



**Therefore go
and make
disciples in
all nations.**

Matthew 28:19

The Way of Discipleship

Table of Contents

Lesson	Page
1. The Way of Discipleship	3
2. The Selection of Disciples	6
3. The Formation of Disciples by the Presence of Jesus	9
4. Formation Through the Teachings of Jesus (Part 1)	12
5. The Formation of the Disciple Through the Teachings of Jesus (Part 2)	15
6. The Formation of the Disciple Through the Teachings of Jesus (Part 3)	18
7. The Formation of the Disciple Through Human Relationships	21
8. The Practice of Discipleship in Relation to the World	24
9. The Reproduction and Formation of Disciples	27
10. The Reproduction of Disciples	30
11. What is the Church?	33
12. Characteristics of the Church	36
13. The Head of the Body	39
14. Spiritual Gifts	42
15. The Function of Each Member	45
16. The Equipping of the Saints	48
17. Ministering to the Head	51
18. Ministry to the Body	54
19. Our Ministry to the World	57
20. Maturity in Christ	60

Lesson 1

The Way Of Discipleship

Objective of this lesson: to show that discipleship is not reaching a goal and staying there, but instead is a path that progresses forward to new objectives in our continued learning.

The Way of Discipleship

1. The Bible shows us how discipleship starts. Read Matthew 4:19,20. Jesus found Peter and Andrew fishing and called them. _____ *me, and I will make you* _____. *And they straightway left their nets and* _____.
2. Jesus called them to follow Him and Peter and Andrew did just that. In order to follow Jesus they had to decide to follow Him. According to verse 20, this meant leaving their nets and following Him. The initial decision in discipleship has a positive and a negative aspect. According to verse 20, what was the negative aspect? _____ their nets. What was the positive aspect? _____ Jesus.
3. The negative aspect in the initial decision in discipleship was leaving their nets, and the positive side was following Jesus. Every person, in order to be a disciple of Jesus, must leave something to be able to follow Him. If you are already a disciple of Jesus, what did you leave in order to follow Him?

If you are not a disciple of Jesus, what would you have to leave in order to follow him? _____

The Formation of the Disciple

4. The disciple is a student, and a student needs a teacher. In this case, the teacher is Jesus. In the Gospel of Mark we are told that Jesus ordained twelve, that they should be with Him. Discipleship is an intimate relationship with Jesus. Read Matthew 11:28-30. Jesus said, *Learn* _____ . Jesus desires that the disciple learns to be like his Master. If the Master is meek and lowly in heart, the disciple should be _____ and _____ in heart also.
5. Yes, the disciple should learn from the Teacher until he is as meek and lowly as the Teacher. In another occasion, Jesus spoke this very clearly. Read Matthew 10:24,25. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord. The disciples were with Jesus for years, hearing what He said, watching what He did, and going with Him wherever He went.

6. The disciples not only had a relationship with Jesus, but also with the other disciples. At times Jesus talked to an individual disciple, but most of the time their activities were with the group. To learn of Jesus means learning to live in community with the rest. Learning to live together as a group was not easy. Read Matthew 18:1-5. Among the disciples there was rivalry and envy. Each one wanted to know who would be the _____ in the _____ of heaven. Even among the disciples, Jesus had to deal with the matter of personal ambitions.
7. To answer the question about who would be the greatest in the kingdom, Jesus taught that the greatest is the one who humbles himself and becomes as a _____. Genuine humility is the key to good human relationships. Bad personal relationships almost always have their origin in pride. Humility seeks the well-being of the group instead of focusing on the individual. Jesus even made it clear that humility is a requirement for entering into the Kingdom of God. The Sermon on the Mount, given by Jesus, makes clear the character of the disciple. It is that the disciple is a citizen of the kingdom of God, and as such, subjects himself in humility before God. What is the reason for problems between Christians? _____
8. When Jesus called His disciples, He told them the purpose of discipleship. They had been fishermen, and He told them that He would make them _____ of men. Jesus taught them to be fishers of men by teaching them the truth, by demonstrating His power, and by sending them out to preach. The discipleship was not a program of abstract studies, but a movement with action. Jesus did not close His disciples up in a classroom every day, but took them out into the byways, mountains, lakes, towns and cities. Which would be the best way to become a fisher of men—stay in the classroom or go out among people? _____
9. Before leaving this world, Jesus gave His last and most important instructions to His disciples. Read Matthew 28:19,20. *Go ye therefore, and _____ all nations.* To be a disciple meant making other disciples. The disciples were not to receive the privileges and promises of the Kingdom of God just to enjoy them for themselves, but to extend the gospel to all the world. Making disciples requires that you go out baptizing and teaching all that Jesus had taught. Water baptism is a testimony to a firm decision to learn and to follow Jesus. A mature disciple has the responsibility to teach new disciples all the teachings of Jesus. What happens if someone says he is a disciple, but he does not make new disciples? _____.

The Goal of Discipleship

10. Just before He left, Jesus said, *Lo, I am with you always even _____*. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to give the disciples ability everyday. A disciple is on his way to be made like Jesus, *unto the stature of the fullness of Christ.* (Ephesians 4:13) A faithful disciple will not be content to be stationary. Some Christians do not move after they have made a decision to “accept Christ.” Others only become members, but passive members of the church. Many church members do not even allow the Holy Spirit to use them to make new disciples. The disciple will always work toward this goal. Read I John 3:2: *When He (Christ) shall appear, we shall be _____* .

Group Activities

1. Some look at discipleship only in the evangelistic aspect and consider the formation insignificant. In that way, they have many decisions for Christ, but few disciples. What should be done in this case?
2. Others just look at discipleship as a means of formation, and forget about the reproductive aspect. How can this be remedied?
3. Many church members are just passive spectators instead of active participants in the work. What is the solution to this problem?

Lesson 2

The Selection Of Disciples

Lesson Objective: to identify the traits of the persons that Jesus chose to be His followers.

1. In order to know how Jesus selected His disciples, you can read in Matthew 4:17-20. Jesus preached repentance to the multitudes as the first step in establishing God's rule in the lives of His listeners. It is clear that Jesus began His ministry preaching repentance to the multitudes. (Luke 4:14,15) What did Jesus preach to the multitudes? _____
2. Jesus preached repentance to the multitudes. He also announced that the kingdom of God was at hand. The approach of the kingdom of God means that God begins to rule in the lives of those who repent. A repentant person recognizes that Jesus is the ruler of his life; that is the beginning of a life of loyalty to Jesus. Repentance means that Jesus has become _____ of your life. Have you allowed Jesus to become the ruler in your life? _____
3. According to verse 18, Jesus found Peter and Andrew casting their nets into the sea because they were _____. Jesus called these fishermen to become His disciples. It is important to notice that Jesus called men who were responsible workers. Jesus did not seek persons of exalted social position, but neither did He seek irresponsible persons. What kinds of persons did Jesus choose? _____. Why do you think that Jesus chose these types of persons for disciples? _____
4. It is evident that Jesus selected workers because he desired persons of decision and dedication who would be able to carry out the demands of discipleship. At times, there is the temptation to seek out idle persons thinking that they will easily accept the offer of the gospel. If we offer them something attractive, they will probably accept it. But, what will happen if we offer the gospel only to people who are unemployed and needy? Answer according to what you yourself think about this. _____
5. Many times it happens that the unemployed and needy who accept the offer of the gospel become dependent on others. Instead of presenting the gospel as an offer, Jesus presented it as a demand. In verse 19, He said, *Follow me*. This is in the imperative form. It is a command. Jesus, the Lord speaks in command to us. According to verse 20, what action did Peter and Andrew take? _____
6. They left their nets and followed him. We must not think that they were being obligated to do something against their will. The gospel according to John explains that Andrew heard John the Baptist present Jesus as the

Lamb of God. So Andrew began to follow after Jesus. Later he brought Peter to Jesus. So it is clear that Jesus presented the demands of discipleship to persons who had shown their decision to follow Him. Do you think that Peter and Andrew were forced to follow Jesus? _____ . Why did they immediately follow Jesus? _____ .

7. Peter and Andrew were not obligated to follow Jesus, but they voluntarily responded to the demands of discipleship. It is clear that not all who are called are chosen. (Matthew 22:14) Read Matthew 8:19-22. The scribe in this passage expressed himself very eloquently. He seemed to be making an unconditional commitment. But Jesus responded to him by making clear the difficulties and hardships of being a disciple by saying that the Son of Man had no place to _____ . How did Jesus answer the person who wanted to do something first and afterward follow Him? _____
8. When Jesus selected His disciples, He had to eliminate some. But Jesus did not directly eliminate those who offered themselves to Him superficially as candidates for discipleship. He just indicated the demands and difficulties of being a disciple, and the persons who were not willing to accept the challenge withdrew. This is what made the difference between the multitude of listeners and the small group of disciples. The spirit of the multitude was variable. Jesus fed the five thousand miraculously. The next day many people sought Jesus. But Jesus recognized the attitude of the people. Read John 6:26,27. Why did the people seek Jesus? _____ . What kind of food did Jesus tell the people that they should seek? _____
9. Jesus wanted the people not just to seek material (earthly or natural food) but eternal food. When he told them that they must eat of his flesh, many could not understand, and they withdrew. Then Jesus talked intimately with His disciples. Read John 6:67. Jesus asked his closest disciples if they wanted to go away also. It is important to notice that Jesus did not beg them to stay, but He just waited for a courageous and spontaneous answer from them. How did they answer Him? _____

Which do you feel is better: beg people to accept God's offers, or challenge them with the demands of discipleship? Express your opinion. _____

10. In some ways, the gospel offers something attractive, but in order to form strong disciples it is necessary to face the demands of discipleship. We must remember that Jesus did not stop working with the multitudes, but He knew for certain that the continuance of the work depended on the selected group of persons who could be disciplined by accompanying Jesus in the

field of action. Why should a group of disciples be formed? _____

Group Activities

1. All who begin to study discipleship should consider themselves a disciple who has started on the road to discipleship. Each person in the group should answer this question: What does being a disciple mean to me?
2. What are the failures of many believers and church members today in true discipleship?
3. How can we relate the offers the gospel makes and the demands of discipleship?

Lesson 3

The Formation Of Disciples By The Presence Of Jesus

Objective: Find examples of how Jesus demonstrated by action what He taught in words.

1. In the first lesson, you studied that the disciple learns from Jesus the qualities of meekness and humility. The best way to learn these qualities of character is by watching the actions of a person who demonstrates these qualities. Read Matthew 11:25. Jesus recognized that these qualities are necessary to receive divine revelation. Who cannot receive the divine revelation? _____ . Who can receive it? _____ .
2. Divine truths are hidden from the wise and learned and are revealed unto babes. The attitude of Jesus is the opposite of the religious world's attitude. Many people of that time as well as our day believe that divine revelation depends upon academic preparation. But Jesus shows us that heart attitude is more important than great knowledge. Read Luke 2:46,47. *When Jesus was a child of twelve years, He was in the Temple in the midst of the _____ , and all that heard him _____ at his _____ and his _____ .*
3. Jesus, even in His youth, gained the admiration of the doctors of the law because of His extraordinary intelligence. Later, the doctors of the law engaged in conflict with Jesus when they realized that the intelligence of this humble Teacher was greater than theirs. Jesus did not base His discipleship on laws or rituals, but in qualities of character. Read John 14:6. Jesus Himself could say, *I am the _____ , the _____ , and the _____ .* All the laws of righteousness were incarnated in the life of Jesus Himself. (Matthew 5:17)
4. Discipleship is a very simple matter, but yet something very profound. Read John 1:38,39. The invitation of Jesus in verse 39 was very simple. He only said: _____ and _____ . Following after Jesus and observing His character and His deeds, the disciple began to learn the most profound laws of righteousness. The disciple could see the sermon being practiced before hearing the preaching of the sermon. Which is more effective, the life of a preacher or his preaching? _____ .
5. Even parents can recognize that their children follow the way the parents live more than by what the parents teach with words. For example, if the children are fighting, and the parents scold them and tell them they should not quarrel, and an hour later the parents are quarreling, what are the children going to remember the best—what the parents said, or what they did? _____ . Why? _____ .

6. You know the answer to the previous question. It is only when what we say and what we do are in agreement that there is effective teaching. For this reason, Jesus cultivated a very personal relationship with His followers. This intimate relationship was the dynamic that produced the power in the disciples' ministry. Read Mark 3:13-15. Jesus' classroom this time was on top of the mountain. (Many times Jesus took the disciples away from the crowds.) It says that *He ordained twelve that _____ with _____*. Only after they had been with Him were they sent out to preach, heal and cast out demons. Many times believers hastily try to do the work of God without having been with Jesus sufficiently to become capable of doing it. What happens when we try to do the work of God without the power of God?
_____.
7. The disciples had to find in Jesus the power to do God's work. As has been mentioned, the attitude of the multitude varied. But in order to prepare the disciples, they began to participate in the ministry of Jesus. After a time of being together, Jesus sent them out to many places in teams of two. Read Matthew 10:5-8. Jesus commanded them to do exactly as He was doing. What were the commands of Jesus to them? *And as ye go, _____, saying: The _____ of heaven is _____, _____ the sick, _____ the lepers, _____ the dead, cast out _____*.
8. The ministry of the disciples was not only to preach, but also to meet other needs. As time went on toward _____, Jesus dedicated more time with His disciples. The consolidation and continuation of His work depended on this group of disciples. They had come to know who Jesus was, and some of them had seen His glory. At the same time, He warned them of His coming sufferings so that they would be able to face the sufferings that awaited them. Who continued the ministry of Jesus after He left this world? _____.
9. The disciples who had been with Jesus continued the work of Jesus. If Jesus had not prepared this group of disciples, the work of Christ would have been ended. Through the disciples the work of Jesus was extended to many places. We can even say that we today have received the Gospel because there were faithful disciples who transmitted the message to us. How is it possible that the work of the Lord continues today? _____.
10. Today there is a great need for disciples who have learned about Jesus to continue God's work. Now we do not have the physical presence of Jesus but the Holy Spirit is here to equip us for the work. (Matthew 28:20) Read John 16:7,13,14. It is clear that today's discipleship is brought about by a group of people who are guided by the Holy Spirit. What is the result when

someone tries to do God's work without the help of the Holy Spirit?

Group Activities

1. Divine revelation depends more on a humble attitude than it does on a lot of preparation. What would be the best way to prepare disciples for Jesus?
2. Even though we do not have the physical presence of Jesus, how can today's disciples learn about Jesus?
3. Why do many people who accept Christ fail to continue to follow the Lord Jesus faithfully? What should we do to better this situation?
4. How is it possible today to make close disciples who will continue on?

Lesson 4

The Formation Of The Disciple Through The Teachings Of Jesus (Part 1)

Objective: Identify character qualities of Jesus that can become character qualities of a disciple.

1. Jesus lived what He taught, and also taught what He lived. Today in politics, promises are made to impress the people, and then the promises are not kept. Also, there are a lot of religious words being spoken propounding great ideals of righteousness, but there is very little carrying out of these ideals. There would be a temptation to think that Jesus was just another religionist. But Jesus was different. His life was different and His teachings transformed people. Read Matthew 5:1-3. Jesus said to His disciples, *Blessed are the _____ in spirit.* Jesus showed forth this attitude when He said that He was lowly in heart. What do you believe the majority of people think it means to be poor in spirit? _____ .
2. It is clear that people think that it is good to be rich in spirit. Read Matthew 5:13-16. Christ's disciples were *the _____ of the earth and . . . the _____ of the world.* This humility is to be expressed by serving others. Many times even church members do not understand humility. They think that the humble person should say that he cannot do much. But the humble disciple is really the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Which is the expression of true humility, "I am not very capable; it would be better for someone else to do it," or "God will help me to do great things"? _____ .
3. The humblest person is the one that God can use greatly. The humble person is willing to submit to Jesus as his ruler. Read Matthew 5:17-20. Jesus showed His humility by submitting to the authority of His Father. This was His way to show that He did not come to destroy the law but to _____ . The disciple of Jesus also submits himself to this authority. *Whoever breaks one of these commandments shall be called _____ in the kingdom of God, and whoever teaches the commandments shall be called _____ in the kingdom.* This confirms what we have been studying, that the humble person is great in the kingdom of God.
4. Read the second beatitude in Matthew 5:4. This is also a revolutionary teaching. Jesus said, *Blessed are they that _____ .* People think that those who laugh are the blessed or happy ones. They that weep (or mourn) recognize their faults and repent of them. Jesus said they would receive _____ . But there is a saying, "Men do

not cry.” What do you think? Should men cry? _____ .
When? _____ .

5. Those who weep and mourn will receive comfort and consolation. Jesus, the greatest of men, cried when his friend Lazarus died. Peter wept after he had denied his Master. The Bible tells us that great men have wept. We should mourn over our faults in order to live better lives. Jesus mentioned some of our common faults. Read Matthew 5:21-26. Anger is the source of many violent acts. When we are bringing an offering to God, and realize we have offended a brother, what should we do first? _____ .
6. He who mourns his sins recognizes his faults and reconciles with the brother that he has offended, and then he can bring his offering to God. The true disciple of Jesus wants to be at peace with the other disciples. But there are other faults. Read Matthew 5:27-32. Covetousness is the source of adultery. This kind of infidelity is very serious, and Jesus said that it was better to suffer in the flesh than to be unfaithful to our marriage vows. Of course, mistreating our physical body will not solve the problem of a covetous heart. A heart that weeps in sincere repentance can be delivered from this bondage and thus receive consolation. What is the solution to the problem of adultery? _____ .
7. The person should weep tears of repentance as David did, and let God give him a new heart. He who mourns in sincere repentance is cleansed in his heart. Jesus mentioned another terrible sin that comes from a sinful heart. Read Matthew 5:33-37. People become accustomed to deceiving other people by telling lies; so much so that the courts of law ask for an oath. But a man who is a liar will not tell the truth even under oath (this is what is called perjury). But Jesus not only forbids perjury, but also _____ . The person who always speaks the truth does not need to swear by an oath. Why should we not make oaths? _____ . Why is it wrong to perjure ourselves? _____ .
8. Read Matthew 5:5 for the third beatitude. *Blessed are the _____ for they shall _____ the earth.* The people of the world think the opposite of this. They believe that the way to gain more territory is by fighting. Many wars are the result of wanting more territory and economic privileges. The meek person seeks the well being of others. Read Matthew 5:38,39. The person who looks for revenge seeks *an eye for _____ and a tooth for _____* . The revengeful person even wants several of his enemy’s teeth for every one he has lost. But the meek disciple, after someone strikes him, will turn the _____ .

9. Read Matthew 5:40-42. People of the world do only what the law requires of them, but the meek disciple will not only carry the load one mile but _____ miles. This means that the follower of Christ does not serve under obligation, but voluntarily.
10. Read Matthew 5:43-48. It is very common for us to love those who love us, but the meek disciple of Jesus should love also his _____. It is impossible to obey the commandments of the Lord without the love of God in our hearts. It is evident that Jesus expects that the disciple will claim for himself the same qualities that Jesus showed forth. What should a disciple do when there are conflicts between neighbors? _____
_____. And conflicts between nations?
_____.

Group Activities

1. We are different from the world, but we should win them to Christ. How can we be separated from evil and still win the sinners?
2. How can we be light and salt in our community?
3. Which is worse—anger, adultery or deception? How is it possible to eliminate these evils?
4. In what way can the church show the community that we will carry their load the second mile?
5. How can we demonstrate our testimony to the authorities in regard to public services that use violence against human beings?

Lesson 5

The Formation Of The Disciple Through The Teachings Of Jesus (Part 2)

Objective: Identify character qualities in Jesus that should become the character qualities of the disciple.

1. Read the fourth beatitude in Matthew 5:6. If we want to be filled and satisfied, we must _____ and _____ for righteousness. We learn from natural life that even children want to eat when they are hungry. A disciple is hungry and thirsty for righteousness. But Jesus gives a warning about doing our righteous deeds just to impress others. Read Matthew 6:1-4. What do hypocrites do when they give alms? _____ . Why do they do that? _____ . How should our offerings be given in order to receive a reward from God? _____ .
2. Read Matthew 6:5,6. Why do the hypocrites love to stand praying before others? In order to be _____ of _____ . Prayer is an intimate encounter with God, and we should remember that in prayer we are in God's presence. The deepest prayer is done when we are alone with God. Where should we do most of our praying, at home or in the church services? _____ . He who prays with hunger and thirst after righteousness desires and will receive his reward from God.
3. Read Matthew 6:7-13. If prayer is just a religious practice, it can become just words and vain repetitions. Do you know empty prayers? _____ . What are they like? _____ . But God knows our needs even before we ask Him. Prayer should be a conversation with the Lord where we not only talk to Him, but also listen to Him. Meditate on the Lord's Prayer. In this prayer, the hungry disciple asks that the _____ comes, and that God's _____ be done. Only after we submit to the will of God can we ask for our _____ bread. In our prayers, what should we express first, our praise to God, or our petitions? _____ .
4. Read the fifth beatitude. The merciful receive _____ . If we want to receive mercy, we should extend mercy to others. When we repeat the Lord's Prayer, we are saying the same thing when we say, *Forgive us our sins as we _____ those who _____ against us*. Also read Matthew 6:14,15. If we forgive others, our _____ will also forgive us our _____ . This shows us that God wants His disciples to have good relationships with each other.

5. Sometimes when we have personal conflicts it is hard to forgive. When two persons feel offended, one waits for the other to take the first step toward reconciliation. But Matthew 5:23,24 says that the offender should take the step toward reconciliation, and Matthew 18:15 tells us that the offended one should also take the steps toward reconciliation. In your way of thinking, who should seek reconciliation, the offender or the offended one?
_____ .
6. Read the sixth beatitude in Matthew 5:8. Who will see God? The _____ . The pure in heart are those who are not stained with something contrary to the will of God. Read Matthew 6:16-18. The disciple who fasts sincerely is concentrating on the will of God without being distracted by his own carnal desires, food or personal interests. Matthew 17:21 tells us that fasting and prayer can help the disciple to lay hold of the power of God to cast out evil spirits. Do you know of a case in our day where fasting was a blessing? _____. Explain briefly. _____ .
7. Read Matthew 6:19-23. The disciple with a pure heart will place the correct values on possessions. What happens to our earthly treasures (possessions)?

With the treasures we lay up in heaven? _____ .

The human heart appreciates what the eyes look upon. It is true that earthly treasures may have value, but it is only a temporal value. When we come to the end of life, what will be the treasure of lasting value? _____ .
8. Read Matthew 6:24-26. The disciple with a pure heart will not divide his loyalty between two masters, because Jesus is his Lord and Master. What happens if a Christian tries to serve two masters? _____ .
_____. The Christian who tries to serve God and riches is not trusting God to take care of him. Jesus does not condemn honest work, but only anxiety and worrying. Is work evil? _____ .
Is anxiety a sin? _____ .
9. Read Matthew 6:27-32. God provides for the birds of the air, for the lilies of the field and for the grass that lives a short while. Worry does not bring good results. Is it possible by worry and anxiety to add anything to our stature? _____. There is really no reason for us to worry, because our Heavenly Father knows what we have need of even before we ask. (Matthew 6:8,9) If our Heavenly Father takes care of the plants, how much more will he care for us? For the disciple with a pure heart, God is not only our Lord and Master, but also our _____ who cares for us.

10. Read Matthew 6:33,34. Having our Father's care is the privilege of those who are in the kingdom of God. When should we seek the kingdom of God: before or after all other things? _____ . After we seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, what is the promise? *All these things shall be* _____ .
11. God promises to meet all the needs of the person who is submitted to God's rulership. Many times there are people who call themselves Christians who try to promote programs of economic benefit and development for those who have not submitted their lives to the lordship of Jesus. Often, these persons take the help they receive and use it to support their evil habits. Do you personally know people who have prospered after having submitted to the lordship and will of God? _____ . Give a brief testimony of such a person. _____ .
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Group Activities

1. Explain how God has satisfied the hunger and thirst in your own life.
2. Do you think that God hears our vain repetitions? Does He answer them?
3. Can a disciple of Jesus say, "I cannot forgive that brother because his offense was too great?" What happens to us if we do not forgive our brother?
4. Is it bad to be rich? Why is it dangerous (especially for a Christian)?

Lesson 6

The Formation Of The Disciple Through The Teachings Of Jesus (Part 3)

Objective: To continue to identify character qualities of Jesus that should become the qualities of character of the disciple.

1. In this lesson you will learn about the qualities in the life of Jesus that should also become the qualities of character of a disciple, as explained in the last beatitudes and in the last part of the Sermon on the Mount. Read Matthew 5:9. Who shall be called the children of God? _____ . Today there are conflicts between nations, neighbors and sometimes even between brothers. The disciple who knows how to be a peacemaker should have a great ministry. There are many books and courses about human relations. Who do you think should be the best peacemakers? _____ .
2. Read Matthew 7:1,2. If we are quick to judge others, we will also be _____ . It is very human to judge others with hard judgment while being very easy on ourselves. But according to the teachings of Jesus, all of us will be measured with the same _____ . Generally, in the world there is one standard of justice for persons of high social or economic rank, and another for the people who are poor and underprivileged. Can a real peacemaker acknowledge different standards of justice in this way? _____ . Why? _____ .
3. Read Matthew 7:3-5. How funny it would be to see a man with a big beam in his eye trying to do the delicate work of taking _____ out of another man's eye! Is it wrong to try to get a speck out of your brother's eye? _____ . But what should we do first? _____ .
Many times the problems that are most evident and which we condemn the most in the lives of others, are the same problems that we ourselves have. The peacemaker straightens out his own life first before correcting others.
4. Read Matthew 7:6. Do you think that pigs would be careful with precious pearls? _____ . Why? _____ .
Although we must be careful not to misjudge others, verse 5 clearly teaches that we also use discernment. There are things so holy and precious that we should not throw them before those who will tear them apart and trample them underfoot. In those days there were religious people who blasphemed the work of the Holy Spirit by saying that Jesus cast out devils by the power of the devil (Beelzebub). With whom should we share our deep and precious experiences in the Lord? _____ .

5. Read Matthew 5:10. The people of the world would say, "Blessed are the popular ones," but Jesus announces: *Blessed are they who are* _____ *for* _____. There are many who suffer as a consequence of their own unrighteousness, but relatively few who suffer for righteousness' sake. Paul wrote that those who will live godly in this world shall suffer persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12) For many Christians today, the Christian life is very comfortable, and so they usually try to avoid any kind of persecution. Why is there less persecution today than in Jesus' day? _____. Do you know of some persecution today? Explain: _____
6. Read Matthew 7:7-12. Those who suffer persecution must maintain an intimate relationship with their Heavenly Father. God is ready to give to those who _____. Would you as a father (or mother) give your hungry child a stone or a snake? _____. Are you trusting in the kindness of your Heavenly Father? _____. According to verse 12, what is the summary of the law and the prophets? _____
7. Read Matthew 7:13,14. He who suffers unjust persecution hopes for the day when the Supreme Judge will judge all things rightly. It seems strange, but on the way of salvation, there are _____, while on the way that leads to perdition, there are _____. Thus the persecuted one can be assured of life eternal, even though all around him there are many on the way to perdition.
8. Read Matthew 5:11,12. The disciples are blessed and happy when people speak evil of them falsely. According to verse 12, what should be their reaction to this? _____.
Read Matthew 7:15-19 also. Religious liars are those false prophets who wear sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are _____. How can you tell if a tree is good or not? _____. And how can you recognize a false prophet? _____.
9. Read Matthew 7:21-23. Another kind of liar is the one who does everything except obey the will of God. He will say, *Lord, Lord*, giving the idea that he is under the lordship of Christ. He would even do great wonders in the powerful name of Jesus. Is it wrong to prophesy, cast out demons and do miracles? _____. It is wrong, however, to do things in the name of Christ without being willing to do the _____ of the Father who is in heaven.
10. Now read the last paragraph of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:24-29. In this paragraph we see the proof of a true disciple. The wise man is one who hears these teachings and _____ them. The foolish man is the one who hears the words but _____

What happened to the wise man's house? _____ . And to the foolish man's house? _____ .

Group Activities

1. How can a disciple be a peacemaker in homes, communities and nations?
2. Do we have a message of peace for the nations? What is it?
3. In the past there have been violent forms of persecution. What is the form that persecution takes in our time?
4. What are the teachings of the false prophets of our times?
5. The mighty works of God are good, but what is the proof of a true disciple?

Lesson 7

The Formation Of The Disciple Through Human Relationships

Objective: Discover the attitudes that characterize a disciple in his relationships with others.

1. The disciple in Jesus' training program had to learn to live with others. Jesus gathered twelve men who were very different in their character and disposition. Peter was very impulsive, and expressed his opinions readily. John was more quiet, but very devoted to his Master. Thomas always wanted firm reasons upon which to base his faith. The disciples were like a laboratory of human relations in which persons, very different one from the other, had to learn to live together. Why do you think it was necessary that the disciples lived and worked together? _____
_____.
2. The disciples had to work together in order to acquire correct attitudes in their relationships with others. As they traveled as a group with Jesus, each disciple was forming attitudes that were more Christian. Do you remember how the disciples argued about who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God? Jesus told them that they must have the humility and simplicity of a child to be great in heaven. The kingdom of heaven is made up of the "poor in spirit." What attitude is essential (most necessary) in living with others? _____.
3. Humility is essential to obey God and live with others. It was not easy for the disciples to learn humility. Read Matthew 20:20-28. Even the mother of two of the disciples wanted Jesus to command that her sons be seated, one on the _____ and the other on the _____ with _____ when Jesus came into His kingdom. When the other disciples heard this, they were _____ with _____. Jesus explained that in earthly kingdoms, those who are great exercise authority over the rest, but among the disciples, the rule would be: *Whoever will be chief among you,* _____
_____.
4. The disciple is to be a servant because Jesus came to serve and even to _____ for many. Jesus is the best example of good human relationships. He lived to give Himself to others. The essence of Christian love is to give yourself for others. The essence of love in the world is to get something for yourself. From beginning to end, discipleship consists of this Christian love. At the beginning, Peter left his nets to follow Jesus, but yet at the end of His time with the disciples, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than his fishing nets. What is the nature of worldly

- love? _____ . What is the nature of Christian love? _____ .
5. Christian love is not just an abstract essence, but is very practical. The disciples had to practice love toward their Master and toward others. Christian love has its first loyalty to Christ. The disciple seeks first the kingdom of God. Read Matthew 19:27-29. Obeying Christ can mean leaving family and possessions, but Christ promises that such persons will receive _____ times _____. Christ also promises that those who have followed Him shall sit _____. The apostle Paul taught that those who suffer with Christ shall also _____ with Him.
 6. Although a disciple is willing to leave his family to follow the Lord, this does not mean that the disciple does not value human relationships. Read Matthew 18:6-9. The disciple must be very careful not to _____ the little ones (children). The little ones, according to Matthew 18:5, refers to the children who follow the example of adults. The faithful disciple will influence people more by his example than even by his teaching. A good example is the best testimony of a disciple, and the bad testimony of someone who pretends to be a disciple is the _____ example.
 7. The disciple also has the responsibility to try to bring back those who have strayed away from the Lord. Read Matthew 18:10-14. When a brother wanders away from the path of discipleship, many times it is natural to condemn him severely. But according to verse 12, the disciple who follows the example of his Master will _____ the lost one. And when he finds him, will he reprove him? _____. Instead, there is more _____ over him than for those who did not stray away.
 8. The disciples should rejoice when a brother who has strayed away comes back to the path of discipleship. This is only possible if the other disciples have learned to forgive. Read Matthew 18:15-19. There are three steps to reconciliation mentioned here. The first is to tell him his fault, being _____. Do we practice this? _____. Do we more often go and tell others about it? _____. If the first step is not successful, only then should we take the second step to take _____ to serve as witnesses. If he does not hear, the third step is to tell it to the church. What is the purpose of talking to the brother—to reconcile with him or to excommunicate him? _____ .
 9. The disciple does everything in his power to bring about reconciliation, and only when he has exhausted all three possibilities without getting the desired results will he consider the brother irreconcilable and out of communion. A very small congregation can enjoy the presence of Jesus. Read Matthew 18:20-22. Is Jesus always present in a congregation of two

or three? _____. They should be congregated in the _____ of _____. This means that the congregation of disciples think and act following the example of Jesus. The one who follows the example of Jesus is willing to forgive until _____ times _____.

10. This congregation of disciples also participated in the Lord's Supper. Read Matthew 26:26-29. The supper serves to remind us how Jesus maintained the communal life of the disciples. Also, this supper announces that His blood would be shed for the remission of _____. So the last supper symbolizes His sufferings here on earth, and His future triumph in the presence of God the Father.

11. It is clear that Jesus desired that discipleship continue by means of Christian communion. The Christian community later grew and reached many people. So even though our church grows, it is urgent that there are close relationships with groups of two or three gathered in His name. How can the church of today maintain the closeness of small groups? _____

Group Activities

1. What is the difference between being great in the world and in discipleship? What is the difference between worldly love and the love of Christ?
2. How should we deal with those who have stopped following the Lord in discipleship?
3. Explain in your own words the practical way to experience Matthew 18:15-19. What are very common faults in practicing this?
4. What are the advantages of small groups of Christians? What are the advantages of services that are well attended?

Lesson 8

The Practice Of Discipleship In Relation To The World

Objective: Find the attitude of Jesus and His disciples in relations with the world.

1. The disciples of Jesus had to learn a lot about their relationship with the world. At first, their attitudes were not good. Read Luke 9:51-56. When the people did not want to receive them, what did the disciples want to do?
_____. Jesus rebuked them because He did not come to destroy lives but to _____.
2. Jesus also ate with sinners and publicans. The religious people were astonished at His actions. Read Matthew 9:10-13. Jesus Christ had not come to call the _____ but the _____ to repentance. If a person only visits the righteous people, he will not be able to reach sinners with the Gospel. In order to see sinners reached and won to the Lord, it is necessary to _____.
3. Jesus also dealt with the religious leaders. In Matthew 23 Jesus pointed out the hypocrisy of those who pretended to serve God. Read Matthew 23:1-3. The problem was that they said, but did not _____, the commandments. Jesus called them whited sepulchers, full of dead men's bones. But in order to understand the attitude of Jesus, read Matthew 23:37. Did Jesus want to condemn them or save them? The heart of Jesus felt redemptive love for these lost religionists, but their own rebellion had brought desolation to their houses.
4. Perhaps you could think that Jesus would talk nice to the religious people and condemn the sinners, but on various occasions, Jesus showed great compassion to the sinners who came to Him. For an example read Luke 7:36,37. Jesus was in the home of a _____, but He praised more the actions of a sinner woman. Jesus made it clear that he who has been forgiven little loves little; but he who has been forgiven much loves _____.
5. Jesus even took the opportunities He had to testify to civil authorities. Even though He knew that Pilate was going to give Him over to be crucified, Jesus told him that all authority of a government has been permitted by God. Read John 19:11. In the same manner, Jesus declared in John 18:36 that His kingdom was not of this world, and for that reason, His followers would not fight. Jesus the King was willing to suffer at the hands of the authorities of this world's kingdom. If the Master is willing to suffer, the disciple should be ready to _____.

6. Jesus tried to teach His disciples about suffering. Several times he talked to them in regard to future persecution. The disciples were sent out as sheep in the midst of ravenous wolves. (Matthew 10:16) Peter did not want to accept the message of suffering. Read Matthew 16:21-24. But Peter's attitude was not inspired by God, but the _____ . Jesus said, *If any man will come after me, _____ himself, and take up his _____ and _____* . Do you think taking up your cross means hanging a cross around your neck? _____ . What does it mean to take up your cross? Explain. _____ .
7. Although a disciple takes up his cross of suffering, this does not mean that he would forget his first loyalty to Christ his Master. When the question in regard to paying tribute arose, Jesus pointed out the difference between the two kingdoms. Read Matthew 22:17-22. What should we give to Caesar? _____ . What should we give to God? _____ .
8. Jesus wisely answered a very delicate question. In every age of history, disciples have had to learn what belongs to Caesar, and what belongs to God. It is clear that God has one function, and Caesar has another. The disciples learned later that even the civil authorities were subject to God. (Romans 13) In all of this, the apostles always reserved their first loyalty to God. But in moments of conflict, the disciples chose the way of suffering. What should we do when the authorities command us to do something that is contrary to the will of God? _____ .
9. Jesus also taught regarding events between nations in the future. Read Matthew 24:3-14. The disciples wanted to know what was going to happen. In the future the nations will suffer many calamities. Make a list of the calamities mentioned in verses 6 and 7. _____ .
 _____ .
 But there will also be evangelistic activities. According to verse 14, *This _____ shall be preached _____ for a _____ unto all nations; and then shall _____ come.*
10. In this way Jesus prophesied the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in all of the world. The disciple is in the world to testify to the world. Even the last words of the Lord Jesus expressed the mandate of a mission to the world. Read Matthew 28:18-20. Who has all power in the earth? _____ . For this reason, the disciples should go and _____ to all _____ .
11. The nations of the world should be the object of the command to make disciples. In a hostile world, the consecrated disciple preaches the gospel of the kingdom in order to make more disciples. In the command of Jesus,

there are several action words. *Therefore* _____ *and* _____ *disciples,* _____ *in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* Also, the disciples were to _____ them to observe all things that Jesus had commanded. While the disciples are doing this, Jesus promises to be with them unto the _____ of the _____ .

Group Activities

1. What mistake were the disciples making when they wanted to call down fire on those who opposed their preaching of the gospel?
2. Why do you think that Jesus dealt so severely with the religious leaders and so gently with known sinners?
3. What can we do as disciples of Jesus when the civil authorities command us to do that which is contrary to the will of God?
4. What is the commission to the nations that Jesus left with His disciples?

Lesson 9

The Reproduction And Formation Of Disciples

Objective: Show the steps that Jesus took to make each of His disciples fruitful.

1. From the time that Jesus chose His disciples, His purpose was clear. You will remember when Jesus said, *Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*. The words “follow me,” spoken by Jesus speak of the formation of a disciple by means of being in the presence of Jesus, hearing His teachings and having a relationship with Jesus. In the last few words of this statement, Jesus said He would make them to be fishers of men. To become fishers of men meant making other disciples, or reproduction. Stated briefly, Jesus was making disciples of them so that they would make other disciples. What would happen if a person without training would try to make disciples? _____ .
2. Naturally he would tend to make another disciple who had not been trained. It is possible at times for a disciple with little formation, by the grace of God, to produce a disciple who is well formed. But generally, a disciple will produce another disciple more or less just like himself. And there is another extreme. There are those who think of discipleship only as formation or training, without thinking of reproduction. Such persons are eloquent in their exposition of obedience, the cross, and the cost of discipleship, but they speak nothing of the importance of reproduction. What would happen if we put all of our effort into the formation of disciples and nothing into the reproducing of disciples? _____ .
3. Naturally, the result would be that after a time there would be no more disciples because the well-trained disciples would die, and if they have not reproduced themselves in others, there would be no more disciples. But there cannot be a contradiction between formation and reproduction. If a disciple is really formed as a true follower of Jesus, he will naturally make new disciples. Also, if a disciple wants to reproduce true disciples, he himself must be a faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. In clear words, to be a disciple means making disciples. A mature disciple should _____ new disciples, and to do this he must be a _____ .
4. Now this does not mean that the disciple must wait until his formation is completed before he can make disciples for Jesus. Our formation will not be complete until Christ is manifested. (1 John 3:2) Instead, the disciple is reproducing himself all the time that he himself is being trained and formed. Let us look at some examples. According to John 1, Andrew began

- to follow Jesus, and very soon after, he brought his brother Peter to Jesus. Read Matthew 10:1,7. As the first disciples were being trained, they were testifying to others. A part of their training and formation was to go out and preach. What is one way in which a disciple can make progress in his formation? _____ .
5. Their participation in evangelistic trips help them to be better disciples. We can see that if the disciples would have left off the work of evangelism, we would know nothing about the gospel of the kingdom of God today. It is clear to us that the formation and reproduction are inseparable. Keep in mind the command of the Lord in Matthew 28. We must make disciples, but the work of making disciples includes the task of teaching them all that Jesus taught. Many times there are churches that are weak because they have placed evangelism above everything else and have failed to teach discipleship. Does your congregation show signs of this problem? _____ . Explain _____ .
6. Now we are going to look at the instructions that Jesus gave about the reproduction of disciples. Read Matthew 10:5,6. Jesus sent them first to the Jewish people. The disciples also were Jews. A disciple should begin to make disciples among his own people. There are always persons with whom we have some contact. Remember how Andrew brought his own brother. You have family and friends. Who among your family and friends are not disciples of Jesus? _____ . What should you do then? _____ .
7. You can disciple these persons with whom you have contact. You must not think that only the pastor or preacher needs to do that. Read Matthew 10:11. In this way, a family in a town was identified with the Gospel, and represented the Gospel even after the disciple had left for other places. Do you know of churches that started in a home? _____ . Sometimes the church grows and we should not wait until the people can go to the temple. What are we to do when the work keeps growing? _____ .
8. There is another important point in Jesus' instructions. Read Matthew 10:14. If some do not want to receive our message, what should we do? _____ . We should think of the advantage of these instructions. That way the disciples could give their time to receptive people. Jesus did not command us to work without seeing any results. But as we mentioned before, disciples can be the objects of persecution. Read Matthew 10:16. Disciples should be as wise as _____ and as harmless as _____ .
9. There are times when the gospel brings division. Read Matthew 10:34-39. The gospel of the kingdom is revolutionary, and he that loves father and mother more than he loves Jesus is not _____ of Jesus. To take up the cross means to love Jesus supremely and above all else, and

- have everything else as secondary. Life eternal has the greatest value. Who saves his life? _____ .
 Who loses his life? _____ .
10. We must recognize the importance and value of discipleship. Read Matthew 10:40-42. A faithful disciple is a representative of Christ. Those who receive a disciple are receiving _____. Even giving a drink of cold water to a disciple will not lose its _____. Serving as a representative of Jesus is a high privilege and should not be taken lightly. This would seem to say that if a family received a disciple into their home, it would be expected that this family would be disciples. How many homes are open to your visits? _____. Have you begun to disciple these families? _____ .
11. Even though not all homes are ready to be disciples, there are towns and villages that are ready to receive this message. Read Matthew 13:1-9. Not all ground produces fruit. But *there was ground that brought forth, a _____, some _____ and some _____*. A good farmer sows more and harvests more from fertile ground. Of the towns and villages that you know about, which are the most receptive to the gospel? _____. Among the people that you know, which are the most receptive? _____ .

Group Activities

1. Is it healthy for a congregation if the pastor talks only about obedience and taking up the cross to follow Christ? What is lacking?
2. Where should each disciple begin evangelizing? Why?
3. Is it wise to waste a lot of time evangelizing people who reject the Gospel? Why do you answer in this way?

Lesson 10

The Reproduction Of Disciples

Objective: Learn more about the steps Jesus took to develop His disciples in this way.

- In the previous lesson, you began to study the parable of the sower and the seed and the four kinds of ground. Read now the interpretation of this parable in Matthew 13:18-23. Make a list of the result of sowing in different types of earth, comparing them with people's attitudes.
—Sown by the wayside— _____ hears _____ and does not _____ .
—Sown on stony places—he that receives the Word with _____ but has no _____ in himself and _____ only a while.
—Sown among thorns—the _____ of this world and the _____ of riches _____ the Word.
—Sown in good ground—he who _____ the Word and _____ it and bears _____ .
The wise sower of the Word of God should know how to analyze the ground he is sowing. Where should we sow and cultivate most?
_____ .
- The parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13:24-30 teaches us that the kingdom of God exists in an evil world until the day of final judgment when the tares will be burned. Read Matthew 13:31-33. Here there are two parables about growth. The tiny mustard seed grows to become a _____ . Thus a small group of reproducing disciples can grow into a large group of disciples. Also, in verse 33, we find the effect of leaven. Almost always in the Bible, and especially for the Jews, leaven meant a bad influence. (See Matthew 16:5.) This also indicates that evil influences will increase in the future. The meaning of the prophecy that Jesus gave in Matthew 24 is that the conflict between evil and good will intensify in the future. What does leaven mean in the Bible? _____ .
- The value of the kingdom of God is expressed in two parables. Read Matthew 13:44-46. What did the man do who found the treasure? _____ . What did the merchant do who found the pearl of great price? _____ . On various occasions Jesus spoke about the value of discipleship. What should we do when we find eternal life? _____ .
- We do not have space here to point out all the teachings of the parables of Jesus. But the principal teachings are clear: God's work will grow, but it will

grow in the midst of growing evil; and in spite of the conflict between good and evil, it always is worth the cost to follow Jesus. This is affirmed by His other teachings about the cost of discipleship. The value of discipleship is such that the disciples have the responsibility to share their lives with others. All of this teaches us something positive and something negative. The positive is that we should strive for the growth of God's work, and the negative side is that we must be aware of the fact that evil is going to increase also. What is the responsibility of a Christian in the face of this situation? _____.

5. All of this implies that we must have the power of God in order to conquer. Read Matthew 16:15-18. Peter confessed that Jesus is the _____ , the _____ of the _____ God. This confession forms the basis of faith for disciples of all ages. God uses His disciples to build a _____ and the gates of _____ shall not _____ against it. This is a church triumphant over all the forces of evil. Jesus was not applauding Peter for saying this, or saying that He would build His church on Peter. In Matthew 16:23, Peter served as a messenger of Satan, and in the epistles that Peter wrote, he declares clearly that Jesus is the cornerstone. (1Peter 2:4-6) But every believer is a living stone. (When we speak of the church, we should not always think of the visible church of today as being necessarily the kingdom of God.)
6. So the church that is built upon Christ, but made up of His disciples, will be triumphant in the midst of a hostile world. This work would not be possible without the help of the Holy Spirit. Read John 14:16,17. The Comforter will be with the disciples _____. Jesus said the disciples, by the power of the Holy Spirit, would do the works that Jesus did, and _____ works. (See John 14:12.)
7. But to be able to produce more fruit, we must maintain an intimate relationship with Jesus. Read John 15:1-5. Who is the vine? _____. Who are the branches? _____. How is the fruit produced? _____. The disciple can continue to produce fruit only if he continues to be united to the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Vine. The believer who vacillates in his faithfulness will not produce much fruit. Instead the brethren will have to take a lot of time to encourage him, and they will not be able to devote as much time to the new believers and to evangelism. Think about it. Are you a disciple abiding permanently in Christ, and so producing fruit? _____. If not, think about what you can do.
8. The fruit that God desires is two-fold. First, the fruit of the Spirit in us, (Galatians 5:22,23), and then the reproducing of new disciples. Jesus knew that the continuation of His work would depend upon what God did through His disciples who made other disciples. He saw the fields ready for the harvest. Read Matthew 9:36-38. *The harvest is* _____.

but the _____ are _____. What is the solution to this? _____. We should pray that God will send forth laborers. But whom shall He send?

9. Jesus sent His own disciples. Read John 20:21,22. *As the Father _____ me, I _____ you.* Who will be sent? _____. If you are a disciple of Jesus, you are a sent disciple. On this same occasion, Jesus told them the importance of receiving the Holy Spirit.
10. Only with the help of the Holy Spirit was it possible for the disciples to continue the work of Christ. Read Luke 24:49. Until when were they to stay in Jerusalem? _____

_____ .
What would have happened if the disciples had tried to do the work of the Lord without the power of the Holy Spirit? _____. These last words of Jesus are very important because they are the link that connects the ministry of Jesus with the work of the apostles in the Book of Acts. Read Acts 1:4-8. The disciples waited in prayer for the fulfillment of the promise Jesus had given them. On the day of Pentecost, they received power to witness in _____, and in _____ and _____, and to the _____ .

Group Activities

1. In the parables of Jesus about the “treasure” and the “pearl of great price,” what do you think this means?
2. Who is the chief cornerstone of the church? Who are the other living stones in this spiritual house (the church)?
3. What happens to the branch (disciple) that does not produce fruit?
4. What did the disciples have to do to receive power? Then, what must we do to have power to witness?

Lesson 11

What Is The Church?

Many people have an idea of what the church is. Some of these ideas are correct, but others are wrong. It is important to see what the Bible says about the church.

I. What Many People Think:

1. Many people think that the church is a building. A cathedral or an impressive temple attracts their attention. So there are great quantities of money invested in such religious edifices. At least the building remains as a souvenir of the efforts of its builder. Do you think that the church is a material object such as a building? _____ .
2. Some people think that the church consists of a group of religious leaders. When they speak about the church, they are thinking about the ministers, the priests, the bishops, pastors and deacons. Then when these leaders do not function as they should, it is easy to criticize and say, "The church is dead," or "I do not like what the church does." Do you think the church is just a group of religious leaders? _____ . Give your reason for your answer. _____ .
3. Then there are others who think of the church as a social club. The people who meet there consider that the church is merely a social function. So the people must be entertained and pleased. And the people go expecting to receive something that will be a pleasant pastime. When the church does not fulfill what they have expected in this way, they cease to attend. Do you believe that the church should meet social needs for its people? _____ . Do you believe that the church is only a social function? _____ .
4. As a result of all these ideas, many consider the church as a place to observe others. They can look at the building and make comments about it. They can see and hear the leaders, and give their opinion about whether they are doing what they should be doing. Also, they can examine everyone else in order to be able to say whether this one looks nice, or the other does not appeal to them. Is it true that the church of Jesus Christ exists so that we can be observers of each other? _____ . Now, what is the church, according to your way of thinking? _____ .
_____ .

II. What the Bible Says:

1. The Bible does not teach that the church is a building, but that it is like a building. Many times the early church had no special building in which to

meet. Many times the church met in homes, in schools or in the open air. Nevertheless, the apostle Paul compares the church to a building.

According to 1 Corinthians 3:11, the foundation of the church is _____.

Also, according to 1 Peter 2:5, the followers of Christ are as living stones that should be built as a _____.

So the church is _____ a building, but is _____ a building.

2. Neither does the Bible teach that the church is a group of religious leaders, but that it is a group of persons who unite to worship and serve God. As we read in 1 Peter 2:9, the church is a chosen generation, a _____ a _____ nation, God's _____ people, called to _____ the praises of Him who called us out of _____ into His _____. So we see that the church does not consist of the clergy, but of priesthood that includes all of God's people.
3. The Bible does not teach that the church is a social club, but the church does have a social aspect. According to Ephesians 2:19, we who are of the church are members of the _____ of God. Many times the father of a family starts a church in his house with the members of his own family. Paul sent greetings to the church that met in the home of Priscilla and Aquila. (Romans 16:5) The advance of the gospel did not have to wait for the construction of expensive buildings because most of the time the church met in homes. Also, the "family" church took care of the needs of the members. (Galatians 6:10) Do you believe that the gospel would grow faster using homes as meeting places? _____.
4. In addition, the Bible teaches us that the church is the Bride of Christ. Marriage is the most intimate of all human relations. Read Ephesians 5:25-27. Husbands are to love their wives as _____ loves the _____, and gave _____ for it, that He might _____ and _____ it with the _____ of water by the _____, that He might present it to Himself a _____ church without _____ or _____. In the book of Revelation, the wedding supper of the Lamb is mentioned, when the church that has been faithful will be united forever with Christ. So we see that the church is not a social club, but is the family of God, and even the Bride of Christ.
5. The Bible does not teach that the church is a place where we observe one another, but a place of interaction among all. One of the best descriptions of the church is that it is the body of Christ. Colossians 1:18 tells us that Christ is the _____ of the body, the _____, . . . that in all things He may have the _____. Also, Romans 12:5 says that we being many, are one body, and _____ one of the other. In 1 Corinthians 12:12 Paul uses the human body as an

illustration: *For as the body is _____ and has many members . . . so also is Christ.* So it is expected that each member will actively participate in the functions of the body. In the same way, the members of the church are not to be observers but participants.

III. Summary

Many think that the church is: a building, a clergy composed of religious leaders, a social club or a place to observe others.

But the Bible teaches us that the church is like a spiritual building with Christ as the foundation, and the followers of Christ as living stones in the walls. It also teaches that the members of the church form a royal priesthood to worship God and proclaim Christ to the world. The church does have a social aspect since it is the family of God, and is the Bride of Christ that is being purified and made ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Lastly, the church is the body of Christ, with Christ as the head, and with each member functioning actively and in unity with the other members.

Group Activities

1. Have a chalkboard at hand. Various members of the class may draw representations of the church in figures, such as a building, a family, as an engaged couple and a human body. Try to identify the meaning of each part of the figure.
2. What are the characteristics of a church that is organized and directed by human ideas? Of a church directed by Christ as the Head?
3. Do you believe that church should be established in homes in your community? Which of families that you know would you be ready to visit?

Lesson 12

Characteristics Of The Church

You have studied that the church is like a building, is priesthood, is a family, a bride and a body. In this lesson, look for the meaning of these illustrations. In other words, we are going to study the characteristics of the church.

I. The Characteristics of the Church as a Building

1. You remember that the foundation of the church is Christ, and its members are like living stones. We need to investigate further the meaning of this illustration. Read 1 Corinthians 3:11-13. A good building needs to be built with quality materials. In verse 12, we note that there are durable materials such as _____, _____ and _____ stones. Good materials are those that can endure the test of fire. If the members of the church are living stones in this building, it seems that Paul means that there are believers who are not durable material. When the tests come, they do not endure. Do you know of believers who have not followed the Lord faithfully? _____. What should be done for them?
_____ .
2. Many churches have had members who have not continued faithfully. Perhaps they have failed because they had a mistaken concept of what the church is. Some have left off looking to Christ as the Head of the church, and have begun to see the faults of the church leaders. Some have thought that the church is only a place to receive spiritual blessings and material benefits, but they have forgotten that each member is to serve in the church. So we see that we need to orientate them better so that they will be durable members. Also read 1 Corinthians 3:16,17. The temple of God is to be a dwelling place for the _____. So we must not only receive the Lord, but give Him a dwelling place in our heart. What is the difference between persons who only expect to receive and those who are willing to give? _____ .

II. The Characteristics of the Church as Priesthood

1. We learned from 1 Peter 2:9 that the church is a priesthood. A priest is one who enters the presence of God to be reconciled with God and to worship and serve God. In the Old Testament, the priesthood was among a select group, but now Jesus has given every person access to the presence of God. Should the church be divided between the clergy and the lay people? _____. Who forms the church? _____ .

2. The priests offered sacrifices for their own sins and also for the sins of the people. Peter tells us that we are to proclaim the praises of Christ to all other people. Many church members do not think of their priestly ministry toward people who are still outside the church. In what way could each church member be a priest in his own community? _____

III. The Characteristics of the Church as a Family

1. One becomes part of a family either by birth or by adoption. The Bible teaches that to become part of the family of God we must be _____ . (John 3:7) Also, in other places in the Bible we are told that we are adopted into the family of God. Many people repeat what we call the Lord's Prayer, or Our Father, but to have the right to call God our Father, we must become His children. Read John 1:12. Who has the right to become children of God, or members of His family? Those who _____ Him, and _____ in His name. Thus the church is composed of persons who have been born again.
2. Persons who are born of the same father are brothers. For this reason, the church is a brotherhood. Read Galatians 6:10. *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us _____ especially to those who are of the _____ of faith.* In what way should Christians help one another? _____ .

IV. The Characteristics of the Church as the Bride of Christ

1. Paul tells us that the church is as His bride. (Ephesians 5:25-27) Christ loves the church and wants to sanctify it. Today it seems difficult to find many sanctified churches, but all the while Christ is purifying persons who will be part of His glorious church. Jesus is the Lamb of God and is ready to take away the sins _____. (John 1:29) Read Revelation 19:7. The day will come for the _____ of the Lamb, and His _____ has made herself ready. Read verse 2 of the same chapter. The opposite of a prepared bride is a harlot. It says that the great _____ has corrupted the earth with her _____. The harlot is the unfaithful church who sins with the kings of the earth. (Revelation 17:1,2) According to the Bible, in the last days there will be the faithful church which Christ will receive as His bride, and the unfaithful church that will be like a harlot who loves the kings of this earth. The faithful church will be the _____ and the unfaithful church as a _____ .
2. The purifying of the church as the bride of Christ will not be completed until Christ presents her unto Himself as a glorious church without spot or

wrinkle. Even now Christ wants to purify the members of His church to prepare them for the marriage supper of the Lamb. What attitudes and practices exist in the church of today that you believe the Lord wants to take away as He purifies His church? _____

V. The Characteristics of the Church as a Body

1. A body has a head that directs it and coordinates all the movements of the body. The church as a body is subject to _____ who is the Head. Since Christ is preeminent and sovereign, we as members of His body should be _____ to Him. Our first loyalty is not to religious leaders but to Christ. Many Christians take Jesus as their Saviour, but they have never allowed Him to be Lord of their lives. What does it mean to have Jesus Christ as Lord of your life? _____
2. A body has many members, and each member helps the other. Each member needs the other members of the body. All the parts of our body are active, unless they are ill. How does a sick member of the church usually act? _____. How does a healthy member act? _____. Since the body of Christ has so many members, it cannot be limited to one group or denomination. How can we show that the body of Christ is not limited to our denomination? _____.

Group Activities

1. What are some reasons why some members withdraw from the body?
2. How can the other members succeed in drawing near to these?
3. How can we more effectively practice the priesthood of all believers?
4. How can we as believers help the needy without creating a dependency on the part of those we help materially? What is mutual help?
5. What are some of the characteristics of a church that is faithful to Christ? Are we correct in thinking that every so-called "church" is faithful to Christ? Is there a danger of including that which Christ does not include? _____. Should we allow the unfaithfulness of others to make us cold and indifferent in our own faithfulness? _____. Who will be the final judge? _____.

Lesson 13

The Head Of The Body

The church is the body of Christ. A body must have a head to direct and coordinate its actions. In this lesson we will study the role of Christ as the Head of the Church.

I. The Position of Christ

1. There are various references in the Bible that mention Christ as the head of the body. Read Ephesians 1:22. The risen Christ is above all principality and power and might and dominion and He has put all things under His _____. In Ephesians 4:15 we are told that we may grow up in all things into Him who is the head— _____, and according to verse 16, the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, will be united. If Christ is recognized as the head, then the members of the body will work together unitedly. How can we practice more unity in the body? _____.
2. In Colossians 1 it tells us that Christ is the creator and sustainer of all things. According to verse 18, He is the head of the body, _____, that in all things He may have the _____. From His place of preeminence He can reconcile all things unto Himself. Also in Colossians 2:10 it says that we are _____ in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. In other words, when Christ is preeminent in our lives, then we are complete in Him. There are those who think that the way to be complete is being rebellious and individualistic, but according to the Bible, how can we be complete? _____.
3. The Bible also teaches that Jesus is the good shepherd and His flock is the church. Read John 10:4. The shepherd goes before the sheep and the sheep _____ him for they know his voice. At other times, the Bible speaks of Christ as the Teacher and his followers as disciples. In summary, the position of Christ is the _____ of the body, the _____ of the flock, and the _____ of His disciples.

II. The Example of Christ

1. Christ gained His position through obedience and suffering. Read Philippians 2:5-8. Paul exhorts us to have the same _____ in us, which was also in Christ. Many times the people in the world win their position by means of force and violence, but Jesus went even to the cross before being exalted. If Jesus was so submissive to His father, it should

- not be hard for us to submit to Him. Each member of the body of Christ should let Christ be supreme in his life. How did Jesus gain His exalted position? _____ .
2. In His obedience, Christ ministered to the varied needs of humanity. Read Luke 4:18,19. He preached the gospel to the _____ , healed the _____ , preached deliverance to the _____ and _____ of sight to the _____ , and set at liberty those who are _____ . It is sad when the church only concerns itself about our future salvation. Jesus presented the complete gospel for the entire man. With Christ as the Head of the church, the members follow His example. What should the ministry of the church involve? _____ .
3. In the philosophy of modern man, spiritual matters are separated from material matters. But Jesus made no such division. Read Matthew 4:23. Jesus went about all Galilee, _____ in their synagogues, _____ the gospel of the kingdom, and _____ all kinds of sickness and disease among the people. Jesus was known as a man mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. (Luke 24:19)
4. So we see that the ministry of Jesus combined the spoken word and deeds. In today's world, we hear a lot of empty words, but Jesus incorporated the fulfillment of His promises with His words. This agreement between His words and His deeds gave authority to His ministry. Today's church faces the task of following the footsteps of the Master. How can the church of today manifest a ministry like that of Jesus? _____ .

III. The Obedience of the Disciples

1. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus called His disciples. Read Matthew 4:19. Jesus said to them, *Follow _____ , and I will make you fishers of _____* . If they were willing to follow Him, as a result, they would be changed to be like their Master. Coming to Jesus was only the beginning of the process of discipleship, which would last several years. This call to discipleship has an evangelistic function. Compare Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15. Many believers do not understand that when they are saved by the grace of God, they start out on the way of discipleship. What is the relation between evangelism and discipleship? _____ .
2. The disciples observed the ministry of Jesus. They saw his works and heard His words. Later they testified that they could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard. (Acts 4:20) Read Matthew 10:25. The

- disciple should be like his _____ and a servant like his _____ . Discipleship is a process by which the character of the disciple progressively assumes the character of his teacher. It is clear that if the teacher is mighty in words and deeds, it is to be expected that the disciple also will be mighty in _____ and _____ .
3. Jesus' discipling was not limited to academic theories, but was carried out in actions in real life. Read Matthew 10:1,5. Jesus gave them authority and sent them out to work. What will be the result when students only learn theories of ministry in the classroom? _____ . How can we succeed in getting Christian training that is training in discipleship also? _____ .

IV. Summary

1. The position of Christ in the universe is that of Creator, Sustainer and Lord. In relation to the church, Christ is the Head of the _____ , Shepherd of the _____ and Teacher of His _____ .
2. Jesus attained this position through obedience. He ministered in obedience to the varied needs of humanity. In His character was incorporated His teachings and His works. The agreement of His words with His works constituted the authority of His ministry. For Jesus there was no separation between the material and the spiritual.

Group Activities

1. How can we, as members of the body, be complete in ourselves and united in the body? Consider the individual and the collective aspects of this.
2. How can the body of Christ of today have a ministry that is complete and powerful such as that exemplified by Jesus?
3. How can Christian educational organizations meet the challenge of Christian discipleship?
4. What is the relation between discipleship and evangelism?

Lesson 14

Spiritual Gifts

In many places there is controversy in regard to spiritual gifts. It is important to study the Bible in order to know the place and correct use of the gifts. The gifts should contribute to the edification of the body of Christ.

I. General Considerations

1. Paul did not want the members of the church in Corinth to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1,2. They knew well how they were carried away to idolatry before their conversion to Christ, but now as believers it was important that they knew the proper use of the gifts of God's Spirit. There are two steps in understanding the gifts: (1) know what the Bible teaches, and (2) know the proper use of the gifts by practice. In your way of thinking, is it possible that believers today are ignorant concerning spiritual gifts? _____ .
2. Read verse 3 carefully. It is possible that at times the believers in Corinth had heard supernaturally inspired utterances that did not glorify Jesus. Verse 2 indicates that it is possible to be carried away by a spirit that is not the Spirit of God. For this reason Paul affirms the close relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit and the lordship of Christ. When Christ is Lord of our life, then the Spirit will have liberty in our life. Also it is clear that the Holy Spirit will glorify _____ .
3. Read verse 7. It is God's plan and purpose that spiritual gifts should be for all the members of His body and not just a select group. Even in this, we must be careful to not create a special group that consider themselves "spiritual." We do know that there are those who have not given place in their lives for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Paul says that to _____ is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the _____ . The purpose of the manifestation is the edification of the body. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts; to minister to the rest of the body, or impress people with our great spirituality? _____ .
4. Read verse 11. Sometimes there are those who say, "I want the gifts, but not this particular one." But the Spirit distributes to _____ as _____ wills. It is possible that the Spirit does not give His gifts freely to the person who is not humble enough to receive whatever gift He wants to give. Then the Spirit is manifested. The Spirit is sovereign in this. According to verse 7, which of the gifts should we be ready to receive? _____ .

II. Specific Considerations

1. Verse 8 mentions the gifts of the words of _____ and of _____. We must realize that these are gifts of the Holy Spirit, and not necessarily a result of our intelligence or study. There are times when a brother or sister with very little education will express a word that is needed in a certain situation. Of course a person who is well educated can receive a word from the Spirit also, as long as there is a humble attitude of dependence on the Lord. A brother or sister receives information miraculously through words of knowledge, and a word of wisdom will be given that is exactly what is needed in a certain situation. Are the words of knowledge and wisdom a result of our intelligence or a result of the Spirit's direction? _____

Write an example that you know of someone being used in the manifestation of one of these gifts. _____

2. Verse 9 deals with the gifts of _____ and _____. Every believer must have faith to receive salvation by grace of God. But the gift of faith enables the believer to trust God for the impossible. The gift of faith may be received during a difficult time of trials, and it enables the believer to come through the fiery trials with calm and serenity. James says that the prayer of faith will save the sick. (James 5:15) The gifts of healings (notice this is in plural) may be physical, emotional or spiritual healings. Since Jesus is Lord over all, it is not hard for him to heal in every area. When a brother is sick, whom should he consult first; the Lord, or the doctor? _____
3. There is also the gift of the working of miracles. A miracle is an event that would be impossible without the intervention of God. There may be healings that are not necessarily miracles. Many times a miracle breaks what we consider to be natural laws. Write an example of a miracle. _____
4. Also there are the gifts of _____ and the discerning _____. At times prophecy is confused with preaching. Generally, preaching is the exposition of the Scriptures as result of study, but a sermon may also include prophecy. Prophecy is a message from God given in a specific manner concerning a certain situation with immediate or future implication. The church needs to have discerning of spirits because all supernatural manifestations are not necessarily from God. Brethren are needed who can discern the operation of an evil spirit and confront it in the power of God. The devil desires to appear as an angel of light for his own evil purposes. (2 Corinthians 11:14) How can we know if a prophecy or other manifestation is of God? _____

5. Then mentioned are the gifts of _____ and _____ of tongues. In chapter 14, Paul explains that tongues can be used for our personal edification and for the edification of the church. The person who uses tongues to pray and to praise God is also able to receive the interpretation. If there is a message in tongues given publicly, it should be interpreted for the edification of the body. Have you known of cases when tongues were used incorrectly? _____. Do you know of occasions when tongues and interpretation have brought edification to the church? _____. Write your comments. _____

III. Summary

Believers should not be ignorant concerning the gifts. The lordship of Christ and the manifestation of the Spirit are closely related. God desires the manifestation of the Spirit in every member of the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit distributes the gifts as He wills. Make a list of the nine gifts of the Spirit: _____

Lesson 15

The Function Of Each Member

In 1 Corinthians 12 we read about the manifestation of the Spirit in each member, while in Romans 12, it speaks of the function of each member within the body.

I. Essential Attitudes

1. Every member of the body of Christ should be very conscious of the mercies of God that he receives daily. The first part of the book of Romans tells of God's mercies such as: the forgiveness of sins, access into the presence of God, the Holy Spirit's guidance in his life, and the possibility of a holy life before God. Now read Romans 12:1. In our response to the mercies of God we are to present our _____ in _____ sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. It is reasonable and logical that we should present our bodies to God after receiving so much from Him. How can we put into practice the presentation of our bodies to God? _____.
2. There are several contrasts in verse 2. *Do not be _____ to this world, but be _____ by the renewing of your mind.* On one hand we are not to be conformed to this _____ but we are to be transformed so that we may prove the good and perfect will of _____. The transformation is not just an external reformation, but a radical change of inner attitudes that will result in an external manner of life which will prove the will of God. It is not possible to function well as a member of the body of Christ without first experiencing this radical change. What happens when persons who have not been transformed try to function as members of the body of Christ? _____.
3. Verse 3 deals with our estimation of ourselves. According to Paul, we are not to think of ourselves more _____ than we ought to think. A member of the body who thinks more highly of himself than he ought is a problem. He tries to do everything, and expects others to conform to his ways. But the opposite attitude can also be present in the group; that is, there are those who think of themselves as useless. So when such a person is invited to participate in some way, he always looks for excuses, such as, "I am not gifted so I cannot do it." That attitude hinders the progress of the group also. How then should each of us think of ourselves? We are to think _____, as God has dealt to each one a measure of _____. How can we correct each of these attitudes? _____.

4. When we take seriously the fact that every member has a function in the body, we can correct these attitudes of superiority and inferiority. In verses 9 and 10, we find that the solution is love without _____, a brotherly love. As far as honor is concerned, we are to _____ to one another. Even among Christ's apostles, there were discussions about who was the greatest. It is a spiritual law that he who exalts himself shall be _____, and he who humbles himself shall be _____.
5. Verses 11-13 give some brief but important precepts regarding the function of the members of the body of Christ. We are to be not _____ in business; _____ in spirit, serving the _____; rejoicing in hope, _____ in tribulation; _____ in prayer, _____ to the needs of the saints, and practicing _____. Are we practicing these attitudes? _____. Where could we improve? _____.

II. The Functions of the Various Members

1. It is certain that if the members practice the attitudes that we have just studied, they will function well in the body. What will happen to a well-organized congregation if the members do not have these essential attitudes in regard to the functioning of the body? _____.
2. A congregation or organization can only function well when its members have the correct attitudes. At the same time, it is beneficial to all when the members are organized according to the function that God has given each one. Let us go back to verse 4. The body has many _____ but not all have the same _____. According to verse 5, there are two relations: 1) we are one body in _____, and 2) individually members of _____. If we love Christ, we should also love _____, and in order to love our brothers, we must love _____ and be subject to Him.
3. Read verse 6. Having then gifts _____ according to the _____ given to us, if _____, let us prophesy in proportion to our _____. Here again we see what we saw in 1 Corinthians; there are different gifts and they are charismatic. (Grace comes from the word *caris*.) Here again it mentions the gift of prophecy. Note that the gifts are to be used by faith. What happens to a gift that is not used? _____.
4. In verse 7 there are those gifts of _____ and teaching. Ministry, or serving (*diakonia*) has a broad meaning. In 1 Corinthians the various spiritual ministries were also *diakonia*, and in some places, this refers to serving tables. Christian service is ministering to all human needs through the grace of God. Do you feel that spiritual ministry should be

- separate from meeting human need? _____ How can the various ministries be integrated? _____ .
5. The gift of teaching appears in other lists of gifts also. (1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11) This gift is essential to the development of the body and the training of the members in use of their gifts. Teaching is very different from preaching. In preaching, the truth is proclaimed to the hearers, while in teaching, the truth is developed in the students. Effective teaching requires the participation of the student. Does the church have enough preaching? _____ . Enough teaching? _____ .
6. Verse 8 mentions four other gifts: _____ , _____ , _____ and _____ . There are generous persons who are able to share with others. He who leads is to do so with _____ . Why? _____ . Being a leader (or one who presides) should not be considered a right but a privilege. Diligence is defined as careful effort. He who shows mercy should do it _____ and not begrudgingly. The gift of exhortation is that of consoling and encouraging.
7. It is certain that right attitudes are essential to the proper functioning of the body. It is also true that when a member of the body functions in his gift, there should be the right environment to bring about the right attitudes. Which do you believe to be the more urgent: having correct attitudes, or that each member does his part? _____ .

III. Summary

What are the attitudes that the Bible teaches in Romans 12? Make a list of the seven gifts listed in this chapter.

Group Activities

1. In your congregation, which of the attitudes of Romans 12 do the members practice? Which attitudes should be practiced more?
2. How can we help believers who have a superiority complex? An inferiority complex?
3. Try to identify your own gifts. Help to identify the gifts of the others in the group.
4. Who are the active members of the congregation? Who would be able to participate more if they were willing to present their bodies to God?

Lesson 16

The Equipping Of The Saints

You have studied that every member has his function in the body of Christ, but the members need to be equipped for the work of the ministry.

I. What “Equipping the Saints” Means

1. Read Ephesians 4:7-12. Christ has placed persons in the church for the equipping of the saints. This phrase, “equipping the saints,” has a deep meaning. It does not refer to painting the images in the cathedral. It does not mean that the members have to be perfect before they can serve God. Our word “perfect,” which comes from Latin, does not capture all the meaning of the word *katartismos*, in the Bible. This word is the one used in Matthew 4:21 when it speaks of “mending their nets.” It means that the nets were being readied for fishing. So we are to be put in order and adjusted to do the work of God. If the disciples had to put their nets in order to fish, so our lives should be _____ to do God’s work.
2. But this putting in order not only refers to the personal life of each member, but also to correct relationships within the body. Paul uses this same word when he speaks of the unity of the body. Read 1 Corinthians 1:10. He said, *That there be no divisions among you, but that you be _____ in the same mind and in the same judgment.* For this reason, the “perfecting” or “equipping” of the saints means that each member of the body is in correct relationship and joined to the other members of the body. An individualistic or independent attitude is a sin against the “perfecting” or “equipping of the saints.” To be a good member of the body, we must be in harmony with the other members. So we are able to work well in the Lord’s work. How can we work well together?
_____.
3. But the “equipping of the saints” includes more than correcting our personal life and our relationships with the other members, but also has to do with the Head of the body. Read Luke 6:40. *The disciple is not above his _____ but everyone who is _____ will be like his teacher.* In other words, there is a close relationship between discipleship and the equipping of the saints. The same passage in Ephesians mentions that the purpose is to come to the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (4:13) and to grow up in all things “into Him who is the head — Christ” (4:15). Then the perfecting or equipping of the saints means that we grow to be more like Christ.

II. Why the “Perfecting of the Saints”?

1. Read Ephesians 4:12 again carefully. The saints are equipped for the work of the _____, for the _____ of the body of Christ. The members of the body become ministers in the body of Christ. There is a tradition in some churches of employing a professional pastor so he can do the work. The result of this is that we pay him to do the work in our place. So the individual members are relieved of their responsibility to do the work of the ministry. But according to verse 12, who are the ministers? _____.
2. The work of the ministry is very extensive. It refers not only to preaching from a pulpit within the walls of the church building, but includes all the work that Christ did and even more. Remember the complete ministry of Christ to the needs of humanity. Jesus said that even greater works would be performed by His followers. (John 14:12) How can you personally do “the work of the ministry”? _____.
3. Sometimes there are very active persons who are content just to be active. It could be that they feel important to be able to say, “I am very busy.” While the Bible does teach that every member should take part in the “work of the ministry,” this does not mean that every activity is profitable. We need to find out which activity is the Lord’s will. Examine verse 12. The work of the ministry is for the _____ of the _____. The work that God desires contributes to the edifying of the body. We know that the body of Christ is not limited to a certain denomination, but it does have priority in the divine plan. We need to analyze our ministry. Do your activities contribute to the edifying of the body? _____. How? _____. How could you promote more edifying of the body of Christ in your locality? _____.

III. How can the Saints be Equipped and Perfected?

1. Review Ephesians 4:7-12. Christ gave gifts to the church. The same Christ who descended in humiliation now has ascended in His exaltation. This means that the Lord Jesus Christ is Lord of all beneath and all above. From His exalted position He gave gifts to men. And *He gave some to be _____, some _____, some _____ and some _____ and teachers.* The work of these is the equipping of the saints. An apostle helps the saints by starting new churches. A prophet gives messages from God that are appropriate to the immediate situation. An evangelist can train the members to evangelize. Pastors and teachers counsel and teach God’s people. Should a church have a pastor? _____. Which type of pastor is more scriptural: the

professional who does everything, or the servant who trains his members?

2. It is Christ who Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, and He expects that they will follow His example. This is the only way that all will come to the “fullness of Christ.” So the officials in the church are not there by chance, but are under the authority of the Head of the body. They will be able to “equip the saints” by following the example of their Master. Jesus taught words and deeds. Jesus went with His disciples to the field. Today we also must teach and then lead the members to active participation in the work of the Lord. Do you believe that teaching in the classroom is sufficient? Write your comments. _____
-

How will it be possible to equip all the members of the different congregations? _____

Group Activities

1. The equipping and perfecting of the saints includes: the setting in order of their _____ lives; in being in accord with the other _____ and growing into the likeness of our _____ .
2. What is the purpose of the equipping of the saints? _____ . Who are the ministers? How can their ministry contribute to the edifying of the body of Christ?
3. What should be the work of the pastor? Can one person carry all the work of the apostles, prophets and evangelists? Can a pastor carry the work of teaching? Are there other persons who can help with teaching? How can all the members receive teaching?

Lesson 17

Ministering To The Head

A part of the work of the ministry is to minister to God in worship. Worship is the starting point for the other ministries.

I. What are the Different Ministries?

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. We have already seen that there are a diversity of gifts, but verse 5 speaks of different _____. There is a relation between the gifts and the ministries. A gift is that which is received from God so as to be able to minister to other people. Also, the gifts enable one to minister effectively. Ministry is focused on the gifted person, just as on the person who needs to receive the benefit of a ministry. The objective of ministry is not selfish, but the benefit that others will receive from the ministry. The gift comes from the _____ and the ministry is for the benefit of _____.
2. In 1 Corinthians 12 there is a list of the different gifts, but there is no list of ministries. Nevertheless, the nature of the gifts indicates the nature of the different ministries. For example, in 1 Corinthians 14:2, the gift of tongues can be used to talk to God, and in verse 5 it says that tongues with the interpretation serve for the edifying of the _____. Also, in verse 22 it says that the gift of tongues is for a sign to the unbelievers. So it is clear that a gift can minister to God, to the church and to the unbelievers as the case may be. There are other gifts that have triple uses, too. For example, the gift of faith helps us to worship God, serve the church and testify to the world. So the different ministries can minister to _____, to the _____ and to the _____. This lesson has more to do with ministering to the Lord while the previous lesson dealt with ministries to the church and to the world.

II. How is it Possible to Minister to God?

1. In one sense, we have nothing to offer to God. He is sufficient in Himself. But at the same time, the Bible says that the members of the church in Antioch ministered to the Lord. Read Acts 13:2,3. Among them were prophets and teachers who were participating in fasting and prayer. Remember that according to Ephesians 4, prophets and teachers are gifts to the church from God. So they were able to minister to the Lord because they had received from _____. The truth is that every good and perfect gift comes down from above. (James 1:17) Then the only good

thing that we can offer the Lord is what we have received from Him. What are some of the good gifts that you have received from the Lord? _____

2. It is logical that a part of our ministry to the Lord is to give Him thanks for the good gifts He has given us. The gifts of God are expressions of the grace of God, and to receive the grace of God we give thanks to God. Sometimes we are very ungrateful, not giving thanks for the good things and even thinking that that which we receive is not good. Read Ephesians 5:20. It says _____ *thanks always for* _____ *to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*. According to the Bible, we are to give thanks for even that which does not seem to be good. Many times that which is disagreeable is good for us. Do you believe that we should give thanks for all things? _____ .
3. Our ministry to God has a spiritual aspect. Read John 4:24. Those who worship God must worship Him in _____ and in _____ . Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 14:15 that he prayed and sang in the Spirit and with understanding. In Romans 8:26, it says that the Spirit makes intercession for us with _____ that cannot be uttered. In order to have communion with the Spirit of God, our spirit must communicate with God. What is the root of our problem when we do not want to praise the Lord? _____ .
4. But worship is not limited to the spiritual plain. Remember that we are to worship in spirit and in truth. Our singing and praying should be in spirit, but also in truth; and our singing and praying should be with the Spirit and also with understanding. What takes place in the spirit is translated into practical action. When we worship God in spirit, it is to be expected that we practice the presence of God in our daily life. Paul writes of a reasonable service in Romans 12:1. We have received so much mercy from the Lord that it is up to us to present our _____ in living sacrifice. This living sacrifice is not just done in church buildings but in every place we go. How can we offer our bodies to the Lord every day? _____

III. What is the Result of our Ministry to God?

1. In Acts 13 we are told how they ministered to the Lord, and as a result the Holy Spirit told them what Barnabas and Saul should do. As a result they were sent out to extend the work of the Lord in many places. After praising and worshipping the Lord, it is probable that God will use us more effectively. In his missionary journeys, Paul was used powerfully to perform miracles and preach the Word. When we minister to God in worship, God ministers to His people in power. Which should come first — service or worship? _____ .

2. In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul explains the ministry of the new covenant. Under the old covenant, there was a veil covering the face of Moses, but in the new covenant, with open faces we behold the glory of the Lord. Read verses 16-18. To worship God we need to see the glory of the Lord. In this way the Spirit sets us free from the obstacles that hinder our praise. According to verse 18, what is the result of beholding the glory of the Lord? We are _____ from glory to _____ into the same image. That tells us that spiritual worship will result in a progressive transformation bringing us into the image of Christ. Even psychology teaches us that we begin to resemble that which we look at. If we keep looking at evil things, we can become like them. But if we fix our eyes on the glory of God, we will become more like _____ .
3. This agrees with what Paul teaches in Ephesians 4. The work of the ministry is so that the body will be edified to the place where all will grow into the _____ the fullness of _____ . If true worship is practiced, then we will move onward to be made into the image of Christ. Is the church practicing this type of worship today? ____ . How can we better practice true worship? _____ .

Group Activities

1. What is the relation between the gifts and the ministries?
2. What will be the result if we begin to give thanks for all things?
3. For which good things do you thank God?
4. For which disagreeable things do you thank God?
5. What does it mean to pray and sing in the Spirit?
6. Share with one another regarding offering our bodies daily to the Lord.
7. What are the subjects that we talk about mostly with our friends? What will happen if we talk more about the things of God?

Lesson 18

Ministry To The Body

Ministering to the Head, or worship, is a preparation for ministry to the body. Ministry to the body includes the gifts that God has placed in the body, and the use of these gifts by the members of the body to minister to one another.

I. How can we Minister to the Body?

1. All of the members of the body have personal needs. If we all wait to benefit from the ministry of the rest, then there will not be anybody to minister to the rest. There is a great difference being a “parasite” and being a minister. The parasite only expects to receive, while the minister wants to share. What is the difference between a parasite member and a ministering member? _____ .
2. In order to be able to minister, we must first receive. The grace of God is the source of our ministry. A member who tries to minister without the grace of God will surely fail. In 1 Corinthians 12, the gifts are mentioned first, then the ministries, and after that, the operations. One must receive from God in order to share with others. What will happen if we try to minister without God’s help? _____ .
How then can we minister? _____ .
3. It is to our advantage to look at the example of the early church. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples testified of the power of God through the enablement of the Holy Spirit. They spoke of the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11) and many people were added to the church (verse 41). Read verse 42. They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ _____ and _____ , in the breaking of _____ and in _____ . After ministering to God in prayer and praise, God made them capable of ministering to others in material ways as well as in the spiritual. What will happen if a person considers himself too busy ministering that he says he does not have time to praise God? _____ .
_____ .

II. How can we Minister to Human Need?

1. The example of the early church will help us find our way in this. Read Acts 2:43-47. Today there are groups that emphasize the spiritual ministry only, while there are other groups that only emphasize the material and social side. But the fervor of the early church united both of these aspects in one ministry. In verse 43 we read that the apostles did many

- _____ and signs, manifesting their spiritual power. Then in verse 45 it tells us that all who believed sold their _____ and goods and divided them among all, as any one had _____. According to verse 46 they were in the _____ every day, and breaking bread from _____.
2. Read verse 47. It says that they were _____ God, and having favor with the _____. Their praise was characterized by spiritual power that reached the people, that is, that had a social aspect. It is not surprising that the Lord _____ to the church daily. The church can grow when it cultivates a life in God to the place that the people around it become the beneficiaries of its Christian love. Is it possible to praise God and not help people around us? _____. Is it possible to a servant of the Lord to help the people without testifying about God? _____. Think about your answers. How can we practice a ministry integrating both the spiritual and material aspects? _____.
3. In chapter 3 there is another example of ministry to human needs. There was a crippled man who was begging at the gate of the temple. It seems that most people thought that the cripple only needed alms. But when Peter came by, he gave the man something much more valuable. Read Acts 3:6,7. Peter did not give him money; he gave him healing through the power of God. The apparent need was for money, but the deep need of this man was for healing. It is easy to be satisfied just by ministering to apparent needs and leaving the deep needs untouched. What are some of the apparent needs that people have? _____ . Some of their deep needs? _____.
4. When the paralyzed man was healed, he began to praise God. Read Acts 3:8,9. He entered the temple walking, leaping, and praising _____ and the _____ saw him. Here we see a cycle of praise. First, the church praised God; then the power of God was made manifest; then the recipients of power-filled ministry praised the Lord. If we minister in our own strength, we receive the praise, but if we minister in the power of God, He receives the glory. What are some of the comments that people commonly make about our church? _____.

III. What are the Requirements to be able to Minister?

1. The church faced a problem concerning the Grecian widows. Apparently there was a daily distribution of material provisions. There were well-defined requirements for those who were elected to distribute these provisions. Read Acts 6:3. They were to choose seven men of the group of

- _____ reputation, full of the _____ and _____. Do you think the church of today should have the same requirements? _____.
2. In 1 Corinthians 12-14 there are more instructions. In 12:7 we are told that the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____ of all. In 12:22, we are told that the members of the body which seem to be _____ are necessary. In chapter 13, it is made clear that the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit can be empty and meaningless without _____. In 14:12 Paul says that we are to be zealous for _____ gifts, and for the _____ of the church. Also, he exhorts that all the members are to participate (14:26,27). Finally, Paul instructs the church that they are to desire earnestly to prophesy, and not to forbid to speak with tongues; but to do all things _____ and in _____. Answer this question in your own words: What is the proper attitude to practice the gifts and ministries? _____.

Group Activities

1. How can parasitic members be changed to become members that minister to others?
2. Give some examples when church members have successfully combined spiritual ministry with meeting material needs?
3. Are we ministering to apparent needs or the deep hidden needs of the people? How can we better minister to their deep needs?
4. With the group analyze the general comments that people make regarding your local congregation. Who receives the recognition?
5. What are the most urgent requirements for those who are going to minister in spiritual and material ways?

Lesson 19

Our Ministry To The World

In the previous lessons you have studied about the ministry of the body to the head and to the other members of the body. In this lesson, study about the ministry of the body of Christ to the world.

I. The Example of Christ in the World

1. Jesus left his exalted position in glory to serve humanity in this world. Read Philippians 2:5-8. He was willing to humble Himself and even suffer to serve. Many times people think that we must climb to a high position to be able to serve others. Is it necessary to have an exalted position to serve?
_____ .
2. Even though Jesus humbled Himself, at the same time He was the light of the world. (John 8:12) Compare Matthew 5:14. So those who follow Christ can also be the _____ of the _____ . See Matthew 5:16. Our light should so shine before men that they will see our _____ and glorify our Father in heaven.
3. Jesus was mighty in deeds and words. He taught, preached and healed the people. (Matthew 4:23) He said that this gospel was to be preached in all the world. (Matthew 24:14) He thanked the Father for the men that He gave Him out of the world. (John 17:6) When men and women come out of the world and come to Christ, the body of Christ grows. According to these verses, where are we to preach the gospel? _____ . What should be the result of our preaching to the people of this world?
_____ .
4. The teaching of Jesus was by word and example. Jesus called the disciples to follow Him so they could see and hear what He did and said. His teaching showed them the way to practice righteousness and love in all human relations. The disciples saw how Jesus solved the problems that people brought to Him. Then Jesus sent them out to do as He had been doing. What does a disciple of Jesus do? _____ .
5. Besides teaching and preaching, Jesus healed many people. He cast out demons, gave sight to the blind and raised the dead. Healing was as much spiritual as it was physical. The miracles of healing confirmed the word that had been proclaimed. Jesus healed the people _____ as well as physically.
6. God has many ways for us to minister effectively to human needs. God blesses the work of the doctors and nurses. They must cooperate with the laws of health that God has set up in order for healing to come to sick bodies. But not all illness responds to medical treatment. There are

sicknesses that cannot be healed by natural means. God is able to heal all sickness and disease, whether it is natural or supernatural in its origin. How should a member of the body of Christ minister to the sick today? _____

II. The Mandate of Christ in this World

1. The last words of Christ before He left this world express a mandate that we serve in this world. Matthew 29:19 says, *Make disciples of all* _____ . Mark 16:16—*Preach the gospel to* _____ *creature*. Jesus does not want us to just be concerned with the internal affairs of the church, but to launch out to work in this world. What will happen if the church is only concerned with itself? _____
 2. Jesus also commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 24:49) After being filled with the Spirit, they testified of Christ in Jerusalem and to the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts 1:8) They could do the work of God because they had the power of God in their lives. Even today it is the divine power of God that extends the work of God. Where do we receive power to become witnesses in this world? _____ .
 3. Jesus' example confirms His mandate. Jesus said in John 17:18 that the Father had sent Him, and He was sending the disciples forth into the world. (Also, John 20:21.) God so loved the _____ that He gave His only begotten Son. The Father gave His only Son, and the Son gave His life for a lost world. Do we practice this kind of love? _____ . How can we better do that? _____ .
 4. Now we know what Jesus sent us to do. If we love Him we will do what He has commanded us to do. He said that we should make disciples, preach the gospel, and we will be sent out in the same way that He was. All this implies that it is up to us to live as He did and so continue His work. Today there are many who are worried about conditions in the world, but they try to solve the problems of the world without doing as Christ did. What will be the result if we think we can solve problems by using merely human means? _____ . What would happen to the world if all Christians were to continue the work of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit? _____
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III. Summary

1. Jesus set the example before giving the commission. He left His place in glory to suffer and serve in this very needy world. Through teaching, preaching and healing He ministered to humanity. Some men came out of the world to become members of the growing body of Christ. It is for the followers of Christ to continue the work He began. What is the relationship between what we preach and what we practice? _____ .
2. After setting the example, Jesus gave His commandment. His last words on this earth express His desire to redeem this world. He commanded His followers to make more disciples, to preach the gospel and testify in the power of the Spirit. He summed it up by saying, "As the Father has sent Me, so send I you." As Christians, should we wait to be sent out, or are we already sent out? _____ .

Group Activities

1. Jesus taught, preached and healed. Which of these three do we do most? _____ . Which do we do least? _____ .
2. Which good works could be a light in this world and glorify God? _____ .
3. Whom should we consult first when we are sick? _____ .
4. What were the last commands of Jesus? Make _____ , preach the _____ , be endowed with _____ .
5. Are we obeying these commands, or are we busy doing other things? _____ .

Lesson 20

Maturity In Christ

After writing about ministry, Paul wrote to the Ephesians about maturity in Christ.

I. The Need for Maturity

1. After a person comes to Christ, he needs to be nourished spiritually. Read 1 Peter 2:2. As newborn babes we are to desire the spiritual _____ that we may grow. A child is nourished by the person who gave birth to it. So the members of the body of Christ have the responsibility to feed and nourish new members. It is wonderful when each full-grown member is nourishing a newborn member. Have you had the experience of feeding a new believer? _____ .
2. A growing child learns to feed himself. Read Acts 17:11. The people of the town of Berea heard the Word Paul preached and they went to their homes and to search the _____. A child who never learns to feed himself will grow very slowly. Like them, there are Christians who never develop because they are always waiting for someone else to give them spiritual food. Do you believe the Bereans grew spiritually? _____ Why?
_____ .
3. A new believer should grow in the grace of God. (2 Peter 3:18) Christians should not keep on drinking milk. Read Hebrews 5:12-14. According to this passage, those who have been taught should begin to teach others. Those who have partaken only of milk should grow so as to digest _____ food. In the following chapter in Hebrews, it tells how to go on to perfection, or maturity.
4. We can illustrate maturity by using a comparison between a cart and a truck. The cart can move only when someone is pushing it. When no one pushes it, it is standing still. But a truck carries a load, and even carries the driver. An immature Christian often waits until someone motivates him, while a mature member is capable of motivating himself and also encourages others. A full-grown Christian does not just wait for help from others, but he offers to help the rest. To what stage of maturity have most of the members of your local congregation come into? _____
_____ .

II. Steps to Maturity

1. Now we are going back to Ephesians 4. Remember that we learned that the leaders of the church are to train the members for the work of the ministry.

- They grow because they are working for the Lord. Our human body becomes strong through exercise. Read Ephesians 4:13. We need to come to the _____ of the faith and the _____ of the Son of God. The feeling of unity among the brethren is one means of knowing Christ better. What will happen to the church where there is no unity? _____ . Will it grow? _____ .
2. Also they are to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. This does not refer to intellectual ability, but to a personal relationship with Christ. According to verse 13, we are to grow to the measure of the _____ of Christ. Jesus told His disciples that they should learn of Him for He was meek and lowly in heart. The growing Christian desires that his personality becomes more like Jesus every day. Do you know of anyone who is exactly like Christ? _____. We all must move on in this. Do you want to be more Christlike? Pray and ask God's help. To grow to be like Him, we must keep our eyes on Him. According to Hebrews 12:2, we should look unto _____. 2 Corinthians 3:18 tells us as we behold the glory of God, we are changed from glory to glory.
 3. While all the members are becoming more like Christ, they are not falling into false doctrine and error. Read verse 14. Christ does not want us to be as children, tossed to and fro with every _____ of doctrine. Many times it happens that the immature members are the most apt to fall into error. Those who are serving the Lord faithfully are stronger and more stable. Many times there are members who are weak because they are not using the gifts that God has given them. Are there weak members in the church? _____. How can they be strengthened? _____ .
 4. Another step toward maturity is the proclamation of the truth. Error is defeated by the truth. Read verse 15. Mature Christians speak the truth in love. An immature person speaks the truth in an offensive manner. Then there are those who feel that to not speak the truth in love, because they are afraid. But Paul says the body will _____ itself in _____ (verse 16).
 5. Read verses 15 and 16. When the members of the body are joined to the head, which is Christ, the members of the body will be joined too. The joints will be knit together and joined. Sometimes there are persons who profess to be joined to Christ, but they do not want to join the body of Christ. In one of his letters, John says that if we love God we will love our brothers also. How can the brethren work together? _____ .
 6. The activity of each individual member contributes to his growth. When each member does his part, the church grows. There are those who criticize the church, but they themselves are the ones who can impede or promote the growth of their church. According to verse 16, our goal is not personal

satisfaction, nor the well-being of the church only, but growth that will bring new people to Christ. How can you help your own congregation to grow? _____ .

III. Summary

1. New members of the body need food in order to grow. The people of Berea studied the Scriptures for themselves. After being taught, we should teach others. After first drinking milk, we become able to eat solid food. Do you believe the members of your congregation are growing? _____ .
2. Ephesians 4 presents the steps toward maturity: 1) All members of the body must be trained to serve. 2) Every Christian should be more Christlike. 3) The mature Christians should confront the false doctrines. 4) Members of the body speak the truth in love for the edifying of the body. 5) The church will continue to grow as each member does his part. Is your congregation growing? Is it growing rapidly or slowly? _____ .

Group Activities

1. How can we promote individual personal Bible study?
2. What is our basic problem; our lack of power, or failure to practice unity?
3. How can we accomplish growth and development in all of the members?
4. What are the factors that contribute to growth in a congregation?



The Way of Discipleship
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