

August, 2008

Workshop 7

“Discipleship”

Presented by Pastor Jim Graczyk

JESUS said: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV

A. Definitions

1. **Disciples** — To teach, to instruct
2. **Disciple** — A “disciple” was not only a pupil, but an **adherent**; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher. (*from Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.*)

The disciple of Christ today may be described in the words of Farrar, as “one who believes His doctrines, rests upon His sacrifice, imbibes His spirit, and imitates His example. (*from International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Electronic Database Copyright © 1996, 2003 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.*)

John 8:31 NKJV — “Then **Jesus said** to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.’”

John 15:8 NKJV — **Jesus said:** “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”

B. Comments on Definitions

1. We can see from the definitions that one who “**disciples**” is one who teaches or instructs. In the Biblical sense it is one who teaches or instructs in the knowledge of God and the teachings of Jesus.

The person who “**disciples**” must also be a disciple, which means he must also be one who follows or adheres to the teachings of Jesus. One who disciples must have a thorough knowledge of the word of God.

2. We can see from the definitions that the ones to be disciplined must believe in the doctrines of Jesus.

3. He is to be one who rests upon His sacrifice.
4. He must be one who abides in the Spirit of God and not in the “flesh”.
5. He must be one who adheres or “obeys” the word of God. Obedience to the Word of God is not optional. Obedience to the Word of God also indicates a “proper” heart towards Jesus. It is an indicator of true follower of Jesus.
 - **John 14:15-21** — **Jesus said:** *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”*

The one who disciples must make it clear, he must teach the one who is to be discipled that obedience to the Word of God is essential.

- **James 1:22** — *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”*

The one who disciples must make it clear that a person who does not do the Word of God is fooling or lying to himself. It is not good enough to just read the Word of God. It is helpful to point out that victory over addiction is accomplished through the application of the Word of God. Point out that God normally follows a command with a blessing or a benefit.

- **James 1:25** — *“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”*
- **Matthew 7:7-8** — **Jesus said:** *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”*

C. Attributes Of One Who Disciples

1. **He must exhibit “agape” (unconditional) love** for those he disciples
 - **John 13:35** — **Jesus said:** *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

It is by demonstration of God’s Love through the one who disciples that will motivate an individual (disciple) to follow Christ.

2. He who disciples must be kind and patient.

- *Romans 2:4* — *Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?*

It is through God's kindness that individuals are lead to repent and then obey Gods Word. A true discipler will emulate God in his life adhering to the Word of God. There will be many individuals you will encounter to disciple who will test your patience, kindness and tolerance. Just remember what you were like when you first started walking with the Lord. I am forever grateful to God and those whose exhibited this patience, kindness and tolerance in my life.

3. He who disciples must demonstrate forgiveness.

- *Colossians 3:12* — *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another."*

You will encounter many individuals who hurt you in this ministry. Stay focused on the fact that you are in this ministry because of your Love for Christ, and what He accomplished on the Cross to forgive you of your sins.

4. He who disciples must be consistent.

If you are not consistent the one who you disciple will not be consistent. We are to set the example.

- *1 Corinthians 15:58* — *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."*

5. He who disciples must let his "Yes" be "Yes" and his "No" be "No."

Do not make promises you cannot keep. You do not want to appear to be a hypocrite.

- *Matthew 5:37* — *Jesus said: "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."*

6. He who disciples must be knowledgeable in the Word of God.

You cannot teach what you do not know. If someone asks you a question and you do not know the answer, tell them you will look it up in God's Word and give them answer. Make sure you follow through. Supply the scriptures to back up your answer.

- *2 Timothy 2:15* — *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

**7. He who disciples must be real, he must be honest.
He must adhere to the Word of God.**

I know of nothing that can damage your teaching an individual more than not practicing what you preach. It is understandable if you blow it from time to time. If you blow it, admit it and ask the individual to forgive you and pray for you.

- *Psalm 143:10* — “Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.”
- *Romans 2:21-23* — “You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”
- *1 Timothy 4:12* — “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

8. He who disciples must be willing to share and he must bold.

- *Luke 8:16-17* — **Jesus said:** “No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open.”

9. He who disciples should be a good listener, speaking only after thoughtfully considering his words, and must not show anger.

- *James 1:19-20* — “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”

D. What is “The Most Excellent Way” all about? Biblical guidance!

We are loving, feeding, and disciplining God's family so that His children mature in the faith and become more like Jesus Christ. It is important that we (1) preach the Gospel to the lost, but it is also important that we (2) interpret the Gospel to the saved.

A Christian matures by allowing the Spirit to teach him and direct him by feeding on the Word. The immature Christian lives for the things of the flesh (staying sober, solving the immediate problems of living) and has little interest in the things of the Spirit that will transform them into the image of Christ.

Most people in our meetings are immature because they have been Believers a short time. TMEW is, in most cases, the first (maybe only) introduction to the Word of God our people receive. We must have knowledge and understanding of “Scriptural milk” so we can feed them God’s truth — for example:

1. The meaning of the Cross of Jesus (see page 7)
2. The importance of knowing God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
3. The importance of dying to SELF
4. The importance of loving God with good deeds
5. The importance of reading and mediating on God's Word
6. The importance of prayer
7. The importance of fellowship with Believers
8. The importance of praise, worship and thanksgiving
9. The fact of spiritual warfare
10. THE NEW BELIEVER'S APPLICATION OF THE WORD —
PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

- ***Ephesians 6:13-20*** —

Therefore take up the whole armor of God , that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ *Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,*

¹⁵ *and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

¹⁶ *above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.*

¹⁷ *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;*

¹⁸ *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,*

being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints —

¹⁹ *and for me, that utterance may be given to me,*

that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

²⁰ *for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

Our goal is to nurture new Believers into an active relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As they learn and apply the basics (the “milk”) of Scripture, they will begin to hunger for the deep things of God (the “meat”).

We can consider our ministry as the first step into Christ's Body — the Church. If we provide the Way, the Truth and the Life, they will follow their Lord into His Church — (through the front door) and reproduce themselves.

After all, how did most of *us* get here? God used someone to teach us!

E. Resources

“The Most Excellent Way” has resources available for discipleship and Biblical guidance, for example:

- Ministry Leader’s Manual contains outlines for teaching the 10 Attitudes, and 73 applicable Biblical topics
- 10 Attitude Group Discussion Guides
- Sermon on the Mount Bible Study and Homework

“The Most Excellent Way” also recommends “The Believer’s Bible” as an inexpensive and effective resource for helping people understand basic Biblical doctrines and how to apply Scripture in their daily walk. (www.Biblesatcost.com — 800-778-8865)

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It is our responsibility as a discipler to provide competent teaching of God’s Word to the disciple to insure they will be successful. Armed with the knowledge of God’s Word and His Holy Spirit, the disciple will bear much fruit.

“It is worthy of notice, that those who were Christ’s apostles were first His disciples; to intimate, that men must be first taught of God, before they be sent of God. Jesus Christ never made an apostle of any man who was not first His scholar or disciple.” *(from Adam Clarke’s Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)*

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