
02 Genuine Discipleship: Introduction, Part 2

Recap

In our first session we laid a foundation for discipleship and growth to maturity, which requires transformation. We talked about seeking God and knowing God. We talked about Moses, Enoch, and David as examples of believers who truly sought and walked with God.

More About Seeking God

Paul is also someone who wanted to know God and be in relationship with Him. Despite his massive responsibility of teaching the Gentiles the Word here is his heart:

Phillipians 3:7-8

[7](#) But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. [8](#) Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

We can have this same attitude where we simply want to be in relationship with God and with his son, Jesus Christ. We could read about Peter as well and his heart for God.

Colossians 1:28-29

[28](#) Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29](#) For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Paul worked like crazy in order to bring others to maturity. It is the Word that will bring us to maturity. Some people may ask, "Why does God make it so hard?" God did not make it hard. He made it possible and available for us to change. Adam made it hard!

Hear is the attitude we need to have in order to change and grow:

Psalms 42:1,2

[1](#) As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. [2](#) My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

Everyone Has the Need to Change

Concerning this need everyone has to change, there are many lists in the New Testament of various sins that are common to man. It is interesting that there are these lists of sins but there is no instruction manual for how to address each one.

2 Corinthians 12:20

[20](#) For I fear that perhaps when I come, I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish

In other words, they may still be sinning despite his reproofing letters... *and*... he may need to lay more reproof upon them.

— that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.

Those are all sinful things. However, you can't find a chapter dealing with anger and find out how to change that. Or on any other of the behaviors listed here. The change takes place by being transformed by the renewing of our mind and simply putting on the Word and reckoning the old nature dead and ourselves alive in Christ.

Everyone has some issue, or many issues to deal with. For someone it might be quarreling, another it might be jealousy, or gossiping etc. The scriptures can address it by putting on the new man without going into specific detail about our specific challenges.

Self-help and counseling will target those things with a certain degree of success. But what is the first word in "self-help"? SELF! We don't need self-help. We need God-help and Christ-help and new-man help in order to change.

Proverbs and the "Heart-set" Required

Proverbs is written with the orientation of a father to a son. It is instruction on how to live and on wisdom. It expresses the kind of heart we should have as we approach the Word, change, and growth to maturity. You will notice the word "understanding" throughout this section and recall the work we did in a previous seminar on Understanding the Times, Understanding God, and Understanding Ourselves.

Pay attention also to the word "if". Watch how many conditions God is setting up here.

Proverbs 2:1-11

1 My son, **if** you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you,

First, we have to put ourselves in the position to receive the Word, and we know what it means to treasure something, value it, esteem it, keep it, take excellent care of it.

2 making your ear attentive to wisdom.

Instead of being attentive to the news and politics and gossip or what people are doing.

and inclining your heart to understanding;

We don't just want to know something. It's, "God, I want to understand you, I want to understand life, who I am, how I got here, where I am going!"

3 yes, **if** you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,

That is serious! Calling out for insight, raising your voice for understanding!

4 **if** you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,

Finally, a "then"!

5 **then** you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

How exciting of a promise is that?! God promises **IF** we do receive the Word, treasure it, make our ear attentive, incline our heart for understanding, call out for insight and understanding,

seek it like silver or a hidden treasure...**THEN** we will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

[6](#) For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; [7](#) he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;

Notice it does not say He stores up sound wisdom for everybody! Why is God being so exclusionary? This is similar to what we covered in John 14 where Christ laid out with whom God and Jesus would come and make their home. It is with those who seek. **God will help you, lead you, teach you if you seek.**

He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, [8](#) guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. [9](#) Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; [10](#) for wisdom will come into your heart,

Isn't that great? Wisdom will come into your heart. We are not born with the wisdom of God. We don't just have it naturally.

and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; [11](#) discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you,

These are promises of God that we can prove if we will fulfill the conditions he has laid out. We will be looking at how we can really prove God. [Romans 12:1-3](#) says we can prove that good and perfect and acceptable will of God. God asks us to prove Him. Learn the Word, apply it and come boldly before the throne of grace it says in Hebrews.

The Purpose of The Parables Jesus Spoke

Many People do not understand why Christ spoke in parables. They think he was using them to make something clear.

Mark 4:10

[10](#) And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. [11](#) And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, [12](#) so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven."

Isn't that mean? Why is Christ being so mean? He is not being mean. He is expressing that in order to really know and understand, you need to seek me! He would explain the parables to those who stuck around and really wanted to know what his teaching had meant. Humble people who were not afraid or ashamed to ask for understanding are the ones who got it.

Who were those people? Not just the twelve but others as it says those around him with the twelve.

Proverbs 25:2

[2](#) It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

There is so much truth hidden in the Word. Because Adam and Eve rejected God and lost fellowship with Him, now man needs to seek God to learn. God wants to be sought after in terms of a relationship.

The Pursuit

Paul writing to Timothy after stating that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil says:

1 Timothy 6:11

[11](#) But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. "Evil associations corrupt good behavior."

Pursue these things! We actually have to pursue them. They are not just going to happen in our lives. The New Testament will teach us what righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness are and we can learn to pursue them.

The word "pursue" in the Greek is [diókó](#). It occurs 45 times in the New Testament.

30 of those times it is translated persecute. What is the connection between persecute and pursue? Did Paul know about persecution? He persecuted believers. What did they do? They chased them and pursued them until they "got them." It is the same word here and translated as pursue. We are to pursue these qualities...chase them until we get them!

[Anecdotal example of a college man pursuing a gal who works at a certain café. He doesn't go home and just wait for her to call him! He shows up when he knows she is working and devises a plan to ask her out.]

We must actively pursue these qualities. They are not going to land in us naturally. We have the DNA from Adam. However, now that we are born-again, we can walk according to the Christ in us and actually pursue these things.

[Anecdotal example of someone who loves football. He plays football, practices, works out with weights to get stronger for football, watches football, thinks & dreams about football, hangs out with football players, reads about it, watches it on TV...why? Because he loves football with his whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.]

God says we are to love Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. What would that look like? Specific sections of the Word direct us to think about God, meditate on Him, on his Word, walk worthy and act according to the Word. He directs us to invest our time and money in me and redeem the time. Read the Word, follow preachers teaching the Word, listen to the Word and hang out with other believers.

Of course, we don't separate ourselves entirely from the world. We want to share with them and influence them. But if we hang out with unbelievers it is going to have an impact on us.

"Evil associations corrupt good behavior." I Corinthians 15:33

Parents disallow their teens from hanging out with the wrong crowd.

Timothy was a terrific believer, but he had a tendency toward timidity. Paul is encouraging him to be more forceful.

2 Timothy 2:22

[v.14 I charge thee before God..."] [22](#) So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, **along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.**

Be with others who are doing this. We can help and encourage one another. We all have issues we deal with.

Hebrews 10:25 says encourage one another even more as you see the day approaching.

In my opinion it seems the end-times are approaching. I recently went back and looked at Genesis 6 and 9 and the flood and Babel. If you study the Nephilim, you see parallels to things happening today. The devil interfered with humanity as it is and co-habitated with humans to produce giants. God did not allow that. The spirits that caused that are imprisoned because they broke the rules. [see 2 Peter and other places.]

What is happening today with science? Transhumanism. Artificial Intelligence. Science is moving towards making people no longer people. Technocracy is on the rise. I don't believe God is going to allow that! We are getting closer to that. You can even have a "designer baby" with blue eyes, blonde hair, a certain IQ. God did not allow it back in Genesis 6. I don't believe He is going to allow it today.

What about the tower of Babel. What was that about? That was about globalism, and one world and man worshipping man. Man making it happen on his own. The Globalists meet in Davos Switzerland [The World Economic Forum] each year and each year the attendance is higher and higher.

We know from the Book of Revelation that globalism is going to happen, but God puts an end to it at the end of Revelation.

This is purely my opinion, but I believe the time is short. This should motivate us to say "God, I am going to do exactly what You say to do with the time I have left." In order to be holy, righteous, godly, to please God, honor and praise Him. We all have a certain number of days. Each of us is going to die one day. God gives us the opportunity with each day that we have to honor, praise, and glorify Him.

Ephesians says, "redeem the time because the days are evil". As a younger believer I had trouble seeing evil. Now we get it. Every day there are evil people seeking to obstruct, persecute Christians, lead us the wrong way. The days truly are evil.

To "redeem the time" means to "buy back" the time from the world, the flesh, and the devil and to use that time for God, for good, for glory and to please Him. God remembers all that and we will be rewarded for it.

Why did Paul go through all the persecution that he did? He knew there were going to be rewards. God showed him the future. 2 Corinthians 12:2. John saw the future and wrote Revelation. Isaiah saw the future, the new heaven, and the new earth. When we know the future, it motivates us to make the most of the present.

To Summarize

Psalm 34:8

[8](#) Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!

Psalm 81:10

[10](#) Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

Jeremiah 15:16

16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart.

Ezekiel 2:8–10

8 “But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.” **9** And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. **10** And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel 3:1–3

1 And he said to me, “Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” **2** So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. **3** And he said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it.” Then I ate it, **and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.**

Eat it! Digest it! Assimilate it and then go speak. Even though it says that the words were of lamentation and mourning and woe, once they are digested to the point of understanding and knowing what the future holds, they can be as sweet as honey to our taste.