

DAILY DISCIPLESHIP (2011 Congregational Theme)

A. **We human beings** are inclined to exaggerate our accomplishments & experiences. Why do we do that?

1. We want people to see us in a favorable light – *we men are especially bad about this.*
2. A man might refer to himself as a *golfer, hunter or fisherman* when actually he engages in those activities very seldom.

B. **There may be** some things we do only occasionally by which we try define ourselves, *but being a disciple of Christ cannot be one of those things!*

1. Following Him is about daily living, it is not about an occasional outing.
2. Unfortunately people believe that because they own a Bible & attend church services this qualifies them as a disciple of the Lord.

3. But “Jesus didn’t come to earth & die on a cross so that we could have holy hobby for the week-ends” – *following Jesus is a daily activity.*

C. **This year**, we’re going to have a congregational theme: “Daily Discipleship.”

1. We’re going to work at developing some tools that will help us “live by faith” rather than just practicing “the faith” every now & then.
2. Our theme verse can be no other but Luke 9:23 – *“Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, & take up his cross daily, & follow Me.”*
 - a. Notice the all inclusiveness of this statement as indicated by Jesus’ words “all” & “daily”.
 - b. “All” is every one, & “daily” is every day – *discipleship is an everyday occurrence by everyone who chooses to follow the Lord.*

3. We will have about a lesson a month devoted to our theme.

a. Most of the subjects will be familiar to us, but our goal is to work them into our daily lives better than we have in the past.

D. **The subjects** are not intended to diminish the value of our assemblies, but rather to enhance it.

1. Some Christians have become dissatisfied with public worship, & so they stay away as much as they can while claiming that what's really important is their daily discipleship.

2. Well, I believe the reason for that attitude is that not enough time is spent on "daily discipleship".

3. Daily discipleship will improve both the leaders of our public worship as well as those who follow their lead in the assembly.

4. Those of you who have a hobby know that you enjoy that hobby the more devoted you are to it.

a. Otherwise, your attempt at IT will just frustrate you, for not having developed any proficiency.

5. So if there isn't an endeavor to develop our discipleship (faith) daily, then our weekly Bible classes & worship services will be dry, & some Christians will lose their interest.

6. But what is even sadder, is when God loses His interest in our collective worship.

Amos 5:21-24 – I hate, I despise your feast days, & I do not savor your sacred assemblies. 22 Though you offer Me burnt offerings & your grain offerings, I will not accept them, nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. 23 Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. 24 **But let justice run down like water, & righteousness like a mighty stream.** [They lacked "daily discipleship".]

I. WHAT IS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST?

A. **A disciple is** one who learns from Christ & becomes a follower of His teaching & an emulator of His life (**Matt 28:19-20**).

1. Disciples of Christ are not a subset of the church or the saved; the saved are His disciples.
2. In fact, the name “Christian” is found only 3 times in the Scriptures, but the word “disciple (s)” is found over 250 times.
3. Do you view yourself as a disciple of Christ?
 - a. That’s a very challenging question because it has to do with the actions of our daily lives, & not just a name we might try to wear.

B. **It takes two things** to be a disciple of Christ.

1. An Ear That Will Listen To Christ –

John 8:31-32 – Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “***If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.*** 32 And you shall know the truth, & the truth shall make you free.”

- a. Jesus explained who we are to listen to, but why are we to listen to Him?

John 8:28-30 – Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, & that I do nothing of Myself; but ***as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.*** 29 And ***He who sent Me is with Me.*** The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.” 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

- b. Now the next question is going to make us feel a little uncomfortable.

- 1) Do we listen to the Lord every day? Do we, like Mary, reserve a portion of each day to sit at the feet of Jesus?

2. The second thing it takes to be a disciple of Christ is A Heart That Will Imitate Christ.

- a. In other words, a true disciple will always act upon what he learns from his teacher.

- b. In the parables, there were two men who didn't act upon what they learned from their master, but later wished they had.

Matt 25:26 (Talents) – But his lord answered & said to him, ‘You wicked & lazy servant, **you knew that I reap where I have not sown, & gather where I have not scattered seed.** (30)

Luke 19:22 (Minas) – And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. **You knew that I was an austere [harsh] man,** collecting what I did not deposit & reaping what I did not sow. (27)

- c. In Luke 6, Jesus expounded on the fact that His disciples will imitate Him.

Luke 6:39-42 (Sermon on the plain) – And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? (Scribes, Pharisees; Matt 15:14; Matt 23:16ff) 40 **A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher** (Jesus; John 13:16; 15:20) 41 And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, & then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

- d. What Jesus is telling us here is that people will imitate the spiritually blind (false teacher).

- e. And people will also imitate the hypocrite who claims that he is trying to help them, but will not even help himself.

- f. But the disciple of Christ will be like his teacher; he will imitate his teacher.

Heb 7:26 – For such a High Priest was fitting for us, **who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,** & has become higher than the heavens;

[How are we going to be successful at imitating our Lord? First, we have to be committed to doing it daily.]

II. GOD EMPHASIZES THE WORD “DAILY” IN THE MATTER OF DISCIPLESHIP

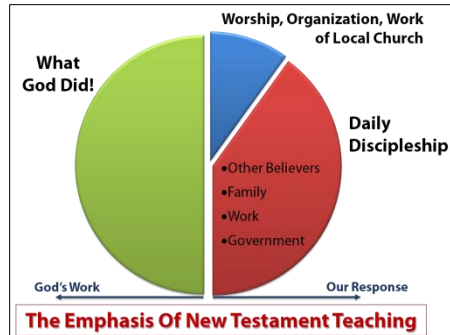
- A. **Jesus commanded it** (Luke 6:23), but God’s servants have always known that **listening** to His word & **imitating** it was a daily matter.

Acts 17:11 – These [**Bereans**] were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, & **searched the Scriptures daily** to find out whether these things were so.

Psa 88:1 (Sons of Korah) – O Lord, God of my salvation, **I have cried out day & night before You.**

Psa 5:3 (David) – **My voice You shall hear in the morning**, O Lord; **in the morning I will direct it to You**, & I will look up. **55:17** – **Evening & morning & at noon I will pray, & cry aloud**, & He shall hear my voice.

B. The NT emphasizes daily discipleship.



1. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 13 to 15 chapters deal with the local church, the remainder of the NT tells us what God did & what he wants us individually to do.

C. Our daily needs require daily discipleship.

Matt 6:11 – Give us **this day** our daily bread.

Heb 3:12-13 – Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but **exhort one another daily**, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Acts 5:42 – And **daily in the temple, & in every house**, they did not cease teaching & preaching Jesus as the Christ.

D. God is worthy of daily discipleship.

Psa 68:19 – Blessed be the Lord, who **daily** bears our burden [nkjv, loads us with benefits], the God who is our salvation. Selah.

Psa 61:8 – I will sing praise to Your name forever, that I may **daily** perform my vows.

Psa 72:15 – Prayer will be made for Him continually, & **daily** He shall be praised.

Rev 4:8, 11 – The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around & within. And **they do not rest day or night, saying**: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was & is & is to come!” 11 **You are worthy, O Lord**, to receive glory & honor & power; for You created all things, & by Your will they exist & were created.

Rev 5:9 – And they sang a new song, saying: “**You are worthy** to take the scroll, & to open its seals; for You were slain, & have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe & tongue & people & nation,

CLOSING

Rom 12:1 – I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

- A. **In contrast** to what most people believe about being a Christian, the Bible teaches that discipleship is a daily responsibility.

- B. **We must devote ourselves** to God daily if our faith is going to serve His purpose, which is for our benefit.

- C. Our needs demand it & God's grace deserves it!