

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

The Discipline of Learning

Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3;
Hebrews 5:11-14

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

- 1. The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.
- 2. The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)
- 3. The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the Worship Time that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Ask everyone to bring a picture from his or her childhood. Prepare a table or another place to put all the pictures.

Bible Study Leader:

Have a jar of baby food, a bib, a bottle, and a soother ready for opening the Bible Study time.

Worship Time Leader:

Have the following references to verses written on cards and ask members of the group prior to the time of worship to read them when indicated.

Matthew 11:28-30	John 14:21-26	Hebrews 5:11-14
Hebrews 10:24-25	Joshua 1:8	Psalms 119:11
Philippians 4:6-7	Romans 1:16	

Music sources:

“Light the Fire Again.” Words and music by Brian Doerksen. Mercy Me/Vineyard Publishing, 1994. Great theme song for the unit on disciplines. From the song “... I need Your Discipline ...” From WOW Worship Songbook. Integrity Inc, 2000.

“Footsteps of Jesus” Words by Mary B.C. Slade. Music by Asa B. Everett. Public Domain.

“Jesus Loves the Little Children” Public Domain.

“Lord I Want To Be A Christian” Negro Spiritual. Public Domain.

“In That Day” Paul Sabolick. Maranatha! Music, 1999. From WOW Worship Songbook. Integrity Inc, 2000.

“Cry of My Heart” Words and music by Terry Butler. Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, 1991. From WOW Worship Green Songbook. Integrity, Inc. 2001.

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

The Discipline of Learning

Focal Text

Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11-14

Main Idea

To be a disciple of Jesus is to learn continually from Jesus.

Question to Explore

What steps are you taking to seek to learn from Jesus continually?

Gathering together:

Ask everyone to bring a picture from his or her childhood. Mix the pictures and place them on a table in the middle of the room. Then ask the people to gather around the table and attempt to match the pictures with the adult. As the process slows complete the matches and ask the people to introduce themselves. If there are children present ask, 'What will the children look like when they are grown?'

Gathering Time Leader: "Learning and growth is not only part of our physical life – but a vital part of our spiritual walk as well. This takes discipline. 'Disciple' and 'discipline' come from the same root word. Today we will focus on the discipline of learning.

Ask the congregation to sing "***Lord, I Want to Be A Christian***" or another hymn or chorus that shares a desire to grow.

Ask a member to pray for those present to grow to be what God desires.

First thoughts:

Leader, read:

Mark 10:21 ***Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."***

Those are the words that brought sadness to the heart of the rich young ruler. He had come to Jesus in the night to seek eternal life but he was confronted with a choice that he was unwilling to make. He was a good man, a religious man with great wealth. He exuded success in every way except in the spiritual dimension of his life. He knew his need and he went to the source that could meet that need. But the choice he was asked to make was more than he was willing to do. The result was sadness. Each day we learn from God through His Word more about Him and more about the life to which He has called us. Today, we will be examining the discipline of learning and what it requires from you. The choices you have to make will be explored. The outcome will be in your hands.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the "Teacher Preparation" for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the "Bible Study Plan" for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

The Discipline of Learning

Focal Text

Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11-14

Background Text

Matthew 11:25-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 5:11-14

Main Idea

To be a disciple of Jesus is to learn continually from Jesus.

Question to Explore

What steps are you taking to seek to learn from Jesus continually?

Teaching Aim

To lead the group to decide on ways they will seek continually to learn from Jesus.

Introduction to your personal study:

What a joy to see children grow up! Taking a first step, saying the first word, learning how to dress, brushing one's teeth -- each of these milestones shows growth taking place. The excitement parents feel when their child reaches a new stage of growth is indescribable, but most every parent can relate to that joy. Imagine, however, the pain that parents feel when, for some reason, their child is behind on a task (e.g. walking, reading, potty training, etc.). Children are supposed to mature and grow up.

Spiritual children are the same way. The person who becomes a Christian has been "born again" (John 3:1-21), therefore, as a spiritual baby he/she needs to grow up. Spiritual maturity does not take place overnight, but spiritual babies should grow up over time. If they don't grow up, then something is wrong. Children are a beautiful example of faith (Mark 10:13-16), but they make poor examples of maturity (1 Corinthians 14:20). This lesson describes the Christian's need to grow. Placing one's faith in Jesus is the beginning of a lifelong journey.

Background:

This session begins a series of studies that will help your congregation to better understand and apply several key Christian disciplines in their lives. You will seek out God's teaching regarding the disciplines of:

Learning --- Serving --- Giving --- Worship --- Relationships --- Right living

Each works together with the others to bring us into a stronger, more spiritually mature relationship with God and man. They serve as a team to lift us up. Never allow them to be seen as teachings isolated one from the other.

Of all the disciplines taught in the New Testament for the spiritual growth of Christians, none is more important than the discipline of learning. Even in the secular world, every employer wants workers that are "teachable". Christians are blessed to have the greatest teacher of all history as their own Master Teacher—Jesus Christ.

His methods, educational philosophy, content, and procedures consist of the finest models of teaching ever developed. Throughout his ministry, He emphasized learning. He taught to change the mind, spiritual heart, and abilities of every person who touched his life. If teaching and learning were so important to Jesus, they ought to be as important to us.

Formal training in the faith, daily personal devotionals, our own family learning times, Bible study with our church family, and learning through the experiences of living out our faith in the world—are not options for the Christian. All these learning experiences present to us serious privileges and obligations entrusted to every child of God.

Focusing on the Meaning:

"Learn from Me" (Matthew 11:28-30)

Matthew 11:28 – Jesus spoke to those who are "weary" (exhausted from constant hard work) and "burdened" (like a pack animal made to carry a heavy load). Jesus promised "rest" (refreshment, peace and assurance) to these weary and burdened people. The Pharisees and other religious leaders of the day loved to burden people with rules and regulations to follow to be right with God (Matthew 23:4; 12:1-14). But such people working hard for their salvation become "weary" and "burdened" by the rules. Jesus, however, taught that a simple faith relationship with him is all that is necessary for salvation. He alone is the one who can give life and rest, "Come to me."

Matthew 11:29 – Jesus continued the image of a beast of burden with the picture of a "yoke." A yoke lets the master determine the direction. This is how Jesus pictured

discipleship. Each person should take his yoke upon him/herself, that is, voluntarily submit to Jesus' leadership. Jesus also called all his disciples to "learn from me," or submit to his regular teaching. Jesus is "gentle and humble in heart," a master who only has the best interests of his servant at heart.

"And you will find rest for your souls." It is ironic that a person will find rest only by coming to Jesus and by voluntarily taking on his yoke. One might think that rest would come only by being freed of all yokes completely. By casting off all restraints, then and only then would one find true joy and rest. But one of the sad realities of life is that those who insist on having no rules at all will find themselves to be the most enslaved. Living with no restraint leads to awful bondage. People who have no sexual inhibitions find themselves enslaved to addictions, broken relationships, diseases, and numerous other tragic results. Jesus taught that a person's soul finds the rest it craves only by voluntarily submitting to his gentle and humble leadership.

Matthew 11:30 – An "easy" yoke is one properly sized and balanced and is comfortable. It is a yoke that fits well, probably made for the animal individually. When the yoke fits well, the animal can easily carry the load for the weight is evenly distributed. A "light" burden is one that is manageable for that animal. Any good master would know the limit for each animal, and a gentle and humble master would never burden an animal with a load that is too great.

The Holy Spirit will Teach You (John 14:23-26)

John 14:23 – "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching." Jesus tied love and obedience together several times in this chapter (14:15, 21). He called for each disciple to question himself about his own love for Jesus. The sign of that love is not words but actions. The person who truly loves Jesus will obey him.

"My Father will love him." God first loved us (1 John 4:19), and his love for us creates in us a desire to love him in return. We show our love for him by our obedience, and he rewards our obedience with even more of his love poured out in our lives.

"And we will come to him and make our home with him." God and Christ will respond to our love and obedience by making their presence known in our hearts. They dwell in the heart of the believer through the person of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:24 –The opposite is also true: disobedience to Jesus' teachings reveals a lack of love. "These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me." His words are not simply someone's opinions, but they are the words of God himself (John 7:16). Rejecting his words will mean rejecting God's presence and love also (14:23).

John 14:25-26 – In these few verses Jesus taught us much about the Holy Spirit. Jesus called the Spirit "the Counselor," the term for a legal advocate, someone helping a defendant in court. Thus, the Holy Spirit strengthens, encourages, and gives help to

those in need. The "Holy Spirit" fully displays God's holiness, but he also works to make God's people holy. The Spirit is described here as a person, not some impersonal force, sent in the name of Jesus to represent Jesus and act on his behalf.

"[He] will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." Speaking directly to his eleven disciples present with him at the time, Jesus taught of how the Holy Spirit would remind the disciples of Jesus' earthly ministry. The Spirit would also teach them the significance of everything that Jesus said and taught (John 2:19-22; 12:16). In the next few days the disciples would witness Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. The Holy Spirit would enable them to recall everything Jesus said and learn the tremendous significance of Jesus' words and deeds. This means that we today can have confidence in their testimony contained in our New Testament. The Holy Spirit ensured that their recollections and understandings about Jesus Christ are true and accurate. The same Holy Spirit who inspired the writing of the New Testament and the Old Testament (cf. 2 Tim 3:16) is present with us today as we read the scripture. Jesus said that the Spirit "will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13) and "the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you" (John 16:15). The Author of Scripture will teach us what it means. When we approach the scripture with an earnest and prayerful heart, the Great Teacher himself is there to teach us.

"Mere Infants in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

The Corinthian church in Paul's day had many problems. In this one letter Paul addressed problems such as: sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage and divorce, idolatry, disruptions in public worship, and divisions in the church.

1 Corinthians 3:1 – Paul called the problem in Corinth spiritual immaturity and carnality. These converted Christians were dominated more by their old fleshly nature than by the power of Christ. "Spiritual" people are mature (2:6; cf. Galatians 6:1), but "worldly" people are immature people who direct their lives by worldly principles rooted in sin rather than by God's wisdom (Romans 7:14). A church full of such spiritually immature people will bring strife and discord. Paul called these Corinthian Christians "brothers" and "infants in Christ." But as infants, they had merely begun the life of faith (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:20). They had not matured to the point of letting God run their lives.

1 Corinthians 3:2 – Nothing is wrong with drinking only milk regularly—if one is a baby. Food should be appropriate to one's state of maturity. Babies drink milk; adults eat solid food. Paul wanted to teach these Christian babies the meat of true wisdom (2:6), but they could not handle it. Christians don't automatically grow up with time. One expects a new convert to be spiritual baby, but that baby should gradually grow up. These Corinthian Christians should have grown past infancy long before this.

1 Corinthians 3:3 – Jealousy and quarreling in the Corinthian church showed the spiritual state of the members. The world and the sinful fleshly nature (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 2:3) controlled them more than did the Spirit of Christ. Self-

centeredness and a divisive spirit are indicators of a "worldly" life. These Corinthians acted like "mere men," like those who do not have the Spirit of God in them (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:14).

"By This Time You Ought to be Teachers" (Hebrews 5:11-14)

The writer of Hebrews wrote this letter to some Christians whose faith was sagging and who were in danger of turning away from their Christian commitments. This letter sought to encourage them to stand firm in their faith and to grow in maturity through their difficult times.

Hebrews 5:11 – The people had "become dull of hearing" (NASV). At one time they had been more astute and attuned to the things of God. The writer wanted to speak more of the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ (5:1-10), but they were not able at this time to handle such deep thoughts.

Hebrews 5:12-13 – The Hebrews had backslidden into infancy once more. By now they should have matured in their faith to the point of being able to teach others, but they were still babies. Like children who had not yet mastered the alphabet, these baby Christians still needed to be taught the "elementary truths of God's word." They should be eating solid food by now, not milk. The "teaching about righteousness" is probably the basics of the gospel message. The Hebrews had not yet grasped even the basics of the Christian faith.

Hebrews 5:14 – Like serious athletes who "trained themselves" to be ready for the contest, maturing Christians should train themselves to determine right from wrong. Frequent study and use of God's holy word will help such a Christian grow in faith (Psalms 1:2), as will regular prayer, time spent walking closely with Jesus, and putting his lessons into practice.

Teaching the Passage:

The Scripture passages today have a common theme, "Grow up!" Jesus offered an invitation to all people to come to him and find his marvelous rest, but that rest of which he speaks is found only by submitting to his leadership. We need to follow him and learn from him. God sent his Holy Spirit to teach us what we need to know from the Scriptures, because he is the One who caused the Bible to be written.

Christians who refuse to grow up look more like the world than the children of God that they really are. Christian growth is not automatic, for it takes deliberate effort and training, diligent study of God's Word, and quality time spent with Jesus to become mature.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**

2. What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

3. What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

The Discipline of Learning

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to – or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the Youth/Adult study should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the beginning of this **Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions).

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11-14

Background Text

Matthew 11:25-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 5:11-14

Main Idea

To be a disciple of Jesus is to learn continually from Jesus.

Question to Explore

What steps are you taking to seek to learn from Jesus continually?

Teaching Aim

To lead the group to decide on ways they will seek continually to learn from Jesus.

Connect with Life:

As the people arrive, have a jar of baby food with a bib, a baby bottle, and a soother (a pacifier) on the table. Ask for volunteers to use these items in front of the group. If someone volunteers, ask him or her how that experience felt. If no one volunteers, ask why they were not willing. Either response will probably describe a feeling of awkwardness. Eating baby food, drinking milk from a baby bottle, or using a soother are activities appropriate for a baby, but not appropriate for now.

Ask: "What does a baby Christian look like?" and "How can Christians mature in their faith?"

Guide the Study:

Lead the group to read Matthew 11:28-30. Point them to the word picture of an ox and yoke that Jesus referred to as an illustration of submission. Ask, "How can wearing a yoke bring rest?"

Using comments from the study guide, explain the concept of an "easy yoke" and a "light burden." Point out that each person seeking rest must voluntarily submit to Jesus' leadership and learn what he teaches them.

Lead the group to read John 14:23-24. Have them look for the main indicator of a person's love for Jesus (obedience). Point out that words are not the sign of one's love, but actions are.

Ask: How will we know what Jesus wants of us?

Have someone read John 14:25-26. Explain the meaning of the term "Counselor" as someone who gives help to those in need and how the "Holy Spirit" works to make God's people holy.

From the **Teacher Preparation**, describe how the Holy Spirit was responsible for the Scripture we now have and how he teaches us today from the Scripture.

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 aloud, and as this person reads have the rest of the group list everything they can learn about the Corinthian Christians (such as: worldly, mere infants, Christian brothers, should have grown up by now, jealous, quarrelsome, acting like "mere men").

Ask: If you could sum up Paul's message in this passage in one phrase, what would it be? ("Grow up!")

Ask: What does an immature and worldly Christian look like? Point out that one's actions demonstrate if someone is God-controlled or controlled by the world.

Read Hebrews 5:11-14 aloud, and have the group list everything they can about the original recipients of this letter (slow to learn, infants, etc.).

Ask: Is there anything wrong with drinking milk? (Of course not, but a diet of nothing but milk is an appropriate food for an infant, not for an adult.)

Ask: What does the writer mean by '**By this time you ought to be teachers?**' (They should have grown up by now.)

Ask: If you could sum up the message in this passage in one phrase, what would it be? ("Grow up!")

Point out from verse 14 how maturity comes from deliberate and concerted training like that of a dedicated athlete.

Ask: What kinds of things would help Christians grow up in the faith? (Bible study, prayer, associating with other Christians, putting lessons learned into practice, etc.)

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to go away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Have the group look at the baby items once more and ask themselves, "Are these items appropriate for me at my stage of Christian growth?"

If these items are appropriate, then we must ask ourselves the following questions:

- ✓ What do I need to do to grow up in my faith?
- ✓ Have I submitted myself to Christ's leadership?
- ✓ Am I studying His Word regularly?
- ✓ Am I seeking to obey what God is teaching me through His Word?

Ask: If these items are not appropriate and I am indeed growing in my faith, am I willing to teach someone else? Am I willing to train others from God's Word?

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! TakeTen

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

The Discipline of Learning

**Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3;
Hebrews 5:11-14**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

No youth wants to be thought of as childish. What are things that represent your ability to be treated as “grown-up”?

Driving the car super responsibly, every time?

Baby-sitting?

Obeying adult rules even when they seem unjust to you?

Having a job?

Staying home alone?

Be honest and add to this list your own list --

What are markers of your maturity in the Christian life? Think of decisions you make in terms of Christian values, being responsible when given a job to do, choosing to worship and serve Christ and His church without being shamed or coerced into it, thinking about how others feel, serving others.

Have someone pray for each of you to learn God’s wisdom about learning to be mature in every way.

3

Copy this section for the Worship Time leader.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)

The Discipline of Learning

**Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:23-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3;
Hebrews 5:11-14**

Beginning the Service:

Sing (or play a recording) of "Light the Fire Again" as people sing-a-long and as latecomers gather for worship from Bible studies. You may wish choose other music at your discretion.

Worship leader: "The best expressions of worship do not depend on the musical style of our songs nor the eloquence of our prayers. God is more pleased with our worship when we seek to obey him. **"To obey is better than sacrifice"** (1 Samuel 15:22).

Sing **"Footsteps of Jesus"** and/or **"Cry of My Heart"**

Prayer time:

Pray for the children by name.

Pray that new Christians in the group would continue to grow.

Offering:

Ask someone to gather the offering for the day.

Lead the group to sing: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" while the offering is gathered.

Scripture Reading:

Have the following verses prepared on cards and ask members of the group prior to the time of worship to read them just before the sharing time.

Matthew 11:28-30	John 14:21-26	Hebrews 5:11-14
Hebrews 10:24-25	Joshua 1:8	Psalms 119:11
Philippians 4:6-7	Romans 1:16	

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to

give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Growing Up

Introduction:

When we were children, our mothers often told us that life was full of choices. We are reminded of that as we see our children and grandchildren growing up. There are times when we wish for the “good old days” when the decisions were so much easier because they were so black and white. But when we are honest with ourselves those decisions that seem so easy in hindsight were just as difficult as the decisions we must face today. The issue is one of maturity. Through the experiences of a lifetime, we have grown as a person and are able to help others. The Christian life is much the same. Spiritual maturity comes from spiritual growth.

Today, in our Bible study we have examined several passages about learning and maturity. It leads to a central truth:

Christian maturity requires disciplined choices

If we are going to grow from that infant stage as a Christian, we must consistently discipline ourselves to make five key choices.

We must choose to “Come to Him” (Matthew 11:28).

We have heard young children use the phrase “Me do it me own self”. Children desire to be in control of their lives. We all like to have control of our own destiny and life. In life our choices are based upon several things: our experiences, our training, our hopes and desires, and the pressures of life. In the midst of all those voices calling for attention and screaming out advice, we long for a voice that will bring peace and rest. In this passage, we hear Christ plead “Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”.

In times of crisis and confusion, we seek a voice of reason and a single voice to follow. We are given the freedom to choose who that will be. Like a child in the center of a room with adults calling from every side, “Come to me”, we must make that same decision about who will be the authority for our life. When times of prosperity and success come, we must be consistent in our loyalty to that authority. For in those times, we can lose contact with the things that are most important (family, friends and our Savior).

We must choose to “Take up His Yoke” (Matthew 11:29).

In the first five years of a child’s life, he or she will learn the patterns and rules of life for the family. It will not be easy during some of those times of training. There will be the

training of the parents with late nights cries on the first days home from a hospital that signal the need for a feeding. There will be the confrontations during the two year old stage that include a defiant “No!” from a small person followed by action from a large person. The key words during those days are consistent love. Parents and children must walk together to learn.

In the same way, our loving Father urges us to take up the “yoke” to learn the tasks for which we were created. Some of the patterns of life we have developed are contrary to His plan for our life. Those patterns must be changed. Those changes require repentance and discipline to learn a new way of doing life. Our heavenly Father invites us to choose His presence and His discipline for this process of transformation. This discipline includes time with other believers (Hebrews 10:24-25), time for the reading and studying of His Word (Psalms 119:11, Joshua 1:8), time in consistent prayer (Philippians 4:6-7) and time-sharing what you have learned with others (Romans 1:16). These are all parts of the yoke.

We must choose to “Obey Him” (John 14:21-24).

Obedience is the proof of our love for God. It is also the proof of our faith in God. When we come to know a command or principle to follow in our lives, we must make the choice to obey. Our will is influenced by many factors but the choice still remains with the individual. God is at work in the lives of believers (Philippians 2:13) to show His plan but the individual must still choose and do. In the passage we studied today, we see the promise that Christ will reveal Himself to those who are obedient. It is in the midst of obedience that we can grow in our knowledge of Him. When a truth becomes clear in our mind, we must obey.

We must choose to “Listen to Him” (John 14:26).

A person is not left alone in this process to maturity. Christ has promised a Comforter who will teach and bring to remembrance all He has taught us. He will come alongside us to bring a deep sense of His presence and His power.

Often the voice of a child cannot be heard above the noise of our preoccupied lives. Sometimes we are so focused upon accomplishing the best for our families that we miss the subtle request of a single member to change course for a few moments of ‘personal time’. It is often in the middle of one of those personal times that we discover the deepest meaning of family and are drawn intimately closer to one another.

The same is true of our relationship with Christ. We must choose to listen and focus our attention on Him or we may miss the opportunities to grow deeper and closer.

We must choose to “Practice good choices” (Hebrews 5:14).

When an athlete is developing his/her skills, there are three phases to that process. The athlete must learn the skill from the coach. The learning process includes

observation of another person doing the skill, reading about the skill, or attending a clinic or school. The second phase is performing the skill under the watchful eye of a trainer with correction at each part of the skill. The final phase is practice, practice, and practice!

Change requires consistent practice to make the choice a habit. The bad habits of the past are not overcome by simple decisions but rather by practiced good habits.

Call to Commitment:

Will you make the choices to grow to maturity?

- ❖ Come to Him.
- ❖ Take up His yoke.
- ❖ Obey His commands.
- ❖ Listen to His spirit.
- ❖ Practice His lifestyle.

Concluding the Service:

Sing “**In That Day**” or “**Lord I Want to Be A Christian**” as a closing song.

Ask someone to pray asking God’s blessing for grace and peace and for wisdom to make the right choices during the week.