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#DiscipleshipTuesday



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**EDITORIAL
EVANGÉLICA**

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February Free Lesson
Discipleship Tuesday

Christ in You

John 13:12-17; 14:19-24; 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11;
2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:20-24; 5:1-2; Philippians 2:1-5;
Colossians 2:20 through 3:10; 1 Peter 2:19-24

INTRODUCTION

Remember the television reality program titled *Extreme Makeover*? Each week two individuals were selected to undergo a number of procedures which would improve their appearance, self-image, and personal life. Over a period of several months they would have plastic surgery, major dental work, hair restyling, and be given a new wardrobe. Then there would be a celebratory revealing of the new person to their family and friends. Tears, hugs, smiles, applause, and varied exclamations were evident as the person displayed his or her new self.

In many ways this program provides a parallel to the tremendous transformation that comes about when Christ is allowed to live within us through salvation. The immediate exterior results vary from person to person. Some of the variables are age, personality, and previous lifestyle. We become new creations. We are changed through Christ and enabled to live in a new way. Of course, we still will face temptations as we strive to live this new life of holiness in relationship to our heavenly Father; it's not instant perfection.

When Christ dwells within us we enter a new life path. Prayer and Scripture study help us discover and apply the principles of life in Christ. It means seriously striving to fulfill all the potential now made available, allowing the truths of Scripture and the power of the Holy Spirit to be reflected in the totality of our life.

This lesson reminds us of the necessity of demonstrating the reality of our claim to be a believer. It speaks of the need to think, speak, and act in a Christlike manner. This means demonstrating in our word choice, manner of dress, and style of entertainment that we have been changed spiritually and now are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unit Theme:

Christian Ethics

Central Truth:

Because Christians are changed by Christ, they can live pleasing to God.

Focus:

Affirm that Christians are different because of the indwelling Christ and reflect this truth in the way we live.

Context:

Selected New Testament passages about the indwelling presence of Christ

Golden Text:

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Study Outline:

- I. Live in Christ's Presence
(John 14:19-24; 17:20-23)
- II. Put On the New Self
(2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 2:20-23; 3:1-4)
- III. Become Christlike
(Phil. 2:1-5; John 13:12-17; 1 Peter 2:19-24; Eph. 5:1-2)

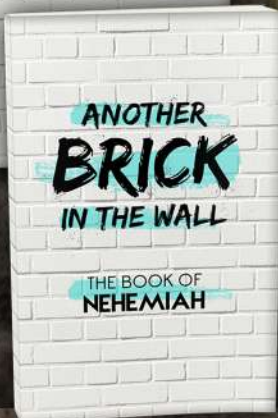
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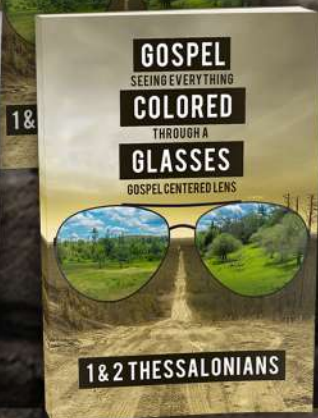
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- I. LIVE IN CHRIST'S PRESENCE (John 14:19-24; 17:20-23)
- A. Through Obedience (14:19-24)
- 19. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.**
- 20. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.**
- 21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.**
- 22. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?**
- 23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**
- 24. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.**

Talk About It:

1. How did Jesus differentiate His followers from the world (v. 19)?
2. In verses 20 and 21, what does Jesus teach about the believer's relationship with Him?
3. How does someone show a lack of love for God (v. 24)?

Jesus is having His last meal with the disciples prior to the upcoming arrest which will lead to the Crucifixion. The reality of Jesus' leaving lays heavily on their minds. Jesus has shared His preparations for the future and the promise of the Comforter who will not leave them. In verse 19 Jesus emphasizes the immediacy of His leaving. Their time together is very short. But then He offers a contrast between them and the world—those who have not believed.

Those within the world who have not accepted Jesus will be separated from Him both physically and spiritually. The disciples will experience the same physical separation as Jesus returns to the Father. However, as a result of the Resurrection, Jesus will continue to live and the disciples and all believers through the ages will have eternal life. Death will not be the final overcomer!

Though Christ ascends to the Father, His followers are assured of being able to experience the ongoing presence of Christ. Just as there is the intimate relationship of Christ dwelling within the Father, He also dwells within believers (v. 20). This mystical relationship doesn't make us little gods or partially divine; it does enable us to continue to experience Christ working and willing through us. Here we need to be reminded of Philippians 2:13: "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (NIV).

This ongoing relationship and living in Christ's presence doesn't happen without effort on our part. It isn't sufficient for us to simply state our love for Christ. The Lord expects our obedience on a daily basis. Jesus states it very clearly in verse 21 of the text. If a person truly loves Him, then obedience to His

words will be the priority. Obedience, in turn, provides the atmosphere for experiencing Christ's presence. The opposite is equally true. Disobedience is a sign of there being no love relationship (v. 24).

Our personal obedience is a distinct means by which we enjoy a relationship with our Savior and Lord. It supersedes any actions or words that try to cover our disobedience. Christ deserves and wants our total, specific obedience. There is no substitute.

B. Through Unity (17:20-23)

20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 17 records Jesus' prayer prior to His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. He begins by praying for Himself. He desires to glorify the Father so others may know Him and have eternal life (vv. 1-5). Jesus then prays for His disciples (vv. 6-19). He asks for their protection even though physically He will no longer be with them. He wants them to experience joy while being in the world, protected from the Evil One. Verse 18 indicates their role in the future. They will be doing some of the same ministry Jesus did.

Beginning in verse 20, Jesus prays for all individuals in the future who will believe in Him. Jesus' disciples—including the Twelve, the Seventy, and others—will be witnesses who lead many to salvation. The Church will be established and extended during the time to come until Christ's return. Each generation of believers will share the message of truth which leads to believing in Jesus as Savior and Lord. It is for all these Jesus is interceding.

There are many areas of doctrine and life for which Jesus could have prayed. He could have asked the Father to help the believers through the ages to avoid the tantalizing offers of false doctrine. He could have desired for them to remain true when facing the persecution which will come. Instead, the focus of His intercession is unity.

Please note that Jesus' prayer doesn't mean unity among believers is more important than doctrinal purity! Unity that necessitates compromise of biblical doctrine or lifestyle is not what Christ desires for His church!

"May you and I be more and more drawn in, taken over, and consumed by this love from God."
—Richard Foster

Talk About It:

1. For whom is Jesus praying in this passage (v. 20)?
2. What is Jesus' request (vv. 21-23)? 24)?

“Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.”
—John Fawcett

Talk About It:

1. Describe the transformation that takes place in a believer's life (2 Cor. 5:17).
2. What “truth” were the believers “taught” (Eph. 4:21-22)?

Jesus' prayer emphasizes the unity among the members of the Godhead; specifically, the Father and the Son. This relational reality is a mystery beyond our comprehension. But we know it is true because of Jesus' stating it. Just as the Father and Son have a mutual indwelling, He desires the same for us. We are to dwell within them and they in us. This doesn't make us little gods with a hybrid status of divinity, but it does mean we are in unity with God.

Just as the Father and Son are one yet remain distinct, such is the unity Jesus desired for believers. We have distinct personalities and giftedness. Our interests vary greatly. Yet, within this diversity we are to be one united in the bond of salvation through Jesus Christ. We are to be united in our mission, even as we may use different methods to accomplish it. Our unity with fellow believers and with God is a testimony to the world of God's love (v. 23).

II. PUT ON THE NEW SELF (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 2:20-23; 3:1-4)

A. A New Creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:20-22)

2 Corinthians 5:17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Ephesians 4:20. But ye have not so learned Christ;

21. If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

No one can be a genuine believer and continue to live in the same way he or she lived prior to salvation. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we experience a regeneration. Once we were dead in our sins, but we became alive through Christ. Previously we lived in darkness and separation from God, but through salvation we entered the light of a new relationship with our heavenly Father.

The single verse from 2 Corinthians clearly states what happens when anyone accepts Jesus as Savior. The past old self no longer exists. In its place the Spirit initiates a new being. We are cleansed from our sins, and we are enabled to see things differently. Our desires change.

Living as a new creation requires effort on our part. When we accept the truth of Jesus Christ and apply it to our personal being, the darkening of our understanding and hardening of our hearts are changed. However, that is just the beginning of the journey. When the deceitful desires of the past accompanied by old habits attempt to pull us down, it becomes necessary to be reminded we are new creations in Christ.

Paul's word to the Ephesians furthers this concept of being

a new person. The patterns of one's pre-Christian life should no longer be the identifying characteristics of our being: "You . . . did not come to know Christ that way" (v. 20 NIV). The various patterns of immorality (vv. 18-19) must no longer characterize our thoughts and actions. The sinful desires, which deceive so pleasure becomes more important than commitment to holiness, should be eradicated.

B. A New Freedom (Eph. 4:23-24)

23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The believer's new self begins with the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. He enables the Christian to be free from domination of the old nature. "Righteousness and true holiness" are to be seen as representing the new us. To accomplish this, we must resist the devil and his temptations. We are to place ourselves in situations allowing our new nature to become entrenched as a way of life. Some of the apostle Paul's last words to the Philippians apply here: "Finally, brothers [and sisters], whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (4:8, NIV).

God is ready to work within us so that we can become mature and strong in the Kingdom. But, we are not simply robots which He starts, turns, and stops; we must do our part to reap the benefits of life in Christ.

This freedom to live the fullness of life in Christ comes through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, through whom we become a new creation with a new way of thinking and acting. Instead of the domination of sin, a new righteousness pervades. The desire to live right and please God pushes a person to learn the Scriptures as well as lean on the leading of the Holy Spirit. Being a Christian isn't just a matter of claiming Jesus as Savior. It must, of necessity, include yielding to Him as Lord in how we think, which determines what we say and do.

C. A New Direction (Col. 2:20-23; 3:1-4)

(Colossians 2:20-23 and 3:1 are not included in the printed text.)

3:2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

A true test of our new life in Christ is the direction we take. Will we be bound to earthly, secular principles, or will we allow heavenly, spiritual principles to prevail? It is easy to point to the

"Christianity is either relevant all the time or useless anytime. It is not just a phase of life; it is life itself."

—Richard Halverson

Talk About It:

Describe the "new man" in Christ (vv. 23-24).

"As we truly worship the God of glory, we are allowed to take on the characteristics of God's holiness that sets us apart from the worship of every other god."

—David Morris

Talk About It:

1. According to 2:20-23, what has "an appearance of wisdom . . . but they lack any value" (v. 23 NIV)?

2. How have believers been “raised with Christ” (3:1 NKJV)?
3. What is the promise of verse 4, and how should it motivate us to live (v. 2-3)?

“Where you’re going is more important than where you’ve been.”
—David C. Cooper

Talk About It:

1. What should we strive to be (Phil. 2:2), and how can this happen (v. 1)?
2. How should we view ourselves (vv. 3-5)?

latter as our answer, but it will take some concentrated effort to make it happen.

For many, their attempt to live a holy life involves only the negative “thou shalt nots” of an ascetic life. But what about the “thou shalt” with their positive projections? There are some ascetic principles (such as fasting, practicing solitude, and frugality) which should be followed in the process of keeping our bodily desires in line with the directives of Scripture. However, a life ruled by “Touch not, taste not, handle not” (see 2:21) lacks the joy of fulfilling the whole dimension of Scripture. “Such regulations” lack the power to restrain “sensual indulgence” (v. 23 NIV).

When we become believers and participants in the fullness of salvation through a risen Savior, our hearts are to be ruled by “things which are above” (3:1). Human principles which may bind rather than free to greater life in Christ are to be pushed to the side. We need to recognize them for what they are. Life in Christ should be an experience of growing in Him. His example and His teachings should dominate all aspects of our lives.

Verse 3 points out we are “hidden with Christ in God” (NKJV). No, we do not lose our personality and particular abilities. Rather, everything we are becomes tempered by Him so eventually we will experience the final glorification (v. 4). Our whole life is to be a preparation for meeting Christ face-to-face and living forever in His presence.

III. BECOME CHRISTLIKE (Phil. 2:1-5; John 13:12-17; 1 Peter 2:19-24; Eph. 5:1-2)

A. Life of Humility (Phil. 2:1-5; John 13:12-17)
(Philippians 2:1-2 and John 13:12-14, 16-17 are not included in the printed text.)

Phil. 2:3. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. John 13:15. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

To be Christlike includes the attitude and action of being humble, which must never be confused with low self-esteem. Humility does not mean degrading one’s own personality, appearance, and abilities. Instead, it means having a holistic perspective of being a part of the body of Christ. No one is to lord over or flaunt his or her position and accomplishments.

As the apostle Paul writes to the church in Philippi stressing the need and means for unity, it becomes evident how humility is

to prevail. Genuine love, compassion, tenderness, and fellowship radiate in an atmosphere of humility (v. 1). When no one attempts to accomplish or stand out for personal acclaim and glory, the whole body is edified. We should attempt to do our best, but the issue continues to be the motive which drives the action.

Verse 4 reminds us how we are not to neglect our personal needs and obligations. However, we are not to become so self-absorbed as to become blind to the visible needs of those brothers and sisters around us. There is the sense of our being our brothers' and sisters' "keepers."

Several decades prior to the apostle Paul's writings, we see Jesus demonstrating humility at the last fellowship meal with His disciples prior to the Crucifixion (John 13:1-17). After the meal, Jesus proceeds to wash each of the disciple's feet. This isn't the usual providing of water or washing a guest's feet upon entering a home. Here Jesus institutes a practice through example.

Humility is a great subject to discuss, but it has little value unless there continues to be practice. We act with humility when we willingly serve others. No menial task is too low for us to complete; no person is too insignificant for us to help.

B. Life of Suffering (1 Peter 2:19-24)

19. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

21. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Suffering for the cause of Christ is not a popular concept within the North American church. Our many years of religious freedom causes suffering for our faith to appear as abnormal. Yet, we know that persecution for one's Christian faith is common worldwide. More believers died for their faith in the twentieth century than in the previous nineteen centuries combined. Sobering, isn't it?

The apostle Peter is writing to believers who know firsthand

3. What brings genuine happiness (John 13:14-17)?

"It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to the Lord Jesus. A holy ministry is an awful weapon in the hands of God."

—Robert McCheyne

Talk About It:

1. What is "commendable" (vv. 19-20, NKJV)?
2. Describe the example Christ left for us (vv. 21-24).

“Men seek an explanation of suffering in cause and effect. They look backward for a connection between prior sin and present suffering. The Bible looks forward in hope and seeks explanations, not so much in origins as in goals.”

—Francis I. Anderson

Talk About It:

1. What two names are believers given in verse 1?
2. How should we “walk,” and why (v. 2)?

“He alone loves the Creator perfectly who manifests a pure love for his neighbor.”

—The Venerable Bede

what it means to experience suffering because of persecution. He tells them of the merit in enduring suffering because of being a righteous person committed to God. There is nothing creditable for suffering due to one’s wrongdoings, but suffering for doing good continues in the example of Jesus Christ. Though without sin of any type in His life, Jesus became the sacrificial lamb on the cross at Calvary. Therefore, our calling to be His followers and experience salvation may take us on the path of unjust suffering.

Verses 23 and 24 remind us how Jesus responded to His persecutors. He did not retaliate in kind. He accepted this as part of His role in fulfilling the will of the Father.

Over the centuries there have been those like Ignatius, a second-century bishop, who avidly sought martyrdom. It was perceived as the best way to honor the Lord. This extreme needs to be avoided just as much as that of assuming persecution to be abnormal.

C. Life of Love (Eph. 5:1-2)

- 1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;**
- 2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.**

This third dimension of being Christlike begins with the admonition to be imitators of Christ. We are to be followers who demonstrate His attribute of love. It is only to be expected that as children of the heavenly Father we will reflect His love. Here we are reminded of John 3:16—though we were sinners and totally separated from Him, God sent His Son, Jesus, to die for us.

Love of this type is foreign to most humans because of their being so self-absorbed. Genuine love reaches outward from one’s own little circle to include others. It willingly sacrifices personal comfort and pleasure in order to be of service to those in spiritual, emotional, and physical need.

Tucked in these few lines of Scripture, we see God’s atonement for our sins through Christ’s shed blood. He becomes the eternal blood sacrifice applicable to the sins of all humans who will believe on Christ as Savior.

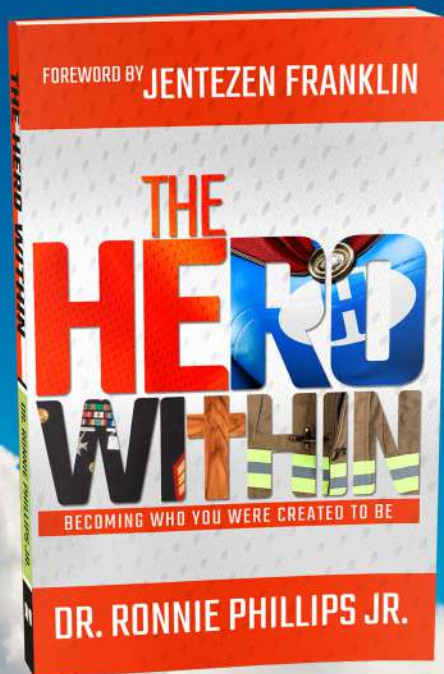
CONCLUSION

This lesson reminds us how through Christ we are changed from the old sinful person to a new creation in Christ. As Christ continues to dwell within us, we reflect His nature, lifestyle, and teachings. We can never fulfill the pattern of Christian ethical conduct unless we experience the regenerating and sanctifying wash of the Holy Spirit.

GOLDEN TEXT CHALLENGE

“IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATURE:

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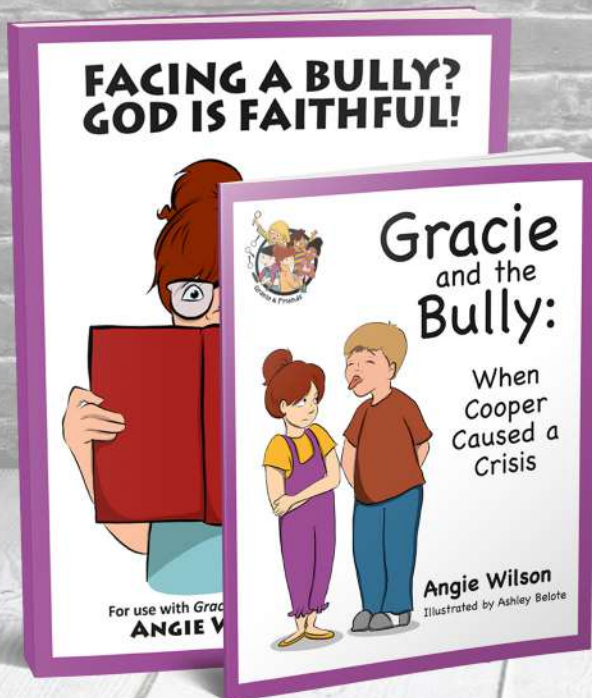


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OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Paul precisely identifies this new creation as one in which the old has passed away. The Greek word for *old* means "former things." For Paul, "former things" included a life controlled by the flesh and by evil spirits. It also included a life dominated by the Law. Anything that once stood in the way of our open relationship with Christ is part of the "old things."

The verse concludes with this expression, "Behold, all things are become new." This is certainly a reminder of Revelation 21:5, "Behold, I make all things new." There is a newness in the redeemed life beyond human understanding. This newness is so radical that we seldom understand it in ourselves, much less in others. Nonetheless, it is a profound statement of the status we have in Christ Jesus.

Anyone "in Christ" is a "new creature." The expression "in Christ" occurs 165 times in Paul's writings. It indicates the presence of the Lord in practical and ethical areas of life; it refers to the reigning rule of the Lord in His church as the Victor over death; and it reflects the close relationship between the Christian and Christ.

Thus, to be "in Christ" is to be in a profoundly new experience—life at its fullest. Since the focus is primarily on the Lord, this new life is a reflection of the life brought about by His resurrection.

Daily Devotions:

M. A Changed Man

Mark 5:14-20

T. Proof of

Salvation

Luke 19:1-10

W. Made Alive in

Christ

Ephesians 2:1-10

T. The Hope of

Glory

Colossians 1:21-28

F. Renewed in

Christ's Image

Colossians 3:1-11

S. Called to Holy

Living

2 Timothy 1:8-14