

Discipleship Series (3)

Following Jesus:

LIFE

TRAINING

Foreword

Praise the Lord! We believe that you have already experienced the first taste of being a disciple of Jesus by reading the two booklets **“1ST STEP AND 4 HABITS OF FOLLOWING JESUS”** and **“7 STORIES OF LOVE.”** By now, you should already have a group of companions who are walking this heavenly journey with you.

This discipleship series will help you to continue following Jesus, to grow and to have breakthroughs in your life as you are being touched and renewed by the Holy Spirit. We can release the power of God to transform the world when we restore the joy, peace and love of God which He has given in our lives.

Excerpt

Jesus has sacrificed His life for everyone in the world. He is willing to love each of them and to transform each of their lives from brokenness and pain to love, peace and joy. If we are willing to repent and be baptized, the love of Jesus and the Holy Spirit will enter into our lives.

Furthermore, His love is the power that continues to transform us every day. When we are following Jesus, we are walking on the path of light that gets brighter and brighter. Through our new lives, our Heavenly Father would release His love and power to more people.

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Life Training (1):

Be Lenient with Other; Be Introspective with Oneself

Opening Questions:

1. Please share a thing that happened in the previous week that you were grateful for or how you experienced the love of Jesus.
2. Have you ever judged someone before knowing the whole truth?
3. Have you ever been hurt by other people's inaccurate judgment on you?

The Teaching of Jesus – Matthew 7:1-6

After teaching about the essential attitudes, missions, characters, and spiritual habits of a disciple (see the “Life Transformation” and “Spiritual Breakthrough” booklets), Jesus warned His disciples against the greatest spiritual pitfall concerning their attitudes toward other people. Here is what Jesus said:

Don't condemn others, and God won't condemn you. God will be as hard on you as you are on others! He will treat you exactly as you treat them.

You can see the speck in your friend's eye, but you don't notice the log in your own eye. How can you say, “My friend, let me take the speck out of your eye,” when you don't see the log in your own eye? You're nothing but show-offs! First, take the log out of your own eye. Then you can see how to take the speck out of your friend's eye.

Don't give to dogs what belongs to God. They will only turn and attack you. Don't throw pearls down in front of pigs. They will trample all over them.

Discussion:

1. What challenges did Jesus give to His disciples?
2. With what different standards do hypocrites or show-offs judge concerning other people and themselves?
3. What analogy did Jesus use to refer to these different standards?
4. Jesus used “what belongs to God” and “pearl” as figures of speech referring to comments that His disciples give to others. Why did Jesus teach them not to give valuable things to people who won’t cherish them? How is this analogy related to giving people comments?
5. Do you think Jesus is banning all kinds of comments here? How should a disciple make comments in a correct way?
6. How do you think Jesus is helping you with your life training?

Conclusion:

Jesus taught His disciples to guard against spiritual pride when judging others or themselves. He did not ban all kinds of comments, but He pointed out that the disciples should have the right attitude and motivation when giving their comments—to be humble, lenient, and loving. Before pointing out other people’s problems with their lives, Jesus reminded His disciples to reflect first on their own lives. They have to seek the grace of God and avoid being hypocrites. When helping people to correct their problems, the disciples should give comments wisely and should identify if people are willing to listen and accept these comments.

Action Items:

1. What action or transformation would you have, so that Jesus could make you a disciple who could live out His life?
2. With whom can you share the teaching of Jesus that you learned today? How do you practice what you have just learned?

Life Training (2): **Seek the Father; Be Kind to Others**

Opening Questions:

1. Please share a thing that happened in the previous week that you were grateful for.
2. Please share about your experience with your previous assignment.
3. Please share what opportunity Jesus gave you to share His love with the others in the previous week.

The Teaching of Jesus – Matthew 7:7-12

In the previous session, Jesus taught His disciple to guard against spiritual pride. In today's session, Jesus called His disciples to seek God wholeheartedly. He assured them that the Father would give them the best blessings in return. Here is what Jesus said:

Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. Everyone who asks will receive. Everyone who searches will find. And the door will be opened for everyone who knocks. Would any of you give your hungry child a stone, if the child asked for some bread? Would you give your child a snake if the child asked for a fish? As bad as you are, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. But your heavenly Father is even more ready to give good things to people who ask.

Treat others as you want them to treat you. This is what the Law and the Prophets are all about.

Discussion:

1. What challenges did Jesus give to His disciples?
2. What analogy did Jesus use to refer to the Father responding to people's prayers?
3. According to Jesus' teaching, how should His disciples treat others?
4. How do you think Jesus is helping you with your life training?

Conclusion:

Jesus encouraged His disciples to seek the Father earnestly, because the Father promised to respond to and bless those who seek Him wholeheartedly. If our father on earth knows to be kind to his children, how much more would our generous and loving Heavenly Father be willing to bless His children? At the same time, from understanding and learning from the nature of the Father, Jesus also challenged His disciples to be kind to the others, just as how they want the others to treat them. This is the foundation of all the laws.

Action Items:

1. What action or transformation would you have, so that Jesus could make you a disciple who could live out His life?
2. With whom can you share the teaching of Jesus that you learned today? How do you practice what you have just learned?

Life Training (3):

Enter the Narrow Gate; Follow the Narrow Road

Opening Questions:

1. Please share a thing that happened in the previous week that you were grateful for.
2. Please share about your experience with your previous assignment.
3. What challenges have you encountered after you started to follow Jesus?

The Teaching of Jesus – Matthew 7:13-14

After Jesus encouraged His disciples to seek the Father earnestly, He reminded them the path of following Him is not an easy one. While the Father assured that there will be blessings for those who seek Him, there is also many challenges that the disciples will encounter. Here is what Jesus said:

Go in through the narrow gate. The gate to destruction is wide, and the road that leads there is easy to follow. A lot of people go through that gate. But the gate to life is very narrow. The road that leads there is so hard to follow that only a few people find it.

Discussion:

1. What challenges did Jesus give to His disciples?
2. What do the wide gate and wide road represent? What do the narrow gate and narrow road represent?
3. Where is the wide road leading? What about the narrow road?

4. Why did Jesus teach His disciples to enter through the narrow gate and to follow the narrow road? Why did Jesus point out that only a few people could follow the narrow road?
5. What do you think Jesus meant by this analogy?
6. How do you think Jesus is helping you with your life training?

Conclusion:

By giving the illustrations of the narrow gate and the narrow road, Jesus pointed out to His disciples that the path of following Him leads to eternal life; however, it is not an easy road but a road that is difficult and full of challenges, and even with only a few companions. On the contrary, there are a lot of people who choose not to follow Jesus, and their paths seem to be more comfortable than ours; nevertheless, Jesus warned us that their paths lead to death. Jesus challenged His disciples not only to follow Him, but to also be prepared to face difficulties and pay the price as a disciple.

Action Items:

1. What action or transformation would you have, so that Jesus could make you a disciple who could live out His life?
2. With whom can you share the teaching of Jesus that you learned today? How do you practice what you have just learned?

Life Training (4): **Bear Good Fruits; Be True Disciples**

Opening Questions:

1. Please share a thing that happened in the previous week that you were grateful for.
2. Please share about your experience with your previous assignment.
3. What is your opinion on the view that if you had “accepted” Jesus once, you will definitely be saved, or “once saved, always saved”?

The Teaching of Jesus – Matthew 7:15-23

In the previous session, Jesus compared the narrow and wide gates and roads. He pointed out that the disciple’s path has a challenging entrance and is a difficult road to follow. After that, Jesus clarified that discipleship is not a onetime decision but a lifelong transformation that will bear fruits. Here is what Jesus said:

Watch out for false prophets! They dress up like sheep, but inside they are wolves who have come to attack you. You can tell what they are by what they do. No one picks grapes or figs from thornbushes. A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. Every tree that produces bad fruit will be chopped down and burned. You can tell who the false prophets are by their deeds.

Not everyone who calls me their Lord will get into the kingdom of heaven. Only the ones who obey my Father in heaven will get in. On the day of judgment many will call me their Lord. They will say, “We preached in your name, and in your name we forced

out demons and worked many miracles.” But I will tell them, “I will have nothing to do with you! Get out of my sight, you evil people!”

Discussion:

1. What challenges did Jesus give to His disciples?
2. What analogy did Jesus use to refer to “false prophets” or the people who are following Him superficially?
3. According to Jesus’ teaching, how should His disciples identify false disciples?
4. Why did Jesus say “not everyone who calls me their Lord will get into the kingdom of heaven”? Who is qualified to enter the Kingdom?
5. How do you think Jesus is helping you with your life training?

Conclusion:

Jesus pointed out that not all who call themselves disciples are true disciples. He taught the disciples to learn to discern whether they were true disciples by observing their lives, because the fruits of the tree will tell its nature. Some people would even think that they have followed the Lord but are eventually rejected by the kingdom of heaven. At the same time, this is also a challenge and a reminder of Jesus to the disciples concerning their lives. Being a true disciple is not a shallow, one-time decision; it is a life dedicated to following Jesus and bearing good fruits. Jesus made it clear that only the disciples who truly obey the will of the Father can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Action Items:

1. What action or transformation would you have, so that Jesus could make you a disciple who could live out His life?
2. With whom can you share the teaching of Jesus that you learned today? How do you practice what you have just learned?

Life Training (5): **Listen & Obey; Be the Wise Person**

Opening Questions:

1. Please share a thing that happened in the previous week that you were grateful for.
2. Please share about your experience with your previous assignment.
3. From the teaching of the previous sessions, how would you summarize Jesus' definition and requirements of a disciple?

The Teaching of Jesus – Matthew 7:24-27

Jesus taught about the life of a true disciple using the illustrations of the narrow vs wide gates and roads, and the good vs bad trees and fruits in the last two sessions. At the end of His teaching, He gave the last and an especially important challenge to His disciples. Here is what Jesus said:

Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock. Rain poured down, rivers flooded, and winds beat against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on solid rock.

Anyone who hears my teachings and doesn't obey them is like a foolish person who built a house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house. Finally, it fell with a crash.

Discussion:

1. What challenges did Jesus give to His disciples?
2. What illustration did Jesus use to refer to the people who hear His teachings and obey them?
3. What illustration did Jesus use to refer to the people who hear His teachings but do not obey them?
4. What is the difference between a wise person and a foolish person when building a house? How is this related to the life of a disciple?
5. How do you think Jesus is helping you with your life training?

Conclusion:

Jesus used the parable of building a house to challenge the disciples not only to hear His teachings, but also to truly obey His words. True disciples need their foundation deeply rooted in the teachings of Jesus, so that they will be able to stand on the day of God's judgment. A sinner's prayer does not equal to salvation, because a true repentance along with the passion and faith in Jesus have to be demonstrated through a disciple's everyday life. Only the ones who truly follow Jesus and live out His teachings are His genuine disciples.

Action Items:

1. What action or transformation would you have, so that Jesus could make you a disciple who could live out His life?
2. With whom can you share the teaching of Jesus that you learned today? How do you practice what you have just learned?

Ministry Resources

If you'd like to continue growing in the journey of following Jesus, we encourage you to find someone to study the **“Discipleship Series”** booklets together.

We also have different training materials and demonstration videos available on our YouTube channel.

Visit us online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SunriseCCLA>

Or you may contact us via:

Website: www.sunrisela.org

Email: admin@sunrisela.org

Phone: (626) 281-3406

Address: 8618 Mission Dr.,
Rosemead, CA 91770

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