

If you abide in Me,  
and My Word abides in you

By this My Father is glorified,  
that you bear much fruit

# Who can be a Disciple?

If you abide in My Word  
You shall know the Truth &  
the truth shall make you free

Love one another  
as I have loved you

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."*

Jean Manning  
REVIVAL MINISTRIES AUSTRALIA

# ***WHO CAN BE A DISCIPLE?***

## **A STUDY GUIDE BASED UPON THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS.**

*“Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed’” John8:31.*

*“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples” John 15:7-8.*

*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” John13:34-35.*

**Prepared by Jean Manning**

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## INTRODUCTION

# WHO CAN BE A DISCIPLE?

Jesus had many followers. Some were simply curious; some followed Him looking for miraculous signs; some came to find fault in Him; some followed hoping that He truly was the Messiah. Those who believed in Him became His disciples.

Strong's Concordance defines a disciple as a *pupil/learner* [SC # 3101 and is derived from SC # 3129] which means to *learn, understand*.

### A. Jesus said that a disciple would be recognized in three different ways.

- **Abiding in the word**

*“Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed’”* John 8:31.

- **Answered prayer**

*“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples”* John 15:7-8.

- **Loving/serving as Jesus loved**

*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* John 13:34-35.

### B. Jesus made three statements that would prohibit a man from being a disciple

He gives three areas where we need to bring our priorities and our lifestyle into submission to Him.

- In **relationships** with others Jesus has first priority.

*“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple”*  
Luke 14:26

- In **our way of life** Jesus must be given first place

*“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple”*  
Luke 14:27.

- Our **possessions** must not hold us back from following Jesus.

*“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple”*  
Luke 14:33.

## ABIDING IN THE WORD A SIGN OF A TRUE DISCIPLE

**Abiding in the word that Jesus spoke was the sign of a true disciple.**

In **John 8:25-30** Jesus told the Jews who He was *“And as He spoke these words, many believed in Him”*.

To these believers He said: *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* **John 8:31-32.**

The word Jesus is referring to is the *logos* – the word of God.

When the word of God abides within, the disciple *“would know the truth and the truth would make you free”* (v.32).

**Knowing the truth** of God’s word:

- enables a disciple to walk by faith in the fullness of God’s promises
- allows the disciple to pray with confidence expecting answers to his prayers as the Holy Spirit quickens a word from God

*“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you”* **John 15:7**

This *rhema* word comes as a result of the abiding *logos* being quickened.

### HOW DOES THE WORD WORK IN THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLE?

- **Cleansing**  
*“You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you”* **John 15:3.**
- **Sanctifying**  
The word of God is truth and sanctifies the disciple.  
*“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth”* **John 17:17.**
- **Producing good fruit**  
A disciple is a learner who prepares his heart to receive the word. The word falling into a prepared heart produces good fruit.  
*“But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty”* **Matthew 13:23.**
- **Blessing**  
A disciple receives a blessing through hearing and obeying the word of God.  
*“But He said, ‘Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it’”*  
**Luke 11:28.**
- **Bringing assurance of everlasting life**  
The one who hears and believes has everlasting life. He shall not come into judgement but has passed from death into life.  
*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life”* **John 5:24**

- **Bringing judgement**

Those who have heard the word will be judged with what they have done with the word.

*“The word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” John 12:48.*

- **Preparing**

Jesus calls His disciples to remember the word He has spoken to them so they will be ready for what lies ahead.

*“Remember the word that I said to you. ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also” John 15:20.*

- **Reminding**

The disciple is to remember that the word has been fulfilled.

*“But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause’” John 15:25.*

- **Causing others to believe**

The world will believe that God sent Jesus Christ when His disciples (more specifically those chosen to be apostles) speak the word.

*“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word” John 17:20.*

- **Working effectively**

The word works effectively in those who believe.

*“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because of the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works effectively in those who believe”*

**1 Thessalonians 2:13.**

- **Revealing the love of God**

The love of God is perfected through the abiding word.

*“But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him” 1 John 2:5.*

- **Overcoming**

The abiding word enables the disciples to overcome the wicked one.

*“I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one” 1 John 2:14.*

**(Also Revelation 3:8-10)**

## WHAT IS A DISCIPLE TO DO WITH THE WORD?

- **Speak the word without fear**

*“... and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear” Philippians 1:14.*

- **Hold fast the word of life**

*“Holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or laboured in vain” Philippians 2:16.*

- **Rightly divide the word of truth.**

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” 2 Timothy 2:15.*

- **Preach the word**

The word of God is manifested through preaching.

***“God has in due time manifested His word through preaching” Titus 1:3.***

***“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching” 2 Timothy 4:2.***

Jesus said to those who believed in Him,

*“If you abide in My word,  
You are My disciples indeed.*

*And you shall know the truth,  
And the truth shall make you free.”*  
**John 8:31-32**

## ANSWERED PRAYER – THE FRUIT OF A DISCIPLE

*“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*

*“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be My disciples” John 5:7-8*

Jesus says that answered prayers are a sign of discipleship. They show that the disciple is being fruitful. He adds that **the disciple will give glory to God for this fruit.**

### HOW CAN THE DISCIPLE BE FRUITFUL IN PRAYER?

- **Abiding in the word**

Jesus makes this a condition for a disciple to receive answers to prayer. *“If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” John 14:14.*

When the disciple knows the word of God, he is able to pray in agreement with the word that God quickens to his mind, and thus pray for God’s will to be done here on the earth.

- **Spending time in relationship with God our Father**

Jesus declared to them the reason He spent so much time in prayer. He knew what to do because He had been with His Father in prayer.

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner” John 5:19.*

*“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” John 5:30.*

Jesus reminded them that *“It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher.”* Matthew 10:25a.

- **By recognizing that the throne is the place of prayer – the place of authority**

All authority flows from the throne where Jesus is seated. God has raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him *“far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave to Him to be head over all things to the church”* Ephesians 1:20-22.

The disciple, who has been raised together in Christ and is seated in Christ in heavenly places **Ephesians 2:6**, is to seek the will of the Father in heaven and pray His will into place here on the earth.

As the disciple sets his mind on things above **Colossians 3:1-2** he is to pray: *“Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* Matthew 6:10.

- **By praying as Jesus taught**

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, **Luke 11:1** He taught them *“In this manner, therefore, pray”* Matthew 6:9-13.

Believers have prayed this ‘pattern’ prayer (known as the Lord’s Prayer to most believers) ever since but have not always recognized that Jesus gave it to His disciples because they asked Him **how to pray**. He gave it to the disciples to teach God’s priorities as they came to Him in prayer.

### **This prayer is relational**

- we recognize our position as sons of the Father through Jesus Christ;
- we recognize and acknowledge our relationship with fellow believers who also speak to God as “Our Father”.

### **In this pattern prayer Jesus is teaching that prayer is entered into through worship of the Almighty One who reigns eternally and upon whom we depend**

- who supplies ‘our daily bread’ – both physical and spiritual
- who forgives us and reminds us of our need to forgive others
- who guides us and keeps us from the evil one

A disciple who prays ‘**in this way**’ will walk in the promises of God.

- By **listening** to see God’s will in every situation.  
*“Watch and pray lest you fall into temptation” Matthew 26:41, Mark 14:38, Luke 22:40, 46.*  
Jesus set an example. All that He did was as a result of hearing from His Father.  
*“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner” John 5:19.*
- He told His disciples to **ask in prayer, believing**  
*“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them” Mark 11:24.*
- He told them the importance of **praying for labourers**  
*“Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest” Matthew 9:38.*
- **Watch and pray**  
Jesus told them that the one who watched and prayed would be counted worthy to escape the trials that would come upon the earth.  
*“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the son of Man” Luke 21:36.*
- **Persevere** in prayer.  
*“Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart” Luke 18:1.*

## **A HOUSE OF PRAYER**

### **This body is the temple of the Holy Spirit**

Paul addressed the church as the temple of God.

*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.*

Disciples are being built together as a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

*“members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place for God in the Spirit” Ephesians 2:20-22.*

During His life on earth, Jesus went into God's earthly temple and cleansed it. He threw out all the practices that man had added to the directions that God had given to them through Moses. (Mt. 21:12-16)

He quoted from the prophet, Isaiah 56:7 "*My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves*" **Matthew 21:13.**

Jesus cleansed the temple to become a house of prayer and immediately power was released in the house and the blind saw and the lame walked. (:14)

The blind and the lame are those whose understanding of the word of God had been limited because of the sinful practices in the temple and their walk with the Lord has been distorted.

With prayer restored in the temple, the blockages are removed and power is released for healing. Then there is great rejoicing and praise. (:15)

The temple (the body of the believer) is to be cleansed of all sin so that there is a pure channel for prayer to the Father.

- **God answers the prayer of faith**
- **power is released**
- **the word of God is made manifest**
- **God is glorified**

#### **When the word of God is abiding within:**

- The disciple will pray in obedience and agreement with God's will.  
Jesus said: "*Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven*" **Matthew 18:19.**
- Power will be released and there will be great rejoicing in the church and God will be glorified.  
Jesus said: "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it*" **John 14:12-14.**

"If you abide in Me,  
and My words abide in you,  
you will ask what you desire,  
and it shall be done for you.

"By this My Father is glorified,  
that you bear much fruit;  
so you will be My disciples."  
**John 15:7-8**

## LOVING AND SERVING AS JESUS LOVED A SIGN OF A TRUE DISCIPLE.

*“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him” Isaiah 42:1-2.*

**God humbled Himself  
and came to earth in the form of man  
to serve mankind as the Son of God.**

God did this out of His great love for all He had created.

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” John 3:16.*

### **His name was Jesus**

In human form as the Son of God, Jesus became a servant to His disciples and washed their feet.

### **He set an example**

*“You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.  
If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,  
you also ought to wash one another’s feet.  
For I have given you an example,  
that you should do as I have done to you.”  
John 13:13-15*

### **He gave a new commandment**

In the context of having washed the filth of the road from His disciples’ feet Jesus gave a new commandment to His disciples:

*“love one another, as I have loved you” John 13:34.*

### **Jesus proclaimed this – the love that leads to serving - to be a sign of a disciple**

*“By this all will know that you are My disciples,  
if you have love for one another” (v.35).*

John specifies three things about which Jesus was sure when He demonstrated His love by washing the disciples’ feet.

When Jesus told the disciples to love as He had loved them, He wanted His disciples to be sure of their position with God in these same areas.

### **WHAT DID JESUS KNOW?**

*“Jesus*

- *knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands,*
- *and that He had come from God*
- *and was going to God,*

*rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded” John 13:3-5.*

➤ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things into His hands

▪ **He was God in human form**

Before Jesus came to earth, He was in the form of God. “... *Christ Jesus, being in the form of God*” Philippians 2:6.

He came to earth in human form as the Son.

*“being found in appearance as a man”* Philippians 2:8.

He was proclaimed by God at His baptism.

*“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* Matthew 3:17.

▪ **He was heir of all things**

*“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things”* Hebrews 1:1-2.

▪ **He had the authority of God**

*“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’* Matthew 28:18.

▪ **He was the Creator of all things**

*“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made”* John 1:3.

➤ Jesus knew where He had come from

He was conceived by the Spirit of God.

*“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit”* Matthew 1:20.

➤ Jesus knew where He was going.

*“I go to prepare a place for you”* John 14:2.

**Knowing these three things -The Son became the Servant**

*“but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant”* Phil.2:7

**The church – made up of disciples - is to have the same mind as Jesus – to know what Jesus knew**

In His letter to the Philippians, the apostle, Paul, exhorts the church there to be like Jesus.

*“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,  
who being in the form of God,*

*did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,*

*but made Himself of no reputation,*

*taking the form of a bondservant,*

*and coming in the likeness of men.*

*And being found in appearance as a man,*

*He humbled Himself*

*and became obedient to the point of death,*

*even the death of the cross”.* Philippians 2:5-8

➤ Jesus has put all things into the hands of His disciples

As the Servant, **Jesus set an example** for His disciples to follow. He has put all things into the hands of His followers. He has given gifts (**Romans 12:6**) for His disciples to recognize and acknowledge.

- **Jesus has left the church** in the hands of His *“apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers”* **Ephesians 4:11**
- He gave the **keys of the kingdom** to Peter, who had professed faith in Jesus as the Messiah. *“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven”* **Matthew 16:19.**
- He spoke in parables of **responsibilities** to come  
*“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom His master made ruler over his household?”* **Matthew 24:45**  
  
*“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them”* **Matthew 25:14**
- Jesus gave **authority** to His disciples  
*“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means harm you”* **Luke 10:19.**
- He has **empowered His disciples by sending His Spirit** to dwell within.  
*“Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high”* **Luke 24:49.**

➤ A disciple knows his own spiritual beginnings

*“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”* **John 1:12-13.**

Our spiritual birth, our ‘born again’, experience is from God (**John 3:3-6**), and is *“according to the good pleasure of His will”* **Ephesians 1:5.**

➤ A disciple knows his eternal destiny

*“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am you may be also”* **John 14:3.**

Jesus has prepared a place for us to be with Him forever. Our eternal dwelling place is as *“an heir of God through Christ”* **Galatians 4:7.**

Jesus rules and reigns eternally and God has *“raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”* **Ephesians 2:6.**

It is no effort for a disciple to serve when he has these assurances. **Hallelujah!**

## Love as I have loved you

The apostle, John, encouraged the church in his epistles to obey the commandment Jesus gave to His disciples in **John 13:34-35**. His epistles strongly urge the believers to love as Jesus loved.

- *“Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another” 1 John 3:10-11.*
- *“He who does not love his brother abides in death” 1 John 3:14.*
- *“And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment” 1 John 3:23*
- *“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.  
“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.  
“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.  
“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.  
“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” 1 John 4:7-11.*

Jesus trained His disciples and sent them into the world as He was sent. God humbled Himself, came to earth in human form as the Son of God, and served mankind.

The mature disciple, knowing his standing as a son of God, humbles himself to serve mankind with the same love that Jesus showed.

Jesus knew that He was on the earth  
to fully reveal God,  
His love,  
and His kingdom to mankind.

## He came to fulfill prophecy

*“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights”  
Isaiah 42:1.*

## He came as the Apostle of God

*“consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” Hebrews 3:1.*

He said: *“He who has seen Me has seen the Father” John 14:9.*

His message was a kingdom message coming from the King.

*“Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand” Matthew 4:17.*

## He came with the authority of God and His kingdom

*“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” Matthew 28:18*

## The Son became the Servant

Jesus *“did not consider it robbery to be equal with God” Philippians 2:6, “but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant” Philippians 2:7.*

*Who Can Be A Disciple?*

A disciple walks as a mature son of God and co-heir with Christ **Romans 8:16-17**, knowing that *“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”* (Ephesians 1:3).

Yet Jesus reminds us: *“But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”* Matthew 23:11-12.

***“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus”*** Philippians 2:5

***“love one another, as I have loved you”*** John 13:34.

***“By this all will know that you are My disciples,  
if you have love for one another”*** (v.35).

## WHAT PROHIBITS A MAN FROM BEING A DISCIPLE?

Jesus made three statements that would prohibit a man from being a disciple. He gives three areas where we need to bring our priorities and our lifestyle into submission to Him.

1. In **relationships** with others Jesus has first priority

*“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple”*  
Luke 14:26.

2. In **our way of life** Jesus must be given first place

*“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple”*  
Luke 14:27.

3. Our **possessions** must not hold us back from following Jesus

*“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple”* Luke 14:33.

*When Jesus has first place the disciple will see that every other relationship and situation falls into order.*

### Jesus is first

- Jesus has first place in our family relationships
- Jesus has first place in the ministry a disciple is given
- Jesus has first place in His church

*“He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell”.* Colossians 1:17-19

### Jesus calls His disciples

#### ▪ They followed Him

When Jesus called the first disciples, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother to follow Him, we read: *“They immediately left their nets and followed Him”* Matthew 4:20.

*“Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him”* Matt.4:21-22.

#### ▪ They left all

Towards the end of His life on earth, these same disciples reminded Jesus that they had left all to follow Him. *“Then Peter began to say to Him, ‘See we have left all and followed You’.”* Mark 10:28

#### ▪ Jesus rewards

*“So Jesus answered him and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time – houses and brothers and*

*sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life’.*” **Mark 10:29-30**

Jesus is reminding the disciples that the spiritual rewards far outnumber the physical rewards.

There is a spiritual family and a spiritual inheritance that is beyond human comprehension.

## **JESUS HAS FIRST PRIORITY**

### **1. In our relationships with others**

*“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple”* **Luke 14:26.**

This verse is easier to understand when we recognize that the word ‘hate’ = ‘love less’.

Natural family relationships are always enhanced when Jesus is acknowledged first. He guides with wisdom and discernment thus bringing forth a response to situations rather than a reaction to or in those same situations.

#### **✓ Family relationships are important to Jesus**

##### **(a) Marriage is part of God’s purpose for man**

He chose to give Adam a helpmate.

*“And the LORD God said: ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him”* **Genesis 2: 18**

##### **(b) Children are a reward from God**

*“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward”* **Psalms 127: 3**

##### **(c) Parents are to be honoured and cared for**

*“Honour your father and your mother, that your days maybe long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you”* **Exodus 20:12.**

Jesus reprimanded the scribes and Pharisees with regard to their mishandling of this issue (**Matthew 15:4-6**). Jesus demonstrated the importance of this command when He spoke from the cross and placed His mother in the care of the disciple He loved.

*“When Jesus therefore saw His mother standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to His disciple, ‘Behold your mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home”* **John 19:26-27.**

##### **(d) Family relationships are to be maintained in the church**

The apostle, Paul, addresses children, fathers, servants in Ephesians 6:1-8 and reminds the church *“knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free”*(v.8).

When Jesus Christ has first place in every relationship – at home, in the church, at work - the disciple will *“walk in the light as He is in the light”* and *“we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin”* **1 John 1:7.**

*“Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”* **1 John 1:3a.**

## 2. In **our way of life** Jesus must be given first place

*“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple”*  
**Luke 14:27.**

When Jesus took up His cross, He died and rose again in a resurrected form. Likewise He expects His disciples to die to self that they might live for Christ. Following this death there is a resurrection life for believers in the Spirit.

The apostle, Paul, said: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in Me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me”* **Galatians 2:20.**

### **How can a man die to self?**

#### **(a) By faith.**

A disciple walks by faith believing what Jesus has accomplished at the cross. There is an exchange that takes place at the cross – Jesus took our sins and gave us His righteousness.

*“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”* **2 Corinthians 5:21.**

By faith the disciple receives this new life *“knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him”* **Romans 6:6.**

#### **(b) Through baptism**

Once a disciple is baptized in response to Jesus, by faith he receives a new life. The disciple believes *“that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life”* **Romans 6:3-4.**

*“Now if we died with Christ, we believe we shall live with Him”* **Romans 6:8.**

#### **(c) By walking in the Spirit**

The new life is a spiritual life in a human body.

*“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh”* **Galatians 5:16.**

Paul lists the *“works of the flesh”* **Galatians 5:19-21** and reminds the disciple *“those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires”* **Galatians 5:24.** He says: *“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”* v.25.

#### **(d) By dealing with sin**

A study of **Colossians 3:5-15** reveals that there are fleshly things to *‘put off’* (v8-9) and a new man to *‘put on’* (v10).

*“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry”* v.5.

There is a responsibility for the disciple to deal with the flesh life. *“But now you yourself are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds”* v.8-9.

*“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if*

*anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfection” Galatians 5:12-14.*

**(e) By being renewed in knowledge**

The disciple is a new man conformed to the image of Christ **Romans 8:29**. So the disciple is to: *“put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” Colossians 3:10.*

This new man will *“Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” Colossians 3:2.*

The disciple will be transformed by the renewing of his mind to know God’s *“good, acceptable and perfect will” Romans 12:2*

**The disciple who has ‘taken up his cross’ to follow Jesus will deny himself and walk in the Spirit revealing Jesus and the kingdom of God on the earth.**

**3. Our possessions must not hold us back from following Jesus**

*“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple” Luke 14:33.*

In the parable of the sower, Jesus warns that *“the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful” (Mark 4:19).*

Jesus is warning us about the attitude of a man’s mind with regard to ‘things’.

- Jesus told the parable of the king who invited guests to the wedding feast of his son. **Matthew 22:2-14.**

What a privilege to be invited to such an occasion! Yet people refused the invitation because they placed a greater importance on their possessions and the work that needed to be done to maintain those possessions.

*“But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his business” Matthew 22:5.*

- When Jesus spoke to a ruler who wanted to inherit eternal life He saw into the heart of a man who kept the law but placed greater importance on his wealth.

Jesus said to him, *“One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up your cross, and follow Me. But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” Mark 10:21-22.*

Jesus saw his sorrow at the thought of having to part with his possessions and said: *“How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God” v.23*

The disciples were astonished at these words **Mark 10:28-30**. But Jesus reminded the disciples that the spiritual rewards far outnumber the physical rewards.

**What does a disciple do with his possessions?**

- I. We see **in the gospels** that there were those disciples who were good stewards of the riches they had and used their riches to assist Jesus and His disciples.

- (a) Mary, Martha and Lazarus offered hospitality to Jesus and his friends at Bethany. *“There they made Him a supper” John 12:2*

(b) ***“Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others provided for Him from their substance” Luke 8:3.***

(c) Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man who had become a disciple of Jesus, took the body of Jesus and laid it in his new tomb **Matthew 27:57-60.**

**II.** In the book of **The Acts of the Apostles**, we read that ***“Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need” Acts 4:34-35.***

***“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all, as anyone had need” Acts 2:44-45.***

**III.** In the **Epistles**, we see the churches that were able to, sent relief to help those parts of the body that were suffering because of drought and famine. Paul travels from Macedonia and Achaia to ***“minister to the saints” and “make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem” Romans 15:26.***

Paul commends the church in Philippi for sharing in his personal distress. ***“For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities”.*** He speaks of ***“the fruit that abounds to your account” v.17.***

Paul speaks of the gift given by one church to another ***“which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and to show your ready mind” 2 Corinthians 8:19***

His exhortation reminds the disciple:

- to have a ready mind
- that giving in this way brings glory to God.

### **How did Jesus regard possessions?**

In the sermon on the Mount Jesus warns His disciples ***“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.***

***“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” Matthew 6:19-21.***

What a disciple does with his possessions indicates what his heart attitude is. Jesus recognizes man’s needs and cravings. His preaching teaches man a better way to consider possessions **Matthew 6:25-34.**

Jesus then commands the disciples:

***“Seek first the kingdom of God  
and His righteousness,  
and all these things  
will be added to you”.***  
**Matthew 6:33**

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISCIPLE

In the four Gospels we see the behaviour exemplified by those who became disciples (learners) as they walked and lived with Jesus. We see them become mature in their responses to Jesus and the things He asked them to do.

*They sought to be like Him as they tried to understand His ways.*

### WHAT WERE THESE CHARACTERISTICS?

#### 1. Faith

They believed in Him. *“This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and His disciples believed in Him” John 2:11.*

Faith is a prime characteristic of the disciples. When Peter recognized Jesus he had great faith to walk on the sea. When he took his eyes off Jesus, he fell. Yet he still had faith to cry out to Jesus for help **Matthew 14:25-31.**

#### 2. Worship

In His lifetime, the disciples worshipped Jesus.

*“Then those who were in the boat came and worshipped Him, saying, ‘Truly You are the Son of God.’” Matthew 14:32.*

*“When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.’” Luke 5:8.*

After His resurrection, the disciples worshipped Jesus.

*“Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here and look at My hands; and reach your hand here and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving but believing.’ “And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God.’” John 20:27-28.*

#### 3. Knowledge of Scripture

(a) They knew the Scriptures and thus remembered what had been prophesied.

*“Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.’” John 2:17.*

(b) *“Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word Jesus had said” John 2:22.*

#### 4. They asked for understanding

*“Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’” Matthew 13:36*  
Also in **Matthew 15:12-15, Mark 7:17, Mark 10:10.**

Jesus distinguished between those who simply heard His teachings and the disciples who came to learn from Him.

*“Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given” Matthew 13:11.*

#### 5. They spent time alone with Him

Jesus called them apart to explain things to them.

*“He called His disciples to Himself and said to them .... ” Mark 12:43.*

*“And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples” Mark 4:34.*

They also went aside alone with Him to rest. ***“And He said to them, ‘Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while’” Mark 6:31.***

#### **6. They followed Him**

As they followed (went with) Him they saw how He ministered, and witnessed the power of His words and deeds.

***“Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him” Mark 6:1.***

***“So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples” Matthew 9:19.***

***“Then another of his disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.’ Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him” Matthew 8:22-23.***

#### **7. They prayed with Him**

***“And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him” Luke 9:18.***

#### **8. They asked Jesus to teach them how to pray**

***“Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.’” Luke 11:1.***

As a result of this request Jesus has given to us the ‘pattern prayer’, which is often referred to as the Lord’s Prayer (**Luke 11:2-4, Matthew 6:9-13**).

#### **9. They were obedient**

He challenged those who called Him ‘Lord’.

***“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” Luke 6:46-47***

When Jesus told Simon to launch out into the deep and cast their nets Peter was obedient even though he did not understand why Jesus would tell him to do this.

***“But Simon answered and said to Him, ‘Master we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.’” Luke 5:4-5.***

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DISCIPLE

Jesus taught His disciples by example. Now through the word and the Spirit He expects His disciples to do as He did.

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father” John 14:12.*

In the light of Jesus’ teachings:

1. **What are your responsibilities with regard to the word of God?**

(Refer to Session 2)

**Read: John 8:31-32**

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Consider what **priority** the following have in your life.

- (a) Reading the Bible
- (b) Studying the word
- (c) Sharing your revelations/understanding from the word
- (d) Teaching the word to others

Consider yourself in the light of **Matthew 24:45**. Will you receive the blessing of verse 46?

2. **Jesus said that answered prayer is a sign of a true disciple** (Refer to Session 3)

**Read: John 15:7**

Consider your prayer life in the light of **Matthew 6:9-13**

- (a) Are you ‘God’ conscious as you pray? Do you commune with Him as your Father?
- (b) Do you have an awareness of Him on the throne in heavenly places as you pray?
- (c) Is it easy to follow the pattern Jesus gave in this prayer?
- (d) Are you aware that He already knows your needs and has a solution to all your requests?

How persistent are you in prayer?

What things have priority when you pray?

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3. **Jesus said that loving or serving as He did is a sign of a true disciple**

(Refer to Session 4)

**Read: John 13:35**

How well are you able to do things for others out of love - without resentment and not out of a sense of duty?

Are you seeing the needs of others and trying to meet those needs where you can?

Do you know what Jesus knew when He washed His disciples' feet? **John 13:3**

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Consider your life in the flesh** (Refer to Session 5)

**Read: Luke 14:27**

Are you daily dying to self?

What things are now in place in your life as a result of your baptism? **Rom.6:2-14**

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

How well are you living the new life that is a result of your water baptism?

How easy is it for you to say that things no longer control you in any way? **Philippians 3:7-8-9**

5. **Do you fully understand the authority that you have from Christ?** (Refer to Session 7)

**Read: Luke 10:19-20**

What does this authority allow you to do?

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6. **How well do you walk in the empowering of the Holy Spirit?** (Refer to Session 8)

**Read: Acts 1:5 & 8**

What is the primary purpose of this empowering? **Acts 1:8**

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Jesus taught His disciples by example. Now through the word and the Spirit He expects His disciples to do as He did.

***“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father” John 14:12.***

**7. What have you done with the ‘talent’ you have been given?**

Read **Matthew: 25:14 - 30.**

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Prayerfully consider the following. Take time to meditate on these issues and challenges.

- Receive the exhortation that the apostle Paul spoke to Timothy in **2Timothy 2:2**.  
***“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”.***
- Ensure that you walk in the works that the Lord has prepared for you before the foundation of the world.  
***“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” Ephesians 2:10.***
- ***“Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord that you may fulfill it” Colossians 4:17***
- May you ***“Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” Colossians 4:12b***
- May ***Christ be formed in you Galatians 4:19***

## SENT INTO THE WORLD AS JESUS WAS SENT

Jesus trained His disciples and sent them into the world as He was sent. He prayed specifically for the ones He had trained.

*“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world” John 17:18.*

Jesus extended this prayer also to those *“who will believe in Me through their word” John 17:20.*

Jesus had already spoken to His Father about the work He had done in preparing these disciples to fulfill their mission on the earth **John 17:1-14**. He also prayed that the Father would not take them out of the world, but would *“keep them from the evil one” (v.15).*

Before He sent them out He asked the Father to *“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (v.17)*. His guarantee is *“And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth” (v.19).*

Jesus then includes all: *“all those who will believe in Me through their word” (v.20)* so that all believers would be *“one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (v.21).*

*So Jesus sends all who believe into the world, to be as one with the Father as He, Himself, was one with the Father.*

### WHY WAS JESUS SENT?

#### Jesus was sent to fulfill prophecy

(a) He would be **God with us**

**Isaiah 7:14** prophesies the virgin birth of the Son whose name would be Immanuel, that is, *‘God with us’*.

(b) He would be **born of the Spirit**.

An angel reassured Joseph, the betrothed husband of the virgin, Mary, *“that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” Matthew 1:20.*

(c) He was destined to **bring salvation**

*“He will save His people from their sins” v.21.*

(d) He would be both a **Ruler and the Good Shepherd**

**Micah 5:2** prophesies that out of Bethlehem *“shall come a Ruler who will Shepherd My people Israel” Matthew 2:6.*

- At His trial before Pilate Jesus Himself acknowledges **His right to rule** when He says: *“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” John 18:37.*
- He also preached about His role as the **Good Shepherd** who *“gives His life for the sheep” John 10:11* and says: *“I know My sheep, and am known by My own” v.14.*

(e) He came to be **light** to a dark world

**Isaiah 9:2** prophesies of a great light who would come to the Gentiles.

John reveals Jesus as the life who was the light of men **John 1:4**. John also spoke of the darkness that did not comprehend this light (v.5).

(f) Isaiah prophesied that He would come as **God's Servant**

**Isaiah 42:1-8** describes Him and His role to the people of God as God's Servant. He will be God's covenant to the people (v.6). In **Acts 3:26**, Peter confirms this. *"To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities"*.

The apostle, Paul, speaks of Jesus in His servant role and exhorts all believers to *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"* **Philippians 2:5-8**.

*Jesus demonstrated this servant role when He washed his disciples' feet (John 13:3-5). Then He commanded these disciples to love in this same way as a sign that they truly were His disciples v.34-35.*

## HOW WAS JESUS SENT?

### 1. Jesus was sent to represent the Father

The apostle, Paul, in speaking of this mystery, writes: *"God was manifested in the flesh"* **1Timothy 3:16**. *God came to earth in human form and was called JESUS.*

When Thomas and Philip questioned Jesus, He replied very clearly: *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also"* **John 14:7**.

*"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"* **John 14:9**.

*"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?"* **John 14:10**

Jesus tells His disciples that the glory of God is in Himself  
*"Now the Son of man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately"* **John 13:31-32**.

### 2. Jesus was sent to obey the Father – even to death on the cross

He accepted the responsibility He had been given and knew He must fulfill this responsibility. *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me"* **John 9:4**.

*"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him"* **John 10:37-38**.

*Jesus said to them: "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work"* **John 4:34**.

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner"* **John 5:19**.

## What were these works?

(a) **To build the church (Matthew 16:18)** by training apostles and disciples who would "Go" and do His will.

(b) **To reveal the kingdom of God**

His actions and His teachings were to show mankind the nature of the kingdom and the character of the King.

It is His plan that the kingdom will be revealed through this church for which He gave His life **Ephesians 5:25-27**.

This then is the mission disciples have been sent to do.  
Jesus sent the disciples into the world  
*“as the Father has sent Me”* to fulfill this mission.

## **DISCIPLES ARE SENT TO FULFILL NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY**

(a) Disciples are **to reveal God’s presence with us** (Matthew 28:20) by “doing those works that I do” **John 14:12**.

(b) Disciples are **born again of the Spirit of God to “see” and “enter” the kingdom of God** **John 3:3-6**.

(c) Disciples are **to preach the gospel of salvation “that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations”** **Luke 24:47**.

*We cannot re-do what Jesus the Messiah did, but we carry His Spirit through our ‘new’, spiritual birth. His Spirit within empowers us (Acts 1:8) to witness to Jesus and to ‘do’ those signs that “follow the believer”* **Mark 16:17-18**.

(d) Disciples are **to rule and reign with the authority Jesus has bestowed upon us** **Matthew 28:18-20**, for He *“has made us kings and priests to His God and Father”* **Revelation 1:6**.

Jesus gave authority to His disciples *“over all the power of the enemy”* with the proviso that *“nothing shall by any means hurt you”* **Luke 10:19**.

He adds: *“Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven”* (v.20). It is significant that Jesus, *“for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame”* **Hebrews 12:2**.

When Jesus said *“I must work the works of Him who sent Me”* **John 9:4**, He was referring to the responsibility He had to obey his Father.

*Obeying His Father gave Him joy  
and He prays for this same joy  
to be in His disciples* **John 17:13**.

(e) Disciples are **to be shepherds of the people God places in our care**

*“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly”* **1 Peter 5:2**. Jesus commissioned Peter, the one to whom He gave the keys of the kingdom **Matthew 16:19**, to *“feed My lambs”, “tend My sheep”, and to “feed My sheep”* **John 21:15-17**.

(f) Disciples are sent **to be light in a dark world**.

*“You are the light of the world”* **Matthew 5:14**.  
*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven”* v.16.

(g) Disciples are **to be among men as those who serve** **Philippians 2:5-8**.

When Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He told them to do likewise **John 13:34-35**.

Jesus could serve His followers in this way *“knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God”* **John 13:3**.

It is no effort for a believer to serve when we have this assurance of the authority given to us (our inheritance), our own spiritual beginning and our destiny.

## UNDERSTANDING THE AUTHORITY THAT GOD HAS GIVEN

### ➤ Authority is God-given

When He sent the seventy out, Jesus gave the disciples of His authority.

*“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy”* **Luke 10:19-20**.

After His death and resurrection Jesus told His disciples that He had all authority in heaven and on earth. He then gave the commandment to go and make disciples. **Matt. 28:18-19**

### ➤ It is kingdom authority

A disciple's spiritual birth, or 'born again', experience is from God (**John 1:13**) and gives entrance into the kingdom of God as a son of God (**John 3:3-6**).

The disciple knows *“that where I am, there you may be also”* **John 14:3**. Jesus has prepared a place for us to be with Him forever. Our ultimate dwelling place is as *“an heir of God through Christ”* **Galatians 4:7**. He rules and reigns eternally and God has *“raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”* **Ephesians 2:6**.

When a disciple understands this inheritance as a son of God he is able to serve his fellow man. He can walk in this role because of Christ's work at the cross. *“For He (God) made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”* **2 Corinthians 5:21**.

This exchange [cleansing] at the cross has enabled the disciple to walk as one *“conformed to the image of His Son”* (**Romans 8:29**), to do the *“greater works”* (**John 14:12**) that Jesus promised we would do because we have been empowered by His indwelling Spirit.

### ➤ It is authority with blessing

*“But God who is rich in mercy ..... raised us up together, and made us sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”* **Ephesians 2:4-6**.

*“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”* **Ephesians 1:3**.

## THE SENDING

### ➤ Receiving Jesus

Jesus has promised us that if a disciple is received when Jesus sends him, those receiving the disciple will be receiving Him and the One who sent Him!

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and He who receives Me receives Him who sent Me”* **John 13:20**.

➤ **Jesus will be manifest**

When Jesus sent His disciples out, He sent them *“before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go”* **Luke 10:1**. This is to be the experience of every ‘sent one’. A disciple can expect that Jesus will manifest His Presence in every place and situation where he is sent for the sending is in the power of the Holy Spirit **Acts 1:8**.

➤ **God’s love will be revealed**

It is because *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”* **John 3:16-17**.

In his Epistle, John reminds us of the love of God that caused Him to send Jesus into the world and adds, *“As He is, so are we in this world”* **1 John 4:17**

As Jesus was sent by the Father to reveal the love and the will of His Father so He sends the disciple into the world to make known His love and His will.

*“As You sent Me into the world,  
I also have sent them into the world”* **John 17:18**

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,  
baptizing them  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;  
and lo, I am with you always,  
even to the end of the age.”  
Matthew 28:19-20*

# THE EMPOWERING OF THE DISCIPLE

## 1. Prayer

We have seen that answered prayer is a demonstration of God's power in the ministry of a disciple. In the record of the disciples failing to cast out a demon from a boy, Jesus added fasting as a prerequisite for empowering on occasions (**Mark.9:29**).

## 2. The sending

In **Luke 10:1-20** Jesus sends out 70 disciples two by two *"into every city and place where He Himself was about to go."* (:1)

He tells them what to do and what to say. (:9)

*The sending by Jesus and the obedience of the disciples results in rejoicing as the disciples see the power of God at work through their ministry. (:17-18)*

## 3. The giving of authority

After their experiences, Jesus gives them authority to demonstrate His power.

*"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you"* **Luke 10:19**.

He then reminds them of the greater thing to do. *"Nevertheless do not rejoice that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."* (:20)

## 4. The promise of the Holy Spirit

When Jesus was telling of His death and departure He promised His disciples He would not leave them as orphans. *"I will come to you"* **John 14:18**.

He taught about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who would be:

*"another Helper"* **John 14:16**,

*"abiding with you forever":16,*

*"the Spirit of truth" who "dwells within" :17.*

Jesus promises to manifest Himself to the one who loves and obeys Him. :21.

The Holy Spirit will teach and remind the disciples of His teachings :26

**John 15:26-27** and **John 16:7-15** give further promises of the work of the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples.

## 5. At His ascension Jesus gave instructions to His disciples:

**Luke 24:49** *"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high"*. We read about the Promise of the Father in **Ezekiel 36:26-28**.

Luke repeats this command to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in **Acts 1:5**.

The result would be *"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"* **Acts 1:8**.

*The word "witness" means a martyr.(SC 3144) So the empowering of the Holy Spirit will enable the disciple to die to self and empower him to testify to Jesus.*

## *Who Can Be A Disciple?*

As the disciples were **obedient** and **waited in prayer** they received fulfillment of the promises of Jesus. The mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost empowered the disciples **Acts 2:4** and saw the birth of the church of Jesus Christ **Acts 2: 41**.

The book of the Acts of the Apostles reveals the disciples (and the apostles):

- abiding in the word
- going where they were sent
- fearlessly preaching the gospel
- receiving answers to prayer
- seeing and experiencing the manifestations of the Lord's power
- counting everything as lost to gain Christ
- giving up their lives to save others

***“Behold I send the Promise of My Father upon you;  
but tarry in Jerusalem  
until you are endued with power from on high”  
Luke 24:49***

## THE DISCIPLE'S CHARGE

*"I charge (you) in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,  
Who is to judge the living and the dead,  
and by (in the light of) His coming and His kingdom:  
Herald and preach the Word!"*

*Keep your sense of urgency (stand by, be at hand and ready),  
whether the opportunity seems to be favourable or unfavourable.  
(Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it is welcome or unwelcome, you as  
preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.)*

*And convince them,  
correcting,  
warning  
and urging  
and encouraging them,  
being unflagging and inexhaustible  
in patience and teaching."*

**2 Timothy 4:1-2  
(Amplified Bible)**

*"Study and be eager and do your utmost  
to present yourself to God  
approved (tested by trial),*

*a workman who has no cause to be ashamed,  
correctly analyzing  
and accurately dividing (rightly handling and skillfully teaching)  
the Word of Truth.*

**2 Timothy 2:15  
(Amplified Bible)**