**ASSIGNMENT FOR LESSON FOUR**

**Memorize Galatians 2:20**

**Day One**: Read the notes for Lesson Three. Then answer the following question.

Do you agree or disagree with the opening statements of this lesson: “Jesus has not called us to be dabblers in religion. He gives a radical call….”? Why do you agree or disagree?

**Day Two**: Read Galatians 2:19-20 and Romans 6:1-4.

When does the Christian “die” with Christ?

What happens with regard to sin when you die to the law?

How does the one crucified with Christ then live?

How does the Christian then live with regard to sin?

**Day Three**: Read Romans 6:5-7 & Colossians 3:1-3.

What follows our death with Christ?

Can there be a resurrection with Christ without a death with Christ? Why?

When we are raised with Christ, how are we to live?

**Day Four**: Read Philippians 3:7-11.

What passionate desire did Paul have?

How does this desire mark him as a disciple of Jesus?

How did Paul indicate he would “attain to the resurrection of the dead”?

**Day Five**: Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12.

Note: “this treasure” is “the knowledge of the glory of God” (v. 6). It is this that we “reflect” or “behold” (3:18), and it is this, which makes the difference in our lives.

Where does the Christian get the power to live the life of a disciple?

Note that the victorious life is not always a “bed of roses.” In fact, there can be no victory without a battle.

How does Paul describe the battle and the victory in this text?

Why does Paul say he is being “given over to death”?

How can the life of Jesus be revealed in your mortal body?

**Day Six**: Read Luke 9:23-24 and John 12:23-28.

When is the disciple to “take up his cross”?

Why did Jesus say the seed must die?

How was Jesus glorified?

How was the Father glorified in Jesus?

How, in these texts, do we serve and follow Jesus?

MY NOTES & QUESTIONS FOR CLASS:

[**DISCIPLESHIP (3) – The Call to Discipleship**](https://committedtotruth.wordpress.com/2009/08/08/discipleship-3-the-call-to-discipleship/)

Jesus has not called us to be dabblers in religion. He gives a radical call – a call repeated by his apostles. He wants our complete, full allegiance. There are no “half-measures” in being a disciple-follower of Jesus. Consider these statements and the demands implicit in them:

* *He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.* –Matthew 12:30
* *Therefore, come out from them and be separate.* –2 Corinthians 6:17
* *Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs – he wants to please his commanding officer.* –2 Timothy 2:3-4
* *Why do you call me, “Lord, Lord” and do not do what I say?* –Luke 6:46
* *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*–Matthew 6:33

All of this leaves a flavor of “get with it – or don’t bother!” We are assured of God’s love and mercy; we are also reminded that God’s goodness is to lead us to repentance (see Romans 2:4). In other words, being a Christian is a serious matter. Jesus told one whole church, *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one of the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth*(Revelation 3:15f). He went on to call this church to repentance, for he had not given up on them. Yet it is clear he was not happy with their lukewarm stance.

**His Characteristic Invitation: “Come Follow Me!”**

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When anyone came to him, Jesus always gave a challenge: *Come after me. Follow me and let the dead bury their dead. Sell all you have and give to the poor and come follow me.*

He promised much, but he did not offer cheap grace. In following him, we follow one who left the glory of heaven for the hardship of a poor family in an oppressed country – and for death on a cross. When he calls us to follow him, he does not call us to idyllic days in green pastures with no dangers in sight. Rather, he calls us to walk in the way of the cross, for it is this way that leads to the land that is fairer than day!

**Cross Bearing: At the Heart of Being a Disciple**

*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me*(Mark 8:34). We simply *cannot* follow Jesus without bearing our own personal cross. The above words were not directed to the apostles alone, but to the whole crowd. Cross bearing is not an option for the disciple of Jesus. It is a requirement.

Of course, he led the way. In one sense, his entire life was a life of cross-bearing. He always put his life on the line for those who needed him most. We are called to do the same for those who need us. *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers* (1 John 3:16). (The next verse tells how we are to do this.) In another place husbands are told, *Love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her* (Ephesians 5:25).

The common factor in statements like these is that self is put to death for a greater good. The early disciples declared that they would die for Jesus. He challenges us to do just that. In most cases, this is not a literal death. However, in all cases it is a death to self that we might walk with Jesus in his concern for others and for God. My pleasures, my possessions, and my pride: these are all to die on the cross so that I might be cleansed to serve him. The death of self-will is always painful. But, it must happen. “The Glory Land Way” is “The Way of the Cross” – and this road to Golgotha leads through Gethsemane. It is at Gethsemane that we learn to pray genuinely “Not my will, but yours be done!” The Garden of Gethsemane reverses the Garden of Eden. In Eden, Mother Eve wanted to do it her way, thinking she could be wise like God to determine good and evil by her own will. In Gethsemane Jesus subjugated his will to God’s will. And he came there bearing a cross (though it was not visible for another few hours). When we bear our cross, we will meet him there.

**We Are Called to Become Before We Are Called to Do**

When Jesus called the Galilean fishermen to follow him he said, *Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men* (Mark 1:17). He did not call them to fish for men. He called them to follow him; as they followed him, he changed them into fishers of men. Note that he made them fishers of men before they went out to catch men. They were called to become and to be those who could catch men. But it was Jesus who made them what they needed to be.

This is the way God works with us. He calls us to follow him as disciples. When we do, he makes us into new creatures *able to do what he needs us to do*. If we choose not to follow him, he leaves us to our own devices – and to our own success or failure. This is the source of much of the frustration many find in trying to live the Christian life and fulfill his commandments. We try to live and to obey without first putting ourselves under his tutelage as disciples. The result is that we try to do God’s work in our own strength – and we become frustrated. It is only as he *makes us to become* what we need to be that our weakness will become his strength.

**What We Are Determines What We Do**

Jesus once said of the devil, *When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies* (John 8:44b). Why does the devil lie? Because he is a liar. Change what you are if you want to change what you do. You can no more keep a sinner from sinning than you can keep the devil from lying. If you want to keep from sinning, become something other than a sinner. Jesus works on what we are; he does not just give us some commandments about what to do. He starts with the heart, for it is the heart that makes a man unclean (Mark 7:20-23). Jesus works on the hearts of his disciples.

**What We Become Is Determined By Whom We Follow & To Whom We Entrust/Commit Ourselves**

Being a disciple means trusting and following our Master. In following Jesus, we become like him. When the unbelieving Jews realized the apostles were unschooled men, but observed their courage, *they took note that these men had been with Jesus* (Acts 4:13). Being with Jesus as his disciples made them different. In following him, they became changed men. Unschooled men were supposed to be awed by the high Jewish court; these men spoke up with boldness born in their walk with Jesus and his Spirit.

This same Spirit will change us from ordinary people into people of glory. *And we…are being transformed into his likeness with every-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit*(2 Corinthians 3:18). How does this transformation take place? It is as we behold his face, looking to him, watching him, learning of him, following him – as a disciple. This is why he calls us to be disciples. He wants to transform us into his own image, into the very likeness of God!