



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON: PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Sunday, June 18, 2023

When you get saved, you become a spiritual newborn. And just as birth is only the beginning for a newborn baby, that child is not meant to be a baby forever; but to grow and become strong and eventually reach adulthood where they are able to be more of an asset in society. The same is true for us. When we first come to Christ through receiving His salvation we are spiritual newborns but we are not meant to remain that way. God's plan is for us to grow strong, become mature, and become a greater asset for the Kingdom of God.

With that being said, we have created a list that will help you to grow. We believe that when you implement these practices and patterns in your life, you will grow right and become all that God has created you to be.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

1 Corinthians 13:11 – When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

DESIRE CHANGE

Spiritual growth is advancing on your personal journey to spiritual maturity - becoming all that God has created you to be. Growth requires a change from where you are to where you want to be. It requires you to let go of any patterns that do not align with God's plans for your life.

When you grow, bad habits must go!

Start by taking inventory of your life now and imagine what it should look like in the future. Now, to get to that future, you must desire change.

In the book of Genesis, Jacob, who was a con artist and a deceiver, had a desire for change. He wrestled with an angel throughout the night and would not let the angel go until the angel blessed him with the transformation that he needed. Seeing his intense desire for change, the angel blessed Jacob and changed his status in life (Genesis 32: 22-31).

Just like Jacob, your desire to change will provide the passion you need to see real results. You will grow into what God has created you to be, and you will see a God-sized reward for your efforts as He will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37: 4-5). God will strengthen you in your desire for change as it is a show of your faith to become who He has already planned for you to be (Jeremiah 29: 11).

Assignment:

- 1. Fill in the blanks: Spiritual growth is advancing on your personal journey to _____ - becoming all that God has created you to be.**

START EVERY DAY IN PRAYER

“Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.” – Hymn, What a Friend We Have in Jesus

What is prayer? It is basically time spent in the presence of God, where you are communicating to one another. In prayer, you talk to God, and He will also talk to you. Now there is the question of what to talk about. You are in a conversation with God, not an angel or an assistant – in prayer, you are talking to the One who created everything, including you! So what do you say to Him in prayer?

Here is a helpful acronym that you can use. It is P-R-A-Y.

1. P – PRAISE

Start your time of prayer with praise – we praise God for who He is and for what He has done!

2. R – REPENT

Repent of sins you have committed and of God’s commands you have neglected.

3. A – ASK

Ask for the needs of others – and ask for your needs.

4. Y – YIELD

Yield your will to God’s Will. Yield your agenda to God’s agenda for you.

In prayer, you talk to God, and He will also talk to you.

5. After prayer, believe and trust God...and walk in your victory!

We teach that you should “pray your day” – and that is profound! When you get to the “Ask” part of your prayer, instead of saying, “Lord, bless me today” – be specific. Talk to God about what you have going on that day. Not to inform Him – He knows your schedule. Pray to seek His guidance and also to release any anxiety, fear, anger or other feelings that can keep you from being the best that you can be.

Talk to Him about that difficult co-worker, that doctor’s appointment, that parent/teacher conference. When you have talked with God about your day, you will see Him working in every situation. You may find that your day goes more smoothly – or even on the tough days, you will find that you feel better equipped to handle whatever comes up.

Try starting every day in prayer and see what a difference it will make!

Assignment:

1. Fill in the blanks for the acronym, P-R-A-Y:

P - _____

R - _____

A - _____

Y - _____

ATTEND WORSHIP SERVICES

Every service, whether virtual or held at the church, brings something to your life! It is essential not to miss the “Rhema” (an experience tailored to your situation) that God will provide through worship, fellowship and the Word of God!

Hebrews 10: 24-25 says,

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another...”

God’s Word commands us not to forsake the “assembling of ourselves together”! There is something special that happens when God’s people come together to worship, whether online or in person. Be sure to attend all of our services – and participate! The services bring something to you...and you bring something to the service. Like, share and comment – invite your friends and family.

Assignment:

1. **Fill in the blanks: It is essential not to miss the “Rhema” (an experience tailored to your situation) that God will provide through _____, _____ and the _____ !**

COMMIT TO THE CHURCH

Your commitment to your local church is critical to your Christian walk and sustaining your relationship with Christ. The local church is the institution that God has set up to nurture and develop God’s people as well as advance the overall mission of Christ.

For the Christian, the local church provides times of worship, a venue to hear the Word of God, Christian counsel, a place to serve, an opportunity to support a higher cause and fellowship with the people of God. It is important as a Christian to get in a pattern of coming to church and connecting virtually. Your obedience, attendance and personal accountability in Christ and for the Church will strengthen and stabilize you.

Assignment:

1. **Fill in the blanks: The local church is the institution that God has set up to _____ and _____ as well as advance the overall mission of Christ.**

LIVE FOR JESUS

We live in a shattered society and broken world. Many endure broken homes, marriages, and even bodies. But this doesn't mean that we cannot live an abundant life of faith, restoration and victory that God has purposed for us. As Christians, it is important for us to align our lives with God's plan and yield to the direction of His Spirit. This is living for Jesus!

God has designed your life with great purpose. To fulfil the promise of His purpose, it is important to fully give your life to Jesus. Living for Jesus is living a righteous life and upholding the biblical standards of God's Word.

Joshua 1: 8 says that we should:

"...observe to do according to all that is written (in the Bible): for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success".

It is necessary to make a change from your old lifestyle and ways to a new spiritual lifestyle in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5: 17 says,

"...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away..."

Spiritually, you are moving from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God. As you live for Jesus you will be challenged with hills and valleys – but you will also experience joy, love, and peace on this glorious journey in Him.

Assignment:

1. **Fill in the blanks: Living for Jesus is living a _____ and upholding the _____ of God's Word.**

GET INVOLVED

When you give your life to Christ it is vital to quickly get involved at some level at your local church. Your engagement will develop you as a person and expose you to the greater mission and vision of the church and Body of Christ.

Participation in church ministry and outreach service provides the opportunity to serve in the community, fellowship with your church family, and support through labor and giving to your Local Church. You will begin to develop a greater passion for God and what He is doing through you as you use your gifts, talents and abilities for the Kingdom of God.

There are so many opportunities that you can take advantage of concerning being active in ministry and service. Studies show that the more you are involved with something – the more you will get out of it.

Get involved!

Assignment:

- 1. Participation in church ministry and outreach service provides the opportunity to serve in the community, fellowship with your church family, and support through labor and giving to your Local Church. Circle one: True or False**

BECOME A REACH LEADER

The Harvest Life Church Reach Culture is the undergirding foundation that speaks to consistently and perpetually REACHING individuals through the ministry of Jesus Christ primarily through salvation and discipleship but through other means as well.

The Reach Culture is a living concept by which Harvest Life operates in our functional environment and through its membership to bring the quality of “spiritual reach” – ministering to everyone and their need with priority and care.

This begins with reaching people with:

- (1) Salvation through Jesus Christ concerning the eternal heavenly destination of the soul
- (2) Discipleship – Discipleship is a commitment to transform into a spiritually mature Christian – a process of learning to love and follow Jesus and becoming more like him in our attitudes and actions.

We believe that every member of the Body of Christ, from young children to senior adults, can be REACH LEADERS. This concept of REACHING is also

employed within the context of our preaching, teaching, training, services, music ministry, youth ministry, events, ceremonies, conferences, projects, correspondence and social media.

Assignment:

1. What is the Harvest Life Church Reach Culture?

2. Every member of the Body of Christ, from young children to senior adults, can be REACH LEADERS. Circle one: True or False

SPEND TIME WITH GOD

“...there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18: 24

Friends are an important part of life. God created us to crave companionship, and good friends can provide it – as well as encouragement and support. A good friend will also challenge you if they see you heading in the wrong direction.

As awesome as friends are, there is a Friend above all others – and He desires to spend time with you. Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, but He is also the Son of Man. The Word of God tells us in Hebrews 4: 15 that Jesus experienced every temptation known to man, and Isaiah 53: 3 says that He was “a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief”. He is not untouchable or out of touch.

Whether you spend time with God in prayer, in worship, or just sitting in His presence it is important that you spend time with Him. Time spent with God changes you – it brings clarity of thought, brings peace of mind – brings hope, joy, and an overwhelming sense that you are loved. You can share your deepest thoughts and the desires of your heart, share your hopes and dreams.

When you spend time with God, you don't have to fear any judgement. Even when He corrects you, you don't have to feel any shame. He knows all about you, and He loves you anyway!

“...in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psalm 16: 11

Assignment:

1. **Fill in the blanks: Whether you spend time with God in prayer, in worship, or just sitting in His presence it is _____ that you _____ with Him.**

DON'T FEAR MISTAKES

As you continue to grow deeper in your relationship with God, you will make mistakes. We are imperfect, and through the Word of God, we can learn and grow – our mistakes will also be our teachers.

A small mistake now may reveal something that you must know to avoid a more significant mistake in the future. Yes, you should avoid making mistakes when you can – but you should not fear mistakes.

2 Timothy 1: 7 says,

“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind”.

To fear mistakes causes a focus on how we are perceived (to be perfect, without mistake) instead of how God wants to use us. Your focus must be on accomplishing the will of God for your life. Whatever it is that God is asking you to do – do it – and if you are scared – do it afraid!

God does not want you to play it safe concerning Kingdom work – nor are you expected to be perfect. What God requires is obedience and sacrifice.

1 Peter 5: 6-7 says,

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”

With humility comes God’s grace and favor. As you humble yourself and put God’s plan first, you will significantly impact yourself and others.

Assignment:

- 1. Our mistakes will also be our teachers. Circle one: True or False**

FELLOWSHIP

Coming together makes all the difference! There is something powerful about being around other believers in fellowship. No matter where you are in your Christian walk, fellowship provides connection, encouragement and family.

It's a blessing to be saved and living for Jesus – but sometimes our surrounding environment, outside of the church, can sap our spiritual strength. When we deal with a carnal and hard-hearted world, it can become easy to fall into a weak and unspiritual disposition. It's a good thing to get back into the presence of God and with people who love Him much like you do! Fellowship helps to restore your soul!

One of the gifts that God gave us is people. The right people and setting are much like water for a traveler thirsty from the desert sun. It makes all the difference! Coming to church is more than just hearing the Word, singing songs and praying a prayer – although all of these are good. But it is also engaging in conversations, hearing testimonies, laughing with friends and worshipping together – fellowship!

There is a real power in fellowship! It makes us stronger, provides encouragement, reminds us that we are not alone, helps to get us refocused on God and helps us to GROW! Oh, what a Fellowship – oh, what a joy divine...!

Assignment:

- 1. When we deal with a carnal and hard-hearted world, it can become easy to fall into a weak and unspiritual disposition. Circle one: True or False**
- 2. There is real power in fellowship! List two ways that fellowship impacts our lives:**

- _____
- _____

OBEDY AND TRUST GOD

A successful journey to spiritual growth and maturity in Christ requires a process marked by obeying and trusting God. Character is developed by keeping God's Word through challenging experiences. Your faith is going to be put on trial. Maturity is when you can continue to live right and do the right thing in the midst of your storm.

Spiritual growth is established when you are obedient to God and His direction in spite of your desires and feelings. In fact, living with trust and obedience is one of the most powerful things that you can do.

The Bible says in 1 Samuel 15: 22,

“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice...”

No matter how overwhelmed you may feel, continue to trust God.

The psalmist said in Psalms 61: 2,

“...when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

Spiritual Growth will happen – but you must keep walking by faith!

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”
Proverbs 3: 5-6

Assignment:

1. **Fill in the blank: _____ is when you can continue to live right and do the right thing in the midst of your storm.**

“BY THE WAYSIDE” TALK

Some things are taught – other things are caught. Powerful things happen when you are at the right place at the right time. We encourage you to stay around the church, your Pastors and fellowship – because there are valuable teachings that come “by the wayside”.

Wayside talk is not formal teaching – but “God arranged” and “Holy Spirit driven” opportunities to hear and grow!

Proverbs 8: 2 says that wisdom:

“...standeth in the top of high places and by the wayside where the paths meet.”

Listen to how God instructs us to teach His principles to our children in Deuteronomy 6: 7:

“And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

God has a plan for your life (Jeremiah 29: 11) and that plan includes mentoring moments and “on the job training”. You have a purpose and an assignment at your church and in the Kingdom of God. Wayside talk is essential for your Christian development.

Assignment:

- 1. Wayside talk is not formal teaching – but “God arranged” and “Holy Spirit driven” opportunities to hear and grow! Circle one: True or False**
- 2. Fill in the blanks: Wayside talk is essential for your _____**
_____.

WELCOME AND RECEIVE CORRECTION

If you are expecting to grow then you must welcome and receive correction. Correction is one of the most effective tools in the Kingdom of God! As infractions, mistakes and mess ups occur – correction is a “ready teacher” to help you improve immediately.

In grade school, when you got your test back – the answers that were wrong were marked. For those that wanted to learn and grow, the incorrect answers were an opportunity through correction to progress and get smarter. It didn't feel good – but it was good. Compliments are nice – but correction is dynamic!

The Bible says in 2 Timothy 3: 16 that even the Word of God was given for this reason:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Get in the frame of mind to welcome correction when it comes. God sends correction to direct you and perfect you. Take correction and corrective action without blaming or complaining. Just know you are a son or daughter of the Lord Jesus – when you have been “called on the carpet”.

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” Hebrews 12: 6-7

Assignment:

1. Correction is one of the most effective tools in the Kingdom of God!

Circle one: True or False

**2. Fill in the blanks: Get in the frame of mind to _____
_____ when it comes.**

GIVE YOUR BURDENS TO THE LORD

Psalm 55: 22

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”

One thing for sure, holding on to burdens and cares will undoubtedly wear you down, discourage you and affect you negatively. These burdens can affect your health, your mood, your personal relationships and your witness for Christ and ultimately stunt your spiritual growth.

You may ask, “How can this affect my spiritual growth?”

Giving your burdens to the Lord is not an easy thing to do. We tend to carry our burdens for so long till they drain us emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Carrying them alone means we have not fully trusted God.

So, the more we can release our burdens to God, demonstrates that we are maturing and growing in Christ; trusting in Him and not ourselves.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 5: 7,

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

God wants us to take our burdens, frustrations, anger, pain, worries, disappointments, fears and needs to Him. God is bigger than all our worries and problems put together! Talk to God and tell Him all about it. Tell God what’s on your mind, tell Him all your frustrations and fears – both big and small. No matter what you’re going through, no matter how you feel... God can take it! And God WILL take care of you from the inside out.

The Bible says in Matthew 11: 28-29,

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Say this Prayer:

“Father I give all my burdens (you mention them one by one) to You. I give it all to You Lord. I am tired and can’t carry them anymore. I have come to You today, and I trust that I will never be the same again in JESUS’ NAME. Amen.”

Assignment:

- 1. Holding on to burdens and cares will undoubtedly wear you down, discourage you and affect you negatively. Circle one: True or False**
- 2. Fill in the blanks: The more we can release our _____ to God, demonstrates that we are maturing and growing in Christ; trusting in _____ and not _____.**

DEVELOP A SENSE OF GRATITUDE

Take a look at your life right now; no matter how many mistakes you feel you’ve

made or how many victories you've won – no matter what; say "I'm Grateful". Why?

Romans 8: 28 says,

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Understand that everything that you have been through; every challenge, every trial and tribulation, every setback, every situation, every storm, and victories; the good and the bad, all worked together to get you in position to be all God has created you to be and to do all God has called you to do.

When you purpose in your heart to thank God for everything that He allows to come into your life, you will find yourself growing in Christ and in the knowledge of who God is.

1 Thessalonians 5: 18 says,

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

Right now, you need to take a praise break and give God thanks for what He has done and what He continues to do in your life! Hallelujah!

The songwriter said;

As I look back over my life, and I think things over... I can truly say that I've been blessed – I've got a testimony!

Assignment:

List 3 reasons you have to be thankful:

- _____
- _____
- _____

GIVE

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?”

Psalm 116: 12

Giving is an attribute and expression of spiritual growth. In natural life we see the progression of a human life. A newborn or infant has a life where they totally RECEIVE (they are dressed, fed, nurtured, etc.). Later on that toddler learns to dress and “share” with others. That same individual, later on in life, is married and a parent – and now GIVES to take care of their family with time, nurture and resources. To GIVE means to mature.

Giving in the spiritual realm also indicates growth. When a child of God sees and understands the importance of the Kingdom to the degree that they support – maturity has taken place. Strong Christians give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9: 7) in their tithing, offering and vision support because they are grateful to God. They realize that they have been blessed and want to see their church successful along with the Kingdom of God!

But strong believers have also learned that giving is an opportunity for God to bless them back! God promises to bless us over and above what we give and also according to the measure that we give.

Listen to Luke 6: 38:

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

God wants us to give because He knows that we will be blessed in the process. But also when we give, He gives us an opportunity to participate, by faith, in His divine plans. Every time we support financially through tithing and offering we are growing stronger in God!

Assignment:

- 1. Giving is an attribute and expression of spiritual growth. Circle one:
True or False**

2. Fill in the blanks: Strong Christians give cheerfully in their _____, _____, and _____ because they are grateful to God.

3. God promises to bless us over and above what we give and also according to the measure that we give. Use the space below to write out Luke 6: 38.
