

DISCIPLESHIP PRINCIPLE #2

Luke 4 / 2 Tim. 3:16-17 / Col. 2:6-7

THE METHOD OF LIVING LIFE AS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

We begin our studies of how to live for God as a disciple of Christ in the midst of this fallen world by looking at **the example of our Lord Himself**.

"I came, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent me"

— John 6:39

Please read Luke 4:1-14 and notice **the Minister** (the Holy Spirit) who leads and empowers us to live for God, **the Monster** (Satan) who seeks to get us to live for ourselves rather than live and die for God, and **the Method** (imposing the Word of God on our soul and circumstances in the face of life's tests) of living victoriously, usefully, and fruitfully for God.

The
Minister

The
Monster

The
Method

We shall look at our relationship with the Holy Spirit and our battle with Satan in coming studies, but our focus here is upon the **Method** by which God would have us live as His disciples until He returns. How we are to serve Christ, be what He wants us to be, and be useful to Him in the work of the age is our focus. Learning and applying this method of living for God is required for our success to be a mature disciple of Christ and therefore also for making disciples for Him as He has instructed us. We must learn and live by this method.

The **METHOD** of living life for God that Jesus demonstrated here, and throughout His life is this: Jesus **knew** God's Word and therefore God's will regarding what he faced in life and He **imposed** it on his soul and his circumstances in life.

The Holy Spirit led Christ into "tests" of whether He would live by this method or not, and the Devil did all he could to get our Lord to deviate from this way of life. Christ evaluated what He faced in life, allowed by God, in three separate tests of this method, and He **IMPOSED** God's opinion and commands, as revealed in His Word, on His soul and all His circumstances, leaving the results in God's hands.

*“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led about by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days; and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘**It is written**, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”*

*And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.’ And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**It is written**, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.’”*

*And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; for it is written, ‘He will give His angels charge concerning You to guard You,’ and, ‘On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.’” And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**It is said**, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

And when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.” — Luke 4:1-14

So, the METHOD of living life for God, as a disciple of Christ, is to **learn God’s perspective on the matter before me, and impose it on my soul and my circumstances in life**. Life for us as Christ’s disciples is a continual testing of this method. Notice that it has 2 parts:

1. Learning God’s opinion on the matter you face in life, and
2. Imposing that opinion on your soul (mind, will, and emotions) and your circumstances

It is quite a simple method – just obey the commands of God that He has revealed in His Word.

Let us note that:

1. **It is a TRANSFORMING method.**

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” — Rom. 12:2*

When a new Christian begins to live in this way – everything changes, because this is not the way of life of anyone but a committed Christian. This a learning process, both to become a disciple and to train one, for there is much to be learned and this takes time. But...

“God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested beyond what you are able, but will, with the temptation, provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.”
— 1 Cor. 10:13

2. It requires that we learn to THINK BIBLICALLY.

We are exhorted to become wise and understanding, with wisdom being defined as “seeing life from God’s perspective”, and understanding as “responding to life from God’s perspective.

"The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding. Prize her, and she will exalt you; She will honor you if you embrace her.

She will place on your head a garland of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty. Hear, my son, and accept my sayings, And the years of your life will be many. I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; And if you run, you will not stumble. Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.”
— Prov 4:7-13

When Jesus was faced with those three ideas about life, three proposals about what He should do, it is obvious that He greeted them with these questions in His mind: “What is the biblical basis of that idea?, What is My Father’s opinion about it? What has My Father said about it?”

Oh, He knew the Bible. Even though these false ideas were packaged cunningly, even with Scripture taken out of context, He saw the errors and rejected them. He lived His life by this method.

“I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”
— John 8:28-29

So, living life for God requires first that we learn His opinion and commands about what we face in life.

3. It requires that we **IMPOSE** God's perspective on what we face on our soul and our circumstances.

The methodology of living for Jesus Christ as His disciple is to yield to the Father's will for our life and obey the commands of His Word to us, by the power of the Spirit which indwells us.

*"From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem (this was the Father's will for Him), and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for **you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.**"*

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it."

— Matt. 16:21-25

A true and mature disciple **learns** what God's will is for him in a matter, and then, dying to his own opinions and self-interest, he **imposes** God's will on himself and his circumstances. Being a disciple of Jesus Christ involves more than learning and accepting as true the **concepts** of God's revelation to us. We are not just to hear the gospel and be saved. To be a disciple is to live life according to the principles of God's Word to us.

Being a disciple is to live a "follow-Me-as-your-way-of-life" life. It is to obey the truth. It is to walk in the truth, increasingly in a manner worthy of our calling to do so. It is to please the Lord in all respects as He has commanded us. It is to add to our "believing the truth" faith, with knowledge, virtue, self control, perseverance, and self denying love of God and others.

If we are examples of this biblically revealed way of life and are teaching it to others, we are fulfilling His purpose for us in life as His disciples. Can an immature Christian fulfill Mt. 28:18-20? Can he or she make mature disciples for Christ? No.

UNIT STUDY SESSION #1

In preparation for the group study of this principle of living for Christ, read and study the above scriptures and summary and then complete the following self – evaluation.

Evaluating The Method I Use To Respond To What I Face In Life

1. When you face a decision in life, in any area, is it your routine to seek or ask, “what is God’s opinion regarding this”? and after clarifying this, to impose this opinion on yourself and your circumstances? Absolutely _____ .
It depends _____ . > On what? _____
2. Does this methodology describe your marriage? Is this how you and your spouse discuss life? _____ Is this a big part of how you pray together, i.e. asking the Lord for His direction? _____ Does searching the scriptures for His opinion describe your approach to living life together? _____
3. Does this methodology describe the raising of your children? Is this a major aspect of their training? _____
4. Does your knowledge of the Bible and your ability to find answers to your questions in it about what God has said allow you to use this method easily? _____
5. Do you get counsel from others who would know the Bible well, when you need to? How often do you do this? How often do you neglect this and go without biblical counsel on major decisions to verify you are in God’s will? _____
6. What is your assessment of how you are doing regarding this principle of life? Are you an example to be imitated? How would you grade yourself? __A__B__C__D__F__
7. What commitments are you willing to make, to do what God is asking you to do in this area of living for Him? _____

Discussion Questions For Study Session #1

1. How helpful was Luke 4 to you in understanding the method of living life for Christ?
2. Does God have an opinion on everything?
3. Which is harder – getting God’s opinion on a matter or imposing it on myself and my circumstances?
4. It seems to me that, if I do what God wants in many situations, that the cost may be significant. At least I often struggle to visualize how it could work out well. Am I still to do it? Always?
5. Can you give an illustration of choosing to “pay the cost” of obeying God’s will in a matter, and then God doing something “supernaturally” to make it work out for His glory?
6. How does Satan work to either get us to do something that is not God’s will or convince us that the right thing to do is actually the wrong thing? Can you give an example?
7. How can we “put the armor on” before we face a decision and the deceiver is there to do his thing? (Deut. 11:18, Ps. 119:11, 40:8, 1:2, Col. 3:16, Isa. 51:7) How do I do this?

UNIT STUDY SESSION #2

In preparation for the second study session please consider choosing one of the following projects:

- **Do a thorough study** of God's opinion about one of the following subjects, and be prepared to summarize it in 5 minutes and / or distribute your study of God's opinions on one page to the group.
 1. The Greek word for "church" appears 111 times in the New Testament referring to Christian churches or a local church. Identify 10 opinions God has about these.
 2. There are at least 14 qualifications for Elders, as far as God is concerned. What are these?
 3. How does a covenant differ from a contract and does this matter to God?
- **Memorize** one of the following portions of God's opinions.
 1. John 14:1-3
 2. Prov. 6:16-19
 3. Phil. 2:3-8
- **Read** a chapter of Proverbs and every thirtieth Psalm every morning (5 Psalms), and a chapter from the book of Romans, or another N.T. book every evening.

Discussion Questions

1. Did any of you do a study project in God's Word? Can you share it with us?
2. Did any of you memorize some of God's Word this week?
3. Did any of you Read God's Word morning and evening?
4. If we find that our personal knowledge of God's Word does not tell us His opinion on a matter we face, what should we do? What is God's opinion on this?
5. What do you think of this counsel: "If you ever cannot figure out what God wants you to do in a matter, just ask yourself what your natural inclination is – and do the opposite!"

Prayer