



transform transform
discipleship mentoring discipleship mentoring

Obeying Christ - Making Disciples

“Go therefore and make disciples...”

Matthew 28:19



LEVEL TWO

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ENGAGING

Transformed Character



Modeling Christian Character

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**A Discipleship Ministry Resource Provided by
Faith Assembly of God**

254 Spackenkill Rd., Poughkeepsie NY
(845) 462-5955

INTRODUCTION

The greatest task that the church faces today is not only to reconcile people to a relationship with God but to disciple them in knowing how to live out that relationship. Derek Prince once said "a Christian is not a Christian if he is not a disciple." Over the years, it has appeared to me that the church is good at bringing people to the saving knowledge of Jesus, but little has been done in the area of discipleship, teaching them how to follow Him. It would be like going on a fishing trip, catching a few fish but not cleaning them when you returned from the lake. The great commission is clear we must GO and MAKE disciples.

These next sections of studies are about the making of disciples. Your part as a disciple maker is critical and essential in your mentees life. The journey that lies ahead is about the transformation of your mentees character, the inside of them, and their heart. To accomplish this challenging task I would like to introduce to you a new term..."**With-nessing.**" You're going to disciple your mentee by being with them. **Let's call it with-nessing!** After all isn't that the way Jesus did it? Mark 3:14 says "He appointed twelve-designated them apostles-that they might **be with him** and that he might send them out to preach and have authority..."

Being in a mentor/mentee relationship is following Jesus' pattern and is the path to making disciples. This is how Jesus did it! I believe the kingdom of God struggles because of the lack of young believers having a seasoned mentor/man/woman of God in their life.

Over the next 6 weeks or more we are going to look at the book of Luke and examine the life of Jesus and His disciples. How they interacted together. You will notice as we study that Christ's objective was **character transformation**. His focus was on what they should be and not only what they should do. For example, Jesus taught us that we should pray, but his goal for us was to learn dependency on God. Although a lot of us know we should pray, we seldom live dependently on God. Let's change that.

Luke will layout for us a path that includes examples of the Christian character, and maturity and the stewardship of the Christian lifestyle. My prayer is that all of us will open our hearts to the master discipler, Jesus as He shows us and teaches us the way everlasting.

May God bless all of you as you follow Jesus Christ!

Pastor John Ogden

TEACHABILITY - a disciple is teachable

Main Truth: A disciple of Jesus Christ must be teachable to the point where blind obedience overrides common sense and the natural bent of leaning on logic. We learn this character trait from the life of Simon (who became Peter), one of Jesus' first disciples.

Read Luke 5:1-11: read it carefully and slowly!

Keep in mind that Jesus is recruiting his first disciples. Ask yourself, "What's Jesus looking for in those he's recruiting?"

As we dive into this text, it's important for us to feel and imagine what Peter must have been going through. He had just finished repairing and cleaning his nets from an unsuccessful late night fishing trip that brought in ZERO fish! He's now tired, very discouraged and probably wanting nothing more to do except to go home to his bed. Then out of nowhere Jesus gets into his boat and with a cheery request says, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." In other words, Jesus was saying... "let's go fishing!" Just imagine what possibly was going through Peter's mind? The thought of getting the nets ready...again, and going out to fish...again, and during the day...NOT! For Peter, nothing lined up with his rational mind (read V.5), and for many of us this would have been our initial response too. However, it is important for us to note Peter's response and learn a few things about having a teachable spirit.

Firstly, like Peter, the way we respond to circumstances and divine moments will determine our future. He could have argued with Jesus in disagreement, or he could have openly refused his request but instead his response was, "**MASTER...because you say so, I will let down the nets**" (read v.6).

The essential quality that surfaced from Peter's heart was the recognition of who Jesus was to Him..."**His Master!**" He also showed a **teachable** spirit by obeying despite his competitive reasoning not too. He was open, he was willing and was eager to embrace his Lord's request. He was **Teachable!** There will be times in our own lives when the leading of Christ will go against our logic and rational but our decision to allow Him to be Lord will manifest itself in a life of obedience and trust.

Teachability is your most basic kingdom quality as a disciple. You must be willing to learn and be open to new input and new truths that will contribute to and initiate change to your practical day-to-day life and circumstances. You must be ready for God to push you out of your comfort zone and into a radical obedience despite your natural bent toward what you've always known. There is no discipleship without it. It starts with "Master," and goes on to say, "because you say so, I will..."

Make it your prayer today and ask God to give you a teachable spirit. You will continue to grow as a result of this prayer.

Pastor John

See Article on "How do I maintain a teachable spirit" - next page!

FLEXIBILITY - a disciple is flexible

Main Truth: A disciple is a citizen in the Kingdom of God. This is a **new** and unique life calling, not something as an addition to the old life (**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17**). We learn this character trait from the life of Levi (also known as Matthew) another one of Jesus' first few disciples that he called.

Read Luke 5:27-39 read it carefully and slowly!

An important verse to use to make my point that a disciple is to be flexible is Luke 5:28, when Jesus said "follow me," we notice that Levi (Matthew) the tax collector "got up, **left everything** and followed Him." He not only left his possessions, he left his religious practices.

In order for you as a disciple to be flexible, you must "welcome newness" as a part of your new life and relationship in Jesus Christ. What do I mean by that? Many, of us prior to understanding the good news (the gospel) have had some sort of religious background that we know and adhere to. For some of us, we have held to the belief, like the Pharisees did, that legalistic performance (abiding to a set standard of rules) would add up to an accepted righteousness. Whereas the one who places their sole trust in the blood of Christ, and the work of the cross are made righteous! Righteousness comes by the work of and faith in the cross, not by religious traditions or the works of man (Ephesians 2:8-9).

In reference to Luke 5:27-39, if we can answer the question – "Why was Jesus at the feast?" and "why were the Pharisees at the feast?" It will better help me explain my point. Jesus was there because Levi who wanted his sinner friends to get to know Him, invited him. The Pharisees on the other hand were there because of an unwritten customary open house invite when anyone of great status or significance was being honored. My point, the Pharisees questioned Jesus' purpose of being at the party and eating with sinners, yet they themselves, thinking they were righteous were there. Jesus' response discloses a point worth mentioning. Jesus said in his defense of being at the party, "is it not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick? I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Luke 5:31). Blind as always, the Pharisees didn't see themselves as sinners, only the others at the party! In order to truly live the new life, one must die to the old life... more so if it was founded on a self-righteous religious experience.

When people begin their new Christian experience on any other foundation but Christ and the cross, eventually they will be faced with the truth about their sinful condition and a choice to trust Christ alone, as their savior. What Christ was really saying, if they were able to read between the lines was, "I came for you, a sinner...repent, stop trusting in your own righteousness and start trusting in Me, and you will be made righteous."

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If you're going to be flexible as a disciple of Christ, it involves a daily renewal in areas such as our mindset and our behavior toward positive change that glorifies God. This change that takes place comes from a relationship with Christ, not a form or a practice of religious ritual or a bunch of rules; it's not a repair job when you become a disciple of Christ, it's a replacement. God wants to replace the old life with a new one. He's not interested in patchwork over all the holes in your life. He has a new garment for you.

Jesus said in Luke 5:36 "No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old." Becoming more and more religious is all about fixing all the holes in your life with patches. The Pharisees were inflexible. They could not leave the old coats of Judaism (righteousness by the law). Unfortunately Christianity appears to be nothing more than patchwork (law), instead of truly understanding that God is the tailor of a new garment (Christ) of which he wants you to put on (Galatians 2:6).



This is what a Christian looks like who doesn't understand their new life and position in Christ...Just a whole lot of patchwork instead of a clean slate and a full life. Be flexible and open your heart to the new life Christ offers and put on the new garment of righteousness that Christ offers.

My prayer is that you discover and understand the new life Christ has provided for you. Be flexible and live the new life by the power of His spirit, not in your own effort.

Humility - a disciple is humble

Main Truth: A disciple willingly accepts and lives by a value system that is contrary to the world and the natural inclinations of it.

Read Luke 6:20-26 read it carefully and slowly!

Poor, hungry, weeping, and hated...Jesus said is the path to a blessed life. There are many modern day Christians who have a misunderstanding of what is really involved in being a follower of Jesus Christ. Many believe that as a King's Kid, they have a right to expect abundant blessings. However, the "blesseds" that Jesus taught his disciples strike a different note. Look closely; the beatitudes destroy any credibility to the prosperity gospel. The truth is, blessings flow in the lives of those who lived by and within Kingdom principles (Matthew 6:33).

Humility, is one of those great Kingdom principles. In Philippians 2:7-9 Christ gives us an example of humility that results in a position of greatness. Practice humility and watch God reveal his glory.

The Bible describes humility as meekness, lowliness and absence of self. The Greek word translated "humility" in [Colossians 3:12](#) and elsewhere literally means "lowliness of mind," so we see that humility is a heart attitude, not merely an outward demeanor.

One may put on an outward show of humility but still have a heart full of pride and arrogance. Jesus said that those who are "poor in spirit" would have the kingdom of heaven. Being poor in spirit means that only those who admit to an absolute bankruptcy of spiritual worth will inherit eternal life. Therefore, humility is a prerequisite for the Christian. When we come to Christ as sinners, we must come in humility. We acknowledge that we are beggars who come with nothing to offer Him but our sin and our need for salvation. We recognize our lack of merit and our complete inability to save ourselves. Then when He offers the grace and mercy of God, we accept it in humble gratitude and commit our lives to Him and to others. We "die to self" so that we can live as new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We never forget that He has exchanged our worthlessness for His infinite worth, our sin for His righteousness, and the life we now live, we live by faith in the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us ([Galatians 3:20](#)). That is true humility.

Biblical humility is not only necessary to enter the kingdom, it is also necessary to be great in the kingdom ([Matthew 20:26-27](#)). Here Jesus is our model. Just as He did not come to be served, but to serve, so must we commit ourselves to serving others in all lowliness of mind, always considering others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3).

This attitude precludes selfish ambition, conceit, and the strife that comes with self-justification and self-defense. The truly humble does not defend themselves when falsely accused or unjustly treated. They defend the truth, but not their own ego or reputation.

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Jesus was not ashamed to humble Himself as a servant ([John 13:1-16](#)), even to death on the cross ([Philippians 2:8](#)). In His humility, He was always obedient to the Father and so should the humble Christian be willing to put aside all selfishness and submit in obedience to God and His Word. True humility produces godliness, contentment, and security.

God has promised to **give** grace to the humble, while He **opposes** the proud ([Proverbs 3:34](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#)). Therefore, we must confess and put away pride. If we exalt ourselves, we place ourselves in opposition to God who will, in His grace and for our own good, humble us. But if we humble ourselves, God gives us more grace and exalts us ([Luke 14:11](#)). Along with Jesus, Paul is also to be our example of humility. In spite of the great gifts and understanding he had received, Paul saw himself as the "least of the apostles" and the "chief of sinners" ([1 Timothy 1:15](#); [1 Corinthians 15:9](#)). Like Paul, the truly humble will glory in the grace of God and in the cross, not in self-righteousness ([Philippians 3:3-9](#)).

- by gotquestions.com

A Prayer For Humility

Today we share a prayer from E.M Bounds about humility.

"Never let the world break in, fix a mighty gulf between; keep me humble and unknown, prized and loved by God alone."

Lord, allow us to not have our eyes on self, but rather on you and others.

Amen!

7 Quotes - from Andrew Murray's book - "Humility"

There's a little book called **HUMILITY** by nineteenth century South African pastor Andrew Murray. He defines **HUMILITY** as "the place of entire dependence on God" and he calls it "the root of true virtue" and "the first duty and the highest virtue of man". He is very well known, loved in the Christian world and remarkably quotable so here are seven knock-out quotes from this great little book on the pinnacle of Christian virtues:

"...It is not sin that humbles us most, but grace."

1. How to conquer pride: "Two things are needed. Do what God says is your work—humble yourself. Trust Him to do what He says is His work; He will exalt you."
2. "We will learn that we can never have more of true faith than we have of true humility."
3. "Humility is simply the disposition which prepares the soul for living on trust."
4. "There is no pride so dangerous, none so subtle and insidious, as the pride of holiness."
5. The humble man: "He can bear to hear others praised and himself forgotten..."
6. "In striving after the higher experiences of the Christian life, the believer is often in danger of aiming at and rejoicing in what one might call the more human virtues.... While the deeper and gentler, the more divine and heavenly graces are scarcely thought of or valued. These virtues are those which Jesus first taught upon earth—because He brought them from heaven—those which are more distinctly connected with His cross and the death of self—poverty of spirit, meekness, humility, lowliness."
7. "...it is not sin that humbles us most, but grace."

- by Andrew Murray

CAMPASSION - a disciple is compassionate

Main Truth: We as disciples, respond to hostility and rejection by treating others, even our enemies, the way we want to be treated.

Read Luke 6:27-36 read it carefully and slowly!

Peering into the future of his disciples' lives, Jesus could see storm clouds gathering. He knew that they would face much conflict and rejection. He also knew that being rejected would give them opportunities to show the difference between natural responses (those not saved) and kingdom responses (those who are disciples/saved).

The natural response to hostility is either to RUN or to FIGHT. These are negative responses and usually make things worse. As Christians, Kingdom people, we are called to a more positive, compassionate commitment to those who treat us unfairly or outright reject us. This would be a very expensive lesson for any disciple to learn. Some people, including Jesus, have paid the price of this kingdom principle with their lives.

If we look closely at the context of this account, Luke 6:27-36, v.20 says "looking at his disciples, He said...". This teaching is specifically for those who are Disciples of Christ. Jesus was making sure and was concerned that his followers learn how to respond to rejection and or unfair treatment. Jesus wants his disciples to love those who mistreat them. Because this was a difficult lesson, Jesus gave the 12 some additional motivation. In summing up the ideal of being compassionate to our enemies, Jesus said to them "...you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked" (6:35).

In Genesis we are told that God has created us in his image. Part of that image involves His character and part of that character is kindness to ungrateful and evil people. By living out the life of a follower of Jesus, we affirm the image of God. I think its critical for us to accomplish what God wants us to do and become all that he wants us to be.

Becoming godly in character and behavior must be our highest priority and life long calling. If we sit back and refuse to be concerned about this transformational process in our lives, we fail and deny the very image of God in which we were created.

When we respond to rejection and mistreatment His way - - **with compassion** - - we are sons of the Most High...like father, like son. Therefore we must be merciful, just as our father is merciful.

See the wonderful story on next page about COMPASSION!

INTEGRITY - a disciple is open / honest

Main Truth: Rather than focusing on the failures and shortcomings of other people, a disciple of Jesus Christ periodically engages in healthy self-evaluation of their own spiritual condition. They are not only honest with others, they are honest with themselves.

Read Luke 6:37-49 read it carefully and slowly! Integrity is considered the quintessence and application of Character. It is the demonstration of who we are in Christ and that our faith is real and backed up with our attitude and word. The absence of *integrity* is an indication that we as Christians are perhaps fakes and frauds at worst, and ineffective and useless at best. It is essential that we pursue *integrity* and His transforming work to make His Name real and shown (Rom. 12).

Jesus calls us to *integrity*, which means we are to be true to our word as a testimony to our faith in Him. We are not to be worldly with our words or the veracity of our virtue and character. Everything we do as a child of God must be in integrity, truthfulness, and honesty, as we are representing Him who is living in us! Consistent *integrity* is essential for the person who claims Christ as Lord of his or her life!

So, the question is, *are you a person of integrity?* When we say we follow Christ and His Word, do our actions show that we do? If not, we are being a Pharisee (they are not fair, you see), which is being a hypocrite. This is reprehensible before our Lord and others around us because we are misrepresenting Christ and His character! Thus, it is imperative that when we say we are followers of Christ, our character and behavior reflect Him and His call to the best of our abilities. If we are in leadership, this is even more imperative. We demonstrate *integrity* when we do what we say and act out what we believe; if not, we are a fraud, and woe to us for being one!

The Bible calls us to a higher level of excellence than that of others around us^¾one of truth, love, honesty, and functionality. This is *integrity* in action; it is the implementation of His Ways in the practice of our daily Christian lives. We are adhering to His rules, morals, and principles (Zech. 8:16-17). This means we, as people of the faith, will place character, without excuse, ahead of our ambition. Most of all, we will have the focus to glorify God and not ourselves. In so doing, we will be doing the right thing all the time with no guilt or fear and nothing to hide. So, we do what we say we will do from the practice of God's Truth and Character that He has for us. We must be willing to do this regardless of our comfort, convenience, challenge, or controversy^¾without excuses. (In addition, to do what is contrary to His Word and say we must do it because we said we would for *integrity's* sake is also evil). His ways give us meaning, and leading a righteous life gives us satisfaction.

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We become a Christian by the work of the Spirit. But, our maturity in Christ and how we practice our faith is determined by the choices we make from the conviction and confidence of our beliefs. We choose to take the faith He gives and make it more real and effective. We choose to make the right choices or not, so we have no excuse when our life is messed up by neglect or poor choices. Yes, we have forgiveness and grace, but we are still left with a life that could have been so much more. So, we have to make the determination and be willing to align our lives to His Word and precepts so our behaviors represent who we are in Christ. After that, we need to be more conscious of the decisions we make, both large and small, without the compromise of solid ethics.

We must also be on guard with people who will do all they can to try to convince us to give up our *integrity* and character. There will be appealing arguments, passionate pleas, peer pressure, rationalizations, and ridicule on a personal level for why we do not need *integrity* (Job 2:3, 2:9, Prov. 29:10; 1 Cor. 15:33). Do not fret or despair when others come against you (and they will), when you stand up for truth, or when you keep your word; because of your *integrity*, you will be doing the right thing and you will be rewarded (1 Kings 9:4-5, Nehemiah 7:2, Psalm 41:11-12).

So, let us, without regret, lead lives that are worthy. Our call is to do as we teach, to do as we say, and to act as we teach others to act. *Integrity* is of the utmost importance for the Christian (Exodus 8:28-32; 1 Thess. 2:10-12)! Why? Because God is righteous and just, and wants us to be our best in this area, too. The reason the Pharisees are equated with hypocrisy is that they were worshipping not the God of the Jews and the Law, but a made-up god that suited their own thoughts, schemas, and pride. They also covered truth and *integrity* with their hidden agendas and deceit (Psalm 103:1-14; Matt. 23; 1 Tim. 3:2-7; 1 Pet. 5:10)!

The fuel that will enable us to maintain our *integrity* is our understanding of “fullness.” This is knowing who we are in Christ, and what He did for us on the Cross—that we are complete in Him! Then, we can be better able to comprehend that the Word of God is our authority. All you do, as a Christian, is a response to what He has first done in you. Couple that with the application of His Word, and it will instigate the right mark and practice of our behaviors. This is our *integrity*.

The willingness to model Christ’s character is far more vital for us today than the willingness to just preach it. God want us to be authentic—not pretentious^{3/4}because we are the Bible that non-Christians read (2 Cor. 8:9)!

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Review Questions - Lesson 4

1. In the lesson on being teachable, how will our decision to allow Christ to be Lord manifest itself? p.46

2. In the lesson on flexibility, explain in your own words the difference between a repair job and a replacement when it comes to your new life in Christ. p.48

3. In the lesson on Humility, when it comes to our worthlessness and our sin, what is it that we must never forget? p. 49

4. In the lesson on compassion, explain the difference between the natural response and our response to being mistreated as a disciple of Christ. p.52

5. In the lesson on Integrity, what are we to focus on besides the failures and shortcomings of other people? p.53

6. List 2 things that would indicate that you are a teachable person.

7. Finish the sentence:
"All the good advice in the world won't help if you

Remember: This is a new life calling in Christ and not just something to add to the old life. (2 Corinthians 5:17)