.2; 119.63; Prov. 13.20; Acts 2.42, 46-47; 5.42; Heb. 3.13; 10.24-25; 1 John 1.7)
- 8 - **Share the Gospel** (Psalm 9.1; 26.7; 35.28; 96.2; Proverbs 11.30; Mark 16.15; Acts 2.47; 1 Peter 3.15).
- 9 - **Make disciples** (Deuteronomy 4.9-10; 6.5-7; 11.18-19; 32.46; Psalm 22.31; 78.3-7; Matthew 28.19-20; 2 Timothy 2.2).

Christians who develop discipline in these basics of holy living will be active *disciples* of Jesus. It does not happen overnight. It takes many years to become a mature *disciple*, but it starts with the daily discipline of being in prayer, the Word and fellowship with other believers. “*Apply thine heart unto instruction*” (Proverbs 23.12).

Pray in the morning and throughout the day. Set up a daily Bible reading program. If you read four chapters a day you will read through the Bible in a year. Read three chapters in the Old Testament each day and one chapter in the New Testament. Buy an audio copy of the Bible, and listen to it as much as possible at home and in your car. Buy DVDs about the Bible and watch them often (*Jesus, The Gospel of John, Peter and Paul, The Greatest Story Ever Told, King of Kings*, etc.). Memorize Scripture. Try to memorize one verse a week. Meditate on verses you have memorized. Let the Holy Spirit teach you. Learn how to share the gospel and then share your personal testimony, and the gospel as the Lord leads.

A good beginning program of spiritual discipline is reading four chapters each day of the Bible (3 chapters in the O.T. and 1 chapter in the N.T.). Pray twice for five or more minutes when you wake up and

as you lie down to sleep. Also pray short prayers throughout the day. Set aside 15 minutes a day to memorize and review Scripture. Also set aside 15 minutes a day to meditate on Scripture. Try to do this during the day, but if you cannot meditate during the day do so after you have prayed as you lay in bed. Get into a habit of meditating on Scripture as you lie in bed at night. It is a most blessed way to fall asleep.

It is important to find brethren to fellowship with. A home Bible study is one way to find fellow *disciples*. Look for a study where the teacher knows the Bible and knows how to teach. Avoid a study where the people share their ignorance. We recommend you only attend a church that has a solid discipleship program. If it does not have one give the pastor a copy of this book and encourage him to start one. If he does not start one using this book or another program consider going to church that has a discipleship program.

Paul told the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitated Jesus (1 Corinthians 11.1). If we are to imitate Paul and Jesus we must be *disciples* because Paul was the greatest *disciple* and apostle and Jesus was also a *disciple* (Isaiah 50.4-5).

All disciples are fishers of men who actively lead people to the Lord. Jesus was the greatest fisher of men and He called His disciples to be the same:

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. (Matthew 4.18-20)

All Christians should be disciples and therefore fishers of men. If you are not a fisher of men study this book carefully and you will become one.

When church leaders do not exert strong leadership, but bow to the wishes of the people their spiritual welfare declines quickly. When the pastors do not teach and preach solid, biblical sermons in which they explain what the Bible says the people remain spiritual babies.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4.3-4)

Most pastors preach lukewarm, sour-milk sermons that make people “feel good” and keep them in a permanent state of spiritual infancy. In many churches in America the majority of the members are spiritual babies who have no desire to grow spiritually. They are like the Corinthians: “*I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it ... ye are yet carnal (or babes).*” (1 Corinthians 3:2-3a).

Do you want to die a spiritual baby in your spiritual crib? If you do not want to die in spiritual infancy start with Step 1 and do not stop until you finish Step 10. If you want to grow to maturity do not stop until you reach Step 20, and if you have been called to be a pastor do not stop until you finish Step 22.

Some deacons and Bible teachers in church have become stagnant in their spiritual growth. They reached a level of spiritual maturity that they are comfortable with and stopped growing. They read a few verses or maybe even a whole chapter each day and stopped memorizing Scripture. They no longer study the Bible. They are content in their position in the church and their level of maturity. They have arrived.

Spiritual stagnation is just as bad as spiritual infantilism. God hates both! Christians who stop growing are in danger of being thrown away by God and swallowed up by the world. Every Christian who stops growing always becomes worldly, seeking after the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes. Have you ever seen a spiritually stagnant Christian who does not have desires for the things of the world?

Carefully read, study and meditate on the following passage:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. (John 15.1-6)

Do you want to spiritually dry up and be cast off from Jesus? If you do not have a desire to study the Bible you may already be dried up and the world will eventually consume you.

You may also want to consider another possibility. If you have no desire to hear, read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture, and you rarely pray or pray for a couple minutes each day you may not be born from above. You may have made a false profession of faith. That is why Paul encouraged the believers in Corinth to examine their faith:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Corinthians 13.5)

There are millions of people, throughout history, who truly believed they were saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, but they were not. On judgment day millions will proclaim their faith and the works they did in the name of Jesus yet He will cast them away:

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7.21-23)

The way to know for certain that your confession of faith was real is by your fruits. Do you have a powerful desire to know God and Jesus? Do you hunger and thirst for Their Word? Do you hear, read, study, memorize and meditate on Their Word daily? Do you pray always? Do you desire to fellowship with the brethren more than once a week? Are you eager to share the Gospel with the lost?

Do you hate sin? Do you hate worldly movies and television shows that depict every sin imaginable? Do you hate worldly music that glorifies the Devil, drugs alcohol, sex, etc.? Do you hate and not go to concerts where people are high on drugs and alcohol, and the music is worldly? Do you hate partying, and not go to parties where there is drinking, smoking and drugs? Do you hate and not go to night clubs? Do you hate gambling and avoid it? Do you rarely envy the wicked?

If you answer no to just one of those questions you may not be truly born from above. Your profession of faith may have been a false profession. If you are certain you are born from above but have a problem with any of the above noted sins you need to pray fervently every day, study the Bible daily and find a church where the brethren can help you gain victory over your sins.

Take this course at your own pace. Start with Step 1 and continue until you finish Step 10. If you can go further do so, and if you have been called to be a pastor complete the entire course. Make sure to take the Final Exam (p. 139) once you finish Step 10.

If you are serious about being a faithful *disciple* of Jesus Christ consider a special secret in the Bible:

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. (Psalm 119.99)

If you want to know and understand more than all of your spiritual teachers meditate on Scripture as much as possible every day.

Read as many chapters of Scripture as much as possible and pray. Read one or more chapters in the Bible when you wake up. Take Bible breaks whenever possible. If you take eight five-minute Bible breaks each day you can read eight or more chapters a day. End each day in prayer and a chapter or more of the Bible.

Study the Bible every day. Set up a study program and spend 30 minutes, one hour or all day studying the Bible. Take a book of the Bible and study through it. You can also do topical studies.

Memorize Scripture. Choose your favorite verses and write them out on flash cards (3 x 5 cards or business cards). Get blank business cards or old ones and write the verse on the back. Keep them with you and when you have a spare moment take them out and memorize or review them. If you memorize one verse a week you will have hid 52 verses in your heart after a year. Never stop memorizing Scripture.

Meditate on Scripture. Try to find time every day to meditate on Scripture. Early in the morning when you wake up is a good time. Some believers have a daily quiet time. They read several verses and then meditate on them asking, "What is God trying to tell me." You can also meditate on Scripture as you wait to fall asleep. After you have prayed and read Scripture meditate on a specific passage or topic.

More tips on reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on Scripture can be found in Steps 6, 11, 12, 15 and 16.

If you want to know as much about the Bible as possible and be filled with wisdom study the Bible daily asking for wisdom (James 1.5), and let the Holy Spirit teach you (1 John 2.27). Any believer can understand every passage and doctrine in the Bible because the Holy Spirit searches the depths of God (1 Corinthians 2.10). He can give us everything the Father wants us to know. Since we have the "*mind of Christ*" we can know everything Jesus knows:

*For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?
But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2.16)*

The cults take discipleship seriously. They make sure their devotees are thoroughly indoctrinated into their heresies and are capable of sharing them with others. The Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses are masters at proselytizing while most Christian churches have no evangelism programs and few have a discipleship program. Is it no wonder the cults are growing while the true churches are shrinking?

If you think being sold out to God is not important and you can live your life the way you want to doing whatever pleases you, meditate on the following passages:

*What? know ye not that your **body is the temple of the Holy Ghost** which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.** (1 Corinthians 6.19-20)*

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him **deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.** (Matthew 16.24)*

*So likewise, whosoever he be of you that **forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.** (Luke 14.33)*

*Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and **sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.** (Matthew 19.21)*

*If any man come to me, and **hate** not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and **his own life** also, **he cannot be my disciple.** And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, **cannot be my disciple.** (Luke 14.26-27)*

*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, **do all to the glory of God.** (1 Corinthians 10.31)*

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.** And **be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.** (Romans 12.1-2)*

*Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the **loss of all things, and do count them but dung**, that I may win Christ. (Philippians 3.8)*

Do you consider all of your worldly goods to be nothing but dung? Do you consider your career, home, bank account, stocks, bonds, cars, planes, boats, motorcycles, art collection, jewelry, clothing, gold and silver stash, guns and other valuables to be dung (worthless)? Or are some or all of these worldly things more important to you than serving God with all of your heart, soul, mind and body? Do you spend more time playing with your worldly goods or serving the Lord?

Do you believe you were bought with a price – the blood of Jesus Christ and that you are not your own boss?

Do you believe you should deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus?

Do you believe you must forsake all that you are and have to be a disciple of Jesus?

Do you believe that you must at least be willing to sell all that you have to be His disciple?

Do you believe you must love God more than your family and yourself to be His disciple?

Do you believe that everything you do should be done for the glory of God?

Do you believe you should present your body as a living sacrifice and not be conformed to the world? Do you believe you must be transformed by the renewing your mind daily through prayer and the study of the Bible?

If you believe these things then do them. Completing this discipleship course is a step in doing these things.

Every Christian “*shall give account of himself to God*” (Romans 14.12). We all want to hear the words from Him, “*Well done, good and faithful servant*” (Matthew 25.21). Be a faithful *disciple*.

Meditate on these passages to see how you can be a faithful disciple of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (Matthew 25.21)

Holy living

*And they that are Christ's have **crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*** (Galatians 5.24)

*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*** (Romans 13.14)

*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*** (1 Peter 2.11)

*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath **suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*** (1 Peter 4.1-2)

Charity

*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye **love one another with a pure heart fervently.*** (1 Peter 1.22)

*We then that are **strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*** (Romans 15.1)

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. (Romans 12.13)

*Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and **we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.** But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not **love** in word, neither in tongue; but **in deed** and in truth. (1 John 3.16-18)*

*And let ours also learn to **maintain good works** for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. (Titus 3.14)*

Spiritual fitness

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2.15)

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17.11)

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4.4)

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

There are a few basic things that a believer in Jesus Christ must do to become a faithful disciple:

- Live a holy life denying themselves of the pleasures of the world.
- Meet the needs of needy fellow believers and unsaved.
- Do basic good works for the brethren and the unsaved.
- Develop a spiritual fitness program.
- Become an active member of a church or fellowship.
- Become a disciplemaker.

Go through this course as far as you can and become a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ so you will hear Him say to you when you go home to be with Him forever:

Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (Matthew 25.21)