**ASSIGNMENT FOR LESSON EIGHT**

**Memorize Matthew 11:28-30**

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

What would be the most attractive feature of a church of true disciples?

What keeps the church of today from becoming a church of true disciples?

**Day Two:** Read John 20:24-31.

What caused Thomas to believe in Jesus?

What causes us to believe today?

How can one who believes without seeing be more blessed than Thomas?

**Day Three:** Read Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Galatians 1:11-12.

Two of these passages say the church is to continue to teach. What is the source of its teachings?

How did Paul receive the message he communicated to Timothy?

**Day Four:** Read John 17:6-8, 14, 20 and Romans 10:17.

What message was communicated to the apostles?

How is that message communicated to us?

How does faith come for us?

**Day Five:** Read Ephesians 3:2-5; 1 Corinthians 14:37-38 and 2 Peter 1:12-16.

Why did Paul say he wrote his revelation down?

What must the spiritual person acknowledge about what Paul wrote?

Why did Peter say he wrote?

**Day Six:** Read John 5:36-40 and 45-47.

What witnesses does Jesus claim to authenticate his ministry?

How did Jesus say the Scriptures fit into the phalanx of witnesses?

Why did the Jews (who studied the Scriptures diligently) not come to Jesus?

**MY NOTES & QUESTIONS FOR CLASS:**

[**DISCIPLESHIP (7): A CHURCH OF DISCIPLES**](https://committedtotruth.wordpress.com/2009/08/24/discipleship-7-a-church-of-disciples/)

I remember driving into Fort Worth one Christmas season. The surrounding country to the west is flat and virtually treeless. The city, lit up for the season, was visible for miles. The tall buildings of the city created their own “hill” – and the city could not be hid.

Jesus observed, after telling his disciples *you are the light of the world*, that *a city set on a hill cannot be hidden* (Matthew 5:14-16). In Greek, the words *you* and *your* in this text are plural. This, with his refer­ence to a *city* that cannot be hidden, lets us know it is the church collectively, not the individual disciple, that makes an impression on the world as children of light. Individual candles may be hidden under a bushel basket; a city of lights cannot be hidden. It is this city of heavens light, shining in the darkness of this world of sin, which causes men who see the delightful deeds of disciples to glorify God.

This assumes, of course, that the light is shining before men, unhidden by clouds of sin that often darken our light and cause the *lamp stand*(which is the church in Revelation 2:5) *to be removed.* The light *shining in our hearts* is the glorious light of the gospel, *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

What would the church be like if we were all disciples, not just Church Members?

**A Church Where Each Yielded To the Other Instead of Insisting on His Own Way**

One of the most distasteful things in church life is the political maneuvering for position and power that often occurs. We saw in an earlier lesson how James and John’s request for seats of honor in the kingdom created friction with the other disciples. Jesus rebuked this action and the reaction of the Ten (Mark 10:35ff.). All Twelve misunderstood the way to greatness in the kingdom of God.

Jesus did not achieve greatness through raw ambition – but through yielding to the cross. His disciples go in the same way. They achieve their goals, not through self-interest, but by looking to the interests of others. They do not act with selfish ambition or empty conceit, but with humility and love. In this, they follow their leader (see Philippians 2:1-4ff.).

Colossians 3:12ff lists qualities that should be seen in the disciples of Jesus – because these qualities were in Jesus. *Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness and love.* These are the virtues of yielding that are the opposite of the unbeliever’s worldview – but which become second nature to those who follow Jesus.

A church with these qualities would be recognized as having the light of Christ within it.

**A Church of Integrity**

A church of disciples, not just members, would also be a church of integrity. Our God is a God of Truth. Jesus said, *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life* (John 14:6). This may mean many things, but it certainly means God has integrity. Without integrity, God could not be trusted; nor can we.

Ephesians 4:25-32 describes this integrity: *Put off lying and speak truthfully.* Why? *You are members one of another.* That is, you are all members of Christ’s body, bound to him and to each other.

To deceive one who is a part of yourself (and you a part of him) is to deceive yourself. A few verses later he adds, *the thief must quit stealing and do profitable work so he can have something to share with those in need.* Here is integrity at another level. Instead of being an economic parasite on the community, the disciple is one who supports himself – and also gives to those in need. This goes beyond armed robbery to every sort of “sharp dealing” that is shady. Feed the flock; don’t fleece the flock. You should pray for your church family, not prey on them by your wheeling and dealing that takes advantage of their trust in you as a Christian brother.

Such a church would be a welcome haven in a world of duplicity.

**A Church Growing in Grace and Knowledge**

A church of true disciples would be one *growing in grace and knowledge* (2 Peter 3:18). 2 Peter 1:5ff lists eight qualities in which we need to grow. Beginning in faith and ending in love, these form a “rainbow of love” around the disciple of Jesus. Verse 8 says we are to have these *in increasing measure*. That is, we are to grow in them. These eight are sometimes called “the Christian graces.” None of these is to stand-alone. Each is interwoven with the others. Together, they describe the very character of Jesus. Similar to the qualities listed earlier from Colossians 3:12f, these will mold the heart of the disciple into the heart of his Master.

A church of disciples would also continually grow in knowledge. *As newborn babes, they would hunger for the milk of God’s Word so they can grow up in their salvation* (1 Peter 2:2). This, however, would not be knowledge for the sake of knowledge – but *to find out what pleases the LORD*(Ephesians 5:10). Such knowledge is also necessary to grow in the Christian graces.

Such a church would be vibrantly throbbing with love for its God, its members and its community.

**Conclusion**

Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be part of a church of true disciples? But I must ask myself: Would I fit into a church like this? Am I a true disciple? Or am I a casual Christian?

What kind of church would this church be,

If ev’ry member were just like me?

The goal for this lesson is not just an exercise in imagination – but a challenge to become a church of true disciples. Would such a church be perfect? No, for true disciples admit their imperfections and are continuing to *press on to the prize of the heavenward call of God in Christ* (Philippians 3:14). But such a church would be a place where each person is challenged and encouraged to grow toward the image of Christ. It would be a place where fellowship would be more than social; it would be a true sharing of hearts in a way that would draw us ever closer to Jesus.

Such a church would truly be a city of light, set on a hill so that it could not be hidden.

**And men would see it and glorify God.**