"AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES"

A Disciples Devotional Guide

Discipleship

Be a disciple of Jesus and become His disciple-maker.

In order to follow Jesus, you really have to follow Him. Join God in what He is doing.

A Bible-based guide to following Jesus and being His disciple.

By Michael J. Young, Sr.
Evangelist, Bible Teacher

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the Holy Bible, New American Standard Version.

Contact information: Michael J. Young, 10608 Jackson Square Drive, Estero, FL 33928

Email: whitestonefellowship@earthlink.net

Web Site: https://www.whitestone2020.com/

Web Site: https://www.whitestone2014.com/

Online: https://www.whitestone2020.com/and-you-shall-be-my-disciple-the-book

"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed."
John 8:31

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
"Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

I have been a practicing Christian since 1978. My walk as a Christian has not always been steady nor has it always been "pretty". Then, I discovered the 'secret' of becoming a disciple of Jesus, and to my dismay, I also discovered it is impossible to do what Jesus commanded - on my own. But then, so is everything that Jesus commanded. Impossible, to the natural man or woman.

It is only possible to become a disciple, a true follower of Jesus, by completely surrendering your life to Him and allowing the Holy Spirit to inhabit you, guide you, teach you and provide you with His spiritual gifts. It is God who does the work through a humbled and surrendered person.

God, alone, is the miracle worker. We are simply the conduit, simply His vessel. So, we confess, as the Apostle Peter said:

> *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*

This began as a personal journey and a Bible study to learn about being a true disciple of Jesus. I found seventy-two disciplines which mark a disciple of Jesus. This is not a list to be followed nor is it a formula to be worked. It is a frank and honest evaluation of what it takes to follow Jesus - we must honestly and completely submit ourselves to His Will.

It will take effort on the Believer's part, both of (#1) *spiritual discipline* and the effort of (#2) practical application.

Please join me, and let's all pray as we undertake the "impossible" and watch for His Miracle!

"With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God." Mark 10:27

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #1

- **Repent**

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The greatest pronouncement and call to readiness for all Christians: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The hour has arrived. Final preparations are being made. Ready yourself for the Heaven's final assault upon the earth. Satan is to be defeated and you and I are part of God's invading force.

This is not a metaphor. It is not hyperbole. It is the literal call from God through His Son, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Repent, in the Biblical sense, literally means, "To change one's mind; to change one's mind for the better" and it comes from a two root words which mean, "Hereafter, have this understanding or perception".

Repenting is the act of changing your mind which means your mindset, your values, and your worldview is changed. Some would say you then live by new standards. But it is much greater than just living by new standards.

A person of sound mind cannot simultaneously think one thing and do another, repentance results in a complete change of mind and direction of one's life.

Another way of saying this is, "As a man or woman thinks, so are they".

BOTH A COMMAND AND A PROPHETIC WORD

Interestingly, Jesus, the Son of God, in fact God Himself, said these very words which are recorded in Matthew 4:17. Remembering, this is both a Command and a prophetic Word from God.

Jesus said this is what we are to do - Repent - in order to become His disciple and to follow Him, and, this is what will happen is we repent.

The disciples echoed and repeated these very words as they continued to do the Works of God, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is now at hand".

Jesus says for each of us to Repent as an act of our will and that Repentance will allow the Holy Spirit to come into our bodies, our minds and regenerate our spirits. We will become One with Him.

Our fleshly desires begin to fade and our new desires emanate from the Holy Spirit of God. It is not us producing Spiritual Fruit, it is from The Holy Spirit and it should pour out of us, liberally.

We begin to desire the Things of God. We are made new and we can now walk with certainty, with purpose and power in our New Life.

MANIFESTATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Once we Repent, our new desires move us to a new way of living, new actions, which are the direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Repentance means it is no long you or I who live, but it is Christ, literally, living in us.

Galatians 2:**20** "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me"

If you are living in the sin of doubt or fear, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

If you are living under the oppression of poverty, sickness, lack or want, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Rise up. Proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness, help all who are ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; heal them all. **Matthew 4:24**

Go and tell others this exceedingly Good News, telling them to "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

https://www.whitestone2020.com/yes-you-have-to-follow-him-for-real

https://www.whitestone2020.com/call-to-arms-part-2

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #2

- **Follow Me**

"And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" ***(Matthew 4:19).***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"Follow Me", is an imperative statement, a command (not a request). It conveys a sense of urgency, as saying "Now!". The idea is to draw near, as if you are looking over Jesus' shoulder, watching, learning, preparing to imitate Him. You are to be seen with Him and you are to be identified as having been with Him.

A disciple of Jesus – A Christian – is identified as having been with Jesus.

He called Peter and Andrew and said, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men." Peter and Andrew understood this was an invitation to a close, personal and lasting relationship. This was not a casual encounter. This is the Call of God for all to follow Him, and a being yoked with Him is the perfect illustration to describe this new relationship with Jesus.

YOU ARE THE CALLED OF JESUS CHRIST

Being yoked with Jesus is freedom from what binds you, freedom from what ails you, freedom from what plagues you. Know that Jesus is gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. His yoke is a yoke of freedom!

When people see you, are they be amazed? Do they *recognize you as having been with Jesus?*

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

https://www.whitestone2014.com/the-real-gospel-of-christ

https://www.whitestone2014.com/yes-you-have-to-follow-him-for-real

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #3

Discipleship

- **Rejoice in persecution**

  "10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

  11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

  12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." **(Matthew 5:10–12).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

First, let me define these words so we can get a clearer understanding.

We are to ld to **Rejoice**: to rejoice, be glad, to rejoice exceedingly, to be well, thrive.

We are told we will be **Persecuted:** dioko = to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away in a hostile manner; to harass, trouble, molest one.

The word "persecuted" comes from the world "Diakonos" which translates DEACON, which is a servant of God, a minister.

Why and how do you rejoice when being harassed or terrorized? You cannot and you should not unless something unusual, something exceptional is happening.

What we discover is that *Jesus is teaching about your* ***"Sanctification"*** and He is saying that you will be purged, refined and been restored, when you follow Him and are fully surrendered to God and His Will.

Persecution is a necessary and inevitable step. You are walking in the step of Jesus, in His likeness, doing His Will and His Works.

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your reward in heaven is great. Great, indeed.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

https://whitestone2020.com/exprience-gods-will/

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #4

Discipleship

- **Let Your Light Shine**

  "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

PHOS = To shine or to make manifest one's thoughts; God is light because light has the extremely delicate, subtle, pure, brilliant quality of truth and its knowledge, together with the spiritual purity associated with it that which is exposed to the view of all, openly, publicly; reason, mind ; the power of understanding esp. moral and spiritual truth.

Faith is a vital ingredient in our walk with God. Our obedience demonstrates that faith. But James gives us a great reminder when he says, "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

But are we willing to recognize, that faith without works is useless?

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. *Ephesians2:10*

Now, it is your turn:

HOW MUST I DO IT? _____

HOW MUST I TEACH IT? _____

We must remember that it is not our light that shines, but His Light within us, bringing Him glory through our submission and obedience to Him and His Will.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Honor God's Law**

  ""Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

These Laws and the Prophets were meant to teach and guide the Jewish people in all their thought and conduct so as to live a life pleasing to God to have success in their affairs.

> Then, In one bold and sweeping statement Jesus announces that He is the fulfillment, the revealing and the completion of all **the Law and the Prophets** spanning their four thousand years of history.

Jesus is saying that His life, ministry and teachings not only explain the Law and the Prophets but completes their meanings and requirements.

The significance of this announcement is that it relegates the Torah and the Prophets as subject to Jesus and His teachings.

"The Torah" - The "Jewish Law" or the "Torah" is the 5 books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). The **Jewish** tradition is that there are **613 commandments**, or mitzvot, in the Torah (also known as the **Law** of Moses). Also known as the "**Pentateuch**", which is Greek and means "Five Books", refers to the **Torah** i.e. the 5 Books of Moses. These Laws and the Prophets teach and guide the Jewish people in all their thought and conduct how to live a life which is pleasing to God and leads to success in their affairs.

Secondly, **the "Prophets"**, or The Twelve, also called The Twelve Prophets, or The Minor Prophets, the book of the Hebrew Bible which contains the books of 12 minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, **Nahum**, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

These books contain an account God crating the world and the emergence of human civilization.

The first six books narrate not only the history but the genealogy of the people of Israel to the conquest and settlement of the Promised Land under the terms of God's covenant with Abraham, whom God promised to make the progenitor of a great nation.

The following seven books continue their story in the Promised Land, the establishment and development of the monarchy and the warnings by the prophets both of impending divine punishment and exile and of Israel's need to repent.

The last 11 books contain poetry, theology, and some additional history.

Again, in one bold and sweeping statement Jesus announces that His life, ministry and teachings not only explain the Law and the Prophets but completes their meanings and requirements.

Jesus is the fulfillment of all **the Law and the Prophets** spanning their, now, four thousand years of history.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW MUST I DO IT? _____

HOW MUST I TEACH IT? _____

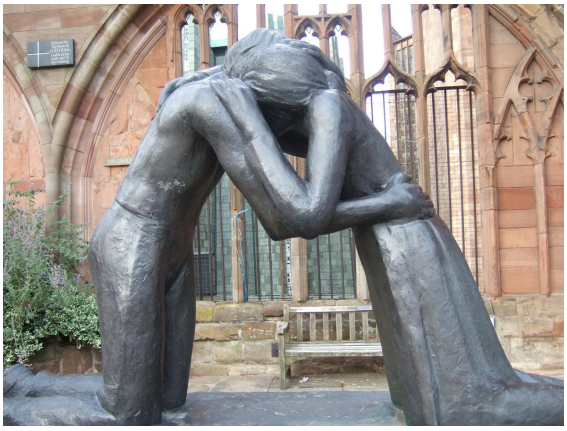
Jesus is our One True way to life and life more abundant

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #6



- **Be Reconciled**

"Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

"Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison." (Matthew 5:23–25).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

> The Truth is presented on several levels in this teaching. Jesus is using *the practice of giving a gift or an offering to God* which will take us from a practical spiritual duty to a profound Spiritual application.

We are reminded, here, that sin separates the Christian from God and it must be dealt with quickly. Otherwise, anything you have to offer God is tainted by your recognized sin, in this case separation from a brother due to some offense.

Jesus then uses a metaphor of the law to explain what happens in the Spirit and in your soul when sin is un-confessed and your are unrepentant toward God. You are handed over to the judge and you are thrown into prison.

The Apostle Paul reminds us, in *Romans 8:6 "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."*

The Greek language used here for *a "mind set"* is, once again, is a picture of being "swept away, fenced in and locked up", put into a prison within one's own mind, soul and spirit, separated from God.

Jesus, Himself warns us, *"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." Matthew 6:14-15*

The penalty is harsh but the remedy is simple: *"Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way..."*

Forgive and be reconciled. *This is what a disciple of Jesus does*. This is what a Christian does. We cannot deliberately and defiantly harbor ill feelings between a brother or a sister - for the jailer awaits.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #7

Discipleship

- **Do Not Lust**

  *" **27** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; **28** but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. **29** "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. **30** "If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell." (Matthew 5:27–30).*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

This is a very difficult saying and an even more difficult circumstance to find yourself. It should be approached with humility, submission to God through prayer.

1. First, God considers lust an offense worthy of death. *Leviticus 20:10 says "If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."*

2. Lust is destructive. *Proverbs 6:32 says "The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it."*

3. Lust is a sin that spreads like a virus. *Matthew 5:32 says "but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of un-chastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*

4. Lust is powerfully seductive and fatally addictive. *James 1:14-15 says, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. (v15) Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."*

5. Lust leads to corruption of the soul, debauchery and a reprobate mind. *James 4:2 says, "You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask."*

Jesus uses an extreme figure of speech when He says to pluck our your eye or to cut off your hand in order to illustrate the serious consequence of lust, "your whole body to go into hell".

A true disciple, a true Christian, must avoid lust at all costs. But, when we find ourselves caught in the vortex of strong delusion and web of sin we must start by, admitting it and begin the long and difficult journey back to freedom.

1 John 1:8-9 says , "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Please read here for a more complete explanation and an escape from this danger:

SEPARATED FROM GOD?

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

LIVING GOD'S WILL

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?_____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?_____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Keep Your Word**

  "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matthew 5:37).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In order to get a grasp on the meaning of this teaching, we must get the context of what Jesus is saying.

First of all, Jesus told us in verse Matthew 5:17, *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."*

Jesus is teaching "the fulfillment of the law" by comparing what the "ancients were told" and what He now says to us.

This time, **Jesus is referring to making of vows**, all of which He calls "FALSE VOWS", which in truth is any vow or prediction you make since you cannot predict or direct your own future.

Matthew5:33 *"Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' **34**"But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, **35**or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. **36**"Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. **37**"But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil."*

Secondly, Jesus is saying **"let your actions do your talking"** so you do not fail in your vows, which God considers as sin.

Besides, when you brag about what you can or will do and fail to do it, you look like a fool and a liar. This is not the representation a Christian can make as a follower of Jesus.

Read *Deuteronomy23:21 to understand the gravity of an unfulfilled pledge or vow: "When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the*

*LORD your God will surely require it of you. **22**"**However, if you refrain from vowing, it would not be sin in you. 23**"You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips, just as you have voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God, what you have promised.*

James 4:13 picks up on Jesus' teaching and reiterates, *"Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." **14** Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. **15** Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." **16** But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. **17** Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin."*

I have read a myriad of commentaries on this matter and the great majority either lightly regard the context of this teaching or ignore the context all together and delve in to history, culture or the linguistics of the verse. We should take this teaching at its face value.

If you are required to take an OATH, then make your oath truthful and fulfill that oath. But, as for vows, just do what you need to do and let the results be your vow. In other words, if you are a Christian, do what you said you would do, otherwise you are compromised by sin. Keeping our word is what we do. Period.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #9

Discipleship

- **Resist Not Evil - Go the Second Mile**

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'

"But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. "If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. "Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you." (Matthew 5:38–42).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Again, a teaching of Jesus seems counter intuitive and can test the soul of even the most dedicated man or woman. It is difficult to understand - unless you are willing.

At first glance, this teaching sounds as if a disciple of Jesus is to stand idly by while an evil person slaps you about and perpetrates all kinds of evil upon and around you.

Some have even dubbed this teaching as "the law of non-resistance". It from this teaching that some call themselves "conscientious objectors".

There are other examples and times when it seems Jesus teaches the contrary, such as, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." Matthew 7:6

Or, Jesus' own example, at times, contradicts the "law of non-resistance", such as when He turned over tables and whipped the money changers in the Temple.

But, again, context is everything.

FIRST, Jesus is telling us not to entangle ourselves in the affairs of evil men, even when they cast their evil upon us. Instead, stay focused on Jesus' Mission while actively responding to evil, by ***overcoming evil with good.***

SECONDLY, God's Word and methods are an intricate balance of mercy and justice, something we rarely see anymore. Once you have "paid the debt" of forgiveness and kindness, do not linger. If an evil person continues in his or her evil ways, "Shake the dust off your sandals", and move on.

James teaches this principal and its practice when he says, *"7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."*

A simple example of the law of "spiritual physics" is helpful. Do this exercise with a friend:

1. Stand face-to-face, within an arm's length from one another.
2. Each person should extend their arm until your hands meet half way between one another. (AN IMAGINARY LINE IS NOW DRAWN BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLE. THE PLACE WHERE YOUR HANDS MEET IS THE "LINE OF AGREEMENT")
3. Each person needs to slowly, at first, apply a forward pressure pushing on the other's hand palm, as if you are trying to push your opponent away. We will call this meeting of the palm of your hands the "LINE OF AGREEMENT" and you are metaphorically imposing your will on your opponent.
4. Increase the pushing pressure as your opponent pushes back, trying to PUSH THEIR WAY into your space, imposing their will on you.
5. One person, suddenly jerk your hand back toward yourself. This will cause your "opponent" to fall forward and suddenly find themselves ON YOUR SIDE of the "ARGUMENT"

Thus, the principal of "Spiritual Physics**: RESIST NOT EVIL.**

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

This takes effort on the Believer's part, both of spiritual disciplines and the effort of practical application. But in the end, you have become a peacemaker and demonstrated that you are a Child of God, a disciple of the King.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Love Your Enemies**

  "v44 "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

  v45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

  v46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same??" **(Matthew 5:44–46).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Once again, Jesus brings a teaching which is counter-intuitive to the human mind. It is a radical departure from the long standing practice of revenge and retribution.

However, Jesus is teaching from a "God perspective". This teaching, when put into practice, will transcend the natural and complete its task by the supernatural Work of God.

Just as *Isaiah 55:8-11 says,*

8*"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,*
Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

9*"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,*
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

10*"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,*
And do not return there without watering the earth

And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

11*So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;*
It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Practicing the act of love, as a disciple of Jesus,

takes both faith and self discipline.

Secondly, a closer look at the command to "*love your enemy*" you will learn that the word "love" used here is AGAPAO = Which is to love, to feel and exhibit **esteem** and **goodwill** to a person, to prize and delight in a thing.

From its supposed etymology AGAPAO, (ἀγαπάω) s ommonly nderstood roperly o enote ove ased n **esteem** (diligo), *as distinct from* (amo), or a spontaneous natural affection of emotional and unreasoning.

TO ESTEEM someone is to respect them but does not refer to a feeling an emotional type of live such as "philos" which is a brotherly kind of love nor an "eros" which is an erotic kind of love.

Once applied, we are told that a prophetic and supernatural act is manifest: *"So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven"*

"May Be" - GINOMAI = Means to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; to become, i.e. to come to pass, happen; to be made, finished; of miracles, to be performed, wrought.

BY THIS, YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN IS GREAT

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #11

Discipleship

- **Be Perfect**

"For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

"If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:46–48).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus is calling us to rise above our carnal nature. Again, humanly speaking, this is a most difficult if not impossible task. Yet Jesus says we must.

He compares how our human nature is to associate those with whom we agree and who agree with us. But, His Way is to love our enemies, those who persecute us and treat us badly because we are followers of Jesus. (love = AGAPAO = Which is to love, to feel and exhibit **esteem** and **goodwill** to a person, to prize and delight in)

Jesus is telling us IF WE ARE TO BE HIS DISCIPLES we must adopt a 'view from above'. We must see the entire picture of humanity as He see it - from a 'heavenly perspective', "*as your heavenly Father"*.

He tell us we must be PERFECT, just as our heavenly Father is perfect.

PERFECT: Strong's concordance #5046 τέλειος teleios tel'-i-os

Brought to its end, finished ; wanting nothing necessary to completeness ; perfect ; that which is perfect; consummate human integrity and virtue, of men; full grown, adult, of full age, mature.

In colloquial terms, to GROW UP and ACT LIKE JESUS. Jesus, Who is PERFECT! We are to be full of integrity, virtue, adult, mature, LIKE JESUS.

Possess **Integrity:** The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness. The state of being whole and undivided.
Possess **Virtue**: Behavior showing high moral standards. Moral excellence. A virtue is a trait or quality that is deemed to be morally good and thus is valued as a foundation of principle and good moral being.

Doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong.

The virtues are temperance, prudence, courage (or fortitude), and justice. Christianity derives the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love (charity) - 1 Corinthians 13.

There is no escape from this. If we call ourselves "Christian", a disciple of Jesus, this is what we do. It gives a new meaning to the phrase...

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

2 Peter 1:5 *¶ Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,*

6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?_____

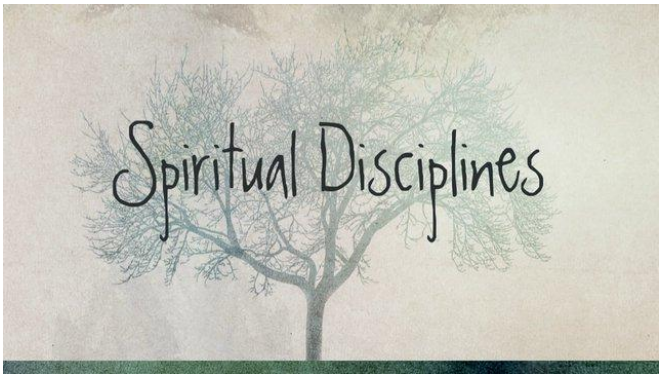
HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #12



- **Practice Secret Disciplines**

*" ¶ "Beware of **practicing** your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.*

*2 "So when you **give** to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.*

3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 " so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. **(Matthew 6:1–4).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

This teaching begins with *"Beware of **practicing your righteousness** before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven."*

It is easy to see what Jesus is teaching. In plain terms, if you seek recognition for your own good deeds, then that is all you will get. Recognition. No one will think of you as anymore than someone needing to be recognized. And, you will have detracted from the good you might have done in seeking to get glory for yourself.

Jesus gives us three examples of how a person satisfies their ego.

(1) Giving to the poor in order to be noticed for their charity and generous character.
(2) Praying in order to be noticed for their religious expressions.
(3) Fasting in order to be noticed for their personal sacrifices and disciplines.

Some might call this type of person a narcissist. Jesus calls such a person, "a hypocrite".

So, let's ask ourselves, do you ever feel like your giving, your praying and your fasting goes unanswered or unrewarded?

There is something bigger at work here: A Spiritual Law.

> *"Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."* ***Luke 6:38***

There are three words, in the Bible...

- "make"
- "practicing", and
- "give"

And, all three are from the same Greek word, used by Jesus when He said, *"Follow Me, and I will* ***make*** *you fishers of men."*

All three words (1) GIVE (2) PRACTICE (3) MAKE, come from the exact same Greek word = POIEO ποιέω (poy-eh'-o) which means you fashion something by what it does. If your intentions are wrong, the outcome will be made in that image. If you intentions are right, the outcome of your efforts will be in that image.

This Spiritual Law is *saying "Give, and it will be given to you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."* Whether good things or bad things, it will be given back.

If we give, pray, fast or whatever we do out of selfish motives, we will, likewise, be have selfishness poured into our laps in good measure until it runs over us.

> *4 " Make your giving in secret; and your Father in Heaven, who sees what is done in secret will reward you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be given to you."*
>
> *6 "When you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be given to you."*
>
> *17 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face*
> *18 "so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you in good measure, pressed down,*

shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be given to you."

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Lay Up Treasures in Heaven**

  *"Do not store up for yourselves **treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*

  *20 "But store up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;*

  *21 **for where <u>your</u> <u>treasure</u> is, there your heart will be also**."* **(Matthew 6:19–21).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? Treasures on earth versus Treasures in heaven?

These words of Jesus, reveal. They reveal the focus of the mind and heart and tell of your eternal destiny.

Jesus speaks of this "treasure" when He tells us that "***The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure*** hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." Matthew 13:44

The hidden Treasure, The Pearl of Great Price, all point to The Kingdom of Heaven.

Also, Romans 8:6 tells us, "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."

There is no escaping the reality of this Teaching.

- ***Where <u>your</u> <u>treasure</u> is, there your heart will be also.***
- *The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Treasure.*
- *The mind set on the flesh is death.*

- *The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.*

The Apostle Paul helps us finally understand this profound truth in Colossians 3:1-4:

*"Therefore **if you have been raised up with Christ**, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.*

"Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

"For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

"When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

Simply put, this reveals who are true Christians, that is, the true disciples of Jesus.

This is not something you do out of obligation. This is something that is revealed about you, the direction of your life and your eternal destiny .

Ask yourself, "*Where am I storing my treasures?"* and you'll discover your destiny.

If you are displeased with what you see, begin now to set your mind on the things of the Spirit.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?_____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

(I heard a man once say, "If you want to know what you treasure, look at your checkbook ledger.")

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #14

Discipleship

- **Seek God's Kingdom**

*"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." **(Matthew 6:33).***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? This teaching, once again, is about your state of mind or attitude. This time, Jesus is specifically teaching about *worry*.

The word 'worry', as used by Jesus, means

- *to be anxious,*
- *to be troubled with cares and*
- *to seek to promote one's own interests and*
- *to be divided in your mind or to be 'double minded'.*

Worry is similar to doubt, which also mean to be double minded, divided against yourself, torn in your thinking.

Worry and doubt can be stumbling blocks to the Christian, the disciple of Jesus. They both present an ongoing struggle for our flesh. So, we are warned and instructed on how to overcome these obstacles. In face, we must.

1. This teaching begins in Matthew 6:24 ***"No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.*
    - *You cannot serve God and wealth.*

2. James warns us that we ***"must ask in faith without any doubting**, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.*

- *"For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,*
- *"being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."*

"THE THREE BIG TAKE AWAYS"
For the Christian - The Disciple of Jesus

I Will Not Serve Two Masters

I Will Ask in Faith Without Any Doubting

I Will Put on The Full Armor of God

YOUR CONFESSION (Read this aloud to yourself, daily, for a month)**:**

As a disciple of Jesus - A Christian - I will be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. I will put on the full armor of God, and stand firm against the schemes of the devil. I will not worry. I will not doubt. But if I do, I will pray, believing.

I know I will struggle against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
But, I am able to resist in the evil day, and I stand firm. I will not worry. I will not doubt. But if I do, I will pray, believing.

HAVING GIRDED MY LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod MY FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, I will stand firm. I will not worry. I will not doubt. But if I do, I will pray, believing. (Taken from Ephesians 6)

This is what we do as Christians - Disciples of Jesus.

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?_____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

Further reading about The Kingdom of God:

https://www.whitestone2014.com/the-kingdom-of-heaven

https://www.whitestone2014.com/heirs-of-the-kingdom

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #15

- **Judge Not**

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.
"Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?" ***(Matthew 7:1–3).***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

To get a clear understanding, we have to look at the context of what Jesus is teaching. And the context is ***"hypocrisy".***

v3 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
v4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?

v5 "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

The "hypocrite", according to Bible lexicons and concordances, is an actor, stage player, a dissembler, a pretender and a hypocrite. A hypocrite is one who simulates, feign or pretends. One who is vile, shameful, reproachful, full of dishonor, ignominy, and disgrace.

Definitions won't adequately describe what Jesus is talking about. Jesus is saying that one's attitude reveals their character, their heart and their intentions. *The hypocrite is in danger of being lost and perishing.*
IL
Listen to what Jesus says about, and to, hypocrites (I have abbreviated these verses for context. Full chapter here (https://www.biblehub.com/nasb/matthew/23.htm) :

13 "But WOE to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites, you will receive greater condemnation.

15 "WOE to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

27"WOE to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29"WOE to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

Lest we are confused, God says,
"Do not judge according to appearance, but do judge with righteous judgment."
John 7:24

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #16

Discipleship

- **Do Not Cast Pearls before "swine"**

"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." (Matthew 7:6).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus has just finished teaching His followers, *"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you."*

"Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:1–5).

Now Jesus is telling us to make a judgment on what is Holy, who are the "dogs", what is a "Pearl" and who or what are the "swine".

It is important to understand the words and the context being used.

Jesus is NOT SAYING we should never make judgments. He IS SAYING we should not judge people unfairly but we are to make right judgments. THIS IS IMPORTANT, especially in our world.

I will define terms so we can begin to understand the differences between being judgmental and making righteous judgments.

"Holy" is the word hagios (hag'-ee-os) which refers to the Holy characteristic of God, or being separated to God, who is worthy of veneration.
Its highest application is to God himself, in His purity, majesty and glory. It is also applied to persons as separated to God's service and is in regards to Christ, of Christians and in the moral sense of sharing God's purity, including sacrifices and offerings.

"Pearls" are referred to as a Proverb or a word of Great Value.

A "Dog" is a metaphor for an impudent person. Someone who shows no respect for another person.
A "Swine" is colloquially, the ultimate symbol of loathing by ancient Jews. Pigs were considered as symbols of disease, filth and hypocrisy.

We learned, in Lesson #14, the we are not to *"judge hypocritically"*. Jesus teaches us that we are not to pronounce judgment on someone and that we, as Jesus' disciples, correct our own attitudes and behaviors.

At the same time, we are told to judge, and *"judge righteously"*. That is to say, we are to judge using righteous discernment. "Do not judge according to appearance, but do judge with righteous judgment." John 7:24

Discernment is the word, dokimazo (dok-im-ad'-zo) which means to "prove" or to try, to discern and to examine. To test, examine, prove, scrutinize to see whether a thing is genuine or not, such as metals. To recognize whether it is genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy.

Judgment is the word, krino (kree'-no) which means to determine, to condemn, go to law and to call in question. It involves esteem. It is to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong.

RECAP:

Disciples of Jesus are not to judge hypocritically. We are to judge righteously using righteous Discernment.

- DISCIPLE OF JESUS, are to judge righteously.
- We are to pray for and use righteous discernment
- We are to determine (judge) who is worthy of the things of God.
- We are to Determine what is Holy and Pure, His majesty and glory.
- We are to determine who are the people of God and Christ and in His service.
- We are to know who is sharing the Truth of God's purity, including sacrifices and offerings.
- We are to determine what are the "Pearls" of God, which is a Proverb or The Word of God, which is of Great Value.
- Disciples of Jesus are not to give what is Holy or of Great Value to those who prove to be *impudent people* full of hate and *hypocrisy*.

"Do not judge according to appearance, but do judge with righteous judgment."
John 7:24

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT? _____

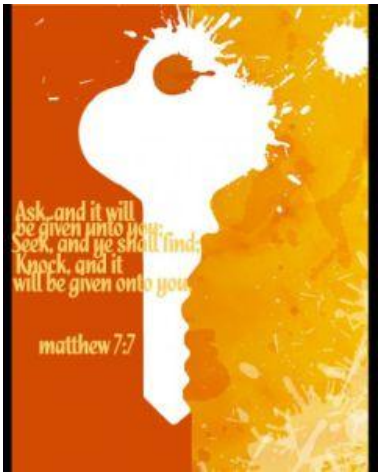
Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #17

Discipleship



- **Ask, Seek, Knock**

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Matthew 7:7–8).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? This teaching is, essentially, about prayer. Jesus is not teaching just how to pray, but, He is commanding His Disciples *to pray effectively.*

Jesus is teaching about the critical importance or prayer.

A SEARCH & RESCUE MISSION

He is telling us how we get results! In contemporary terms (metaphorically), Jesus is saying that prayer, is a *search and rescue mission*!

At first look, it may seem like praying is making a simple request and presto, like calling a genie from a bottle, we have our answer. Or, glancing about and easily finding that which you are hunting. Or, tapping on a door and the gates of prosperity swing wide open to you.

Reading the rest of the verses in the context of the Biblical teaching on prayer we see the seriousness urgency of the matter.

verse 9 "Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone?
10 "Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?
11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

In this case "Ask", literally means to beg, to call for, to crave, to deeply desire, to require. It is in the "imperative mood" which expresses a command to the hearer to perform a certain action by the order and authority of the one commanding. Thus, the word Jesus uses, "Ask", is not at all an "invitation," but an absolute command requiring full obedience on the part of all hearers.

It is the same for "Seek". In this case, "Seek" means, seek in order to find out by thinking, meditating, reasoning, to enquire into; to aim at, strive after, to require, to crave, to demand something from someone. This too, is in the "imperative".

To "knock" is in the imperative and carries the idea of "unfailing". This is saying that it is not enough to ask and seek, but you must not fail to knock, also.

God tells us we must pray fervently to have effectual prayers.

In other words, you must use all resources at your disposal,

- praying fervently,
- seeking intensely,
- knocking persistently, with the purpose of obtaining the thing you seek,
- keeping in mind that God tells us that His Word will achieve the very thing it is purposed to achieve.

Most importantly, Jesus reminds us that He can only do what He sees the Father is already doing, and we, AS HIS DISCIPLES, must do that very thing. It is His Will, not our own ideas, to accomplish a thing.

THE EFFECTIVE PRAYERS OF THE RIGHTEOUS CAN ACCOMPLISH MUCH
James 5:16

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

"The Law of Reciprocity"

- **Do Unto Others**

"In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:12).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The opening of this verse is read at plain face value, "***treat*** *people the same way you want them to* ***treat*** *you".*

*The interesting word in this verse is "****treat****". It comes from the same Greek word as* ***"make****". As in Matthew 4:19, Jesus said to Peter and Andrew, "Follow me and I will* ***make*** *you fishers of men."*

TREAT *and* ***MAKE****. as used here, is translated from the Greek word* ***"poieo". "Poieo"*** *is a* ***CREATIVE*** *word. It means to make something according to what it is called. This is the New Testament Greek word equivalency to the Old Testament Hebrew word* ***CREATE****, or* ***"Bara"****. As in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."*

"WHAT IS VISIBLE COMES FROM THAT WHICH IS UNSEEN"

Please, proceed intentionally. What comes next, is a game-changer for most Christians and particularly for a Disciple of Jesus:

In other words, when you ***TREAT*** *others the same way you want to be* ***TREATED*** *you, are* ***MAKING (creating)*** *a relationship by the way you think and behave, from what is unseen, the Spiritual realm, which manifests itself into the natural world!*

To wit:

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." **Hebrews 1:1-3**

To reinforce the fact that this teaching or command rests on a Spiritual basis, Jesus finishes with the profound remark *"**for this is the Law and the Prophets**"*.

*"**The Law and the Prophets**"*. is another way of saying **"the entire Old Testament"**. The night before his death, Jesus meets with Moses (the LAW) and Elijah (the greatest of the prophets) and talks with them at length. This is important because Jesus was clearly not on Earth to oppose **the law and the prophets** but to fulfill them. (Matthew 5:17)

In other words, *as a Disciple of Jesus,*

1. *How you TREAT people reveals your true relationship to Jesus*
2. *How you TREAT people allows Jesus to CREATE or MAKE a relationship come to pass which is according to His Righteousness.*

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" ***Ephesians 2:10***

We must remember that it is Jesus Who prepares the Works ahead of time so that we should walk in them.

It is both an awesome responsibility and the highest honor to Walk in Works of Jesus, (and in His own Words), and even greater Works than these, because He is with the Father. So, it is no wonder that Jesus said,

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." ***John 14:12-15***

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

He Who is in us, is greater than he who is in the world, and He has overcome the world!

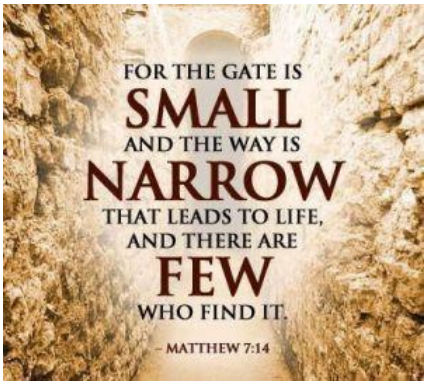
Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #19

Discipleship



- **Choose the Narrow Way**

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13–14).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Training, precision, discipline, hard work, diligence, resolve, dedication, faithfulness, loyalty, clarity of purpose.

As if it were a coded message for a secret mission, the wording is precise, terse and clear: "Enter through the narrow gate".

All of the commands and disciplines listed in this study which are mandatory for a Disciple of Jesus, have two things in common:

1. They are hard, if not impossible, for the natural mind.

2. The only way is for a Disciple of Jesus is by God's Grace through our faith in Jesus. Jesus is the way, the Truth and the Life. There is no other way except by Him.

*"Truly I tell you, anyone who doesn't enter the sheep pen by the **gate** but climbs in some other way is a thief and a robber. [2] The one who enters by the **gate** is the shepherd of the sheep. [3] The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. [4] When he has brought all his own outside, he goes ahead of them. The sheep follow him because they know his voice. [5] They will never follow a stranger; instead they will run*

*away from him, because they don't know the voice of strangers." [6] **Jesus** gave them this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.* **IL**
*"[7] **Jesus** said again, "Truly I tell you, I am the **gate** for the sheep. [8] All who came before me[a] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn't listen to them. [9] I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture." John 10:1-9, CSB*

JESUS IS CLEAR, HE IS THE ONLY WAY

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

NOTE: This teaching by Jesus is critical for us to know and to do especially in the day and this age. His Return is near, and the ONLY way we will successfully "endure to the end" is by being His Disciple.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

https://www.whitestone2014.com/and-you-shall-be-my-disciple

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #20

Discipleship

- **Beware of False Prophets**

"Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

"You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?" (Matthew 7:15–16).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

This is not a casual matter. Jesus is giving a stern warning - an alert. Jesus is saying beware, be alert, be careful, pay attention to, be attentive to, take heed, devote thought and effort to the discerning of false prophets.

A prophet, in the context and as defined in these verses, is anyone who is acting the part of a *divinely inspired* prophet.

A false prophet is one who utters imaginations, falsehoods or deceit under the name of divine prophecies. A false prophet can be a preacher, a pastor or anyone confessing to be a Christian.

Those who would 'give a word of knowledge' or 'speak in tongues' to an assembly of Christians, saying they are giving a "word" or an "utterance" from the Holy Spirit can easily be a false prophet.

Jesus compares false prophets to "wolves". Wolves come in 'sheep's clothing', i.e., they will act like a Christian, in order to conceal their real intentions, and they are ravenous.

Jesus is showing no tolerance for this type of person. The word Jesus uses to describe this person, 'ravenous' means rapacious, ravenous they are extortioners, robbers and thieves. Of

course these ‘wolves’ don’t necessarily see themselves as such, which makes them all the more convincing and dangerous. IL

“So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.” (Matthew 7:17-18)

Jesus gives His disciples a key to recognizing a false prophet, a wolf. The Disciple of Jesus is therefore tasked with *using discernment* in this matter and to respond accordingly.

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me"

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Stay vigilant. Stay on the alert. The day draws near.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Pray for the Laborers of the Harvest**

"Seeing the people, Jesus felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

38 "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."" (Matthew 9:36–38).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus knows you, intimately

Jesus saw the people. The word used here, "Seeing" means not only to look at, to gaze at or to see as a function of the eyes. This word "seeing", as used here, means to see with the mind, to perceive, know and to become acquainted with by experience. This is also our calling.

Jesus cares about you, deeply

Jesus felt compassion for them, as the result of "Seeing" them. This compassion is an inward affection, a tender mercy. The kind of compassion which is felt in the deepest regions of the mind, heart and soul. This is also our calling.

Jesus is calling you, urgently

Beseech the Lord of the harvest. to send out workers into His Harvest. These words carry a sense of urgency and immediacy as an ongoing action. Pray and Go and keep praying and keep going! This is our calling.

This is *THE DIRECTIVE*. These are the marching orders for any and all disciples of Jesus. You and I cannot consider ourselves as followers of Jesus if we do not do what He says.

Let us long to hear the words,

'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful, enter into the joy of your Lord.'

Now it is your turn:

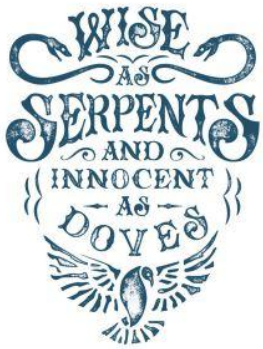
HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother & Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:



- **Be Wise as Serpents**

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus has finished teaching His disciples *and He calls them together for final instructions*. He gives them power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and disease.

Jesus is telling them to use discernment, to be intelligent, wise and prudent, mindful of their interests because wolves are the cruel, greedy, rapacious, destructive men and women they will encounter as they go.

In the midst of His final instructions, Jesus warns them *"I am sending you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.* He tells them to "*be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves". The imagery is unmistakable.*

JESUS IS SPEAKING TO HIS DISCIPLES THEN
AND
TO HIS DISCIPLES TODAY

- *They are warned to beware of men who will hand them over to the courts and scourge them in their synagogues; and they will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.*
- *They are warned that they will be hated because of Jesus, but if they endure to the end they will be saved.*
- *Being shrewd as a serpent means they are to know the tactics and methods of the enemy so they will be able avoid or counter their attacks.*

- *Being innocent as a dove is to remain unstained by the influences of the men and women of the world they will encounter.*
- *They are to remember Jesus' instructions to not return evil for evil but to overcome evil with good.*

STAY ON MISSION

Jesus is saying to His disciples – both then and now – stay on mission. Do not be distracted or discourage by the politics, social upheaval or by the evils of men and women.

Just speak the Truth of the Gospel Message. It will be given you what you are to say. For it is not you who will be speaking, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."

"Whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes."

THIS IS THE DAY

THESE ARE OUR MARCHING ORDERS

– PREPARE –

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT? _____

This is our calling – together we will prevail!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Fear Not**

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

First, this verse, and the verses around it, are for Jesus' disciples only. So, if you are not a follower of Jesus, if you do not claim to be saved by God's grace through your faith in Jesus, you need not read any further. Stop here.

But, if you are a Christian, a true follower of Jesus and one of His disciples, then this is for you. Jesus is telling you to **FEAR NOT**!

The discourse of this verse actually begins in verse 17 of Matthew chapter 10 and goes through verse 31. In these verses Jesus is warning you of some terrible and frightening things which will happen to you. For example:

1. Men will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues
2. You will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.
3. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father will betray his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.
4. You will be hated by everyone because of My name
5. If they have called Me Beelzebul, then they will malign you

However, Jesus tells you not to fear. Their threat will be revealed for the lies they are. Jesus say nothing will be concealed. The truth will be revealed and made publicly known.

Jesus says to tell what He has told us in the broad daylight, to proclaim it upon the housetops.

We need not fear those who can murder our bodies because they are unable to kill our soul; We should fear God, alone.

Fear is the enemy of faith. Fear is a natural response to danger and terror. Fear requires no effort.

But, Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ. We must listen, we must hear His Voice and we must obey it.

You have the ability to exercise either fear or faith. If you are a follower of Jesus, if your are His disciple, if you are a Christian, you really only have one choice.

So remember, *"When evildoers came upon you to devour your flesh, your adversaries and enemies will stumble and fall.*

"And, though a host encamp against you, your heart will not fear. Though war arise against you, you shall be confident.

"One thing you must ask from the LORD, and that you shall seek: That you may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of your life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to meditate in His temple.

"For in the day of trouble He will conceal you in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent He will hide you; He will lift you up on a rock."

Hide these words in your heart. Memorize them. Speak them. For the day of battle is at hand and you shall not fear.

> "You are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread. Then He shall become a sanctuary" – Isaiah 12:12-14

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

The Victory is ours, Says the Lord! FEAR NOT!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

IR

- **Hear God's Voice**

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 11:15).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Whenever you read the phrase *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear",* know that you are being instructed in *an Oracle of God. You are hearing and being taught The deepest and hidden Truths from God.*

This phrase "He who has ears to hear" or "He who has an ear" is used 19 times in the New Testament and 8 times in the Book of Revelation.

This is truly the "Hidden Manna" of God.

"To have an ear to hear" means to possess the faculty of perceiving with the mind, the faculty of understanding and knowing.

Listen carefully all you disciples of Jesus:

- *You may not even be a Disciple of Jesus unless you do not know and practice these Oracles of God, these Truths of God.*
- *You may not be able to "Endure to the End" unless you do not know and practice these Oracles of God, these Truths of God.*
- *You may not be able to "Overcome" unless you do not know and practice these Oracles of God, these Truths of God.*

Only a truly born again believer, a Christian, a disciple of Jesus is able to hear, discern and understand what is spoken, written or taught by The Spirit of God.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. **1 Corinthians 2:14**

The ***"branch of the fig tree***" is now tender and is putting forth its leaves. Know that summer is here."

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

That day is now upon us. Pray, prepare, study, stay ready!

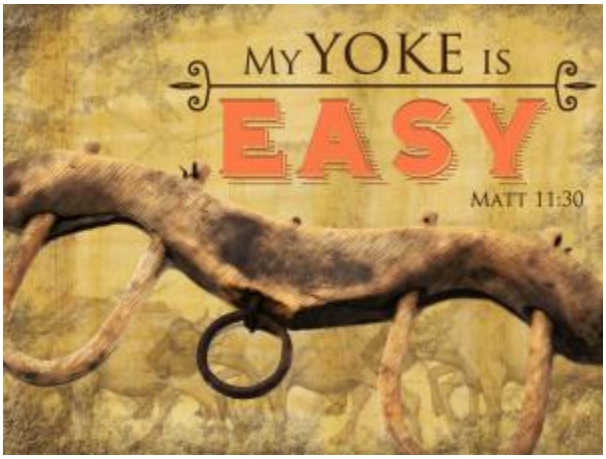
Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #25

Discipleship



- **Take My Yoke upon yourselves**

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28–30).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus says, "Come to me" and He is using the same Greek words as when He called Peter and Andrew and said, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men."

Peter and Andrew understood this was an invitation to a close, personal and lasting relationship. This was not a casual encounter. This is the Call of God for all to follow Him, and a yoke is the perfect illustration to describe this new relationship with Jesus.

YOU ALSO ARE THE CALLED OF JESUS CHRIST

Romans 1:6

- They also understood that Jesus' words were not a simple request. It was spoken *in the imperative as a command "come hither, come here, come now!"*

- They understood the context and vernacular of this word to mean, "*Follow Me in order to be taught by me, looking over my shoulder. You will learn by watching and you will be identified with Me."*

- Secondly, in the times of Jesus' earthly ministry, people clearly understood the significance of "putting on a yoke". A yoke was for animals of labor, it was a metaphor of any burden or bondage such as that of slavery. So, why would any person voluntarily submit to a yoke or heavy labor or bondage of slavery?

- Jesus uses the imagery of a yoke but redefines its meaning from slavery to freedom!

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1"

Being yoked with Jesus is freedom from what binds you, what ails you, what plagues you. Know that Jesus is gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. His yoke is a yoke of freedom!

A disciple of Jesus – A Christian – is identified as having been with Jesus.

When people see you, are they be amazed, and *recognize you as having been with Jesus?*

"Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." ***Acts4:13***

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT?

The day is at hand. Let's pray for and encourage on another.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #26

Discipleship

- **Honor Your Parents**

"For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH." (Matthew 15:4).

WH**AT DOES IT MEAN?**

This is of the "Ten Commandments" found in Exodus 20:2-17 and in Deuteronomy 5:6-21 and it says,

"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you." ***Deuteronomy 5:16***

The second half of this verse is found in Exodus 21:17, *" And he that curses his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.".*

The greater context of this Teaching is about …

"The Traditions of Men versus The Commandments of God".

This Teaching begins in *Matthew 15:1 "Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, v2 "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."*

v3 And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?

v4 "For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.'

v5 " But you say it is all right for people to say to their parents, 'Sorry, I can't help you. For I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you.'

v6 In this way, you say they don't need to honor their parents

v7 "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:

v8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

v9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

For the disciple of Jesus, there is both a promise and a warning.

1. *"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you."*

The word "Honor" is a word heavy with the idea of honoring, respecting, promoting, giving glory to, and is grave in its demands.

It is and imperative command and is in the imperfect tense which means it is incomplete which requires and ongoing action by the doer.

2. *"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you."*

This is a conditional promise. Again, it requires an ongoing action, but it brings the promise of a prolonged life which is good and pleasing, a healthy life accompanied with gladness, joy and wellness.

A mark of a True Disciple of Jesus is one who Honors their Father and Mother.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

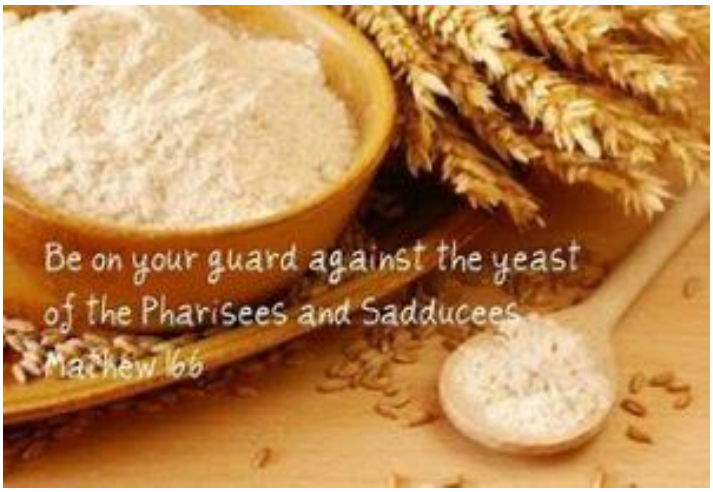
Mike Young

(PS: Honoring my parents was not easy for me in my earlier life. But, as God gave me the grace to forgive and honor my parents a great burden was lifted from my life. The peace of God began to settle over me. I began to find the good and pleasing things in life. I began to experience a new and healthier life accompanied with gladness, joy and wellness. It's worth the effort!)

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES – Lesson #27

Discipleship



- **Beware of Leaven**

"And Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Matthew 16:6).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Before the Holy Spirit came upon them, Jesus' disciples were severely lacking in wisdom and understanding.

How often do we read the scriptures and understand so little? Even trained 'preachers' will give a message on the Gospel and misinform their listeners because they lack understanding and cannot obtain wisdom. And, why are we Christians lacking the abilities to see the context of God's Word, to have wisdom and unable to obtain understanding?

Here is the full context of our verse today: Matthew16:5 *"And the disciples came to the other side of the sea, but they had forgotten to bring any bread. v6 And Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."*

7 They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, "He said that because we did not bring any bread."

8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, "You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread?

9 "Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up?

10 "Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up?

11 "How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

12 Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

This Teaching begins with the words, *"And the disciples came to the other side of the sea,* ***but they had forgotten to bring any bread.****"*

Then, Jesus remarks, ***"Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."***

It is often the method of Jesus to address a person or people by way of their *own live experience*, in the context of their situation or by their own understanding.

These men were thinking about BREAD and Jesus addresses them at their point of *NEED*!

However, because their minds were fixed on a "temporary need", they missed what Jesus was Teaching them. He would not only remind them that He addresses their immediate and temporary needs, but their Eternal Needs as well.

Another similar example is when Peter asks Jesus, *"Do we not pay the two-drachma tax?" Jesus' answer was "So that we do not offend the tax collectors, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me."*

Peter was a fisherman, so Jesus uses the context of Peter's life to meet his need.

Jesus meets all of our needs. It is important that we not become so obsessed with what we want, how we want it and when we want it, that we miss God's provision for our life.

James says it well when he reminds us,

"You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures."

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Let's pray and ask for understanding and wisdom and God, Who gives generously without finding fault, will give to you. James 1:5

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Beware of Covetousness**

"Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." (Luke 12:15).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? - Eternal Security

Once again, we must "zoom out" and look at the context of this verse.

It all began when *"Someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."*

And then Jesus said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?"

Then Jesus said to them all, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

This another profound teaching of Jesus which is largely misunderstood or is so difficult to accept that it is disregarded or considered as not being literal. But, listen to the key words here: BEWARE, BE ON GUARD. This is given as a warning with urgency.

This teaching has more to do with **Eternal Security** than with accumulating and hoarding wealth.

*And He told them **a parable**, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive.*

And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'

"Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

This is the consequence Jesus warned about. Imagine, God calling you or me a fool! *But, God said to the man, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you." And the man will be left with nothing, for Eternity!*

You see, this man did not prepare. He did not have a 'money belt of unfailing treasure in heaven'. He had not made himself 'rich' toward God.

v 21 "So it is with the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

v30 "For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

Our Father has gladly chosen to give us His Kingdom. It is indeed, easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle - which is preposterous - than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts an unfailing treasure in heaven, which do not wear out, where no thief can come near nor can the moth destroy.

Then Jesus utters one of the most profound remark of all times, revealing the secret of His teaching. The oracle is laid bare:

*"For where your **treasure** is, there your **heart** will be also."*

The complete meaning is that a "treasure" from the Greek word is "thesauros" from which we get the English word, "**thesaurus".** Which is to gain a more completed understanding and to lay aside for our use. In this case it is to gain a more complete

understanding that being 'rich toward God' is what is eternally important and to store that up in abundance.

The "heart" is the center and seat of spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors.

"It is with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Romans 10:10

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Although these are urgent days, fear not! He Who is in you is Greater than he who is in this world. Yet, we must learn to "accurately handle the Word of God" in order to Overcome and Endure to the end!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #29

- **Forgive Offenders**

"Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

"Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (Matthew 18:21–22).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus is using a teaching technique of overstatement or exaggeration, a familiar characteristic in Semitic speech and teaching. It is a means of **emphasis**.

For example, Luke 14:26, Jesus says, *"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple."*

Another example is found in Matthew 19:24 when Jesus says, *"Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

These exaggerations are meant to sound preposterous! They say, in essence, there is ONLY THIS WAY. Forget finding another way!

When Peter came to Jesus and asked "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?", Jesus' answer is that CHRISTIANS ALWAYS FORGIVE and, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF TIMES!

Finally, what is the truth or motivation behind ENDLESS FORGIVENESS?

1. *This is an attribute of God.* **Luke 23:34** , **Daniel 9:9** , **1 John 1:9**

2. *This is commanded and expected of a true follower of Christ.* **Matthew6:14**,

3. *This maintains and strengthens our connection with God.* **Matthew 6:15**

4. *It brings healing and good health* ***Proverbs 3:1-8***

5. *It brings freedom* ***Matthew 5:23-16***

Now it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Gods says to try Him and know that He is God!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #30a

- **Honor Marriage**

"And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'?

"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Matthew 19:3–6).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus is quoting the Old Testament, Genesis 2:24. From the time of creation, God has said that marriage is the joining of two people, a man and a woman, through a covenant relationship, into ONE person.

A man and a woman - separate, yet ONE.

A more detailed explanation of why it should be as God has said and HOW WE CAN find life and peace by way of God's design for marriage is found in the book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 5:"21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

The word Greek word for "to be subject to" or "submit to" is ***"Hupotasso"***, which literally means:

1. To arrange under, to subordinate;

2. To subject, put in subjection
3. To subject one's self, obey
4. To submit to one's control
5. To yield to one's admonition or advice
6. To obey, be subject.
7. To mutually agree upon

HUPO – arrange under; *TASSO* – mutually agree upon

The intention of "submission or subjection" is found in the CONTEXT of the words in this chapter of Ephesians which *encourages us to be wise and moral, kind and pure, gentle and forgiving.*

The context is also found in the meaning of the words in these verses.

Specifically, *"Hupotasso"* comes from a Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader".

These troop formations were called a Phalanx. The Phalanx was the formation, usually in triangular form, in which The hoplite phalanx of the Archaic and Classical periods in Greece (c. 800–350 BC) was the formation in which the hoplites would line up in ranks in close order.

Hoplites were citizen-soldiers of Ancient Greek city-states who were primarily armed with spears and shields. Hoplite soldiers utilized the phalanx formation in order to be effective in war with fewer soldiers. The formation discouraged the soldiers from acting alone, for this would compromise the formation and minimize its strengths

The hoplites would lock their shields together, and the first few ranks of soldiers would project their spears out over the first rank of shields.

Those at the front were, what we would call today, THE TIP OF THE SPEAR or the POINT MAN. They presented the first defense against the enemy and were the first to engage the enemy and the first to take casualties.

The phalanx therefore presented a shield wall and a mass of spear points to the enemy. Making frontal assaults against it very difficult.

It also allowed a higher proportion of the soldiers to be actively engaged in combat at a given time rather than just those in the front rank.

This word, "Hupotasso", In non-military use, is "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

The Bible gives this as an example for husbands and wives to cooperate and to successfully navigate life and in waging wars against 'their common enemy', Satan.

The wife is fully engaged in the marriage relationship, but, God says the husband is to be the Tip of the Spear in order to protect and preserve and, if necessary, the first to fall.

Interestingly, *Ephesians 5:22, "be subject to your own"* uses the word "idios" which means, uniquely one's own, peculiar to the individual. It is "stronger than the simple possessive pronoun ('own'). This emphatic adjective means 'private, personal' ".

God gives each husband a wife, designed by God, Himself, to fulfill a role specifically for that husband. God gives the wife gifts, talents, abilities and a calling uniquely designed to serve God and to compliment and to complete the husband.

This is why the Bible says "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

"So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself".

It is also why God says, *"Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord."*

Neither, the husband nor the wife, can be made complete as persons, finding refuge, protection and provision as provided by God well as the God given ability to mature and sustain one another, until they understand this Spiritual principal and follow it.

Marriage has mutual strength through commitment and cooperation with one another under God's Steady Hand.

Please take this to heart, dear ones. This message is so important.

The world and the Devil are deceiving the family in to thinking 'what works for you is OK". It is NOT OK. God's design, His plan and His Word is what gives life, and life more abundant. Stop following the world and REASON through God's Word. Understand it and live!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: Marriage makes the two into ONE. Divorce is a violent tearing apart, no matter how amicable you try to be.

Imagine having your arm our your leg amputated. Can you imagine the pain and the loss? Literally losing part of yourself would impact and affect your body, your mind, your soul and your spirit.

Please dear ones, do not deliberately wound yourself and others.

(MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE)

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #30b

- **Marriage & Divorce?**

"Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?

"And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'?

"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Matthew 19:3–6).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

This is Christ's example for all Christians:

1. 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"
2. 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"
3. 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

The Pharisees and the devil were consorts in many ways. In this case, they were complicit in an ultimate evil, that is, the temptation *of the Son of God* to sin.

Now, just for you information, here is a quick review of the Jewish views on divorce:
The rabbis of the Talmud considered marriage a holy contract, and the dissolution of marriage an unholy act. They quote the prophet Malachi, ". . .the Lord has been witness between you and your wife of your youth against whom you have dealt treachorously, though she is your companion, the wife of your covenant" (2:14). Jewish Oral Law added in Sanhedrin (22a), "Even

[G-d] shares tears when anyone divorces his wife."
https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/divorce-in-judaism IL

Aaron Moss, in 'The Jewish View of Divorce' says, "When a couple gets married in a Jewish wedding ceremony, their souls become one. It is like a spiritual operation that takes separate beings and fuses them into a new whole. The Jewish divorce ceremony is the reverse of this. It is a spiritual amputation, severing one part of the united soul from the other, creating two separate beings. Divorce, like an amputation, is a tragedy, but sometimes it's the right thing to do. Our attitude to divorce parallels our attitude to the amputation of a limb in several ways...
https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/387647/jewish/Jewish-View-of-Divorce.htm

But, what is God's view on divorce?

Matthew 19:4 *"And He (Jesus) answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, **5**and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? **6**"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." **7**They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY?" **8**He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. **9**"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."*

How about you? What is your view of divorce?

Have your ever asked the question, "Is divorce OK"? Are you thinking about getting a divorce? Are you are tempting the Son of God with these intentions?

Divorce is a complicated and serious matter. It will affect you and those around you on all levels:

- You body is affected,
- your soul and mind are affected and
- your spirit is injured.
- Divorce is sin in the eyes of God.
- And, sin is to miss the mark of God's plan of a purposeful, meaningful life and life with peace (Romans 8:6).

Life can be tough enough without causing deliberate damage to yourself and to others. Finding the way to a life full of purpose and peace be difficult. So, call on God and let Him light your path and follow Him in all your ways.

> **Matthew 7:13**
>
> "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. **14**"For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: Have you been divorced? I was divorced before becoming a Christian. I know the pain and the regret. But, remember that God is merciful and quick to forgive those who have been divorced and turn away from sin and ask Him for forgiveness.

I did that and thankfully, I was remarried to the same woman, right after we both came to Christ. We have been married 53 years, now.

A woman once asked my wife "How have you managed to stay (re)married for all these years?" My wife responded with, "Just never get a divorce!"

It sounds simple, but it is not. It take commitment, some hard work and sacrifice. And, it is worth it.

(HONOR MARRIAGE)

NOTES:

- **Be a Servant**

25 "Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them.

26 "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,

27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;

28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:26–28).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Let's step back and read these verses in context:

v20 "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him.

*21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She *said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left."*

*22 But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They *said to Him, "We are able."*

*23 He *said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."*

24 And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.

Simply put, Jesus is both reminding and reprimanding the mother of James and John and her sons for seeking a position and an authority for which they are neither qualified nor eligible.

Worse yet, James and John don't ask for themselves, but have their mother make a request which comes from a self-serving attitude.

It is very common for people to "ride the coattails" of a great leader or teacher without having to earn the position of leadership and authority. Many people even prefer to act on the authority of another and some will attempt to usurp the authority rather than earn that right. These 'usurpers' rarely have the ability to fill the role they desire.

It is equally common for ineligible or incapable people to assume roles of authority or titles which confer authority within the Church. Many Church leaders have simply completed educational courses or are selected through an urgency or by way of favoritism but are ineligible and incapable.

Many church leaders revere the title or moniker of 'pastor' but few pastors, now-a-days, are eligible or capable or even desire to fill the role and responsibilities of a Biblical pastor.

Jesus, rather than offer a 'curriculum or a course of study for leadership positions', makes an astounding statement in response to this mother's request: *"Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

The word for 'servant' is 'diakonos' from which we get our word deacon. It is also used to mean minister; one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use; a waiter, one who serves food and drink.

The word for 'slave' is 'doulos' which is a man of servile condition or one who gives himself up to another's will, especially those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men; devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests. Voluntary servitude in the cause of Christ.

Jesus, with His words, had turned their worlds upside down. He is, in essence, saying that the things you seek you neither understand nor desire.

The magnitude of the Cause and Mission of Jesus is incalculable. The soul of every person to ever breathe the breath of life, hangs in the balance. As *Revelation 7:9* puts it *"a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues."* Jesus, alone, was Called, Capable and Qualified for His role as Savior of the World, and He called Himself a "Servant of many".

Therefore, we, His followers, must and should eagerly desire not only to be called a servant and slave in the Cause of Christ, but we should eagerly desire to made capable and qualified to fill that role.

We could, once again, see the world being won to Christ if we, the follower of Jesus, would but humble ourselves and have the attitude in ourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, although existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT?

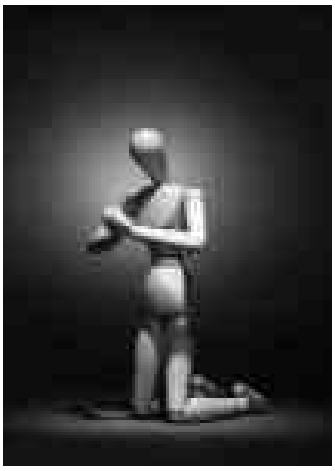
Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: I am saddened, as I have written this devotional today, that I know I am incapable and ineligible to fill the role I read about and teach about. Let's please pray for one another, as the day draws near, that we will be found as willing and obedient servants to Christ and to one another.

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #32



- **Be a House of Prayer**

" And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves.

*"And He *said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN." Matthew 21:12-13*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Please remember, we are studying what it means to be a disciple of Jesus so we can be like Him.

This is an event which must can be misunderstood as Jesus showing calculated anger - which is incorrect. This teaching must be carefully framed as "Righteous Indignation".
Very little is said about this subject, but in this example we have a clear look at a powerful demonstration of "Righteous Indignation", when it is appropriate and when it is called for.

There are only a few examples of when Jesus appears get angry. Each time it is related to someone or some group blocking access to our Father in heaven. And each time Jesus demonstrates "Righteous Indignation".

One account of this event tells us that Jesus takes time to braid a cord into a whip, before entering the Temple. That would take time and forethought. This was not a sudden outburst of anger. It was thought out.

Yet, today, almost every one of our churches, claiming to be a "House of the Lord", have turned His House into a Robber's Den. How this so? At various times, Sanctuaries of God are being used as entertainment centers, athletic centers, political stages or voter registration centers. It is a place to sell religious literature, CDs, DVDs, to raise money for activities in and outside the church - just like we see in Matthew 21.

So, 'what wrong with that?' you ask? Let me say, that if you have to ask that question then it may be a sign that you have, along with thousands of pastors, churches and entire denominations, drifted from so far from a basic understanding God and His Teachings and His Ways, that this small space cannot facilitate your question.

One of the main reasons the contemporary church has lost its power and effectiveness in our world is that we fail to have fervent effective prayers and fail to recognize what Jesus is telling us.

I will close by quoting what Jesus, our Lord and Teacher, says, "*MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER". Jesus has set the example before us and it is THE CHURCH as a House of Prayer.*

I beseech all of us to take this seriously. It is as if we are hemorrhaging our spiritual life blood away from ignorance and neglect of this Great Edict.

Let's turn back to God in fervent, persistent and regular prayer.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

https://whitestone2020.com/was-jesus-moody-the-temple/

NOTES:

- **Ask in Faith, believing**

"And Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen.

"And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Matthew 21:21-22

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

There are times when Jesus will use similes, metaphors, idioms and even hyperbole to make a point. Those examples are easy to spot. Then there are times when Jesus is being literal and The Truth is so profound that many who hear it will not believe. This is one of those times.

Additionally, whenever Jesus uses the word 'Truly' He is actually saying "Amen", in other words it is saying, "this word I am giving you is a firm and faithful statement."

Truly or Amen, at the beginning of a discourse informs the listener (or reader) of a coming truth. If it is used at the end of a statement it means "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled."

It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed, had offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own.

Therefore, Jesus alerts His disciples (which includes His followers today) that *a profound Truth is coming!*

(I am breaking Jesus statement into parts so we can see the importance of each 'step' and contemplate them and I am putting the Greek translation and meaning in parentheses for our understanding),

1. ***"if you have faith*** *(Faith: conviction of, assurance; faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.)*
2. ***do not doubt****, (in your heart and mind, have left no room for an alternative choice)*
3. ***you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but*** *(you will singularly see and complete (poieo) and create what God has prepared ahead of time)*
4. ***even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen.*** (even though you say, and if you say, and if you say so much as; affirm over, exhort, to command, direct; to come into existence, begin to be, to become, i.e. to come to pass, happen)

In simpler words, Jesus is being literal. He is shaking the foundations of the natural world. But then, He is God Incarnate, Emanuel, God with us and He is saying to you that if you have faith and do not doubt, all things are possible for you.

You can literally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. You can put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For your struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places.* Therefore, you can take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, you can stand firm.

Jesus is saying that you need to have no fear of any circumstance, no fear of any person. God is for you. No man can stand against you. No weapon which has been formed can prosper against you. Just, "Ask in faith".

AND HAVING DONE EVERYTHING, STAND FIRM

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: It is and always has been the responsibility of each and every Christian to follow and obey Jesus, do the works He has done and to make other disciples who will do the same.

Have we, the Church, abdicated one of the greatest commands and commissions by Jesus to the professional clergy? Have we engaged hirelings to do our work?

This is what Jesus told us we MUST BECOME what we MUST BE DOING as His Disciples.

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #34

- **Bring in the Poor**

"And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment.

"But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,

"and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." ***Luke 14:12-14***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

This is a profound Truth being taught and demonstrated by Jesus. The focus verses are Luke 14:12-14, but the narrative begins at Luke 14 and goes from verse 1 through verse 14.

There are many things to learn here:

1. *And Jesus said to them, When He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread,* ***they were watching Him closely****.*
    1. So it will be for you as you are a disciple of Jesus

2. *Jesus asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" But the Pharisees kept silent. And He took hold of him and healed him and sent him away.* (The Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath)
    1. *So it will be for you as you are a disciple of Jesus.*
3. *When you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you.* IL
    1. So it will be for you as you are a disciple of Jesus
4. *Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*
    1. So it will be for you as you are a disciple of Jesus
5. *Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*
    1. So it will be for you as you are a disciple of Jesus

STOP THE SELF INDULGENCE

1. In Luke 18:22, Jesus told the 'rich young ruler' if he wanted eternal life that he would need to sell all his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, then come and follow Jesus.

GIVE - WITH NO REWARD IN MIND

The last item in this list can be the most difficult. *We are to give with no reward in mind.* It should remind us of at least two other profound Teachings of Jesus:

1. Luke 6:38 which tells us to "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

All we do is for the Glory of God, alone.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

We are living in a time where the "State" has largely replaced God in our lives. What the Church used to do (or does in a very limited fashion) The "State" now does, but with serious consequences.

The "State" provides food, clothing, housing, medical care, social welfare income, social security retirement income, disability income, mandated education, government funded abortions, job training, etc., regardless of your beliefs, lifestyle or habits, morals or ethics.

WE, the CHURCH are abdicating our role and responsibility. We must care for and provide for our pastors. But, the average church spends 70% to 80%+ of its buildings, debt, income on salaries, retirement plans, healthcare plans, perks, etc., for pastors and staff. Even the best missions programs top of their giving at an average of just 5%. Even once the mission money is delivered, it to goes largely to the same budgetary items.
We go to our church buildings and worship in relative luxury while the world around us becomes more and more secular, more hostile to Christianity and lost to God.

WE, THE CHURCH, THE SAINTS OF GOD, HIS CHILDREN, MUST RECLAIM THIS TERRITORY!

I pray that God will forgive me - forgive us - and that we will submit ourselves, our luxuries, our wants to Him. That I - that we - have the will and the courage to repent and follow Him, fully devoted, fully surrendered, all in!

Amen & Amen.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

- **Render to Caesar**

"Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius.

*"And He *said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"*

*"They *said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He *said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:19–21).*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The full context of these verses starts at **verse 15**:

Matthew 22:15 *"Then* ***the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said****.*

*16 "And they *sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any.*

17 "Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, ***"Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?***

19 "Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius.

*20 And He *said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"*

*21 They *said to Him, "Caesar's.*

*"Then He *said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's.*

v22 And hearing this, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away."

Jesus correctly divides His Kingdom from the kingdoms of this world.

John 8:23, Jesus says *"You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."*

In John 18:36, Jesus says, *"My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

We, too, must correctly divide the Kingdom

Jesus tells us in John 15:19 that we are not of this world, either, because *He chose us out of this world.*

And we are *not to be conformed to this world, but we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, so that we may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Our mind should be "set on thing above", doing the work of our Father.

I know that it is difficult to avoid being dragged into the issues which face us. But, as Christian soldiers we must divide kingdoms. I have trouble avoiding entangling myself in the world's affairs.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in **2 Timothy 2:3**, *"Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. **4** No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. **5** Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules."*

The Apostle Peter calls us aliens and sojourners to this world. He says *you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** for you once you were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; we had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.*

11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."

This is the calling of a disciple of Jesus. This is our standard.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT? _____

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT? _____

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: Reason with me. How can you engage the world around you - the social, political and economics - using Kingdom principals and practices, so that you PROVE what is good, acceptable and perfect?

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #36

- **Love the Lord**

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?""And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' "This is the great and foremost commandment." Matthew 22:36-38

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Once again, things are not as they seem. The man who asked the question did not care about knowing the greatest commandment. He had nefarious motives.

Matthew 22:34 "But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. v35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, ***testing (tempting) Him****, v36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"*

Jesus answers the question, takes command and captures the moment. He recites the Great Commandment from the Jewish law, the Torah in Deuteronomy chapter six.

Jesus then sets the stage

"The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

In one brilliant moment, the Pharisees are confronted with the Christ!

"Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: ***"What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?"***

Learn from this.

1. When people confront you and test you or test your faith, speak the Word of God.
2. Speak the whole Truth
3. Always bring your audience, your opponent or your friends to the Messiah. Always.

Of course, this implies you KNOW THE WORD OF GOD.

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success." **Joshua 1:8**

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

"Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You."

Psalms119:11

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #37

Discipleship

- **Deny Yourself**

"23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?" (Luke 9:23–25).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus says that "If anyone wishes to come after Me...

- He must deny himself
- Take up his cross daily, and
- Follow me

WARNING: **This is not a 'seeker friendly' request!**

We have already seen that Jesus' command to follow Him was not a simple request. It was spoken in the imperative as a command "come hither, come here, come now!" Jesus warned that once you put your hand to the plow and then looked back, you are no longer fit for service in the Kingdom of God.

Secondly, anyone wishing to follow Jesus must understand the context and vernacular of His words to mean, "Follow Me in order to be taught by me, looking over my shoulder. You will learn by watching and you will be identified with Me and you will suffer with me and because of me." There is a price to pay for following Jesus.

Next, there is no way to follow Jesus and retain the life you once knew. Following Jesus requires a total commitment of life, resources and of your future. So, to say "you must deny yourself" actually means a total disregard one's own interests; to deny, abnegate, and abjure your life in favor of the cause and calling of Christ.

Finally, to "take up your cross daily" means you are willing to bear the burdens Christ bore and that your term of service is indefinite and eternal.

One last reminder, which will serve those well who are wishing to come after Jesus, offered by the Apostle Paul in

Hebrews 6:4 "For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, (v5) and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, (v6) and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance,"

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT?

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Heb 12:1

Your Brother and Friend

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #38

- **Despise Not Little Ones**

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 18:10).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Read some other passages to get the context about how God considers the "little ones":

Matthew 18:6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

Matthew 18:14 "So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish."

Matthew 18:3 and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Mark 9:37 "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me."

Children are most precious in God's sight. And to despise on of these little ones, to condemn, disdain, or think little or nothing of them, will incur the wrath of God.

Jesus tells us that angels in heaven are continually reporting about the welfare of these to the Father in heaven. They are always on His Mind.

They are to be loved, nurtured, trained and brought up in the admonition of the Lord.

So it is that abuse, neglect or ill treatment of these little ones, of any kind, is an abomination to God. Abortion is particular stench to God and offenders can fully expect the wrath of God to fall upon them.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW YOU MUST TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

A PERSONAL NOTE: So it is with the travesty of abortion the United States. Anyone who stands by and does nothing is complicit in this atrocity before God.

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #39

Discipleship

- **Go to Offenders and be reconciled**

"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

"But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.

"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." ***(Matthew 18:15-17)***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Jesus is teaching His disciples Kingdom Truths and up until this point, each teaching is to be applied to oneself. This principal, however, is to be applied to someone else, specifically, a brother or sister in the faith.

The Greatest Responsibility

At first, it sounds as if the believer is to simply make a judgment about someone else's behavior and correct them. There are few things farther from the truth. This teaching bears the greatest weight and responsibility for the believer.

Before this teaching, Jesus has warned His disciples

- "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.
- Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:1–3)

The Apostle Paul instructs, *"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted."* Galatians 6:1

This matter must be approached prayerfully, soberly and thoughtfully. A great deal of self-inspection and humility should precede before you act. But, once the decision is made, it is to be done carefully with gentleness but resolutely.

Given time, if the brother or sister does not respond in humility and repentance, then you should go back to them with two more ***witnesses*** so the facts can be confirmed.

The goal is restoration and reconciliation - not separation

Remembering that Jesus came to serve and not to be served and He died a horrible death to pay for our sins. So, this matter must be approached in love.

James instructs, *"My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." James 5:19-20*

However, if all attempts to bring the offender back into fellowship fails, and if the transgressor *"continues in his or her sins and stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned."* Titus 3:10-11

And, "*As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear."* 1 Timothy 5:20

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

TO PASTORS AND 'CHURCH LEADERS': Too many churches and pastors use this teaching, this serious matter, as a means to keep 'parishioners' or 'congregants' in line with the goals, practices and traditions of the local church organization. THIS IS MISAPPLIED and is manipulation and can be spiritual abuse. You are tasked with feeding HIS sheep, not managing your flock. You have no sheep of your own.

Sometimes a disagreement is best settled by mutual agreement to separate in peace, if that is possible. Our Lord is long-suffering not willing that any should perish. Do not drive people away for your own reasons. You will be held accountable.

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #40

- **Love your Neighbor**

"The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

"On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:39–40).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The face-value reading of these verses explains it all.

Is it any wonder why so many professing Christians are called "hypocrites" by those outside the faith? So few of us are practicing this commandment: *"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF".*

Most of what Jesus taught goes against our human nature which makes His Teachings so very hard to do.

But, why should this be difficult if the Spirit of God changes our nature:

Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

Read what the Apostle Paul has to say about this conundrum:

Romans 7:18 "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

Why is this so important?

1. The mark of a True Christian is being sanctified, daily.

*Leviticus 20:7 says, "You shall sanctify yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. 8 ' **You shall keep My statutes and practice them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you."***

2. The mark of a True Christian practices Spiritual discipline.

*Philippians 2:12 "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."***

3. The entire Law of God and all the teaching of the Prophets rests on these two "Greatest Commandments".

"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' Matthew 22:37-39

Unless we obey these two commandments, the rest of what we do is 'wood, hay and stubble'

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

By this, we, the disciples of Jesus, can and will continue to turn the world upside down!

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #41

- **Await My Return**

"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

"But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would

have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

"For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will." ***Matthew 24:42-44***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

These are some to the most dire and clearest warnings given by Jesus about His Return and the necessity of our readiness. Pay close attention and do what He says or be left behind!

The context of these words start in

Matthew 24: 32 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;

33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.

34 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

37 "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.

38 "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

40 "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.

First, some literary housekeeping: There are various discussions and debates about the supposed complexity and intricacies of these verses.

- Some theologians say these verses lead one to believe there will be "two Second Comings of Jesus" - which is utter nonsense. Believe it or not, Jesus can do more than one thing at a time!
- Others wrestle with the wording of the metaphor in verse 32 which says, "you will know when summer is near" and a seeming contradiction found in verse 42 which says "*you do not know which day your Lord is coming"*. This too is nonsense. Clearly, it reads that you will know the "season" but not "the exact day".
- Some "theologians" wrestle with the idea of Jesus being compared to a "thief in the night". *"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into."* Once again, this is nonsense. These are two separate statements, connected only by sequence of events.

#1 - *"be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming"* is a stand-alone statement of fact.

#2 - *"the thief"* is a warning and a direct reference to the *breaking of the 6th Seal, The Great Tribulation and the Wrath of the Lamb, which will seem like a "thief breaking into your home, stealing your goods and harming you and your family".*

The wording of our *focus verses* (Matthew 24:32-44) is made clear when you and read these verses in context of the preceding verses in Matthew 24:29-31.

*v29 "But immediately **after the tribulation of those days** THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory

31 "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

IMPORTANT: Verse 29 says *"But immediately **after the tribulation of those days"** which is a reference to the beginning of the tribulation period*, also known as the *"Days of Distress"*. This period is described by Jesus in Matthew 24 verses 3 through 28.

They are also found in Revelation 6:1-11 and are named **the *"Seals"* of the tribulation**. Seal ONE through Seal FIVE have already been opened or are being opened and are **ongoing events,** all of which began sometime between AD 1 and AD 90.

NOTE: The 6th Seal will mark the beginning of the a period, known variously as "The Day of Wrath", "The End of Days", "The Wrath of the Lamb" and "The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord".

If you read our focus verses in Matthew 24 in the context of the entire chapter you will see why this is such an important warning.

AN ONGOING ALERT

Jesus words, *"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming"* take on a new and urgent meaning when you realize we are on the verge of the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord (Seal 6).

The *ALERT* mentioned in Matthew 24:42 is an ongoing ALERT! We must stay ever vigilant and ready for Jesus' return.

Finally, and just before the opening of the 6th Tribulation Seal, two important events must occur:

1. The Great Apostasy (A rebellion, an abandonment of God's revelation.)
https://www.gotquestions.org/great-apostasy.html

2. The revealing of the anti-Christ

These events are likened to a thief breaking into your home at night and robbing you, destroying your home and harming you and your family.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 *Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,*

2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

These events could occur at any moment. You and I must be ready in a moment's notice in "a blink of the eye". We must stay on alert if we are to escape this calamity, keep our homes and family safe, and join Jesus when *"He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."*

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #42

- **Take, Eat, and Drink in His memory**

"While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

" And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you;

" for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." **(Matthew 26:26–28).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Disciples of Jesus, are commanded by Him, to practice this ordinance in memory of Him. It was meant, then, and is still meant today, to remind us, the disciples of Jesus of what He has done and continues to do for us.

It is also to remind us to stay vigilant, always ready, in season and out of season, to spread the Good News and to give The Reason for our Hope.

His Body and Blood must be constant and intimate reminders of Who and What Jesus is to the believer. The images and emotions we plant in our heart and mind through this intimate act is one of His Body and His Blood coming into our mortal body and mind and cleansing us, strengthening us, saving us, protecting us and providing for us.

We should dwell, ruminate and meditate on these matters, often, allowing them to sink deep into our conscious mind, our subconscious mind, our soul and spirit:

1. The Body of Jesus is the Bread of Life.

- Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. John 6:35
- **YOU WILL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE WITH GOD IN HEAVEN**: "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. v54
- **YOU WILL LIVE IN THE SAFETY AND POWER OF CHRIST:** "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. v56
- **YOU WILL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE:** "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." v58

2. The Blood of Jesus is the remission of sins.

- In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it,* in remembrance of Me." 1Cornithians11:25
- **YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN:** For this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. Matthew 26:28
- "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." John 6:56
- **YOU ARE MADE CLEAN:** And according to the Law, *one may* almost *say,* all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Hebrews9:22

3. A caution and a warning.

- "Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 1 Corinthians 11:27
- "But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. v28
- "For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. v29
- "For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep (die). v30
- "But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world." v31, v32

The New Testament tells us that this rite was instituted by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper as He was giving His disciples bread and wine during a Passover meal. Jesus commanded his disciples to "do this in memory of me" while referring to the bread as "my body" and the cup of wine as "the new covenant in my blood". Through the eucharistic celebration Christians remember both Christ's sacrifice on the cross and His commission of the apostles at the Last Supper. (Wikipedia)

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Dear Friends, please remember, "The State" would tell you otherwise, but, Jesus and The Bible tells you...

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A **royal** **PRIESTHOOD**, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God's* OWN POSSESSION, SO that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. **1 Peter 2:9**

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

PS: *https://www.challies.com/articles/you-yes-you-are-a-minister/*

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #41

- **Be Born Again**

"Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

"Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' " ***John 3:5-7***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Have you ever walked into the middle of a conversation? You haven't heard what the subject is about nor do you know what preceded the remarks you have just now heard. You might be puzzled? Nicodemus was puzzled.

It was as if Jesus is speaking from a different paradigm than Nicodemus. Jesus mind is set on His Father's Words, so, anything you say to Him or ask of Him will get the response of the Father.

Nicodemus, (#1) a man of the Pharisees, (#2) a ruler of the Jews, (#3) came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him. *(John 3:2)"*

Notice that Nicodemus is (#1) educated among the elite, and lawyer of renown; (#2) He is a ruler among the rulers of the Jews; (#3) Yet, he is sneaking around at night? Even the great Nicodemus is more concerned with appearances than with the Truth. Also notice that his statement is actually a confession and an interrogatory.

But, Jesus knowing that men cannot be trusted, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men *(John 2:24)*.

Jesus has said before, *You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."* (John 8:23), and this is reflected in this conversation with Nicodemus.

So, rather then engage Nicodemus on the pretense that he actually wants to know more about Him, Jesus goes to the point of Nicodemus' visit and says to him *"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."* Which, on the surface has nothing to do with what Nicodemus had posed. But, Nicodemus takes the bait and replies with, *"How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"*

JESUS SEPARATES THE KINGDOMS - AGAIN!

Jesus answered, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

Nicodemus, the great teacher, now confounded, said to Jesus, *"How can these things be?"*

THIS SHOULD BE THE QUESTION ON ALL OF OUR MINDS

Shortly after this time, during a discussion between a Jew and disciples of John the Baptist, John repeats this teaching of "Separate Kingdoms" of Jesus by saying, *"A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven." (John 3:27)*

John continues by uttering this most profound Truth:

- *"He who comes from above is above all,*
- *he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth.*
- *He who comes from heaven is above all. (verse 31)*

Being *born of water,* ***"a natural earthly birth"***, must be followed by being *born of the Spirit*, or literally, ***"born from above"*** in order to live as God has designed.

THE BIG LIE

It is Satan's Lie, *"You surly shall not die"* that has cause untold billions of men, women and children to die having failed to complete the **"True Life Cycle"** of being *"born of water and of the Spirit"* so they could *"enter into the kingdom of God"*.

Do not be amazed that Jesus said that you must be born from above!

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #42

- **Keep My Commandments**

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The plain face-value reading is adequate. If you love Him, you will do what He has asked of you. You will do what He has commanded.

However, be aware that This is NOT a statement which says, *"IF YOU LOVE ME, THEN YOU ARE BOUND BY OATH AND THE LAW TO DO KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS"*.

It is instead a **PROPHETIC** word describing a **RELATIONSHIP**. It is saying that: "If you love me, then you will want to keep my commandments, and if you love me you will be able to keep my commandments.

From its root meaning, **this word "LOVE"** (AGAPAO ἀγαπάω in the Greek) is properly understood to denote love based on esteem (diligo). This is distinct from love expressed as a spontaneous natural affection or an emotional and unreasoning love (amo φιλέω from the Greek - amorous English.).

AGAPE, LOVE (ἀγαπάω) is used in the New Testament of a Christian's love toward God and man. It is the *spiritual affection* which follows the direction of the will, and which, therefore, unlike that feeling which is instinctive and unreasoning, can be *commended as a duty.*

It is the highest form of love and esteem when we are duty-bound, not from our emotions or passion but from an act of our will to commit to love unconditionally.

If this AGAPE is our type of love toward God, then we are equally committed to keep His commandments, not as an obligation nor by the force of law, but by an act of our will.

Next we have **the words "TO KEEP"**. There are at least 6 different Greek words in the New Testament which can be translated as "to keep".

The word used for **"KEEP"** in this verse is TEREO - to observe, to watch, to preserve, to hold fast; to attend to carefully, take care of; to keep, one in the state in which he is

The idea contained in this word **"keep"** is translated to in the same fashion as you would see a mother and her baby interacting. Think on this:

The relationship of a newborn and his or her mother is wrought from much excitement and anticipation followed by months of patient preparation and finally realized through great difficulty and pain.

The mother's love is born of an innate unconditional love and duty which is brought about by the process pregnancy and birth. Imagine the scene as a mother holds and feed her newborn in the first days.

Imagine the baby, suckling and watch his or her mother intently. Over time, the baby begins to take on the expressions and attributes of the mother. The bond between them grows and strengthens. Their love deepens and as their commitment grows. The bond of a parent and child.

This is a representation and an expression of "Loving God" and of "keeping His Commandments". It is saying,

- Being Born of God means
- Staying Near to God, and
- Staring into "His Face" and coming to know HIm
- Resting in His Arms
- Loving God unconditionally
- Taking on His attributes
- Being His son or daughter
- Becoming like Him so others see the resemblance

Then, having come to know Him and to love Him, you will keep His commandments.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #43

- **Watch and Pray**

"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." **(Matthew 26:41).**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

At first glance, this seems simple enough to understand. But the larger context is about missing an opportunity and suffering the consequences.

This event can be viewed in two scenarios. And both are correct:

1. Instructions to ***stay alert and pray when calamity, temptation and testing comes.*** In this case, regarding the events leading up to Jesus death and resurrection and the First Advent of the Savior of the World being announced on the world stage.

2. A foreshadowing of ***the coming Second Advent*** of the Savior of the world and instructions for Christians to get ready and stay ready when regarding the coming ***The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord.***

Jesus had entered ***a time of distress*** and grieving "to the point of death" because His time of betrayal and of enduring the cross was drawing near. So, Jesus comes with Peter, James and John to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

Jesus went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed. When He came back to the disciples He found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not ***keep watch*** with Me for one hour?

Then Jesus said, "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Jesus went back to pray two more times and both times when He returned, the disciples had fallen asleep. After the third time Jesus announces, "Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners."

AN URGENT WARNING

The idea contained in the Words of Jesus when He said, **"Keep watching" (Greek = gregoreuo)** is to *give strict attention to, be cautious, active, and to take heed lest through remission and indolence* ***some destructive calamity suddenly overtake one***.

A DIRE CONDITION

The idea contained in the Word **"Temptation"** describes a "trial, a testing, a proving trial *(As seen in Matthew 4:1 when Jesus is lead by the Spirit into the wilderness).*

- It is the trial of man's fidelity, integrity, virtue, constancy; the enticement to sin, arising from personal desires or from the outward circumstances;
- In this case it is the temptation by which the devil sought to divert Jesus the Messiah from his divine errand;
- It also show the condition of a person, a mental state, by which we are enticed to sin, or to a lapse from the faith and holiness;
- It comes from adversity, affliction, trouble, sent by God and serving to test or prove one's character, faith, holiness.
- Temptation can culminate in rebellion against God, by which his power and justice are, as it were, put to the proof and challenged to show themselves. Scriptures warn us: Do not tempt or test God.

Jesus teaches us, in Matthew 24 and tells us in greater detail in the Book of the Revelation (chapters 6 through 8) of

- The present tribulation of these Days of Distress and
- The coming Great Tribulation and the Great And Terrible Day of The Lord.

This is a clear picture that His death and resurrection is (1) the fulfillment of scriptures which sets in motion (2) The Beginning of the End. We must be ready!

READ, PRAY, LISTEN, DO

*"**Therefore be on the alert**, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.*

*"**For this reason you also must be ready**; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.*

*"But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; **the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites**; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Matthew 24:42:51***

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #44

Discipleship

- **Feed My Sheep**

*v15 "So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you **love** Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."*

*v16 "He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you **love** Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep.*

*v17 "He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you **love** Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."* **(John 21:15–16)**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

There are no coincidences in the Bible. This is now the ***third time*** that Jesus was manifested Himself to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.

And now, Jesus gives Peter a command ***three*** times in ***three*** ways. Is this anything significant?

Three, *(shelosh , sheloshah)* in the Bible, means harmony, new life, and completeness.

Three carries an extreme significance throughout Scripture in prophetic fulfillment to the nature of our prayers. As Christians, we should remember to keep an eye out for any instance we see something thrice in Scripture. It's either emphatically pointing to the essence of something, or showing the completeness of something.

1. Jesus asks Peter (as He might ask you) "Do you love (agapao) Me?"

Jesus uses the Greek word "Agapao" which is a ***love based on esteem*** (diligo), distinct from the love that is expressed by spontaneous natural affection, emotional and unreasoning (amo). Agapao-Love is fitly used in New Testament of Christians love of God and man. The spiritual affection which follows the direction of the will, and which, therefore, unlike that feeling which is instinctive and unreasoning, ***can be commended as a duty***.

Almost astoundingly, Peter replies with the word **"Phileo"** which denotes a ***brotherly love.*** It means to approve of, to like or to treat affectionately or kindly, to welcome, befriend.

This is the case THREE TIMES. And, THREE TIMES Jesus says

(1) Tend My Lambs - Portraying the duty of a Christian teacher to promote in every way the **spiritual welfare** of the members of the church. In other words "feed" my Lambs.

(2) Shepherd My Sheep - This is time Jesus uses a word which indicates a sheepfold of a higher order in a higher sanctuary or a more sacred sheep pen. In other words, to supply the requisites for **the soul's need**

(3) Tend My Sheep - This time Jesus repeats His second command. **Repetition is emphasis.**

Each time Jesus uses a more sincere and intensely personal word for LOVE and each time Peter replies with a Brotherly LOVE. Although a good thing, Brotherly Love alone will not sustain you through times of trial and testing.

The Bible tells us, *"A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."* ***Proverbs 18:24***

We, as people, have divided scriptures into books and verses. It is our way.

We, as people, have divided Jesus' Church into clergy and laity. It is out way.

We, as people, have divided our loyalty to Jesus into Agape-Love and Phileo-Love. It is our way.

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" This is His Way.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Let's draw near to God and He will draw near to us.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

"Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes."

Matthew 24:45 - 46

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #45

- **Baptize My Disciples**

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit," Matthew 28:19

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Word of God, Jesus' Teachings, should be read and understood on THREE levels:

1. By the natural or physical (soma),
2. By the soul or the mind, will and emotions (psuche), and
3. By the spirit (pneuma)

1*. The natural of physical reading is at 'face value' and simply says *"Go, make disciples of all the nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit* and this is what happens almost all the time in most all the church buildings by most all the pastors.

2*. Peering through our Soul and reading these verses using all the senses of our mind, will and emotions, we see a bigger pictures.

Our **mind begins** to see and grasp the enormity of the task. Planning begins, thinking, strategizing, pondering.

We feel **the emotional** weight of trying to identify with people on their culture and building relationships with a foreign people in a language. We feel the estrangement from our families, loved ones and all things familiar.

We **sense the commitment and the act of our will** required to go into all the nations of the world as a missionary.

3*. **The Spirit** of God communes with our spirit and we know:

The word "GO" means to pursue the journey on which one has entered, and to continue on one's journey so as to depart from your former life, to follow THE ONE, JESUS, that is to become his adherent and to reorder one's life for Him.

(a) The word **"GO"** is in the aorist tense which means to "keep on going" with no regard to past, present or future circumstances. Once we obey and GO, this is a lifetime and a generation work.

(b) "Baptizing" them is not to be confused with simply dipping them in water,(bapto). The clearest example that shows the meaning of BAPTIZING (baptizo) is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptising the vegetable, produces a permanent change.

When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. e.g. #Mr 16:16. 'He that believes and is baptized shall be saved'. Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!

(c) "In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" the name is used for everything which the name covers, everything the thought or feeling of which is aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering, the name, i.e. for one's rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds etc. the cause or reason named: on this account, because he suffers as a Christian, for this reason

This comes from a root meaning, "ginosko", to have a deep, personal and intimate knowledge, penetrating the heart, soul and spirit.

The gravity of His Words and the great commandment and commission is inescapable.

IF YOU ARE HIS DISCIPLE, A CHRISTIAN, YOU MUST GO, MAKE DISCIPLES, BAPTIZE AND TEACH or you must question whether you are His at all.

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #46

- **Receive God's Power**

"And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Words in Luke 24:49 are Breathed by God, and written by men under the unction of and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was talking to His disciples, in this verse. Jesus is still speaking to His disciples, today, saying that He is sending forth the promise of the Holy Spirit TO YOU and UPON YOU as a Christian.

If this were not so, then the Work of God would have ceased upon the death of the first disciples and the Apostles.

Luke 24:29 is a prophetic utterance.

A prophetic Word to His disciples, for today.

Just like it was for the disciples in Jesus' days on earth, we are to 'stay in the city' until we are clothed with power from on high. In other words, until you have received the gift of The Holy Spirit you have no power. But, once you have been 'clothed with power from on high', you are to go and be His witness to the utter most parts of the world.

Look at another account of this teaching in

Acts 1:4-8

4 "Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;
5 "for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 "So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

7 "He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

8 "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Even today, once you have been 'clothed with the power from on high', that is you have been baptized by and filled with the Holy Spirit, you shall go and be His witnesses, even to the remotest part of the earth.

The word, "witness" in verse 8, is the Greek word "martus" or martyr, in English, and literally means "those who after his example have proved the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by undergoing a violent death." (Strong's Bible concordance)

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

"Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

"Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

Nothing about this has changed. Time is short. Let's GO, together!

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

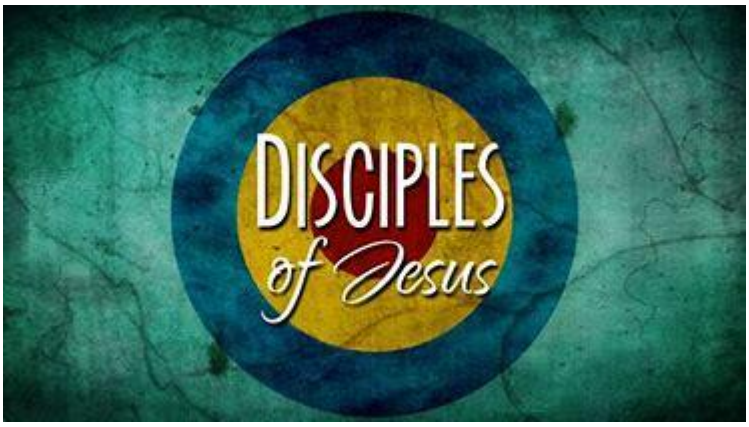
Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

NOTES:

AND YOU SHALL BE MY DISCIPLES - Lesson #47

Discipleship



- **Make Disciples**

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

"teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." **(Matthew 28:19–20).**

NOTE: This command is for every believer and is specifically for the ones gifted as an Evangelist or a Preacher. This is often called **The Great Commission.** *However, The Word of God is written to every believer, for every believer, for every time and for all times.*

Every Christian is given Spiritual Gifts and empowered by God in order to *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you".*

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Acts 2:4 "He (Jesus) commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for ***what the Father had promised,*** *"Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; v5 for John baptized with water, but you will* ***be baptized with the Holy Spirit*** *not many days from now."*

v8 "But you ***will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses*** *both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."*

These Spiritual gifts, (charismata) are an endowment or extraordinary powers given by the Holy Spirit.

These supernatural graces, are given to individual Christians by the Holy Spirit with the purpose of building up the Body of Christ which is The Church and are needed to fulfill the mission of the Church. *Spiritual Gifts enable Christians to serve the Lord and His Church.*

All Christians are called to go, and some are to go with the Spiritual Gift of pastors, some as evangelists, some as prophets, some as teachers some as overseers.

Some are to go through the Spiritual Gift of serving, some through teaching, some through exhortation, some through giving, some by way of mercy, helps or administration.

Some are to go with the Spiritual Gift of giving, or a word of wisdom, some by a word of knowledge, some by a demonstration of faith. Some are to go by way of miracles, some by was of distinguishing spirits and others by the gift of tongues or interpretation of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:12 *"For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. v13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. v14 For the body is not one member, but many.*

v 20 "But now there are many members, but one body.

v 27 "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

v28 "And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

v29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?

v30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

v31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

Now you know. Now you GO!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Now, it is your turn:

HOW CAN YOU DO IT?

HOW CAN YOU TEACH IT?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

"And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Amen.

Matthew 28:18

NOTES: