

STRAND

DISCIPLESHIP FOR MEN

FIRST STEPS

A TEN-WEEK STUDY

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A TEN-WEEK STUDY

FOR LULU, JACK, HARPER & ZEKE

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may 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.

Ephesians 3:17-19

To access the coordinating Strand videos online,
visit www.waterfrontchurchdc.com/strand

“Look, I’m just an ordinary man, and if I can disciple people, you can too. I haven’t developed a set pattern or program for discipling. My approach is to learn all I can that will help people. I think through the challenges ahead for students as they face life, and then try to prepare them for those things. Nothing is off limits. As the Apostle Paul said in Acts 20:20, ‘I kept nothing back that was profitable for you.’ I’ve tried to share my life with those God has given me, and found great joy in walking with God and in helping others. It doesn’t get any better than this.”

—Max Barnett

“If you are ever in the birthing room when Jesus births a new spiritual baby, something about that is so right and so natural to who you are, you will realize that you are doing then what you were made to do.”

—John Strappazon

“What is a disciple? A disciple is one who follows Jesus Christ. But because we are Christians does not necessarily mean we are His disciples, even though we are members of His Kingdom. Following Christ means acknowledging Him as Lord; it means serving Him as a slave. It also means loving and praising.”

—Juan Carlos Ortiz

“Every believer in Jesus Christ deserves the opportunity of personal nurture and development. Every new believer is expected to achieve his or her full potential for God. And most of them would if they had the opportunity, if someone would get the food within reach, if someone would give them the help they need, if someone would give them the training they should have, and if someone would care enough to suffer a little, and pray a lot.”

—Leroy Eims

“If you want to be a winner, you have to take responsibility for your own discipleship... it’s not casual Christians who change the world; it’s dangerous disciples.”

—Jon Randles

“Where’s your man? Where’s your woman? Where’s that one for whom you are pouring out your life to help them walk with Christ?”

—Dawson Trotman

“Are disciples born or made? I contend they are born to be made. The vision Jesus set into motion meant finding and training more people like the eleven, a lifelong experience where imperfect people would be shaped into His likeness--marked by progress, not perfection.”

—Bill Hull

WHY CALL IT STRAND DISCIPLESHIP?

In the age of digital media, I am still one who loves books. My wife and I love going to used book stores and rifling through old books looking for “treasures.” In New York City, near NYU, there is a book store called The Strand. It is the largest book store in the city and boasts 18 miles of books. The main building has several floors of wall to wall, floor to ceiling book after book. Seeing the book store is impressive. It has all the trappings of a top notch organization, and after leaving and heading back out into the city, we began to see the Strand logo on carts and vendor booths all around Manhattan Island. We saw book stands in Central Park, in Times Square, and near the museums. Each station catered to a different clientele, but was clearly a part of the main store. Working at each booth was a single employee, typically reading one of the books that, earlier that day, was taking up shelf space. What a picture of the discipleship process. We are trained in how a relationship with God works and then commissioned to go back to teach others how to do what we’ve learned to do. Plus, once you have experienced the power discipleship has to offer, it is easy to spot others doing the same when you are out in the community. The Strand is your reminder that you can fulfill the great commission wherever God has stationed you, in any phase of life, in any job, at any time. Jesus didn’t spend his time on earth building a temple; he spent his days and nights pouring truth into a small group of disciples, teaching them how to duplicate the process.

Zack Randles

Founding Pastor

Waterfront Church DC

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEEK 1 DISCIPLESHIP	1
WEEK 2 BIBLE STUDY	7
WEEK 3 PRAYER	15
WEEK 4 WORSHIP	21
WEEK 5 SALVATION	29
WEEK 6 TESTIMONY	37
WEEK 7 THE CHURCH	43
WEEK 8 ACCOUNTABILITY	51
WEEK 9 WALK	59
WEEK 10 DISCIPLE-MAKING	67

AND THE THINGS
YOU HAVE HEARD
ME SAY IN THE
PRESENCE OF MANY
WITNESSES ENTRUST
TO RELIABLE MEN
WHO WILL ALSO BE
QUALIFIED TO TEACH
OTHERS.

2 TIMOTHY 2:2

WEEK ONE

DISCIPLESHIP

As far back as I can remember, I have always gotten some type of illness during the month of February. Like clockwork, the flu, strep throat, pneumonia, bronchitis, or even just a really bad sinus infection seems to creep into my system. If casinos start taking bets on my health in February, make sure you bet against it! During my 4th grade year, I was more sick than usual, and I ended up missing a full two weeks of class. In most of my classes this was no big deal, but in my math class we had just started learning about fractions, and I missed some very critical days. I was there for the introduction and knew what fractions were, but I had missed the lessons on how to add them. When I returned to school I was so swamped with work that I just started guessing at how to add fractions. Sometimes it worked, and most times it didn't. I immediately went from making an "A" average to a "B" average in the class. We moved on to other things, but there was a clear hole in my game.

During my 5th grade year, I had a great teacher. She was engaging, and very concerned we actually understood our material, not just memorized it for tests. One afternoon she called me to her desk with a collection of my past math tests sitting in front of her. "I'm noticing a pattern here," she said with conviction. "Do you know how to add fractions?" I was embarrassed, so I lied. "Sure I do! I'm a 5th grader, and that is 4th grade stuff." Without breaking gaze, she slid a sheet of paper across the desk with math problems on it. "Show me," she said. In that moment, I guessed at the problems like I had for the past year and got some right, but most wrong. Her eyes softened, she put her hand on my shoulder, and she softly said so the class could not hear her, "Would you like me to teach you how to add fractions?" Finally free to share the truth, I whispered in her ear, "Yes." After that day, I went from a "B" average to an "A" average again.

I have been discipling since 2003, and several things have become clear. One of those things for certain is that people will typically tell you, when it comes to spiritual matters, that they know twice what they actually know. In many cases, there is a point in their spiritual journey where they missed a foun-

dational teaching, and have been faking and guessing ever since. Like me in math, getting it right sometimes, and wrong most of the time. To make matters worse, these individuals are often given positions in church leadership as teachers, deacons, or even ministers, before he or she really feels qualified to do the job. Having a title or position of leadership causes the individual to feel as though they should already have their spiritual life together, and that they will be ridiculed if they ask for help in understanding a specific spiritual area. I always begin the study by telling this story. If along the way you spiritually missed learning how to add fractions, this group will provide some answers. The way you do this is by starting with the basics and working your way up to more complex materials. For many in the group who have grown up going to church, several lessons are a review of what they already know. But, for one or two each week, a hole in their spiritual development is revealed, and they receive peace and confidence because they no longer have to fake their understanding of God. One semester, a man over 50, who had been a believer for many years spoke up after the lesson on prayer and said to the group, “My whole life I wondered if I had been praying wrong.” In this particular case, the man had not been “praying wrong”, but he had for years desired a reaffirmation of that fact. What freedom!

We must reveal and reaffirm the truths of God, and when we do, the products are passion and courage. This cannot be solely done from the pulpit. It is only in a smaller group setting that you can address specific questions and offer freedom to express doubt and misunderstanding.

From participants, I demand consistency if you are to progress. This is not a come and go study; it builds from week to week. Before accepting a position in the group, participants need to commit to a very specific set of weeks. If you are taking a group through Strand, I also tell them that space is limited, and the goal of group is not to grow in number each week.

Consistency in the group creates accountability and trust.

The goals of Lesson One are to outline what discipleship is, to help those in the group get to know one another, and to define guidelines for the study.

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP? The word ‘disciple’ actually comes from the Greek

word 'mathetes'. This was originally not a churchy word. It was a word used in many fields to describe a dedicated apprentice. 'Disciple' literally means a disciplined follower of a master. This is not a casual follower, but someone who has pledged his or her life to learn what their master knows. We are called to be disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Discipleship is not a class. It is not something extra to fill in the weekly schedule or to check off a list. Discipleship is one-on-one spiritual mentorship for the purpose of spiritual multiplication.

READ 2 TIMOTHY 2:2

This is scripture's definition of discipleship. Paul is literally in his final days before his execution when he writes this famous letter to his disciple Timothy. In one simple verse there are four generations of disciples: Paul to Timothy, Timothy to reliable men, and reliable men to others also. Paul tells Timothy to make the exchange. Realize your days are numbered, and that the message of Jesus Christ must be handed off to reliable, trustworthy, trained disciples with a heart to do the same. Do you desire to become a disciple? Welcome to the Strand.

ACTIVITY: (Not every week has an activity. If you are doing this study on your own, feel free to adapt accordingly.) Go around the room. Have each person tell his or her name, line of work (don't ask for job, because some will be in between jobs) and who has had the deepest spiritual impact on their life. After all have responded, note that relationship, not position has the greatest spiritual impact. People often list mom, dad, grandparent, youth minister, coworker, best friend, but not the pastor they heard on TV or once a week from the pulpit. Relationship is key to spiritual and personal development.

HOMEWORK:

Memorize 2 Timothy 2:2

REVIEW

Each lesson builds on the last. Use the review section to prepare for class. I highly encourage individuals that are teaching the material to go through the review (including all memorized verses) at the start of class every week.

NOTES:

In the weeks to follow, the workbook portion will be much more extensive. The study builds each week.

I HAVE HIDDEN
YOUR WORD IN
MY HEART THAT
I MIGHT NOT SIN
AGAINST YOU.

PSALM 119:11

WEEK TWO

BIBLE STUDY

The greatest outward changes in my life took place between 7th and 8th grade. My friends called me “the hobbit” in 7th grade because I was short, stalky, and I had hair on my face and feet. I was also on my fourth year of braces, and I had thick glasses attempting to correct astigmatism. Then during the summer after 7th grade, crazy things began to happen. I grew 7 inches and slimmed down, I finally got my braces off, and I traded in my glasses for a pair of contacts. I even grew a beard just to prove that I could. Needless to say, confidence was high going into that fall. One day in the halls, a girl handed me a piece of notebook paper, neatly folded with hearts where the dot of the “I” should have been. I couldn’t believe it. A note! This is sad, but I had never had a girl give me a note before that day. I opened it up, and there were several sentences with her name signed at the bottom. There was nothing important in the note, but I must have read it 20 times. This is how we are to read scripture! God has not given us rules and regulations to memorize like cosmic district attorneys preparing to prosecute. God’s Word is a love letter written specifically to you about His Son Jesus, and the plan to keep us with Him for all eternity. God’s love is evident from the first stroke of the pen in Genesis to the final punctuation in Revelation. His word was meant to be poured over, reread, analyzed, and pondered just like my note from the school hallway. Disciples do not read God’s word for completion, they read it for understanding and application.

READ ACTS 8:29-31

In this passage the Ethiopian is reading scripture, but without understanding it his effort is unproductive. He needs Phillip to come alongside him to show him what it means.

Every individual wanting to study scripture must have a desire to dig deep into the love letter God has written us, but he or she must also know how to find answers and understanding when a passage is difficult. I recommend purchasing the Halley’s Bible Handbook for Bible studies during the semester. This tool will greatly help in the historical and cultural breakdown of a passage.

Also, study Bibles, commentaries, and devotional books can be helpful in pursuing

the truth in scripture. I also encourage the group that having a godly leader who is accessible for theological questions is of the highest importance. You should have questions after you study a passage. In some cases, your theology will even hinge on how you interpret a passage. Don't give doubt a foothold! If you have a question, find an answer. I promise answers are out there!

In keeping with the note analogy from earlier, context is hugely important when studying scripture. I once had another girl give me a break-up note, and it started out like a love note. She told me I was a great guy, that any girl was lucky to have me, and that she thought I was a real sweetheart. But, all she was doing was setting me up for the bad news. She wanted to break-up. That was the whole point of the note. Everything sounded good and nice in the beginning, but she wanted to make very clear that the relationship was over. What if I had thought to myself, "Do I really need to read all of this hero worship?" I would have missed the point. The same is true of scripture. Disciples don't read scripture like an archer shooting at random. Disciples read passages from start to finish. If you don't, you often miss the power of a passage, or worse, you could misinterpret scripture and follow a lie. The book of Job is a great example of this. There are points in Job that his friends are saying what sounds like spiritual, godly things, but they are actually speaking evil. If you jump into the passage in the middle, you could follow false teaching. Read passages start to finish and avoid the headaches of bad theology.

Finally, to keep interest high and to catch the best parts of the passage you are studying, look for the verbs. In American culture we are obsessed with proper nouns. We want to know who was involved, and then we make up what happened. There are entire gossip magazines, websites, and TV stations devoted to this idea. We listen and read for who was involved over what happened.

Police investigators know differently than this. Those involved are a piece of the investigation, but the legal system wants to know what happened. Read scripture like an investigator. What happened? Look for the verbs. Should you emulate their behavior or make sure you avoid it? Was the action harsh or gentle? Especially when reading the Gospels, focus on what Jesus does. What does He do that you can copy?

Inductive Bible Study is a methodical way to study scripture. You will do a lot

of these throughout this study. At the end of each chapter, multiple inductive study templates have been provided for you. Below is a description of how they work and what should be written in the blanks provided.

For each inductive study, carefully read the designated passage, underlining important information and key words as you read. When you finish, pull out your Halley's Bible Handbook, and read what it has to say about the passage. This will help you with historical context. Then, fill in the blanks with the corresponding information. After inductively studying a passage, you will be shocked at how much more you understand!

DATE: (List the date.)

PASSAGE: (List the passage in our study, passages are provided.)

HEADLINE: (5 words or less to sum up the passage.)

CHARACTERS: (Who is present or identified in this passage?)

INTERESTING WORDS: (List 5-7 words that catch your attention.)

FAVORITE VERSE: (Which verse moves you to action and motivates you?)

CHRIST SEEN: (How is Christ portrayed in this passage?)

SIMILAR PASSAGES: (List one or two passages that remind you of this one.)

QUESTIONS: (What do you struggle to understand that requires more research?)

SUMMARY: (Summarize the passage in 1-2 sentences.)

LIFE LESSON: (How are you different after reading this?)

This is a variation of Rick Warren's Inductive Bible Study Model.

ACTIVITY: Inductive Bible Study (Do 1 Timothy 1 as a group)

Take 15 minutes for your group to do this, then come back to discuss.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize Psalm 119:105 & Psalm 119:11
- » Complete six inductive studies
- » Buy Halley's Bible Handbook

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?

SIDE NOTE:

For anyone interested in leading a Bible study at work, inductive studies are affordable, easy, and they take you directly through scripture in a methodical and insightful way. Print sheets with the blanks, read the passage, fill out and discuss. See the Halley's Handbook for any theological issues. Deeper issues will need further commentary research, but answers exist!

NOTES:

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 5

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 6

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

IF YOU ABIDE IN
ME AND MY WORDS
ABIDE IN YOU, ASK
WHATEVER YOU
WISH AND IT WILL
BE DONE FOR YOU.

JOHN 15:7

WEEK THREE

PRAYER

Sometimes a little direction goes a long way. Working in ministry, I often walk into schools, churches, and medical complexes looking for a specific room in the midst of a huge facility. Like most men, I usually try to find my way on my own at first. Sometimes I'm successful, but most times I end up asking for a little directional help. Hospitals are the worst about this. Older hospitals have often gone through so many remodels and expansion projects that the room numbers jump all over the place and rarely follow a set order, but those who work there know from experience how to find where they want to go. The same is true of prayer. A little direction goes a long way. Prayer, simply put, is communication with God. But just like walking into a huge facility, sometimes a guide can be helpful in getting you started. When in times of desperate need, prayer can be raw and simple. In times of transition, prayer can be a lot more listening than talking. In times of rejoicing, prayer can be singing from your heart or naming your blessings one by one. In extreme cases, prayer seems to easily flow like water from a fountain. But what about when life is mundane and there is little desperation in our situations? Below is a guide for finding success in your prayer life as you commit to seek the Lord in daily prayer.

READ MATTHEW 6:5-13

This is Jesus' definitive word on prayer, and He offers three hints to successful communication with God.

VS. 5-6 | PRAY IN SECRET

Public prayer has its place, but Jesus says the power that comes from communicating with God is extremely potent in private.

VS. 7-8 | LISTEN MORE THAN YOU TALK

The use of more words does not necessarily indicate that your prayer was more spiritual. Intimacy with God requires you give him an opportunity to speak to you through His word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

VS. 9-13 | GIVE GOD CONTROL

The entire Lord's Prayer can be summed up in the middle of verse 10: "Your will be done." In every aspect of life, from our physical and emotional needs to our debts and temptations, we must give God control, saying—"Your will be done."

THE ACTS METHOD FOR PRAYER

As you daily seek the Lord by praying in secret, intently listening for His direction, and giving God control of each aspect of your life, a simple method has been developed to help stay on target. I learned it when I was a child, and I still use it today. It is called the A.C.T.S. Method. Praying in these phases can really help us focus on the relationship we have with God, while avoiding distraction and selfishness.

ADORATION: Remember who is listening. We have access to God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, but He is still the all-powerful creator of the universe. Take time at the beginning of your prayer to tell God who He is.

CONFESSION: Remember who you are. We are all sinners that fall short of God's glory, and there is power in confessing our shortcomings as we remember that Christ's blood blots out our sin. Don't dwell on this phase. You are not more spiritual for berating yourself, but we are called to confess our struggles to the Lord.

THANKSGIVING: Recall what God has done. This is my favorite part of prayer, and it will become the bulk of your prayer time. If you struggle thinking of things for which you are thankful, pray for God to open your eyes to see what He sees. It's all around us, and His love for us is blatantly evident. Tell Him what He has done!

SUPPLICATION: Relay what you need. Matthew 6:8 tells us that God knows what we need before we even ask Him. Our needs being met are not contingent upon us asking for help, but there is great power in acknowledging a need for ourselves or someone else and watching for God to fulfill the need. Notice this is last. That is very purposeful. Most young prayer warriors jump right into what they need. Do this last and you will experience less selfishness as you seek the hand of God.

ACTIVITY: Pray with your group. Progress step by step through the A.C.T.S. Method. Discuss afterwards whether or not it was helpful. Your group may choose to begin each session by opening this way in prayer.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize John 15:7
This is a powerful verse that gives insight into times that you are praying for direction. “ABIDE” refers to keeping a boat between the shores rather than perfectly stepping into the footprint of God. If God’s Word and His Holy Spirit give the green light, do what you wish.
- » Complete at least two inductive studies.
- » One Sentence of Written Prayer
Prayer journaling is powerful. Write simple prayers once a week, and watch God answer them.

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.

WRITTEN PRAYER

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

GOD IS SPIRIT AND
HIS WORSHIPERS
MUST WORSHIP
IN SPIRIT AND IN
TRUTH.

JOHN 4:24

WEEK FOUR

WORSHIP

One of the most misunderstood concepts in our relationship with God is that of worship. Most Christians think worship is the set of songs or hymns we sing before the pastor gets up to preach the message. This is a misunderstanding. Worship is not the songs you sing. Worship is the attitude of your heart. We worship things all the time. Some people have classic cars they worship. The car is treated as precious and adored. Some people worship a sports team. They wear team colors; they check stats; they watch and record games. Their level of devotion is unparalleled. The same is true of those wanting to worship God. In our Sunday worship services we have a lot of what I like to call bobblehead worshipers. These are people singing to God whatever is on the screen or in the hymnal, but who find themselves looking around the room or “bobbleheading” to see what everyone else is doing. Their focus is not on the Lord or their devotion to Him, but on their own insecurities, their dislike of the worship style, or even their plan of escape from the building. Some find a way to avoid this issue by closing their eyes during worship. It is much more practical than spiritual. Closing your eyes, if you are struggling with constant thoughts of what others think of you, allows you to block out the temptation to follow the crowd. It also says to the Lord, even if for an instant, I desire to focus completely on You. During the message, you can gain focus by bringing your Bible and taking notes. None of this makes you more spiritual, but it is very practical in helping you focus your worship. Our verse to memorize this week, John 4:24, has Jesus telling us that there are two parts to worship. Both must be present for true worship of Holy God.

1. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT

This means we must worship beyond our physical limitations. True worship is a sacrifice, and there must be a moment when we depend on God to do what we cannot do on our own. Jesus tells us that God is spirit, so it only makes sense that spirit-filled worship is a requirement.

2. WORSHIP IN TRUTH

This means we have a clear understanding of who God is. True worship sticks to good theology. It is not based on emotion, even though emotion often is evoked. Many other religions attempt to worship in spirit (beyond their physical limitations), but without the truth of the living God, their worship is for nothing.

READ 1 KINGS 18:25-39

Discuss the difference between the prophets of Baal and their spiritual worship beyond physical limitations (calling down fire from heaven) and Elijah's worship in spirit and in truth. Only one God sends fire. The prophets of Baal had incredible effort and more people, but there is only one God that can answer.

Activity: Put together a playlist with Christian worship songs on it, and find time in your day to listen in the cars, on the treadmill, or elsewhere and to truly express the words they are singing. Be ready next week to report on how this music impacted you.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize John 4:24
- » Write one sentence prayer
- » Complete at least two inductive studies
- » Complete your worship assignment

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: James 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: James 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: James 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: James 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: James 5

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: _____

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

THAT IF YOU
CONFESS WITH YOUR
MOUTH, "JESUS IS
LORD," AND BELIEVE
IN YOUR HEART THAT
GOD RAISED HIM
FROM THE DEAD,
YOU WILL BE SAVED.

ROMANS 10:9

WEEK FIVE

SALVATION

In my time discipling I have found when it comes to discussing salvation, some are concerned that they missed crossing a 'T' or dotting an 'I', spiritually speaking, but they are often too afraid to ask because they don't want to appear unsure or weak. This is the most important topic for any believer to understand for their own assurance, and so they can direct others to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. So what does it mean to be saved? Simply put, 'saved' means eternity with God in heaven instead of eternity separated from God in hell. So, how does one become saved? Our answer is very clear in Acts 16 because a man asks Paul exactly that.

READ ACTS 16:25-31

The jailer in this passage feels as though he has no reason to live, as shown by drawing his sword to kill himself. If the prisoners escaped, even if due to an earthquake, he will likely be held responsible. So he goes to the men he heard earlier singing hymns and praying, even in an awful circumstance. He asks them a very direct question: "What must I do to be saved?". Paul and Silas' response is of the highest importance. "Believe in the Lord Jesus!" This is the simple truth of salvation. You must believe in Jesus. He is the one and only way to salvation. In our current culture the word "believe" has become almost mystical, so people will often ask exactly what the word means. I usually tell them this story. When I was in college I had two friends, and we spent a lot of time together. We traveled together, took classes together, and met together at the campus coffee shop talking about everything from world issues to music. During that time a song called "Barbie Girl" was hugely popular. We talked as a group about how we could not stand that song. We regularly made fun of it and would groan if it ever came on the radio as we scurried to change the station.

One day, one of my friends and I were headed upstairs to the other friend's dorm room, and as we stood outside the door we could hear the 'Barbie Girl' song blaring while someone was singing along. We started hysterically

laughing. Could our friend really like this song? We knocked on the door, and then immediately the music changed to hard rock. When he opened the door, we grilled him. At first he denied, but in the end he confessed. He loved that song. He had always loved that song. It's a funny story, but perfectly illustrates what it means to believe. You can say all sorts of things and act a certain way, but in your heart you know the truth. Only you and God can know if you truly believe in the Lord Jesus. At the end of time they are not going to check the church roster, look at your family heritage, or pull out a sheet listing your good deeds. In the end, the truth will be revealed. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELIEVE IN JESUS?

Below are five things that can help you figure out where you stand in this process or where someone else stands if you are sharing Christ with them. All five are crucial.

1. YOU MUST BELIEVE JESUS EXISTED.

Jesus was not mythical, and the Bible is not fictional. There is a growing view among students that the Bible is like Greek mythology, good stories for life, but it should not be taken as historic. This is just false. To believe in Jesus you must believe He is real and the Bible is true.

2. YOU MUST BELIEVE JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.

In order for Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for all our sin, He had to be more than just a man. This encompasses the virgin birth. For many this is tough to swallow because it requires faith in something not easily explained. To be the Messiah, our sin substitute, He had to be sinless. None but the Son of God could be born sinless.

3. YOU MUST BELIEVE JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS.

The cross is a critical point in our salvation. It is so important that in His final lesson before going to the cross, He leads His disciples through what we call the "Lord's Supper", in which both elements, the bread and the cup, refer to His work on the cross. The cross is the moment we see the full extent of God's love for us. "But God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) You must believe Jesus went through the spiritual, emotional, and physical gauntlet that was the cross so that our sin would be forgiven, and we could have a relationship with God.

4. YOU MUST BELIEVE JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

The resurrection is non-negotiable when it comes to believing in Jesus. Paul emphatically writes, “And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.” (1 Cor. 15:14) If Christ is not raised from the dead, then how can we be? It’s non-negotiable. Paul reiterates the importance of the resurrection in Roman’s 10:9, “That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Only you and God know if you truly believe this. All other faith and preaching is useless without this. You must believe Christ rose from the dead.

5. YOU MUST BELIEVE JESUS IS THE PERFECT SACRIFICE FOR ALL OF YOUR SIN.

There is nothing you can do to atone for your sin. There is no way you can earn, buy, or sneak your way to God. Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father, except through me.” (John 14:6) To believe in Jesus, you must embrace the fact that Christ’s blood covers all our sin if we believe.

DO YOU BELIEVE?

Only you and God know the truth. When I was five years old I came forward in a church service and was asked if I believed in Jesus. I said yes, but in the follow up they asked if I believed He had risen from the dead. With my mouth I said yes, but in my heart I thought, “Hmm. I don’t know. Can someone really rise from the dead?”. Even though I told others I believed, I knew the truth. Our churches are filled with people who have confessed belief, but live in the dark reality that they have never believed in their heart. Five years later, I got things right. The Spirit of God called out to me in Iowa Park, Texas, at a camp service my dad was preaching. I had heard my dad preach literally about 1,000 times, and I had even heard the specific sermon he was preaching three other times, but that night it was different. It wasn’t like a preacher preaching to the congregation. It was the Spirit of God directly speaking to me. That night I went forward knowing I needed to believe all of it-resurrection included. It was the best decision I ever made.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS? Really? If so, live in freedom. Put doubt to death. Trust God to do what He says He will do. If not, acknowledge it. Talk to your

spiritual leader and stop faking your way through life.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize Romans 10:9
- » Complete two inductive studies
- » Write one sentence of prayer
- » Write a 5-7 minute testimony answering the questions of how and when you came to believe in Jesus, and what God is doing in your life now. Be prepared to present.

REVIEW:

- 1. 2 Timothy 2:2
- 2. How many generations in one verse?
- 3. What does the word disciple mean?
- 4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
- 5. Look for the _____.
- 6. John 15:7
- 7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
- 8. John 4:24
- 9. What are the two parts to true worship?

WRITTEN PRAYER:

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Philippians 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Philippians 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Philippians 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Philippians 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

IF ANYONE IS ASHAMED
OF ME AND MY WORDS,
THE SON OF MAN WILL
BE ASHAMED OF HIM
WHEN HE COMES IN
HIS GLORY AND IN THE
GLORY OF THE FATHER
AND OF THE HOLY
ANGELS.

LUKE 9:26

WEEK SIX

TESTIMONY

Have you ever been lying in bed when the weather is cold and crisp outside and had to get up earlier than usual for an important event you were not excited about attending? It could be for school, work, court, or even (dare I say) church! Motivation is low, to say the least, and the cold weather is like the icing on the cake. When the alarm sounds, for some, the answer is simple: hit the snooze and pull the covers over your head. For others, they make the move from the bed, while dragging their feet and arms like a zombie from the movies. They even have the grunting down! Finally, there is a type of person who springs from bed driven by an understanding of the importance of the day. This person is perceived as alert, knowledgeable, and engaged with a healthy grasp on where they are headed.

Think of a child on Christmas morning. All households have different traditions when it comes to opening and exchanging gifts. We opened our gifts on Christmas morning-the earlier, the better. We even slept on the hard floor under the tree, just so we would be as close as possible to the presents. When morning came (stiff back and all), we sprang into action, tearing through gifts with vigor and excitement. Compare Christmas morning to the alarm story at the beginning of the lesson. What triggers the difference in response? The key word is motivation. Motivation not only determines whether or not you do what you should, but it also greatly affects the attitude with which you do it. The zombie-like person and the child on Christmas morning both successfully leave the bed, but their attitudes are completely different. This is especially true when sharing your testimony.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF OUR STUDY, YOUR TESTIMONY IS:

1. A passionate word about how you came to believe in Jesus.
2. What God has been doing in your life since that time.

Notice that your testimony is ongoing. You should have new stories to go with the story of your salvation. In fact, in my testimony, my stories after salvation are way more intense than my salvation story. What is God doing in your life now? The reason we bring up motivation is because it is not enough just to share your testimony with others. The way that you share it is also important. If you share your testimony in a lethargic zombie-like fashion, don't be surprised when people are unreceptive. If you share your testimony in a fearful way, don't be surprised if people show little response. On the opposite side, if your testimony is shared in an angry way that targets and slanders, the Gospel will also not be seen clearly.

READ COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

As one trying to share the Gospel with people around him, Paul asks for this prayer to be prayed over him. He wants open doors, a clear message, and wisdom when it comes to non-Christians. Paul has an incredible passion to share his testimony with the world. What is his motivation, and can we use that as well?

In Acts 26:1-29, we find Paul giving his testimony. Read it and notice how he discusses the past and present work of God in his life. Toward the middle of the passage, Paul describes his motivation. He met Jesus, in all his heavenly glory and holiness. You see, when we remember who we are representing, and truly believe what scripture says, we do not share our testimony out of duty or obligation, but out of devotion and love.

READ REVELATION 1:9-18 AND DISCUSS

This is the description of the heavenly Jesus. This is the Son of God in all His glory. Read the Halley's Bible Handbook description of this passage for help understanding the imagery, and remember the author, John, is doing the best he can to describe something that is indescribable. I love verse 18, "He holds the keys to death and Hades." He is in charge on earth and in heaven. We work for Him who came to save us. That is why the great hymn of old, in reference to sharing the Gospel proclaims, "I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true, it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do."

Do you tell others about what God is doing in your life, or are you a secret agent believer? In our culture of discipleship, secret agent believers are cowards. What attitude do you have when you tell others about Christ? Remember the description of Jesus. He is the reason we can stand and speak with confidence.

ACTIVITY: Each individual will have an opportunity to present his or her 5-7 minute testimony. After each person has spoken, someone in the group should pray for them before the next person gets up to speak. Be sensitive to time, but this lesson typically runs longer than the others. If your group typically meets in the mornings, you might consider moving this lesson to an evening. It is important to know one's story in order to disciple them.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize Luke 9:26
- » Complete at least two inductive studies
- » Write a one sentence written prayer

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
8. John 4:24
9. What are the two parts to true worship?
10. Romans 10:9
11. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

WRITTEN PRAYER:

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Colossians 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Colossians 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Colossians 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: Colossians 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

LOVE
ALWAYS PROTECTS,
ALWAYS TRUSTS,
ALWAYS HOPES,
ALWAYS PERSEVERES.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

WEEK SEVEN

THE CHURCH

During my four years at Oklahoma State University the toughest ticket in town was always to see our men's basketball games. We had a well-known coach named Eddie Sutton, and he put together some really talented teams. All other athletic events were included in a one-time fee charged to your student account each year, but if you wanted men's basketball tickets you had to pay extra. I didn't make enough waiting tables at Red Lobster to afford the basketball package, but I did snag a few tickets from friends if they had a test or something that night. The building was electric-furious noise projecting from a sea of bright orange. One fan caught my eye, down front in the student section. He wore a bright orange wig and a bright orange bathrobe to match. He was crazy; jumping up and down leading cheers, and having a blast. The next week, I didn't have a ticket so I watched the game on TV with my roommates. There he was again, down front in his orange wig and bathrobe cheering for our team. I asked one of my roommates about him, and he told me that this guy goes to every game, and that he was actually on a church staff in town. Because all I had ever seen this guy wearing was his bright orange wig and bathrobe, I pictured him preaching to a buttoned up congregation in the same attire. It doesn't quite have the same affect from the pulpit as it did in the arena.

In the context of the game, the wig and bathrobe accentuate the excitement and the buzz of the crowd, but in other settings, it would seem a bit odd. Don't misunderstand my point. I'm a guy who once announced our fall festival dressed as an Angry Bird. In all cases, context is important, especially in relation to scripture. Context can clarify real motive and, in many cases, context can offer drastic insight into the meaning of the writer's word choice. Context, like the right key, can unlock the mysteries of a passage. This point is especially true of one of the most famous passages in all of scripture: 1 Corinthians 13.

Famously known as "The Love Chapter," this passage is easily the most quoted scripture passage when it comes to weddings. The couple uses the passage as a reminder on their special day of how they will treat one another during their

marriage. This is not a bad thing, or even unbiblical, but context is the key to a very powerful insight. Many read 1 Corinthians 13 alone focusing on a single relationship. The context of the passage is a little different. 1 Corinthians 11:2 starts Paul's breakdown of what the church is supposed to look like from the worship service to the Lord's Supper, to even the use of spiritual gifts among the church body. He closes this breakdown in 1 Corinthians 14:40. Smack dab in the middle of this discussion is the Love Chapter. Paul even begins the portion on love by saying, "Now, I will show you the most excellent way." In the context of the passage, I believe he is saying, "I will show you the most excellent way to do church."

The first three verses outline what a lot of people value in a worship experience. In verse 1, notice that tongues of praise or spiritual insight are nothing more than noise if love is not present. In verse 2, powerful preaching and faith filled members are nothing without love. In verse 3, Paul goes so far as to write that even social justice and martyrdom gain nothing if not grounded in love. Many of the things we as consumers deem important in a church setting (like worship style, the preacher's motivational skills, or the churches political and social involvement) are seen by Paul as incomplete without love. Love lasts. It doesn't matter what corner of the world you are inhabiting. Love screams the existence and presence of God. Great churches love well!

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, but in place of love, substitute the word "church." This is not to add to scripture in any way, but rather to illustrate Paul's point in the context of the passage.

Ponder and discuss what jumps out to you about this description. After reading the passage in this way at seminary, the professor asked our class if we had any comments. In a packed room of ministers, one spoke up through the deep silence. He simply said, "I want to join that church." What a powerful statement.

Do our churches operate in the love model? This is not an opportunity to trash churches, but it is important to see the picture of how the church should look.

FOCUS ON 1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

In this verse, the word for "always", or "all things" is used four times. For this reason, I call these the non-negotiables of love. In fact, I teach ministers

that these four things are the difference between having a group or having a ministry. The idea with these principles is that there is never a time to withhold this response if love is the aim. Love does not go against its own nature.

1. Love always protects: It takes the hit so someone else doesn't get hurt.
2. Love always trusts: It believes the best about people and avoids gossip.
3. Love always hopes: It knows there is still time for things to get better.
4. Love always perseveres: It never gives up, never quits, and never surrenders.

DISCUSS

I love how Paul tags verse 8 with his stamp of approval: "Love never fails." The practical understanding of this word from Paul is that this always works. A church is not a building. A church is a body of believers committed to loving God and loving people.

DO YOU 'DO CHURCH' IN THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY?

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:7
- » Complete at least two inductive studies
- » Write one sentence of prayer

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
8. John 4:24
9. What are the two parts to true worship?
10. Romans 10:9
11. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?
12. Luke 9:26
13. What is a testimony?

WRITTEN PRAYER:

NOTES:

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 1

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 2

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 3

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 4

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 5

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: _____

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

AS IRON SHARPENS
IRON, SO ONE MAN
SHARPENS ANOTHER.

PROVERBS 27:17

WEEK EIGHT

ACCOUNTABILITY

A few years back, the city of Las Vegas came up with a slogan to promote tourism. This slogan was: “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.” The idea with this is obviously that you can do whatever you want to do in Las Vegas, then return to your normal life without consequence. The city of Las Vegas capitalized off a sentiment among people of all ages: we prefer not to answer to anyone. It is one of the reasons babies squirm and cry when you change their diapers. It is one of the reasons children pitch a fit when you tell them to wear shoes. It is one of the reasons teenagers struggle with their teachers at school. It is one of the reasons adults struggle with their bosses at work. Get the picture? This is not an issue you outgrow. Many times we build our lives around low accountability in the spirit of keeping our options open. We do this with relationships, our careers, our finances, and even the church. As you have committed to walk with God as a true disciple, you must realize that walking through life alone in your relationship with God is not good. We must hold each other accountable for the things we are doing and not doing.

READ JAMES 5:16 & PROVERBS 27:17

Healing comes from confession. Your salvation and the forgiveness of your sins comes from believing in Jesus, but James writes there is great personal healing that takes place in confessing your wrong doing. Proverbs likens accountability to sharpening iron. Few materials are strong enough to sharpen iron, and this was especially true in the ancient world. But, iron sharpens iron. It becomes a powerful and effective thing when one pursuing a life of discipleship embraces the spiritual discipline of holding another accountable for their actions. Accountability, simply defined for the purpose of our study, is being open and honest with someone about your life.

This may seem like a small thing or like a non-essential portion of the discipleship process, but, on the contrary, it is of utmost importance. We are secretive creatures, and the sinful things we plot in secret can be truly wicked. True and honest accountability can help you stay on course in your fight

against sin. Addictions to pornography, substances like drugs and alcohol, gambling, stealing, and more can be long-term struggles. Christ's blood covers all sin past, present, and future for those who believe. But, we will continue to struggle with sin until we get to heaven. No one should go through that struggle alone! With the power of Christ in us and the connection that comes from truly holding one another accountable in love, we can experience victory over habitual sin. 1 John 4:4 reminds us of a very important point: "the one who is in us is more powerful than the one who is in the world." For those of us who have been saved, the enemy cannot defeat us. He can only distract us from the victory we have already obtained in Christ.

Picture it like this: let's say you are an overnight cashier at a convenience store in town. It is not the nicest area, so for protection you have a shotgun behind the counter. In the middle of the night, a smaller man comes in holding a toy gun with foam darts sticking out of the front. Pointing the gun in your face, he demands that you open the register. What do you do? Some would laugh, some would just sit there shaking their head, and some might even feel sorry for the guy. I can tell you one thing you wouldn't do. You wouldn't open the register. Do you know why? Because the small man holding the toy gun has no power. He can talk a big game, taunt you, and scare you, but in the end the only power he has is whatever you allow him to have.

The same is true of the enemy. Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we triumph over death and sin. The enemy has no power over us, unless we let him. Through the process of accountability, you have someone with the same spiritual goals that you have reminding you that the battle is already won, and the enemy, although persuasive at times, can make you do nothing against your will. The term that has been used to describe this type of person, who will, on a regular basis, ask the tough questions and push you to take responsibility, is an accountability partner.

Do you have this type of person in your life? Listed in the back of the book are some accountability questions. You do not have to legalistically stick to all of these each week, but it is very important to go deeper than simply asking how life is going. We are deceitful people at times, and asking the same questions each week can help develop consistency in the fight against sin. You come to dread certain questions if you have stumbled during the week, but just as James says, healing comes with confession of sin. Notice there are specific

questions for different phases of life. There is a difference in our areas of struggle, but sin is the same on both sides. Stop fighting sin alone! Together we are stronger.

HOMEWORK:

- » Memorize Proverbs 27:17
- » Complete at least two inductive studies
- » Write one sentence of prayer
- » Choose and meet with your accountability partner

REVIEW:

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
8. John 4:24
9. What are the two parts to true worship?
10. Romans 10:9
11. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?
12. Luke 9:26
13. What is a testimony?
14. 1 Corinthians 13:7
15. What does Paul call “the most excellent way”?

WRITTEN PRAYER: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 6

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 7

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 8

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 9

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 10

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: _____

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

WEEK NINE

WALK

Have you ever spent a large amount of time on a very specific project? Maybe you rebuilt an engine, painted a replica of “dogs playing poker”, or perfected a delicious recipe. No matter the project, the time involved produces a connection because of your heavy investment. A few years ago, my wife and I took a New Testament Greek class that required an entire year translating I, II, and III John. That’s a whole year on seven chapters of scripture! It was by far the most brutal class my wife or I had ever taken, but by the end of the course, we knew John’s letters like the back of our hand! John starts I John with great authority to establish the validity of what he is about to say.

READ 1 JOHN 1:1

John establishes himself as one who was as close to Jesus’ physical body as was humanly possible. He just starts naming senses. He “heard” Jesus, he “saw” Jesus, he “observed” Jesus, and he “touched” Jesus. These words don’t describe a distant leader, but an accessible, approachable Savior. Fast forward to John’s second letter. In this letter to the elder, John is describing, as the one who closely observed Jesus, what it means to be in a relationship with God. John tells God’s people to “peripateo”. He tells them in Greek “to walk”. This is interesting. John has his pick of any word in the Greek language, and in II John 4-6 he repeats a variation of this word three times. This is not a senile old man repeating himself; this is a great follower of Christ and master disciple making sure we get the point. With the urgency of the Gospel, it seems like running would be more effective. John tackles that in verse 9. Running ahead is a bad idea. It is a beautiful thing to see God’s people walking in truth.

WHY WALK? THERE ARE A COUPLE OF REASONS, REALLY:

1. Walking is an action. Your relationship with God is not a trophy for the shelf or stock certificate you cash out when you die. Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ we gain access to the God who created the universe. We’ve got to be actively involved with Him. John would not have used the word ‘walk’ if he

had intended for the participants to stay still. To walk with God is to live a life of action, pursuing Him daily.

2. Walking is a progression. In the ancient world, there were no treadmills. Walking was a means to get from place to place. It is a very good thing when God's people are progressing. Many run circles around the same sins over and over again. Some chase camp highs and spiritual mountain top experiences trying to duplicate a positive spiritual memory. Disciples progress. Disciples respect their past because it is their testimony, but face their eyes forward to what God is doing in their present and future.

HOW DOES A DISCIPLE WALK WITH GOD?

In the book of Matthew there are three major commands I believe sum up this process.

1. LOVE GOD.

READ MATTHEW 22:36-38.

Jesus is questioned by an expert in the law as to which commandment is the most important. There were over 600 commandments in the Jewish Law, and to pick one would surely ignore another, and catch Jesus as a liar. His response is genius. He tells them to love God. We strive to love Him more than our own wants, dreams, plans, or possessions. Jesus has basically said to the man, if you can keep this one, the rest will not be a problem. So, how do you love God? Read I John 5:3. We obey.

2. LOVE PEOPLE.

READ MATTHEW 22:39-40.

Jesus does offer a second part to the equation, just in case the man misheard Him. A true disciple also has a love for his fellow man. Read I John 5:1. Loving God's people is an overflow of loving God, and a sign the Holy Spirit lives in you. Do you love people or tolerate them? Jesus calls this second only to loving God.

3. MAKE DISCIPLES.

READ MATTHEW 28:18-20.

In this passage there are a lot of amazing verbs indicating the life of action Jesus is seeking from His followers, but they all center around one thing: making disciples. So how in the world do you do this? You make disciples by

implementing the other verbs in the passage. You need to go, baptize, and teach others to obey. It is insightful that during His time on earth, Jesus never built a building for His followers to use for meeting. His life's work was not purchasing land and constructing the main sanctuary of Jerusalem Community Church. He disciplined men. That is how the faith progresses and grows. It is not by huge buildings and massive crowds. The crowds often leave as quickly as they show up. Disciple making can be done in any setting. It survives political revolution, financial recession, disease outbreak, and all kinds of persecution. Discipleship lasts. Are you preparing yourself to pass on what you have learned? It is the only way to fulfill the Great Commission.

HOMEWORK

- » Memorize Matthew 22:36-40
- » Complete at least two inductive studies
- » Write one sentence of prayer
- » Meet your accountability partner

REVIEW

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
8. John 4:24
9. What are the two parts to true worship?
10. Romans 10:9
11. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?
12. Luke 9:26
13. What is a testimony?
14. 1 Corinthians 13:7
15. What does Paul call "the most excellent way"?
16. Proverbs 27:17
17. What is accountability?

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 11

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 12

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 13

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 14

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 15

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: _____

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

WHATEVER YOU DO,
WORK AT IT WITH
ALL YOUR HEART, AS
WORKING FOR THE
LORD, NOT FOR MEN.

COLOSSIANS 3:23

WEEK TEN

DISCIPLE-MAKING

So, how does one make a disciple? Well, when a man and a woman fall in love....just kidding. There is no anatomy lesson here. There was a brief description in the last lesson, but it was not very comprehensive. This lesson will be very practical. The simple answer to our question is to take what has been entrusted to you and pass it on to someone else. Make the exchange. Every bit of spiritual knowledge and experience you accumulate from the Lord in your time on earth dies with you if you don't pass it on to others. The following is a very simple but effective method for relaying information in a way that is memorable. For anyone in a management position, this is useful for your work as well. When I disciple, each lesson has some variation of each principle. Feel free to make it your own.

1. TEACH: Put to words what you know. Communication is probably the most important part of discipling someone. Many have experienced the power of God, but great disciplers figure out a way to put those experiences into words so others can understand the process and duplicate it. When I was a boy, my mom told me to clean my room before going outside to play. I wanted to appease her, so I ran into my room, threw the toys into the closet, piled my clothes into the corner, and pulled the comforter over a wadded up bed sheet so that there was a big lump in my bed. I told her it was clean, and I started for the door. However, she wanted to inspect the room before letting me go outside. When we stepped in the room she was not happy. "You didn't clean your room at all, " she exclaimed. "Your toys are not in their proper place, your clothes are not hung, and you didn't pull up your bed sheet when you attempted to make your bed." The first instructions I received were very broad: Clean your room. The second instructions were much more specific.

When communicating a deeply spiritual principle, be very specific. Don't assume everyone knows what you are saying. Most might, but remember the fractions illustration from week one. People will tell you they know more than they do. Put your faith into words. This takes a lot of time, prayer, and reflection. But, I promise it is worth it.

2. SHOW: Put to action what you know. Good disciplers explain things in a practical manner. Great disciplers demonstrate how the principle plays out in real time. When I teach my lesson on prayer, I close the class by showing how I pray when I am at home by myself. I always get on my knees out of respect and my prayer is much different from a public prayer. It is intimate and much more personal. I even tell the class before I pray, that at my house, I make sure all TV's, radios, cell phones, and other distractions are turned off so nothing interrupts my time with the Lord. Then, I show them how I pray. Afterward we discuss what they noticed about it. This in no way is to put focus on me, but rather to illustrate 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ."

3. COACH: Enable your disciples to experience what you have experienced. Facilitate an opportunity in a controlled setting for your disciples to attempt and discuss the new discipline you are teaching. No one wants to look stupid. Athletic coaches introduce new plays in practice because it is a controlled setting where athletes can attempt the plays and then discuss without the consequence of costing a game. Practice is private, less intense, and there is a safety net if something is difficult to understand. Practice builds confidence so during the game players already know what's coming with very few surprises. This is the goal of every great discipler. You want your disciples prepared for life and a good portion of the predictable surprises.

Every lesson you should teach, show, and coach your participants. Take spiritual truth, put it to words, put it to action, and enable your disciples to experience what you have experienced.

REMEMBER: YOU CANNOT TEACH WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW. You must be constantly growing in your knowledge of God to lead someone else. You don't need to know it all, but a true disciple daily seeks the Lord. Finally, you cannot lead if you are not around. If you take the meetings seriously, so will your disciples. If you show up late and unprepared, so will they (if they show up at all). What you do in moderation, your disciples may do in excess. Be consistent, knowledgeable, and dependable. May God bless you with spiritual children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We were made for this.

HOMEWORK

- » Memorize Colossians 3:23
- » At least 2 Inductive Studies
- » 1 Sentence Weekly Prayer
- » Weekly Accountability Meeting
- » Target 2 Individuals for Disciple-Making

REVIEW

1. 2 Timothy 2:2
2. How many generations in one verse?
3. What does the word disciple mean?
4. Psalm 119:11 & 119:105
5. Look for the _____.
6. John 15:7
7. What is the A.C.T.S. Method?
8. John 4:24
9. What are the two parts to true worship?
10. Romans 10:9
11. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?
12. Luke 9:26
13. What is a testimony?
14. 1 Corinthians 13:7
15. What does Paul call “the most excellent way”?
16. Proverbs 27:17
17. What is accountability?
18. Matthew 22:36-40
19. How does a disciple walk with God? (Three Things)
20. What is the most important thing you have learned?

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 16

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 17

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 18

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 19

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 20

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

DATE: _____

PASSAGE: John 21

HEADLINE: _____

CHARACTERS: _____

INTERESTING WORDS: _____

FAVORITE VERSE: _____

CHRIST SEEN: _____

SIMILAR PASSAGES: _____

QUESTIONS: _____

SUMMARY: _____

LIFE LESSONS: _____

BUT GOD
DEMONSTRATES HIS
OWN LOVE FOR US IN
THIS: WHILE WE WERE
STILL SINNERS, CHRIST
DIED FOR US.

ROMANS 5:8

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

MARRIED MEN

1. How is your WIFE?
2. How are your kids? (if applicable)
3. Are you being loyal to them?
4. How is your job/business? (if applicable)
5. Are you dealing in a way that is above reproach?
6. What is your favorite thing about this week?
7. What is your biggest concern this week?
8. Pray for one another!

UNMARRIED MEN

1. How is your current relationship going? (if applicable)
2. How is your job/business going? (if applicable)
3. Are you dealing in a way that is above reproach?
4. Have you cheated at school or at work?
5. Are you protecting your eyes from sin?
6. What was your favorite thing about this week?
7. What is your biggest concern about this week?
8. Pray for one another!

LEADING SOMEONE TO CHRIST

“FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.”

ROMANS 6:23

EVERYONE SINS.

ROMANS 3:23

JESUS DIED FOR SIN.

ROMANS 5:8

JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY.

JOHN 14:6

DO YOU BELIEVE?

ACTS 16:31

“THAT IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH, ‘JESUS IS LORD,’ AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE SAVED.”

ROMANS 10:9

PRAYER OF SALVATION

Lord, I know I am a sinner. I know sin comes with consequences, but I also believe Jesus existed, He is the Son of God, He died on the cross, He rose from the dead, and He is the perfect sacrifice for my sin.

Jesus come into my heart. Be my Lord and my Savior. I believe in you.

Teach me to be like you. Amen.

HOW TO COUNSEL

Ask the individual his or her name and why they came forward. If they want to be saved, talk through what it means to believe:

1. Jesus existed.
2. Jesus is the Son of God.
3. Jesus died on the cross.
4. Jesus rose from the dead.
5. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for our sin. REMEMBER, you must believe everything to be saved.

If they are seeking to make a life change, give them a chance to tell their story. REMEMBER to listen more than you talk!

Pray specifically and personally for them. If they want to be saved, pray through the prayer of salvation with them. Have them pray for themselves. If they have received Christ, talk about baptism.

Get them to fill out an information card for follow up and discipleship. It is okay not to have all the answers. Ask a minister if you get a question you don't know. If something illegal or harmful is being confessed, (i.e. suicide, abuse, or crime) immediately tell a staff member after your counseling session.

Making disciples is one of the major things we believe Jesus Christ has called us to do here on the earth. Strand Discipleship is a 10-week study on some of the major tenants of the faith, providing some first steps in a person's walk into discipleship.

STRAND

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