

## Lesson Plan

# This is Discipleship

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## Weekly Summary

1. Discipleship 101 - What am I getting myself into?
2. Who are you?
3. Personal Background
4. What is/will be your Occupation/Mission?
5. Name Your Relationships (DTR)
6. How Did You Get Here?
7. What Do You Believe and Why?
8. What is Your Purpose?
9. What Takes Up Most of Your Time?
10. Who is God?
11. How Should You Respond?
12. What's Next?

## Chapter 1

### Discipleship 101 - What am I getting myself into?

Congratulations! You have just signed up for an amazing program that will do the following:

- Help you learn more about yourself
- Remind you where you came from
- Teach you truths from the Creator of our world
- Grow your Knowledge of God
- Grow your Relationship with God
- Grow your Relationship with others
- Help you understand where you're going
- Provide you with a resource who will be available for you

How does that sound? For many of us, we try to take this world on by ourselves. As men especially, we have been instilled with the ability to go explore, build stuff, and do what it takes to survive. This is natural! And it's good! We see this example from movies like: *Commando*, *Rambo*, *Gladiator*, *The Bourne Identity*, *John Wick*, etc. These movies incite us and attract us because we learn the backstory of the 'good guy', and it shows us what we wish we could be. So, let someone know YOUR backstory. Let someone you trust root for you, and encourage you to be the best YOU that you can be. Take athletes, entertainers, and billionaires - we dream of being more talented than how we 'see' ourselves. We are drawn to money and power. We want to have a reason to live. We want to answer the question "What is my purpose?" Does this sound like you? You're not alone.

Speaking of not being alone, the Bible tells us in the book of Genesis "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone.'" (Genesis 2:18a; NIV). Also, the book of Hebrews instructs us to "...spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together..." (Hebrews 10:24-25; NIV). And Jesus actually commands us to "Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12). So you see, we can't just be a hermit and keep to ourselves. There's a reason why we are here - an overwhelmingly beneficial reason! This leads us into the reason for the need for discipleship.

What is discipleship? The sole purpose of discipleship is to teach you what it means to be a christian. Now this is a very broad statement. You can be taught how to be a christian, but if you

don't understand it, what good is it? Likewise, you can be taught how to be a christian, but if you don't apply christian fundamentals in your life, nothing will change. And if your heart's not in it (desiring to be a christian), then there's no point in forcing yourself to live for Christ, as this is just worthless to not only yourself, but to others whom you might be an influence. Dr. J.I. Packer in his book To Be a Christian, tells us "*one can understand these things [the Gospel] and still remain apart from them. In order to know God's love for you, you need to know and love Jesus Christ, and commit yourself to him as his lifelong disciple in his community, the Church.*" We will get into the "how" to be a christian later on in this program. But for now, this is the essence of discipleship. As for the "why", we disciple because Jesus Christ disciplined others. Jesus commanded us to "*go and make disciples of all nations*" (Matthew 28:19; NIV). This is what we were made to do. It reminds me of the bumper sticker that says "Real men love Jesus". This is what it means to be a real man. Discipleship will help you know the Word of God better, reveal to you areas where you can serve God, and get you out of your comfort zone that you have been living in for so long.

Lastly, the main point of discipleship is to encourage you to ultimately produce reproducers. The goal is to take what you have learned, and share it with others, so that it becomes a domino effect. Paul tells Timothy (Paul's disciple) "*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*" (2 Timothy 2:2; NIV). This program will equip you to "*be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" (Romans 12:2; NIV). It is intended to change your life. Are you ready for the ride of your life?

## Directions:

Spend time going through the questions at the end of each chapter each week with your discipler during the time you are together. These questions are intended to make you think. To get the most out of this lesson, dig deep for detailed answers instead of just topical one-liners. Get to know each other while you are meeting. Pray with each other and pray for each other. God has seen this day. He has assigned the 2 of you to go through this together. Stay the course, and remain in Him (see John 15).

## Questions:

1. What is the purpose of Discipleship?
2. Why should I be disciplined?
3. What am I most excited to learn about?
4. Is the person teaching me about discipleship qualified?
5. What is my goal after going through this program?

## Chapter 2

### Who Are You?

Alright, you made it through the first week! Now you have an idea of what you're getting into, and you are excited for the next step! So, discipleship is teaching you how to be a christian. It's a process whereby you let someone into your life who you trust to teach and guide you into a stronger relationship with God. Most importantly, you share things about your life with this same person who will keep your conversations confidential. As discussed last week, it was God who assigned the 2 of you to go through this together. My first instruction to you is to pray for your discipler. Your discipler is and has been praying for you. You'll quickly find out that PRAYER is the best tool for the believer. With men, it's usually very difficult to open up. This program IS NOT intended for you to open up and let everything out, or to train you to do so. The amount you open up to your discipler is up to you...and the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, you will get out what you put in - same as everything else you attempt.

We begin with you. This is a time of self-reflection on who you are. This is a great exercise to get to know yourself better, and ultimately, get to know others better. So this leads us into your first "assignment". Set aside time this week to really ponder on each of these questions. And then share these answers with your discipler whenever you meet next. Reason being, when you know who you are, the next direction is easier. And, having someone walk through this program with you allows them to also provide additional guidance. This is called true fellowship. This could also be called accountability, if you humble yourself to let your discipler into your life - even the dirty parts of your life. Here are the questions:

1. What is your Full Name - including middle name and suffixes? (even if you hate your name)
2. What nationality are you?
3. Where do you live?
4. How long have you lived here?
5. If you could live anywhere, where would it be and why?
6. Did you go to college?
  - a. Why or Why not?
  - b. If you did go, or planning to go, Where?
7. What was your degree?
8. What do you do for a living?

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9. What activities/hobbies do you enjoy most?
  10. What is your favorite food?
  11. What kind of vehicle do you drive?
  12. What kind of music do you listen to?
  13. Are you an introvert or an extrovert?
  14. Who do you like to hang out with?
  15. What's your best friend's name?
  16. How do you define success?
  17. Who do you admire the most and why?
  18. What is a little known skill of yours?
  19. What's something you're proud of yourself for accomplishing?
  20. What is your biggest fear?
  21. What's something you're afraid to tell someone?
  22. What is something you used to love doing, but you don't anymore because someone made you feel bad, embarrassed, or guilty for doing it?
  23. What is your biggest struggle internally and externally?
  24. What are you striving for now, that you wish you could just stop having to work for?
  25. What is the biggest frustration you are facing today?

As you can see, the questions start out easy and end up with some very personal and difficult questions to ask and answer. If you're an extrovert, this is nuthin'! But if you're an introvert, this is pretty painful. The great thing about this, is that God made each one of us unique - for a reason. So remember this as you walk through this program, and as you navigate through all the trials and troubles of life. God created you for a reason. The Psalmist tells us *"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."* (Psalm 139:14; NIV). Also, in the book of Genesis we read *"So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them...God saw all that He had made, and it was very good."* (Genesis 1:27, 31a; NIV).

What a great assurance of who we are! We are made in the image of God, and God made us fearfully and wonderfully very good! Did He make any of us bad? Unless you can find anywhere in the Scripture (The Bible) that tells you otherwise, the answer is no. We will get into the Bible and the inerrancy of this work - which Christians believe is the actual Word of God - a little later on. In the meantime, an important piece of Scripture that is crucial to know is found in 2 Timothy - a letter written by the Apostle Paul to his disciple Timothy: *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Timothy 3:16; NIV).



A big part of discipleship is learning what the Bible says. This means you will be spending time in the Bible - God's Word. You will be not only reading it, but also letting the verses you read soak into you. This means there will be some memorization that will be asked of you. Memorization is intended to help you understand God's Word by allowing you to focus on the particular verse(s) a word at a time. These words (according to the verses above) were inspired by God, written by men. You can either take the whole Bible as Truth, or you can dismiss it as false. Either way, you cannot hand pick what you believe to be true from the Bible, and dismiss the other parts of it. A great saying to support this is "99% of the truth is still a lie." If just a little bit of it is wrong, or incorrect, then the whole thing is not true, and therefore should not be trusted, but thrown out. However, if you trust that the Bible is Truth, then we should know it! After all, the Bible is called God's Love Letter to us. This is how we identify our foundation. We need to know our foundation before we can move forward. Not only so, we need to trust that our foundation is firm. If it's a weak foundation, we will give in under pressure. But if we have a firm foundation, we are strong and confident in who we are. Our confidence is in our God.

***Note: Each week we will get into deeper conversations and deeper understanding of God and our relationship with Him. But know that we have to start from the beginning first.***

### To-Do Items:

1. Memorize 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (Choose whichever version you prefer - NIV, NASB, NRV, ESV, etc). A couple of suggestions for you is to choose a version that either you're used to, or your current Bible's version, or a version that you like that flows better for you. Either way, pick one and stick with it. You will be tested each week on your memorization of each word verbatim according to the version you choose.
2. Start Reading the Gospel of John - at least 1 chapter a day
3. Answer the 25 "Who Are You" Questions above - and come prepared to share with your discipler whenever you meet next.
4. **PRAY DAILY** - Remember we said this was a powerful tool that the Christian has. God speaks to us through the Bible. We speak to God through prayer. Specifically, pray that you will hear God's voice. Incidentally, He knows your heart. Do not pray simply because you think it's just what Christians do. Pray because you want to have a relationship with Him. If you do not feel led to pray, then don't force yourself to do it. But I will tell you, do not expect to have a closer relationship with Him unless you spend time listening to God's Word and talking to God - it's a 2 way relationship. Pray that God will build the relationship between Him and you.

## Chapter 3

### Personal Background - Where did you come from?

How'd you do with your memory verse? I have no doubt you did great! This memory verse serves as a segue to this week's section. Where did the Bible come from? Our memory verse says ALL SCRIPTURE (Old Testament and New Testament) is God-breathed, or "Inspired by God". In other words, the Bible came from God. Again, it's God's love letter to us. So then, we know where the Bible came from. Now it's time to learn where YOU come from. Last week we had 25 questions to focus on who we are today, now, currently, present tense. Let's shift the focus now to how we became who we are today. What are the reasons why we are who we are? So much like last week, spend time answering each question and go over it with your discipler when you meet up next week.

1. Where were you born?
2. Where did you spend most of your time as a child?
3. What were you like as a child?
4. Were you raised going to church?
  - a. If so, what religion did you grow up in?
5. What is your favorite childhood memory?
6. Was your childhood happy or difficult?
7. What's one thing you remember about your mom from when you were a child?
8. What's one thing you remember about your dad from when you were a child?
9. Do you have any older or younger siblings?
  - a. Did you both get along well or fight?
10. What was the most significant thing you learned from your parent(s)?
11. What was your favorite vacation place as a kid?
12. Did you play sports growing up?
13. What was your first job as a kid?
14. Did you have pets growing up?
  - a. Which pet was your favorite?
15. Do you have any experience in the military?
16. What was your favorite game as a child?
17. Who was your favorite teacher?
  - a. What did you like about her/him?

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18. Did you belong to a club like Boy Scouts or play in the band?
    - a. If so, what was this like?
  19. When's the first time you heard about God?
  20. When's the first time you remember praying?
  21. When's the first time you attempted to read the Bible?
  22. When was the first time your heart was truly broken?
  23. Were you ever bullied as a child?
  24. How old were you when you first saw a pornographic image?
  25. Did you know or have a homosexual friend growing up?

Whew! Good job going through those questions. Again, they started out easy, and then they got progressively harder toward the end. This is not easy, especially when the questions bring up some tough times in your life. Kudos to you for staying the course. Remember, the best way to grow in your faith is to truly know who you are, and then see the things that shaped you along the way - thus far. I'd be willing to bet that you have not been asked any of these questions in a long time. It is good to revisit these questions every once in awhile - where you came from, and who you are. We all tend to picture ourselves in a better light than what we truly are. In Chapter 2, we read about being humble to your discipler. Quoting Paul again "*Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment*" (Romans 12:3a; NIV). There is no such thing as a proud Christian.

In counseling, this is how the counselor gets to know you and the reason behind why you respond the way you do. The counselor uses your past experiences and your answers to their questions, and provides guidance based on what they now know about you. And amazingly, you're back to normal! (If only it were that easy, right?) We all know that it takes effort and work on your part to see change. Similarly, being a Christian requires change. God calls it repentance. God answered King Solomon by stating "*if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*" (2 Chronicles 7:14; NIV).

Now you could be the kind of person who has been a Christian pretty much your whole life, or you could be someone who has never been told about the goodness of God - even if you fully reject God. It does not matter where you *were*. The Apostle Paul explains this extremely well in his letter to the Philippians. It goes like this: "*If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more...of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, flawless.*" (Philippians 3:4-6; NIV). This guy Paul is writing to a church letting them know that he was brought up in the church, and he followed tradition and the

rules that were forced on him since he was a kid. As high up in the church he could get, he attained it! This is quite the accomplishment, and one not very many could claim. It looks similar to someone's Resume. You know the type; the people who are so proud of who they are, and what they've been able to do with their lives. The purpose of this statement was not to brag about his past. When you keep reading, he gets to the point real quick: *"But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith."* (Philippians 3:7-9; NIV). Paul understood that what he knew, and what he did were not what mattered. He says everything that gave him a high status in the world, or what made him popular in the world was nothing but 'rubbish' or 'dung' - "garbage".

If you are in a place where you are ashamed or embarrassed at who you are, or what you've done now or in the past, this is the time to finally lay this shame or embarrassment at the feet of Jesus. All of the weight you've been carrying to try to somehow fix it on your own, lay it down. Jesus tells us *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* (Matthew 11:28-30; NIV). Most of the testimonies you hear are from people who hit rock bottom. God had to get a hold of them for them to truly understand and believe that they cannot make it on their own. Like Paul realized, the law cannot save you. God has to be the one to reveal this to you. And sometimes, He uses things like what happened in our past to remind us that we need Him. The last part of the letter to the Philippians talks about how Paul is actually NOT as perfect as his resume portrays. He says *"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal...But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead"* (Philippians 3:12-13; NIV). God allows us to go through things for our own good - but ultimately to bring glory to Him. Thank Him for your past. Thank Him for what He is teaching you. He truly is an amazing God!

### To-Do Items:

1. Memorize Philippians 3:13 (Recite the previous week's verse 2 Timothy 3:16-17 as well)
2. Continue Reading the Gospel of John - at least 1 chapter a day
3. Answer the 25 "Who Are You" Questions above - and come prepared to share with your discipler whenever you meet next.
4. **PRAY DAILY!** But this time, take something NEW that you are struggling with and share it with your discipler so he can start praying specifically for this.

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## Chapter 4

### What is your Mission or Occupation AND/OR What will be your Mission or Occupation?

Welcome back! By now you have memorized 2 verses for this program successfully. In the 2 Timothy verse, you know what your foundation is - All Scripture. The Bible is the Christian's foundation. This means that you believe EVERYTHING that is in the Bible - as it's called God's Word. Make sure that you are confident in this. If you have a shaky foundation, you will most certainly fall. But if God is your strong tower - "*The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*" (Proverbs 18:10; NIV) - the storms of life (trials) will, like the wolf to the 3 little pigs, try to blow, and blow, and blow your house down, yet without success. Jesus also spoke to large crowds about this in what is known as the parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23) - this is one of our 'to-do' items for this week. And like Jesus tells us in John 15, we ought to remain IN HIM.

The 2nd verse you memorized is from Philippians. We talked about how you were raised and what shaped you into who you are today. For most of us, we were embarrassed, ashamed, or hurt at some point in the past - either from someone else, or just by ourselves. This played a key role in how we live, love, and trust today. You would drive yourself crazy if you kept worrying, stressing, or contemplating on these things of the past. Paul tells us in this verse that those things were done in the past. You can either choose to grumble and complain and feel sorry for yourself, or you can choose to stop focusing on it, and look forward to what God has in store for you. Too many times, we let the enemy take our joy and contentment away because we focus on ourselves instead of focusing on God. You can NEVER do anything where God won't forgive you if you're truly repentant, or put yourself in a position that separates yourself from God's love for you. This is called unconditional love, which we'll get into later. What an encouragement!

When I was in high school, a youth group leader of mine shared with me an alliteration that was intended to set me up for success as a young Christian - "Master, Mission, Mate." Master meaning "Who are you serving?" and "Who is your Lord?" Master is listed first because you have to have a foundation before you can move forward. If your master is yourself, then like you read above, you will surely fall since this is a shaky foundation. In this section, we're going to focus on the "Mission" piece of this alliteration - the 2nd 'M'. Once you know who you serve, then the next question should be, "How do I serve?" In other words, what am I going to do with my life? We will

start in the book of Genesis. The first 2 chapters of Genesis show us how our world was formed: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* (Genesis 1:1; NIV). We read that EVERYTHING God created was good - even man and woman! However, there’s something in this world, or rather someone, who has been man’s nemesis since the creation of Adam. The 3rd chapter tells us the story of how men became separated from God. Adam disobeyed God (thanks to the help of this nemesis), and as a result God punished Adam - and EVERY man (*“just as sin entered the world through one man”* Romans 5:12; NIV) - by charging us *“through painful toil”* and *“By the sweat of your brow”* (Genesis 3:17-19; NIV) man will have to work to survive. So since we know we are ‘required’ to work, and the fact that where we work will more than likely be our 2nd home, it’s worth the conversation.

There are some questions that you will answer below regarding “work”. But first let’s expand on the ‘Master’ and ‘Mission’ concept. Now that we have identified our foundation, and who it is we serve, the next step then is to carry our knowledge and connection with our Master into our Mission. In other words, preface what you do for a living by bringing it to your Master. Anything that happens throughout our day, we should take to the Lord in prayer. If you’re at a crossroads and you don’t know which way to go, give it to your Master. Lay your burdens, fears, frustrations, uncertainties at the feet of Jesus. Jesus says *“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest...I AM gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* (Matthew 11:28-29; NIV). The memory verse for this week is also regarding our attitude toward work: *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”* (Colossians 3:23-24; NIV). If you start looking at your job as a way to glorify and honor your Master, you will be surprised at how much you can accomplish. Is He worth serving? Is He worth your hard work? Your prayers should sound **something like** this (*please note this is just an example, your prayer will need to come from your heart*):

*“Master/Father/Lord/Savior, thank you for who you created me to be. Thank you for showing yourself to me through your Holy Spirit. I want to serve you today at my job (or at school). Please remind me that you created me for good. Help me to do my job (schoolwork) to the best of my ability, as it is You whom I serve. Set my mind right Lord. Allow me to work in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. For it is YOU who allowed me to work where I am working. Everything I have is from You. Let me glorify You today by how I live, work, and play. In Jesus’s name, Amen.”*

Focus on these questions, and talk about them with your discipler:

1. Where do you work, and what do you do?
2. How long have you been working here?

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3. How long have you been working in the industry?
  4. Can you see yourself doing something else?
  5. If money wasn't an issue, would you continue to work here or do something else?
    - a. Why or why not?
  6. Do you like the people you work with?
  7. Have you had a conversation with any of them about God or Jesus?
  8. At what age would you like to retire?
  9. When you retire, then what?
  10. Have you been on a mission trip?
  11. Have you thought about volunteering at the church?
    - a. If yes, What could you see yourself doing there?
  12. What is holding you back from volunteering?

### To-Do Items:

1. Memorize Colossians 3:23-24 (Recite the previous 2 week's verses as well)
2. Continue/Finish Reading the Gospel of John - at least 1 chapter a day (You will be finished with the Gospel of John by end of this week - if you've read it daily since Week 2). Nice job!
3. Answer the 12 Questions above - and come prepared to share with your discipler whenever you meet next.
4. Read Matthew 13:1-23 from this lesson (The Parable of the Sower). Think about where you are in this parable. What kind of soil do you have? Why?
5. **PRAY DAILY!** Be transparent with the Lord when you pray, and be transparent with your discipler.

## Chapter 5

### Name Your Relationships (Define The Relationship)

You are on a roll! You've already been meeting with your discipler for a month now. As this program has helped you to review your life and consider it, let's keep with the theme here and review what's been going on over the past month.

1. We've learned about discipleship - how to be a true christian (child of God)
2. You've grown closer to your discipler by sharing things about yourself that most people don't know about you - and maybe revealed something YOU didn't see before. And as a reminder, it has been reiterated that God loves you and has a plan for you.
3. We revisited your past - the good parts and the bad parts. And even still, God loves you unconditionally and is not scared away by poor choices or embarrassing moments. Amazingly, He loves you the same as He did when He created you - because He knew you. Wow! - **Master**
4. You are destined to work by the sweat of your brow. You've shared about your job and/or what you're doing to prepare for the future. And, most importantly, we learned about HOW to work - "*with all your heart, as working for the Lord*" - **Mission**

The 3rd 'M' that we will touch on is "**Mate**" - well, along with a couple other relationships for this program. Remember, the order of the "M's" is very important. If you don't know who you are serving, life will be very confusing, and unstable. Your job won't have any meaning, and/or your relationships will suffer, because there's uncertainty. The uncertainty here will be due to selfish reasons - just like the rest of the world. This alliteration of "Master, Mission, Mate" was given to high school kids as a firm foundation to steer them in the right direction. I'm assuming you have at some point given advice to others - well-received or not - based on your experience. I can think of no better advice than that of placing your Master first in your life. There are a couple of fun ways to remember the priorities in your life. Here are just a few:

- I Am Second
  - A movement inspiring all to put Jesus Christ first in your life. Founded by the CEO of Interstate Batteries, Norm Miller, you have probably seen the online testimonies that some celebrities have made - further inspiring others to follow suit. Also, you might have seen the notorious black rubber bracelets with white "I AM SECOND" letters written on them. This fits the alliteration Master being first in our lives.

- I'm Third
  - This motto comes from one of the largest christian sports camps in the world (Kanakuk Kamps). It adds an extra layer to the above statement - even though it coined this term back in the late 1920's. "God first, others second, I'm third". This camp focuses on discipleship and raising christian leaders. The camp also gives out the I'm Third Award to the camper who has been seen serving others consistently - even over themselves. I believe this captures what life is all about - following the statement from Jesus when asked what the greatest commandment is. His response was "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind...And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself*" (Matthew 22:37, 39).
- JOY (Jesus, Others, You)
  - Acronyms are a great way to remember things. The term 'Joy' is usually seen around Christmas time all over shopping windows, streets, and (thanks to Hobby Lobby) in carved signs in our own houses. It reminds us to be joyful, and not focus on the things that bring us down. When we put Jesus first in our lives, we shouldn't be surprised that we find ourselves more full of joy - after all, it's one of the fruits of the Spirit. This then leads us to putting others' needs ahead of our own. Paul tells us "*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*" (Philippians 2:3-4; NIV). Memory Verse Alert...

It is extremely important to have relationships in your life, especially since we are called to love others. Let's define them here:

1. Are you Single, Dating, Divorced, or Married?
  - a. Do you expect a change to this marital status within the next 2 years?
  - b. If Dating or Married, how's the relationship going with your girlfriend or wife?
  - c. If Married, have there been any issues that you've gone through that have tried your relationship with your spouse?
  - d. Have these issues been resolved? How?
2. Do you have any kids?
  - a. How many and How old?
  - b. Do they live with you?
  - c. How close is your relationship with each of them?
  - d. What does quality time look like for you and them?
3. Do you have any siblings?
  - a. How close is your relationship with them?

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4. Are your parents still alive?
    - a. How close are you with your parents?
    - b. How close is your wife with your parents?
    - c. How close are you with your wife's parents?
  5. Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ?
    - a. What does your relationship with Him look like?
    - b. Do others know you have a relationship with Jesus?
  6. How is the relationship between you and your best friend?
    - a. Have you shared with this person what you've shared with your discipler?  
Why/Why not?
  7. How is the relationship with your boss and your colleagues or your clients?
    - a. Would they say you are a hard worker and respectful?
    - b. If you're a student, how's your relationship with your professors?

I hope you are seeing the flow here. Let me paint you a picture. When you're in an airplane, and you're listening/watching the flight attendant give instructions for the oxygen mask before you take off on your flight, you can either listen or play around on your laptop/mobile device, etc. If you choose to listen, you will find out that the instruction is to first grab oxygen for yourself, then help others to get theirs. Usually in time of panic, people tend to fumble around, become disoriented, freak out, and lose their minds. This is eerily similar to when we go through trials. The direction to take care of your oxygen mask relates to spending time with God - after all, He provides oxygen for us. With the wisdom God has given us, we can then share that wisdom with others - either purposefully or visibly. Are you being love to others? Or are you adding to their disorientation? Relationships are vital! They are also from the Lord. Jesus gave us this quote that should help out in our relationships: *"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me."* (Matthew 25:40; NIV).

### To-Do Items:

1. **Memorize Philippians 2:3-4** (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
2. **Daily Reading** - Since you've finished with the book of John, pick a book that you'd like to read in the Word, and tell your discipler what you will be reading. Look out for questions you may have when reading, and bring them up in your meeting next week - or call/text during the week.
3. **Answer the Questions above** - and come prepared to share with your discipler whenever you meet next.
4. **PRAY DAILY!** Be transparent with the Lord when you pray, and be transparent with your discipler. Ask God to reveal areas where you can show love more.

## Chapter 6

### How Did You Get Here?

What does this make you think of? Typically you hear this question from someone who is helping you with directions if you're lost, or if you ran into traffic on your way here and they want to complain about it with someone. Basically, which way did you take to get here? The reason for this title is to get you to think about how you ended up here. To answer this question, it's going to require you to broaden your mind. It's not just a simple one-sentence answer. The appropriate answer may seem like it's from a sci-fi movie. Scientists have studied and are even now studying how old the earth is and how to create a human cell and replicate DNA. You may be familiar with the Big Bang Theory. Others claim there must be some sort of intelligent design, since it still seems too far-fetched to say that 2 meteors just collided at some point billions of years ago and that's how we have what we still have today.

It is definitely respectable and commendable to study our earth and the things in it to try to gain an understanding on how this is all even possible. Previously in chapter 2, we saw in Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth, and He created man and woman. Paul in the New Testament provides this additional insight: *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."* (Romans 1:20; NIV). Not only did God create the heavens and the earth, but He has given EVERYONE signs and little breadcrumbs to follow that reveal to us things about Him and His attributes. The Bible has numerous things to say about this, but one verse stands out regarding God's Word: *"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12; NIV). As we discussed in a previous chapter, if we believe the Word of God is truth - ALL of it - then we believe God is the source of the intelligent design of this earth and the heavens thanks to Genesis 1. The Word of God is relevant today more than ever! *"Alive and active"* from this verse above means that we can apply God's Word to our thinking today; it never fades away or becomes irrelevant. Jesus tells *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."* (Matthew 24:35; NIV). The point is, God made man and woman, and God created the heavens and the earth. You may ask yourself, "Why would God make something so vast pass away?" This we will get into a little later on. But for today, we will discuss the first part of the answer to the question of this title. God created YOU! You came from God! Therefore, you are

a child of God. Throughout the rest of this program, this is the most important phrase you should know. If anyone were to ask you, “Who are you?”, or “Describe yourself”, or “What religion/denomination are you?”, your response should be **“I am a child of God.”** This after all is the only thing that matters.

Did you ever get a speech from mom or dad regarding your behavior? Before a kid leaves for school, or a sleepover, or somewhere away from home for awhile, did your parent(s) ever say “Remember whose you are”? This was intended to instruct the kid to be on their best behavior. It is intended to encourage the kid to be respectful and kind not only to make the kid look good, but also to make the parents (themselves) look good. As a parent, your responsibility is to *“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”* (Proverbs 22:6; NIV). This plays a huge role in what made us who we are today. Like our parents who instilled their wisdom from experience and maybe even from the Bible, God also has instilled us with qualities, characteristics, knowledge, and love (His love), as a Good Father. A parent’s hope is that their kids behave and take the lessons they’ve been given and apply them in their life. In the same way, God sent His Son Jesus down as a visible representation of how we ought to live. The teachings He gave us from what’s written in the gospels are words of wisdom that we are privileged to review anytime we want - especially thanks to technology - but most importantly to review them and follow them. And when Christ was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to be our Helper so that we would not be alone. We will get into the Triune God (The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit) later on in the program.

The main reason you are where you are today is because God has allowed you to be here in this specific moment, even while you are reading this sentence right now. He has already seen this day. Allow yourself to think about how great our God truly is, and what He can do. Don’t limit Him by thinking He can only fit into your understanding. *“Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it?”* (Lamentations 3:37; NIV). Now before you get freaked out and run away, assume God is big enough to know what you are going to do before you do it. Let this sink in for just a second. And of course, we will get to this topic as well - the sovereignty of God - when the time is right (These are the kind of questions that you should/can ask your discipler as well). While you are contemplating this, another section in the Bible reveals to us aspects of God’s qualities that we must bring up here: *“Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord?”* (Exodus 4:11; NIV). This is what God Himself told Moses before Moses went to the King of Egypt to ask him to let God’s people go and worship God. What better way to learn about God than from the words spoken directly from God?

Do you believe we all have free will? Do you believe God knows our next steps? Can you believe both simultaneously? It’s possible that we will choose what God knew we were gonna

choose before we were even born! Is this something you are willing to accept/believe? How big is your God? *“Your ways, God, are holy, What god is as great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.”* (Psalm 77:13-14; NIV). These are deep thoughts that we should regularly consider and ask ourselves. Numerous times in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, we read about God’s miracles and what God did through His people. We have examples of Noah’s arc, Abraham’s faithfulness, Joseph’s interpreting dreams, Moses and the parting of the Red Sea. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, etc. None of these men and women in the Bible were perfect. The Apostle Paul (Saul of Tarsus) killed Christians, before he was called by Jesus! Paul writes *“circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.”* (Philippians 3:5-6; NIV). Think of a teacher’s pet you knew in school. Straight-laced, never did ANYTHING wrong, always polite, etc. It is easiest for those with a spotless reputation to be self-righteous because of their position. Their thinking is that they somehow ‘earned’ this. Well, that was Paul’s response to the question, “How did you get here?” Are you striving to be morally good? OR, are you striving to know the one who was and is morally perfect and totally perfect?

### To-Do Items:

1. Memorize Lamentations 3:37 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
2. Daily Reading - Keep reading God’s Word daily and ask your discipler if you would like suggestions on what to read if you prefer.
3. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline. It’s not easy to pray and read your Bible daily, especially when you haven’t been in the habit of doing this.
4. Come prepared next week by answering the question “Am I trusting in myself and my good works to get me to heaven?”

## Chapter 7

### What Do You Believe and Why?

Remember your answer from last week's question "Am I trusting in myself and my good works to get me into heaven?" Over the last 6 weeks, we've been getting to know YOU: Who you are, where you're from, what you do for a living, who you know, and your purpose. This is instrumental information to have before answering this question. Even Socrates knew the importance of this by quoting "Know thyself" and "An unexamined life not worth living". So you're now up there with one of the greatest philosophers who's ever lived! This is half joking/half serious. After looking at yourself, as long as you are being truly honest, that's wisdom. So revisiting this question, don't be surprised if your answer changes. There ain't NOBODY good enough to get into heaven. And if that's the case, no other human can get you into heaven either - and rightfully so. As a rule of thumb, you should never put any human up on a pedestal. It seems pessimistic, but we are all human - and therefore we all have flaws and make numerous mistakes. Aren't you glad you signed up for this? Please, tell me more! Well, I'm glad you asked...

1. Suppose you went to a restaurant tonight to grab dinner, but on your way, someone had a blowout and lost control of their vehicle and BOOM! Lights out! Do you believe you would go to heaven?
2. If the answer is Yes, and the Almighty God who created the heavens and the earth (oh yeh, and you as well) were to ask you 'Why should I let you into heaven?' What would you say?

These 2 questions are called the Diagnostic Questions. These questions were formed from an evangelism study known as E.E. (Evangelism Explosion). We've already talked last week about how Paul gave us his resume ("*circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.*"). What was not mentioned in last week's chapter was his humility that was written IMMEDIATELY afterward. Let's start in verse 4: "*If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more:*" [same verse as above "*circumcised on the eighth day...*"]. **But** whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness

*that comes from God on the basis of faith.” (Philippians 3:4-9; NIV).* Paul wisely gave up his lifestyle to follow Jesus. He worked SO hard on being a good person, studying everything he could to be the best of the best, so that he could gain success, popularity, you name it. There are others that Jesus confronted in the gospels that had the choice to give up their position to follow Him. Yet, they did not. The key word here is ‘Choice’. Each of us have choices in this life. Aren’t you glad? I sure am! What would have happened if God just made us robots? How boring would that be? And, what good is it if you force or program someone to love you? Doesn’t it mean more that they love you because they WANT to love you by CHOICE, not because they HAVE to? So, Paul says that he considers everything that he tried to accomplish, he now considers ‘**rubbish**’ - that’s my favorite translation of this verse (English Standard Version - ESV). J.B. Phillips has a New Testament commentary (New Testament in Modern English). He says in his version “*How changed are my ambitions! Now I long to know Christ and the power shown by his resurrection*”. Doesn’t that just make sense? Instead of boasting in our own power, Paul boasts in Christ - as should we. But in order to boast in Him, we need to know Him.

Here’s a fun exercise. This week, write down what you would say to someone who asks you what you believe. Even if this is new to you about a self-denial, but rather Christ-centered life, what would you tell people that you believe and how would you explain to them what it means to be saved?

**STOP RIGHT HERE. DO NOT MOVE FORWARD UNTIL YOU HAVE DONE THIS EXERCISE.**

See if your explanation lines up or closely identifies with these truths from the Bible:

1. God created man and woman and He wanted to have fellowship with them
2. The first man and woman (Adam and Eve) sinned thereby ruining fellowship with God
3. God appeared to Abraham - an Israelite - and he became the father of many nations
4. God appeared to Moses and gave Moses the 10 Commandments to share with the Israelites.
5. The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, but God promised Abraham that He would bless Abraham’s nations
6. Abraham’s genealogy continued through King David, all the way to Joseph’s
7. For unto Mary, a King will be born, and His name shall be called Immanuel - God with us (Jesus) - and Messiah (Christ)
8. Jesus was born by way of a virgin - Mary - to show that his seed was not of man, but of Spirit.
9. Jesus is fully God, but He was also fully man while He was on this earth

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10. Jesus descended from heaven to earth to be our Savior - and pay for the sins that man cannot on their own
  11. In the Old Testament, the Israelites would provide a sacrifice to God on a regular basis to ask for forgiveness and be reconciled with God.
  12. This sacrifice was a continual sacrifice and required specific instructions - which only a priest could perform on behalf of all of the people.
  13. Jesus appeared to show men and women how to live
  14. He was imprisoned and given a criminal's death by crucifixion because of His radical teaching - which displeased the Pharisees
  15. However, He didn't just die, but He rose from the grave 3 days later and ascended back into heaven shortly afterward.
  16. Jesus spent time with and taught disciples while He was here on earth
  17. A couple of His disciples wrote books in which we have in our Bible today - called the Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John)
  18. The Old Testament in the Bible foreshadows Jesus; The New Testament in the Bible Reveals Jesus
  19. Jesus died for ALL our sins ONCE AND FOR ALL, so unlike the sacrifice in the Old Testament, there is no need for a continual sacrifice. Jesus even said 'It is Finished!'
  20. God's chosen people (Israel) rejected this Gospel, and thereby God offers it to the Gentiles (you and me).
  21. Jesus has commanded everyone to Repent and be saved because the time is coming soon when He will return again and Judge the world. Those who have accepted Him will reign with Him, but those who reject Him will be thrown into the lake of eternal fire
  22. Jesus also commanded everyone to make disciples of ALL nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
  23. All we have to do is trust in the Lord Jesus with all our heart, and confess with our mouth that Jesus is in fact Lord
  24. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Holy Spirit has to say
  25. Once revealed, answer the call from God, and live for Him

It's important to start from the beginning so that you can get the proper flow of what has transpired up until now; An end-to-end approach if you will. Now this is just an idea of what it looks like. There are still a few major characters and concepts unmentioned.

So how did you do? Is the information above similar to what you had? Would you say you believe what was displayed above? Talk with your discipler about these and have a discussion to ensure this is what you believe. Do not beat yourself up if your statement or list is not as in-depth. This is a process, but one which is extremely important so that you can be ready to answer and rely upon what you know at any given time. There are 2 places in the Bible that address this:

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1. “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119:11; NIV)
  2. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15; NIV)

The Gospel in our Bible gives us a clear answer on what it means to be saved. In the To-Do section below, you'll find that you will need to ask your discipler to go over the Bridge Illustration with you. There are a couple verses included so that it will help you follow along. The high level is that man cannot 'do' anything on his own, apart from Christ, to get to God. We need to have an intermediary that can bridge the gap between man and God. The goal is for you to hear the illustration and gain a better understanding and a better way to communicate this with others. Take notes while you go through it. Ultimately, you want to take notes every week you meet with your discipler. This is such a great way to see growth. And then, when looking back, you can relay to your discipler ways that he helped you grow that you otherwise would not have. This is the goal of discipleship. You are in it! Well done, good and faithful servant!

### To-Do Items:

1. Complete the What Do You Believe Exercise
2. Ask your Discipler to share the Bridge Illustration with you
  - a. Hebrews 9:27, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16, Matthew 28:19-20)
3. Memorize John 3:16 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
4. Daily Reading - Keep reading God's Word daily and ask your discipler if you would like suggestions on what to read if you prefer. Another good way to do this is to listen to the Bible while you drive. Or, listen to your pastor or A pastor's podcast. Intake of the Word of God is so vital!
5. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a MUST in order to grow in Christ Jesus.

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## Chapter 8

### What is Your Purpose?

We have successfully shared the Gospel last week. How do you feel about what you have read, the bridge illustration, and any other realizations you had? In its simplest form, the Gospel is this:

God created man (men and women) in His own image. However, man chose to sin and disobey God. As a result, all have sinned and fall short of God's standard - holiness and righteousness. The consequence or wage of sin is death, **but God** (the greatest 2 syllables in all the Bible - per John Stott) provided an alternative. God knew that men would rebel and choose sin. Therefore, because of God's GREAT love for us, He gave us His only begotten Son (The actual Son of God - Jesus Christ) that whoever believes in Him, will be saved from death eternally. This Son was a sacrifice for our sins. He willingly died to take our place, so that we could have fellowship with God forever. But that's not the end. Death could not hold Him. Jesus was raised on the 3rd day to conquer death and sin once for all! He is now in heaven, seated beside God the Father and He sent His Holy Spirit (the 3rd person of the Triune God) to live in the hearts of men and women who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. This Spirit is our connection to God our Father. Once all nations have received this "Good News" of the Gospel, Jesus will return to earth and take those with Him who believe and are saved into heaven, where they will reign with Him forever.

The band MercyMe has a song with the lyrics "It's not good news, it's the best news ever!" So what now? What does this mean to me, and what should I do? Well that's the question! And one that's the most important question in your life that you will ever need to answer. This also goes back to the 3 "M's" (Master, **Mission**, Mate). If you have recently dedicated your life to Christ - meaning, you repented of what/who you were living for, and have thanked Him for His forgiveness, and now live for Him - or if you dedicated your life to Him early on, the Apostle Paul gives us this instruction: "*each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them.*" (1 Corinthians 7:17; NIV). In other words, unlike the world, this isn't a start over. You are not required to undo everything you have done up to this point. Instead, your purpose is to go public. Paul gives us additional instruction here: "*Only let us live up to what we have already attained.*" (Philippians 3:16; NIV). Now that you have asked God into your heart, and/or the Holy Spirit has revealed to you how then you should live, confidently believe and trust in Him to supply your needs. Paul tells Timothy "*I know whom I have*

believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day [when Jesus returns again].” (2 Timothy 1:12; NIV). Jesus tells us so much in the Bible. A couple of verses are specific to our next steps:

1. *“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:4-5; NIV)
2. *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20; NIV)

These are extremely important first steps! When a child is born, how important is it to stay with the mother? All of the nutrients needed to sustain life are there with the mother. Jesus used gardening as an example here. For branches to grow healthy, it MUST stay with the vine. There’s a famous quote by Neil Barringham that goes like this “The grass is greener where you water it”. This guy hit it right on the head! Where/What are you watering the most? Or put it this way, what are you making an idol in your life today? An idol is what you spend more time with than God. Incidentally, this is the 1st of the Ten Commandments - “You shall have no other gods before me”. Remember Paul’s resume? Paul made it his mission to rid himself of everything that got in the way above God. We’ve broken the first commandment. So we truly cannot rely on our ‘keeping the ten commandments’ to getting us into heaven. This second verse above is what is called the Great Commission. When Jesus first called His disciples, he made the comment *“Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people.”* (Mark 1:17; NIV). Once you’ve been saved, stay close to Jesus (read/listen to His Word and pray to Him), and then go out and tell others about Him. Paul exclaims *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”*

So we know our purpose. Our purpose is to live for Him. *“And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again...Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; The old has gone, the new is here!”* (2 Corinthians 5:15, 17; NIV), Another verse that supports this understanding is also written by Paul *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* (Galatians 2:20; NIV). Remember that we were fearfully and wonderfully made by God - which makes us a child of God. Our purpose is to live for Him and to glorify Him by the way we live. *“You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”* (1 Corinthians 6:19b-20; NIV) and 1 John 4:19 says *“We love because he first loved us.”* God’s love

for us is attractive, because it is something given to us without expecting anything in return. This is called unconditional love. This is the only true way to love. When we put conditions on our love for others, it's pretty evident. But genuine love is a verb, meaning it costs you something to give it. It takes action on your part.

In every area in your life, your purpose is "to know God and make Him known". (accomplished missionary Loren Cunningham). When we share the Gospel with others, we are loving others, and glorifying God together in one action. You do not have to enter the mission field or become a pastor to glorify God. This is the greatest thing about being a part of the body of Christ (not apart from). Just like members of our body, all Christians called by the Holy Spirit are members of the body of Christ. We all have different talents and responsibilities. So be faithful where you are right now. Continue to remain in Him and ask Him to continue to bend your will to Him. He will reveal to you the direction you are to go - in His timing. But most importantly, remain close to Him - read your Word, memorize it, get plugged into your church and start to volunteer. You'd be surprised how much you know, and how much of an impact you can be on others. Now go and serve Christ for His glory, NOT for yours.

### To-Do Items:

1. What can you do to get plugged in at church?
2. Ask your discipler his thoughts on where he thinks you'd be a great fit.
3. Memorize Galatians 2:20 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
4. Daily Reading - Keep reading God's Word daily and ask your discipler if you would like suggestions on what to read if you prefer. Another good way to do this is to listen to the Bible while you drive. Or, listen to your pastor or A pastor's podcast. Intake of the Word of God is so vital!
5. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a MUST in order to grow in Christ Jesus.

## Chapter 9

### What Takes Up Most of Your Time?

Discipleship means following Jesus. It means continuously learning how to live for Him. Our mindset needs to be like John the Baptist as he is introducing the world to Jesus - more of Him, less of me: *“He must become greater; I must become less.”* (John 3:30; NIV). We read last week that anything we put in front of God becomes an idol. I don’t know anyone in this world that doesn’t have an issue with idols.

**Bad News:** We’ve broken the 1st Commandment

**Good News:** You’re not alone! And, God knows your heart. So what are you going to do about it? Let us live up to what we have already attained. So confess it, ask God to help you limit time spent with a particular item(s), and make a conscious effort to live for Him!

Let’s get back to considering ourselves. This time, answer these questions and take a tally throughout the day or week as to how many times and how long you find yourself engaged in each activity. Everyone has a mobile device these days. More than likely, you have a setting where you are notified of the time you are on it. Each week you should receive a notification of how much time you average on a daily basis on your device. From week to week, it even tells you if your usage increased or decreased from the previous week. We’ll apply the same logic to the following questions for this week:

1. Do you work overtime (greater than 40 hours a week)?
  - a. Is this required or preferred?

**NOTE:** This is not intended to make you feel guilty for your answers. So don’t go there!

2. How many hours do you watch TV in a day?
  - a. This includes Netflix, Amazon Prime, HULU, HBO Max, etc
  - b. Do you watch more TV any one day a week more than another?
  - c. How often are you watching sports?
3. How often are you on your mobile device?
  - a. How much time in a given day do you spend on Facebook/TikTok/Instagram?
  - b. How much time in a given day are you playing Candy Crush or other games?

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- c. How much of your day involves watching the News or videos either on your TV or mobile device?
  4. Do you play video games?
    - a. How often do you play video games in a given week?
  5. Do you play sports or exercise/workout?
    - a. How often are you working out each week?
    - b. How often are you practicing or playing sports in a given week?
  6. How often do you work in your yard (mowing, edging, trimming, etc) each week?
  7. Do you have a hobby like working on cars, or working on something in your garage?
    - a. If so, how often are you out there working in a given day/week?
  8. How often are you at your kid(s)' sports practice and their games/events?

So that wasn't too bad, right? What did these questions reveal about how much time you spend with a particular activity? You might even be surprised that you don't spend as much time as you initially thought. Regardless, this exercise is intended to show you a comparison between how much time you spend in a week for certain activities vs. how much time you spend building your relationship with God. Now please pay special attention to this point: **You grow closer to God if the Spirit allows you to grow closer to Him.** In other words, He is the one that calls you to Him initially. YOU on your own (apart from God) did not "find God". HE found you. Jesus says *"Here I AM! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."* (Revelation 3:20; NIV). And in another verse Jesus asks his disciples *"Who do you say I am?"* (Matthew 16:15; NIV). In the following verses, we see Peter give an answer and Jesus responding: *"Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.'"* (Matthew 16:16-17). On his own, Peter wasn't completely sure how to answer the question from Jesus. But when Peter gave his answer, he was extremely confident because he knew it in his heart and in his mind because the Lord revealed it to him. Now this is a hard concept to grasp. We must remember the difference between giving our resume as to why we belong in heaven - as if we could earn our way - and the understanding that it's because of Him that we have faith and eternal life. *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."* (Ephesians 2:8-9; NIV). There are some people who believe that you can lose your salvation. But think about it this way, if you didn't do anything to earn your salvation, how can you lose it? This again is the best news ever!

The Lord uses multiple avenues to grab our attention and speak to us separately and individually. Remember that Him revealing to you His Word is not something you did, but the glory belongs to God alone. This should keep you in a humble state. Meaning, any thoughts of pride for being a Christian has no place. There's no such thing as a prideful Christian. This is what

we call an *oxymoron* - 2 contradictory terms used to describe something (pretty ugly, bittersweet, same difference, etc). “*God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.*” (James 4:6b; NIV). So as good as your intentions are to reduce the amount of time spent in activities that are unnecessary or dishonoring to God, it means nothing if it’s not coming from your heart. In other words, if you’re just reducing the amount of time spent in these activities to check something off your list to sort of gain favor from the Lord, that’s the wrong approach. Instead, wait upon the Lord to reveal to you ways that you can change your time patterns to spend more time with Him. King David asks the Lord “*Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*” (Psalm 139:23-24; NIV). Wow! This comment can only come from God. This Bible that we have been going through is unlike any other book ever written. It is completely opposite of what the world teaches us - survival of the fittest mentality. Lewis Chafer said “The Bible is not such a book a man would write if he could, or could write if he would.” The material found throughout this great Book is a revelation directly from God (inspired by God; God-breathed). Study it! Get to know it! Let it take hold of your mind, heart, and soul. Once you do, you will see a HUGE impact on your attitude, actions, and relationships.

## To-Do Items:

1. What activity do you find yourself in the most - taking up most of your time?
2. Ask God to remind you to limit this activity this week
3. Ask your discipler to pray for you as you work out this goal
4. Memorize John 3:30 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
5. Read Luke 18:9-14. Pay close attention to verse 13 and be honest with yourself as to how you approach Jesus in prayer. Remember, no such thing as a prideful Christian - you put the moron in oxymoron...
6. Daily Reading
7. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a MUST in order to grow in Christ Jesus.
  - a. Share any ANSWERED PRAYERS with your discipler

## Chapter 10

### Who is God?

Aren't you glad we waited until later on to start answering questions about God? Our prayer has been that this program would help you grow closer to God. It's only fitting that we wait until you have several weeks under your belt before we ask you this question. Hopefully you'll be able to see a difference between where you were just 2½ short months ago to today in your relationship with Him and even in your thought life. This isn't a race, and it's not a comparison with others. The relationship you have with our Father is specific to you and Him. Don't feel like you are any less significant or less 'christian' than others, or where you want to be. And most importantly, on the other end of the spectrum, do not feel like you are better than others because you know more now than you did. This self-righteous thinking is exactly what the Pharisees had - and we saw what Jesus did to them - LOL!

So for this chapter, please understand that there are numerous books just on this topic alone. It cannot be condensed into a single chapter. Incidentally, if you want a really good book on who it is you are worshiping, check out *Knowing God*, by J.I. Packer. Unfortunately I won't get any royalties from this recommendation...

Here come more questions. Hint, Some of them don't have a finite answer, so answer as best as you can:

1. Who is God **to you**?
2. Why do/should we capitalize the 'G'?
3. What separates God from other 'gods' (lowercase 'g')?
4. Is God masculine or feminine?
5. What is this Triune (more commonly known **Trinity**) God thing?
6. Does God hear me when I pray?
7. Where does God live now?
8. What does God do all day?
9. Why is God jealous?
10. Is God omnipresent, omniscient, AND omnipotent?
  - a. What's the difference?
11. Can God look at me, a sinner?
12. Why doesn't God just do away with this fallen world?

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13. Why does God allow Satan (Lucifer) to have free reign?
  14. Can God speak to me today?
  15. Can I hear God?
  16. Does God care about me?
  17. Does God look like a person?
  18. Is God judging me now?
  19. Does God want me to be happy?
  20. Why does a good God allow bad or evil to happen?

**STOP RIGHT HERE. DO NOT MOVE FORWARD UNTIL YOU HAVE DONE THIS EXERCISE.**

Not all these questions have a right or wrong answer. That's what's so great about God. God cannot be bound in a box. We try to make sense of things by having a common bond with a particular thing. Take having a pet for example. We know our pet will require food, water, room to move, and a place to sleep. They can't verbally communicate with us in English (or whatever language you speak). They show us when they're ready to play, or if they're hungry, etc. Then, if they're lethargic or coughing up, we take them to the vet to diagnose and make sense of what's going on - IF the vet even knows. Now I'm not comparing God to a pet by any means. But with God, we don't even know what He looks like, or some of the typical ways we look to 'know' someone or something (visual or verbal), but we feel obligated to love him because of what He has done and continues to do for us ("*We love because he first loved us*" - 1 John 4:19; NIV).

*"No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known."* (John 1:18; NIV)

One of the disciples that walked with Jesus tells us that Jesus is God. This is not normal! How can this be? And in the Old Testament, we read: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'*" (Isaiah 55:8-9; NIV). We can only make sense of this by trusting what the Bible says. Nobody truly understands how this is possible. We try to make sense of it on our own - as we should. But, this leaves us with awe and amazement so that we can constantly be learning new things about God - which He reveals to us. That's His will for us - to know Him! When we find out new things about Him, we tend to get excited and focus on what we just realized. That newness eventually wears off, right? Or when someone tells you something you already know about God, we easily find ourselves dismissing it because we already know it. Instead, we should be taking a step back and focusing on what we could be learning from it - or even just meditating on it. Don't be in such a hurry to get through Bible reading or prayer, or worship. Enjoy it! The Bible tells us to *"Be still, and know that I am*

God" (Psalm 46:10; NIV). Slow down. Take Him in. Observe what He has to show you. Ask Him to reveal to you what He wants to reveal to you, and that you would be patient enough to see it.

At some point in your life, you've probably heard that God is Omnipotent (all-powerful), Omniscient (all-knowing), and Omnipresent (all places - everywhere). According to Genesis 1, God made the heavens and the earth. I'd say that's pretty powerful. But not only that, we see in the Bible how powerful God really is in the Old Testament by how He is able to have His will accomplished by shaming the powerful on earth. He uses the weak to shame the strong, the poor to shame the wealthy, and on and on. Paul understands God's power in his letter to the Romans: *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the **power** of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."* Also Job from the Old Testament writes of God's power: *"His wisdom is profound, his **power** is vast. Who has resisted him and come out unscathed?"* (Job 9:4; NIV). Anyone who calls themselves "I AM" is usually someone pretty powerful; might want to watch out for that guy! There's too many stories in the Bible that tell of His power, and even the book of Psalms has numerous verses proclaiming His power.

Is God all-knowing? Does He have complete understanding and unlimited knowledge? It seems pretty clear that He does. One of the psalmists writes *"**The Lord knows** all human plans; he knows that they are futile."* (Psalm 94:11; NIV). Wow! ALL human plans. That's pretty remarkable isn't it? Every plan that you have made in your life - even those spontaneous crazy ideas - God's already seen it. He knows what's going to happen before you do. One of Jesus' disciples says *"If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and **he knows** everything."* (1 John 3:20; NIV). It doesn't get more clear than this. God knows everything. And this was written by one of the closest men to Jesus. Back in the Old Testament, one of the prophets tells us what God said: *"For **I know** the plans I have for you', declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" (Jeremiah 29:11; NIV). Another word typically used in 'Bible talk' is the word 'sovereign'. According to [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com), **Sovereignty** is defined as the "ultimate overseer, or authority, in the decision-making process...originally understood to mean the equivalent of supreme power." When we say 'God is sovereign', it is usually a statement of convincing. Meaning, if something were to happen unexpectedly, the only explanation would be that there is no explanation, hence it's gotta be God. Negatively, it's something that is said without emotion, and without sincerity - like when someone is trying to cope after a loss of a loved one, or you get let go at your job, etc. It seems to be the only thing people can think about as a way to somehow get the one grieving out of their funk. Not a good idea. Those who truly know God, however, use this phrase as a way of thanking Him for what He has done. It could be a way to explain HOW God knows everything. It's like a reminder for those NOT to put God in a box, thereby limiting Him and His abilities to an understanding that they can grasp. And then if He knows everything, then it also means that nothing is hidden from Him. Here are a couple of verses that prove this as well: *"For God will**

bring every deed into judgment, including every **hidden** thing, whether it is good or evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:14; NIV) and “He reveals deep and **hidden** things; he **knows** what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.” (Daniel 2:22; NIV). And from the New Testament: “There is **nothing concealed** that will not be disclosed, **or hidden** that will not be made known.” (Luke 12:2; NIV). Our God truly is an awesome God!

Omnipresent. This one also is tough to grasp. Take pantheism for example, if the term omnipresent is misunderstood, it would be easy to be a pantheist - everything **is** God (meaning the actual universe and everything in it is God). However, the true way to take this term is to compare it with what the Bible says - as we should always do. If we hold to the Triune God (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), His attributes allow Him to be everywhere at once - as a human (Son), and as Spirit. *Note:* We will go over the Trinity in a later chapter. According to the website <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-omnipresent.html>, “No molecule or atomic particle is so small that God is not fully present to it, and no galaxy so vast that God does not circumscribe it.” I believe God has the ability to be everywhere in a way that we cannot fathom. Take time to read Isaiah 40 this week. This chapter is notorious for God’s knowledge, power, and presence. He is beyond understanding. Isaiah starts out by challenging the reader with some deep questions: “*Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? Who can fathom the Spirit of the Lord, or instruct the Lord as his counselor...With whom, then, will you compare God? To what image will you liken him?*” (Isaiah 40:12, 13, 18; NIV). In order for us to know God and who He is, we must be willing to be still and dwell on Him. When we read the book of Psalms, we see a piece of King David’s heart - he’s known as “*a man after His [God’s] own heart*” (1 Samuel 13:14; NIV). God is and will always be worthy of our praise.

Most importantly, if you were to summarize who God is in a single statement, it has to include the phrase “*God is love*” (1 John 4:8b; NIV). He is the creator of love, and the Giver of love. All these other attributes of God are great, and yes He’s powerful and all, but if you don’t see God’s love, then there’s no reason to seek Him. Seek the God who loves you!

## To-Do Items:

1. Answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and go over them with your discipler when you meet next
2. **Memorize 1 John 4:8** (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
3. **Read Isaiah 40** - Stay in the Word - reading daily. Be Encouraged!
4. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a **MUST** in order to grow in Christ Jesus!

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## Chapter 11

### How Should You Respond?

Let's review the questions that we've been able to answer thus far: *Who am I? Where did I come from? What do I want to do for a living? Who are my closest friends? How did you get here? What do you believe/Who do you believe/Why? What is your purpose? What/Who takes up most of your time?* We have not only reviewed, but we've discussed these thought-provoking questions over the last couple of months with someone who has been more like a brother to you. Hopefully this exercise has helped you to know yourself more and know God more. After all, life wasn't meant to just be stagnant. Luke tells us of Jesus: *"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."* (Luke 2:52; NIV). In addition, Solomon (the wisest man who ever lived) wrote *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* (Proverbs 27:17; NIV). The only way to grow in your faith is to be completely honest with yourself and with your discipler. Jesus saw right through His disciples. Knowing then that Jesus knew them, they were able to have a strong relationship with Him - and they trusted Him. Discipleship only works when there is complete trust. Woe to the man who is going through the motions of this study as yet another 'program' to check off his list. This is not that program. It is intended to show you how to live - *"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise"* (Ephesians 5:15; NIV). Getting back to the beginning of this study, being a disciple is learning how to be a Christian. There is only ONE way to become a Christian. And, there's only ONE Person who can reveal this to you.

We must have a firm foundation. And this foundation must be able to withstand ANYTHING that could possibly try to break and undo it. Focus your attention again (from week 3) on the Parable of the Sower found in the Gospel of Mark - which records Jesus' words:

*"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times'...'The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes*

because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.” (Mark 4:3-8, 14-20; NIV).

We’ve discussed the Holy Spirit’s job in revealing to us the need to come to Jesus. We saw in Revelation Jesus is at the door knocking. Our response is to answer and open the door. As Jesus spoke above, it must be the Father who initiates the relationship (“*The Farmer sows the Word*”). Do you have good soil? Are you interested in what the Father has to say to you? Are you willing to give up your earthly interests to pursue Christ? Paul tells us regarding the ONE way to be saved: “*If you declare 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; NIV). That’s it! It doesn’t matter if you’re a brand new Christian, or if you’ve been a Christian since you were old enough to speak. It is the pharisaic mindset to ‘add to’ this sanctification. You cannot ‘DO’ anything to earn your salvation. And therefore, since you cannot earn your salvation, you’re not going to be able to lose your salvation. Do you believe this? Do you trust that God has a plan for your life? Is He sovereign enough to know you and know which direction you would choose?

So this is how we respond. Once you accept Jesus into your heart, “*your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*” (Colossians 3:3; NIV). Even the thief who was rightfully crucified on a cross next to Jesus made the claim to his Savior: “*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*” Jesus answered him, “*Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.*” (Luke 23:42-43; NIV). This thief confessed with his mouth ‘Jesus is Lord’, and believed in his heart God would raise Jesus from the dead. Jesus, knowing this thief’s heart, told him “**TODAY**” - in other words, IMMEDIATELY - he will be with Him in paradise. How amazing is this! Rightfully the Psalmist tells us: “*Today, if only you would hear his voice, ‘Do not harden your hearts’*” (Psalm 95:7-8a; NIV). We all have a choice. We can accept the Spirit’s tug at our heart, or we can deny it - for any reason. There will be a change in your life upon the understanding of what Christ has done for you, and your friends/family. This change can only come from the tug of the Holy Spirit. You will know it because you will see a heart that is set on living for Christ. His Word says: “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*” (2 Corinthians 5:17; NIV) and “*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*” (Galatians 2:20; NIV). Who are you living for? You will be able to distinguish between what it means to live for Christ vs. what it means to live for yourself. This becomes very evident in your relationships with others. We know that God is love. How are you at loving others? Jesus says, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:



*‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’*” (Matthew 22:37-39; NIV). This goes back to our section on relationships (Jesus Others You - JOY). If God shows us love and mercy, it’s our responsibility to pay it forward - we ought to show love and mercy to others. Our response is to be an example for Him - to glorify God. Paul puts it like this: *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”* (Colossians 3:23; NIV). This verse is applied to pretty much everything in your life. The key word here is ‘whatever’. This means that whether you are at work or simply relaxing, do it all for the glory of God. He is worthy of our praise!

### To-Do Items:

1. Discuss with your discipler what you learned this week
2. Share with your discipler your response to knowing Him. What does this look like to you?
3. Memorize Romans 10:9 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
4. Stay in the Word - reading daily. Be Encouraged!
5. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a **MUST** in order to grow in Christ Jesus!

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## Chapter 12

### What's Next?

You've come to the end of the 1st part of this program. Great job! This is not an easy feat. You will have memorized 11 verses in 12 weeks - and retained all 11 verses. You have been taught - or reminded of - the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Most importantly, you have been shown how to apply the Gospel of Jesus Christ in your life right now. Looking back on where you've come from, who you are, and what you knew from when you started, has it been beneficial to you? This must be the first step to discipleship. So many times, we take in bits of pieces of the Gospel, the Bible, and/or supposed Christian-living tips, and try to make sense of it all. But when you understand who you are, and realize even you are a sinner - saved by grace, thank ya Jesus - the Gospel becomes the most precious thing in the world. This is the simplicity of the Gospel. In its simplest form, you were one way, now you are different because of what Christ has done for you. If this is not your story, then there's more to learn. But if this IS your story, you have the strongest foundation possible. We have to realize our place in Christ. We cannot rely on our strength to save us - remember Paul's resume was considered rubbish compared to knowing Christ Jesus. What's the Gospel? **God made man, man sinned, God sent His only Son to save us by dying for us, and rising again. He conquered sin and death, so that we - the ones who confess with their mouths JESUS is Lord and believe in their hearts that God raised Him from the dead - will have fellowship with God, and this fellowship will never end. Amen!**

This information is meant to be spread abroad. This is the Gospel. Paul instructs us in his letter to the Colossians: *"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."* (Colossians 3:16; NIV). The knowledge that you have now is of utmost importance. It's not intended to be hidden. We are instructed to go out and share the Gospel with others. Jesus addresses this in a parable known as The Parable of the Bags of Gold (Talents):

*"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability...The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts*

with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.' His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' Then, the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" (Matthew 25:14-30; NIV).

Sheesh!! Sounds pretty rough, right? You have to remember that this is serious stuff. This literally is life or death. "Small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matthew 7:14; NIV). After the parable that we just read above in Matthew 25, Jesus goes on to say "he will separate the people one from another" (Matthew 25:32). Also, Jesus says "I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." (Matthew 10:34b; NIV). Jesus is love. Jesus is merciful, gracious, and forgiving. But He is also just. One of the prophets wrote this passage: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8; NIV). The Christian life can ONLY be lived out when we are walking with God - being revealed by the Spirit how to live, responding in submission to Him accordingly, and applying His Word in your life.

In the next section (the following 12 weeks), we will dive even deeper into the Holy Bible inspired by God. We will work on topics such as: The Fall of man, Struggle with sin, Old Testament examples, Saved by Grace through Faith, Baptism, The Lord's Prayer, The Lord's Supper, Love, The Fruits of the Spirit, Serving when I don't feel like it, etc. We will progressively get into deeper subjects like inductive Bible study, Bible expositing, and Teaching. But for now, read these verses below and look to understand what it's telling you:

"Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil." (Hebrews 5:13-14; NIV).



Are you constantly training yourself to distinguish good from evil - as the Scripture says above? Meaning, are you finding yourself just reading and praying to check it off your list? Or, are you asking the Lord to direct your path? Are you waiting patiently on the Lord? Ask Him to *“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psalm 139:23-24). Your relationship with the Lord is unique. Cultivate it and watch God move in ways you’ve never seen before. Anyone who thinks himself wise in the world should be careful that they don’t fall. Remember, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. The purpose is to glorify Him in everything you do. Stay close and remain in Him. Let Him direct your path. Come to Him humble, and leave broken - there is no such thing as a prideful Christian. Keep yourself from self-righteousness. Our pride is in Christ alone!

### To-Do Items:

1. Discuss with your discipler what you learned this week
2. Memorize Proverbs 3:5-6 (Recite all verses to get sign-off from your discipler)
6. Stay in the Word - reading daily. Be Encouraged!
7. **PRAY DAILY!** This is a spiritual discipline, and a MUST in order to grow in Christ Jesus!