

TITLE: Christ's Disciples

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Leadership Series

Book 14

CHRIST'S DISCIPLE

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PREFACE

Welcome to the discipleship / leadership series. These little booklets were designed to give basic information concerning various topics about our Christian faith in Christ Jesus.

The purpose of this series is to stimulate thought and to foster a clearer understanding of discipleship and servant leadership. These booklets can be used as a discussion tool for personal study, family devotion, youth meetings or in cell groups. Our hope is that this information will stir the readers and encourage them to go deeper into personal research and study.

Our desire is that these booklets will be a blessing to the reader and a tool that can be shared with others as a gift of encouragement.

Please feel free to mail or e-mail us for more copies or to just write to us with any feedback concerning the content of these studies. We hope you enjoy this offering of knowledge and experience. We pray that Christ will draw you into an ever deeper personal relationship with Himself as you study.

Your servants in Christ,

Rev. Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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INTRODUCTION

You have made a commitment to Jesus Christ by praying and confessing your sin and inviting Him into your heart as Lord and Savior. There are now some new principles that apply to your life.

You may be asking the question, “What does my decision to follow Christ mean?” In some ways it’s like building a house – you have established the foundation and now need to build the rest of the structure. As another example, it is like seeds that have been planted in the garden of your heart. In order to see those seeds mature and bear fruit, key steps need to be added.

Your decision to become a follower of Christ has birthed a new relationship and family. It has made you what the Bible calls a disciple.

As for relationships:

Your commitment opens the door for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. He desires to be with you every step – to walk with you through the good and hard times of growing and maturing. He is with you everywhere you go.

As a family member:

Your commitment to Christ has birthed you into a new family – a body of brothers and sisters and people of like faith. You are not alone on this earthly journey. Christ has made you a part of His body, the church. You are a member that is unique and

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gifted for service. The church is a place to go for help and encouragement and be strengthened in your walk with Christ.

As a disciple:

Your commitment has also made you a student of Christ. This simply means that you have decided:

- To follow the teachings and ways of Jesus
- To come under His discipline and training
- To take on a new lifestyle
- To die to self, giving everything to Christ.

You are now a new creation.

In essence, you have become a child of God. In some ways, you are like a baby that needs training and nurturing in your new faith. What follows is a brief outline of key points which, if applied to your life, will help in growing and maturing as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

1. A Disciple Needs to Study the Bible

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Paul, a Biblical figure, told a good friend that it was important to study the Bible as it was the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15). The Bible is God's "love letter" to us and is His way of sharing His heart. Paul goes on to tell Timothy that because the

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Bible is inspired it becomes a basis for teaching others, for bringing about correction to our lives and providing training in righteousness. This creates an end goal of being adequately equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

King David was another Biblical figure who knew the importance of studying and meditating on the Word. He tells us that the person who meditates (or reflects) on the Word of God is like a tree planted by the riverside. This tree will bear fruit and its leaves will not wither, prospering in all that he does (Psalms 1:2-3). Later in the 119th chapter of Psalms David tells us that the Word is a lamp to your feet which will help us from sinning (v.11). As we study scripture, it gives light and understanding to the simple (Psalms 119:30).

Jesus proclaims Himself to be the living Word (John 1:1-3) that bridges us to the Father in Heaven. He taught the disciples that He is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). The Word (Jesus) is what sets the captive free (John 8: 31-32). As the Word becomes evident in our lives people will see change, proving we are Christ's disciples (John 8:31). The Word of God is the Rock that we must build our lives on. All other things are as shifting sand (Matthew 7: 24-27). James exhorts us not to be hearers of the Word but doers also. Our faith in Christ should lead us to action.

Finally, Hebrews tells us that the Word equips us for battle (Hebrews 4:12) as we are in a spiritual war (Ephesians 6:12). The enemy wants to deceive, divide, destroy and kill, but the Word of God helps us to overcome. John tells us that "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

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You must daily get into the Word so that the Word can get into you.

2. A Disciple Needs to Pray

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

Prayer is simply a two way communication between ourselves and God. Relationships are built through communication – both verbally and non-verbally, expressing the heart of the speaker. Prayer means seeking, asking, knocking and approaching God first (Matthew 7:7). It is the door we enter to learn the Father's will for our lives.

Often we don't know how to pray. This was a question that the disciples asked Jesus. His response was the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). This prayer is a pattern of how to pray through life's journey.

Again using King David, we see the importance of prayer. He asked the Lord to give ear to his prayer and consider the groaning of his heart. He stated that only God was King and Lord. David waited eagerly to hear and watch what the Lord would say and do (Psalms 5:1-3).

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Jesus set an example of prayer for the disciples (Mark 1:35). Often when Jesus prayed He would bring the disciples with Him. Unfortunately, the flesh would sometimes get the better of these men and they fell asleep (Mark 14:37-41). We are encouraged to pray often. Paul tells the Thessalonians church to pray without ceasing. Stated another way, we need to be to praying in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

We also need to pray when we speak as Christ's ambassadors (Ephesians 6:8-20). Our biggest enemy in witnessing is fear and worry but through prayer we can be overcomers (Philippians 4:4-7). Sometimes when one struggle with getting into a habit of prayer, it can be helpful to get a "prayer partner" that will walk along with you, one that you can trust and know that they are there to support and encourage you as you are for them.

Prayer is simply asking the question “**What Would Jesus Do**” (**W.W.J.D.**)? Most importantly, we need to see things through the eyes of Christ. Prayer focuses us on Him, lifting our eyes off ourselves. It helps us to view things through spiritual eyes rather than worldly eyes. Prayer gives us renewed hope, peace and strength to face challenges that each day may bring. **PRAYER CHANGES THINGS.**

3. A Disciple Needs to Be Directed

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. John 14:26

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When Jesus left this earth He told the disciples to wait in an upper-room and be in prayer until the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that unless He went back to heaven, the Holy Spirit could not come (John 14:16-29). The Holy Spirit is our comforter, teacher and one who would empower us to overcome the strongholds of this world. He gives us hope, something that much of the world has lost (Romans 15:13).

The key to the disciple's walk is to ask Christ to fill us with His Holy Spirit. It is what connects us to the rest of the body and aids in our ministry with one other. Paul tells the Ephesian disciples to pray for the Holy Spirit to fill them daily (Ephesians 5:18). God's Spirit is like fuel in a vehicle – when used, it needs replacing or it would soon run out.

One purpose of the Holy Spirit is to empower us for service (Acts 1: 8, Ephesians 4:12). As well, the Holy Spirit guides us on our journey. He is our direct lifeline to Christ and is the one that keeps us connected to the family of God.

4. A Disciple Needs to Have Fellowship

What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ

1 John 1:3

Another important point to remember is that man and woman were created for fellowship. We are not called to walk

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alone or to be an island unto ourselves. As a disciple of Christ we became part of His worldwide Church. He is our head and we are the various members of His body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

The church is where we worship, have communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-24) and give of our possessions. It is also a place where we can give of ourselves – our talents, gifts and service. We become built up and encouraged in church as well as become connected into smaller house fellowships. The early church went from house to house having communion, teaching God's word and working together to meet the needs of others (Acts 2:42-47).

Fellowship is at the heart of God and is birthed from love. We are His children and He desires to care for and fellowship with us. John tells us that fellowship is an important part of cleansing our hearts (1 John 1:3-7).

Finally, we should not forsake the assembling together as we often lose out on what God desires to do through our lives (Hebrews 10:24-25). Fellowship is what binds us together as a body of believers.

5. A Disciple Needs to Testify

And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:11

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The most powerful weapon you have against the enemy of this world is your testimony. A testimony is witnessing on what Christ Jesus has done personally in your life. It is twofold: first, testimony is something you give through words and second (and most powerfully), it is seen through your actions. Actions speak louder than words.

The power of a testimony can be seen when we study the woman at the well. After speaking with Jesus, she went back and told the people in her village what He had said and done. They came to see this man and soon after Jesus shared with them they became believers (John 4:7-38).

Let us look at another type of testimony – baptism. Baptism allows others to see the change in your beliefs – making Christ Lord and turning your life completely over to Him (Romans 6:4-7, Colossians 2:12). This is one of the first things every disciple should do.

Paul tells Timothy not to be ashamed of his testimony (2 Timothy 1:8). It is unique to us and different from those around us. We do not know how our testimony can touch others' lives and we must purpose to share it. If we do not, how will people know about Jesus Christ and what He desires to do in their lives (Romans 10:14-15)?

There are all kinds of testimonies that one can give and various methods in sharing it. You can share through song, poetry or reading a Scripture passage that has special meaning for you.

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Paul testifies to the Ephesians believers of God's grace and power in his life (Acts 20:24).

You do not have to fear sharing with others. Jesus said that in time of need, God will give the words to speak (Matthew 10:19-20). We should always be ready to give a testimony of the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15-16). The Scripture tells us that if we believe in the Son of God we have a testimony and that testimony is one of eternal life (1 John 5:9-12).

6. A Disciple Needs to Be Disciplined

Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.

Deuteronomy 8:5-6

A good analogy on the subject of discipline is planting a garden – there is much work and effort that you must daily put into it to obtain the fruit of your labors at harvest season. John tells us that we are like a branch on a vine that needs to be pruned and nurtured. In due time, it will produce fruit (John 15:1-11). To become mature takes time (Hebrews 6:1), much effort and discipline in your life. You are not alone as the Holy Spirit guides you through the valleys and hilltops that will come your way. We are at first like babies, then little children, youth and finally adults. This maturing comes by feeding on the Word of God daily (1 Peter

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2:2). We need to grow and develop to reach the goal that Christ has to make us more like Him (Ephesians 4:16).

The Word of God gives to us a standard to live by. There needs to be a willingness to take off the old self and become clothed with the newness of Christ (Colossians 3:1-17 and Ephesians 4:17-32). This requires discipline, but through prayer you can overcome and change will take place (1 John 4:4).

There is a measuring stick that we can use to tell whether we are growing. First, do we see fruit from our lives? Second, what kind of fruit is it? Jesus says we will be known by our fruit (Matthew 7:20). Paul also says that the way we can know whether we have the fruit of the Spirit is by watching how we relate to others. Do we have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control flowing through the things we say and do (Galatians 5:22-23)?

Discipline also helps us to recognize the difference between the things of the world and the things of God. It helps us to differentiate between truth and falsehood as well as the distinction between life and death (2 Peter 3:18-19).

Finally, discipline is a part of the character of God. He tells us that He disciplines those whom He loves (Deuteronomy 8:5). The process of discipline is not easy but those who will labor will see great rewards both in the present time and in the future (1 Corinthians 9:27, Colossians 2:5, 1 Timothy 4:8).

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7. **A Disciple Needs to be a Seed Planter**

He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:6

We are to be like farmers who have been given precious seed (Psalms 126:6). Seed does not produce a harvest until it has been planted. Likewise, we must be willing to spread seed for planting. Having received, we now need to give.

God is a giving God. He bestows much to us from His heart of love and desires that we would go and freely give to others (Matthew 10:8). God wants vessels that He can use to touch people with His love and mercy. He has placed within us a treasure that needs to be shared with others (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Paul tells Timothy to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5), taking the Good News of Jesus Christ and broadcasting it to others. This does not mean that we are all evangelists, preachers or teachers. It indicates our need to tell people about our faith in Christ. We all have different abilities and gifting. The key is to take that which we have been given and pour it out to others (1 Corinthians 3:6).

As an example, we are likened to water in a well. When the water is used it will remain fresh and alive. As it sits, it becomes stagnant and eventually dries up. Christ wants to have living water flowing from your heart to others (John 4:10, 14). Jesus states that

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if we give a cup of cold water in His name we will receive a blessing (Matthew 10:43, Mark 9:41).

In His last few hours on earth, Jesus gave the disciples what we call the “great commission”. This is a command to go and make more disciples (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-18). The Good News must be proclaimed throughout all the earth.

CONCLUSION

You are on a journey in your Christian walk. Don't worry that you may not understand all there is to know! Making mistakes and falling down are all part for the course. Get up, keep moving and grow in Christ. As you do you will begin to see the evidence of fruit. Above all else, the key to our discipleship walk is keeping **Christ LORD** of our lives in all that is said and done.

Christ desires to shepherd you as one of His sheep. He knows how to care for and love you through every circumstance. He will guide you every step of the way. Call out His name and He will answer you (John 10:11, 14).

Christ has set a race before you. It is up to you to run or not. There will be many temptations and obstacles in your way. You must keep focused and stay close to the heart of God. As you do you will complete the race and a great reward will be awaiting you (Hebrews 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 9:24-26, 1 Timothy 2:5).

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Our prayer is that as you follow these discipleship principles you will in turn have a very productive and fruitful life with Jesus Christ.

DEDICATION PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus,

Thank you for calling me to be your disciple, I desire to follow You where ever You lead me. I pray that You will open my heart up to hear Your still small voice. Lord I need to see and hear both from Your Word and from the Holy Spirit. Jesus, I also ask that You would help me to walk in Your power and strength and that my will would submit to Your will. I pray that we will be able to walk this journey, that you have for me, with much wisdom. I desire to serve Your body of believers in the years to come. Help me Lord to truly be Your disciple, so that when others look at me they will see that I am a Christian and a follower of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for all your help and love.

Your servant in Christ,

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Appendix:

a. Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.*

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever and ever, Amen.*

Matthew 6:9-13

b. Psalm 23: A Psalm by King David

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. 3 He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me, 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalm 23:1-6

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Project L.A.M.B.S. International

Making disciples is the call and mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus urged the disciples to follow Him. He laid down before us the teaching and the walk that we need to follow with Jesus as our supreme example. It is imperative for every believer and the church to know that disciples are not born but they are made. For the church to be strong in the last days, we must be about the business of equipping the saints (disciples) for the work of service.

Dr. James Humphries has been ministering for over 40 years, and has experience in a variety of ministries including church planting, children's ministry, street ministry, youth ministry, camp ministry, pastoral work and directing and teaching in schools all over the world. In addition, he has taken part in traveling and ministering in the USA, Mexico, Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Thailand and across most of Canada. He completed his B.R.E. and his M.A. from Briercrest, and his Doctorate of Ministry from Providence Theological Seminary in the spring of 1999.

In January 1996, Dr. James Humphries resigned as pastor of a local church with a vision to reach further abroad with the Word of God and to use it to train labourers for Christ (Matthew 9:36-38). He shared this with Dr. David Smith and Dr. Chuck Nichols of Providence Theological Seminary and they greatly encouraged Dr. James Humphries and his wife Irene to develop what God was laying on their hearts.

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In March 1997, they traveled to Jamaica where they met several pastors who were very concerned about the need for training and disciplining their young people as leaders in their churches. Dr. James Humphries and Irene did not know this would be the starting point to an international ministry of discipleship training around the world known as Project L.A.M.B.S. International.

To date, Project L.A.M.B.S. has ministered in Canada, Myanmar, Ukraine, Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, Japan, Dominican Republic, Naga Land and China. We offer over 30 different courses. Our graduates number over 1000, and are serving worldwide. Out of this group of graduates, we have equipped and trained directors, teachers and pastors who in turn are carrying out II Timothy 2:1-2 to an even larger group of people.

In 2002 it was discovered that Irene had cancer again. God gave Irene another three years and because of that she was still able to travel and teach in many different countries. Shortly after what was to be her last trip, Irene was hospitalized in February, 2005. A few weeks later she went home to be with her Lord and Saviour on March 9.

My second wife Hkaw Win was raised and trained mostly in the land of Myanmar. She has earned B.th, University Degree and a master of Divinity Degree in Myanmar. In April 2007 she finished a second Master's Degree at Providence Theological

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Seminary in Christian Education. After July 1st, 2007 she headed back to Myanmar to head up the Christian Education Department for the Myitkyina Kachin Baptist Association and oversaw various ministries to 62 churches. After her four-year term was completed, she has been traveling and working as an interpreter and doing translations concerning various kinds of discipleship books and materials.

Over the last ten years we have lived in the countries of Myanmar and Thailand preparing a variety of resources in the Burmese (Myanmar) and Kachin Languages. To date we have published over 20 different kinds of books. Our goal is to equip and establish people as Disciples of Christ. Please pray for God's leading and wisdom. Our walk with Christ has taken us down many challenging pathways but we have seen the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior in every area. His grace has been sufficient.

Founder and Director,

Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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Discipleship / Leadership Booklets

1. My Call with Christ
2. Called to His Purpose
3. Abiding in the Vine
4. Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding
5. Scripture: The Disciples' Anchor
6. Baptism: The Disciples' Testimony
7. The Disciples' Church
8. Servant Leadership
9. Teacher / Learner, Learner / Teacher
10. Being Wise Builders
11. Shepherds of God's Sheep
12. End Times
13. Relationship Pilgrimage
14. Christ's Disciple
15. Disciple's Prayer Life
16. Communion
17. Ambassadors for Christ
18. Full Armour of God
19. Good News for Challenging and Changing Times
20. Christ our Mediator
21. Jesus our Deliverer
22. Mission and Missionaries
23. Full Gospel Discipleship
24. Romans Road of Discovery

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