**ASSIGNMENT FOR LESSON FIVE**

**Memorize 2 Corinthians 4:5**

**Day One**: Read the notes for Lesson Four and answer the following questions.

Why is cross-bearing so much a part of the disciple’s life?

Can the church today be what God calls it to be without a more fervent commitment to cross bearing?

How can we begin to make this more a part of our Christian walk?

**Day Two**: Read John 13:12-16; John 15:20 and Matthew 10:24-25.

Note: *Servant* in these texts can be translated *slave*

Whose feet did Jesus wash?

What did he say they called him?

What terms did he use in referring to them?

What do these terms suggest about the relationship of the disciples to Jesus?

**Day Three**: Read Luke 6:46-49.

If Jesus is my Lord, what should I do?

What if I do not do this?

What does this suggest about the relationship of the disciple to Jesus?

**Day Four**: Read John 6:66-69.

Why did some disciples leave Jesus and not follow him any longer?

Why did the Twelve not leave him?

What confession did Peter make concerning the person of Jesus?

What does this suggest about the relationship of the disciples to Jesus?

**Day Five**: Read 1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 1 Corinthians 4:6-7 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Why would some say they were of Paul, Cephas, or Apollos?

To what extent can a disciple of Jesus follow a man?

How does a true disciple of Jesus present himself when teaching someone else?

What does this suggest about the relationship of the disciples to Jesus?

**Day Six**: Read Acts 8:30-31; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 2:2 and Hebrews 13:7-8.

When can (should) a disciple of Jesus listen to a human teacher?

What faith or example in others are we to imitate?

What does this suggest about the relationship of the disciple to Jesus?

**MY NOTES & QUESTIONS FOR CLASS**:

[**DISCIPLESHIP (4) – The Cross in the Life of the Disciple**](https://committedtotruth.wordpress.com/2009/08/12/discipleship-4-the-cross-in-the-life-of-the-disciple/)

*One of my earliest memories is of waking from my nap on the front pew of the little white church building where my family worshipped in Central Florida. An older brother in Christ was leading the congregation in singing*Kneel at the Cross. *I have always loved that old song, though I seldom hear it any more.*

Kneel at the cross. Christ will meet you there. He intercedes for you.

Lift up your voice. Leave with Him your care, and begin life anew.

Kneel at the cross; leave ev’ry care.

Kneel at the cross; Jesus will meet you there.

One basic principle of the gospel is that the disciple will share the Master’s suffering. The cross is not limited to the hill outside Jerusalem; each disciple must carry his own cross as he follows in the steps of the Savior. Each must come to know the pain of emptying himself of self so that he may be filled with Christ. Just as our Lord gave up His glory to take up His cross, we must give up the “glory” we *claim*for ourselves and take up our cross. Then the Father will glorify us because we will be following in the steps of His Son.

**I Am Crucified with Christ**

In Galatians 2:19-20 Paul made a stunning announcement: *I died to the law. I am crucified with Christ. Now Christ lives in me.* Is it possible we have become so “glib” in talking about Christ living in us we fail to marvel at how radical this concept really is? This is even more amazing than the fact the Son of God left the glory of heaven to become a babe in Mary’s womb. In his own human form, he remained sinless. But if he lives in me, in my body, *he lives in a body where sin is still active.*

How can the holy Son of God live with me in my sin? The cross is the only answer. He died for me that I might be forgiven. I die with him that I might be sanctified (or *become holy*). The *ego* or *self* dies so that Christ might live in me. This death is a crucifixion with him.

Paul did not claim a unique experience. He reminded the Romans (6:1ff) that they, too, had died. The *old self* was crucified. They *died to sin*. They were *united with him in his death.*But crucifixion is not the end; it is but a beginning. The end is *resurrection to a new life*, a life in which we are being *freed from sin*.

Paul clearly relates this sequence of events to one’s baptism into Christ. It is, he says, as we are baptized into Christ that we are *baptized into his death, buried with him, and resurrected with him.* Because of all this, he says you are to *count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Note, though, that Paul does not claim immunity to sin. He does say *do not let sin reign* and *do not offer your members to sin*. And, he adds, *offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life.* By God’s grace, sin is no longer your master (Romans 6:1-14). Your new Master is Christ.

But, Christ will be Master only as we raise our sights from earth to heaven (Colossians 3:1ff). We elevate our view because *we died and have been raised with Christ.* We look to him so we may be transformed “*from one degree of glory to another”* (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

But there is still some more dying to do while we are on earth! We still have to *put to death whatever belongs to our earthly nature* – and the list of things to put to death is grim. Read it for yourself in Colossians 3:5-11. But do you notice what comes as we put these things to death (dare we say “crucify them”!)? When these are crucified, *Christ is all and is in all* (v. 11).

**To Know Christ We Share His Suffering**

Remember that the definition of a disciple is one who seeks to know and follow his Master. Paul shows a passionate desire to know Christ in Philippians 3:7-11. Everything he previously valued is nothing when compared to the *surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus.* He said, for his sake *I have lost all things and consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ.* He listed three things he wanted to know: 1) Christ Himself. 2) The Power of His Resurrection. 3) Fellowship in His Sufferings. Through these, Paul said, he wanted to *become like Him in his death and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

In the paragraph after this passionately expressed hunger for Christ, Paul went on to say:

*Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

It is in this single-minded pursuit of the heavenward call that Paul’s hunger to know the power of Christ’s resurrection finds satisfaction.

**Crucifixion of Self Allows Resurrection with Christ**

There can be no resurrection with Christ without a prior crucifixion with Him. You cannot live with res­ur­rection power unless you first are crucified with Christ. This is another way of saying we cannot be glorified with the Lord unless we first humble ourselves in the same way He humbled Himself. Jesus humbled Himself to be a servant and to be obedient – *even to death on the cross* (Philippians 2:8). When we humble ourselves to be obedient, even to death on the cross, we will be exalted with Him to glory. This is what it means to be a disciple.

In the beatitude, Jesus pronounced the blessing of being filled on those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). This is the hunger Paul expressed in Philippians 3 – and he was being filled so he could say, *it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me*(Galatians 2:20).

**Our Crucifixion with Him Is Not a One-Time Event**

While the Christian’s life with Christ begins with a once-for-all event in baptism, the dying with Christ that begins there continues. In Luke 9:23-24 he said to all his disciples: *If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.* Each day as we walk with him, we take up our cross to follow him. If we shun this, if we seek to “save” our lives, Jesus said we would lose them. It is only by losing our lives (as we are crucified with him) that we save them.

The idea of losing what we try to save but saving what we are willing to lose links this text with another in which Jesus revealed his own distress at his approaching death. In Jesus’ final week on earth, some Greeks wanted to meet Jesus. Andrew and Philip brought them to Jesus. In his comments, Jesus seemed to ignore these visitors – but he revealed the essence of his mission and how it connects with his death:

Jesus replied, *the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it pro­duces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.* — John 12:23-26.

Without death, Jesus would remain alone; by dying, He would be fruitful. Then He repeated what He had earlier said to us. *The man who loves his life will lose it.* But here, He is focused on His own coming death. He went on to ask, *what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No! It was for this very reason I came to this hour’* (v. 27). Again He says, *whoever serves me must follow me.* But, in following Him into death, we are promised honor and glory from the Father in eternity.

When we give up our glory, we gain His glory. Die to self and live with Christ; live for self and die to Christ. The choice is to be or not to be a disciple of Jesus.