

Foundations I, Part 4:

The Christian Life and the Church, Study Guide

Matthew 28:19–20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus Plan for His people:

1. **They become a disciple** (through the Gospel)
2. **Associate with the Church** (Baptize)
3. **Goal: Learn to obey their God** (Teaching them to observe all that has been commanded)

Obedience: That is the great goal of becoming a Christian.

1. **Obedience is important because God is glorified through the way we live.** Philippians 1:9-11
2. **Obedience is important because it is a mark of true Christians.** John 14:15

This process of growing in our obedience/holiness is called sanctification.

Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace by which we are renewed throughout in the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

1. An ongoing work, not a one time act like justification and adoption
2. We are enabled, meaning we have to work at growing in holiness.
Philippians 2:12–13, 1 Peter 2:24

How to develop a heart that wants to obey God?

What does it mean to have a heart for God?

1. It is a passion to know God, Philippians 3:10.
2. It is a passion to deny self, Luke 9:23-27.
3. It is a passion to serve others, Matthew 20:20-28.

What should I do to develop a heart for God?

A. Meet with God daily.

1. Read the Scriptures systematically, Acts 17:11.
2. Read the Scriptures devotionally, Luke 24:32.
3. Worship God daily, Psalm 5:3, John 4:24.

B. Examine yourself daily.

1. Be hard on yourself, but gentle and patient with others and their sins,
II Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:2, 3.
2. Understand the difference between legalism and discipline.
 - a. Legalism- man attempting to gain God's favor by religious activity,
Mt. 23:13-39.
 - b. Discipline -- denying self of good things that deaden spiritual vitality,
I Tim 4:7.

How do we read the Bible?

A. Not:

1. Simply to increase our knowledge, I Corinthians 8:1.
2. To support a pet theological doctrine, John 5:39, 40.
3. To gather ammunition with which to blast others, Matthew 19:3 ff.
4. To fulfill a religious ritual.
5. To be relieved of emotional, spiritual pain as though it were a drug.

B. But we should read the Bible:

1. To show us our sin.

- a. To convict us of sin, Luke 5:31.
- b. To produce sorrow for sin, Acts 2:37.
- c. To elicit confession of sin, Psalm 32:5.
- d. To produce a deep hatred for sin, Psalm 97:10.

2. To reveal the Triune God to us.

- a. An awe of God, Psalm 33:8.
- b. A greater trust in God, Job 13:15.
- c. Our need of Jesus and His sufficiency, Isaiah 64:4; John 15:5.
- d. A deeper love for Jesus, Hebrews 11:26.
- e. A deeper awareness of, dependence upon the Holy Spirit, John 16:13,14; II Peter 1:3,4

3. To move us to obedience and love for Jesus.

- a. To see God's demands upon us, Deuteronomy 6:5
- b. To see how we have failed to meet His demands, Isaiah 53:6.
- c. To produce a greater zeal to obey God, Psalm 119:97.
- d. To produce a greater zeal for prayer, Mark 1:35.

Practically applying what you read.

1. SPECK. After reading, ask yourself:

- S - Is there any Sin to avoid?
- P - Is there any Promise to claim?
- E - Is there any Example to follow?
- C - Is there any Command to obey?
- K - Is there any new Knowledge of Jesus?

Developing a Consistent Prayer Life

What is prayer? Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies. 1 John 5:14

Our hearts must be in the right condition

1. Being poor in spirit, Matthew 5:3.

2. Grieving over sin, Matthew 5:4.

3. Being gentle, Matthew 5:5.

Do not: Demand your own personal rights, be hypersensitive, defend yourself, crusade for your vindication, or lash out at those who attack you.

Do: Be patient, self-controlled (angry at the right time, never angry at the wrong time), strong and courageous, Yield your future: health, reputation, prosperity into God's loving hands.

4. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness, Matthew 5:6. 1.

How to structure our prayers: ACTS.

A: Adoration- Begin your prayer time with praise and adoration

C: Confession

1. Unconfessed sin blocks God's blessing, Psalm 66:18.
2. Ask God to show you your sin, Psalm 139:23, 24.
3. Do not be healed "too quickly."

T: Thanksgiving. Learn to be thankful in everything, I Thessalonians 5:18.

S: Supplication.

The Church

The word church is a Greek word--ekklesia. "that which is called out for a special purpose; an assembly."

The Universal Church: Consists of all true believers from all ages. Rev. 5:9

The Visible Church: Consists of all those who profess Christianity and their children.

What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a holy ordinance appointed by Christ, by which, by visible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed and applied to believers. Matthew 28:19, Matthew 26:26-28

The sacraments of the New Testament are, two only, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and these take the place of Circumcision and the Passover in the Old Testament.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is the sacrament in which the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, signifies and seals our being grafted into Christ, and having a share in the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our pledge to be the Lord's.

What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament in which, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to Christ's appointment, his death is proclaimed, and those who receive rightly are by faith (and not by the mouth in a physical manner) made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

1 Cor 10:16-17