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All Bible quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version translation.

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INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Learning and Experiencing
The Essentials of the Christian Life

Introduction

Purpose of the Manual
Before You Start

Part I The Life In Christ

Chapter 1 Our Assurance Of Salvation
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Chapter 3 Our Life As A Disciple

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Addendum:

My Heart Christ's Home

CHAPTER 12

TWO STATEMENTS TO LIVE BY:
THE GREAT COMMANDMENT
AND
THE GREAT COMMISSION

ASSIGNMENTS:

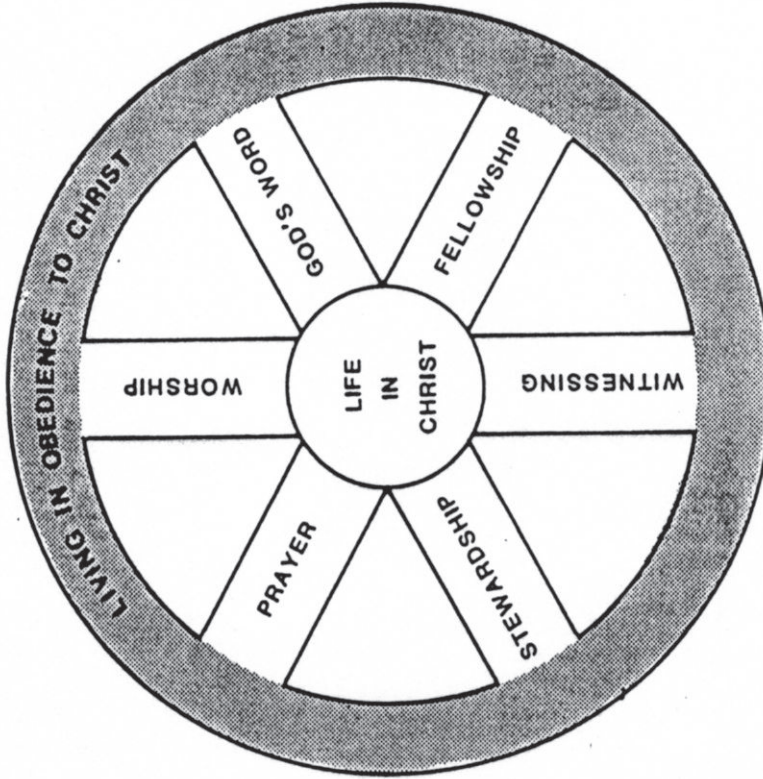
1. Scripture Reading - James 1-5; Philcmon; Jude
Read one chapter each day.
2. Prayer - Use the prayer list page to record your requests and answers.
3. Memorize - Matthew 22:37-39 and 28:19-20
4. Study and complete the material in the chapter.
5. Outline the pastor's Sunday sermon.

Outline your daily progress below:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

CHAPTER 12

TWO STATEMENTS TO LIVE BY:
THE GREAT COMMANDMENT
AND
THE GREAT COMMISSION



Our Lord gave us two great statements to live by: the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. He also demonstrated their meaning by His life. The Great Commandment is the foundation for the Christian life, the Great Commission is the expression of it.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

The Great Commandment is found in Matthew 22:37-40, "...love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." The Great Commandment is *agape love*. "In the New Testament, love is one of the central ideas which expresses the whole content of the Christian faith. God's activity is love." "The Greek verb for this kind of love is not *phileo*, which expresses friendly affection or *eros* which expresses egocentric desire, but *agapao*, the commitment of devotion that is directed by the will and can be commanded as a duty." (NIV Note). It is not a feeling. It is not controlled by our emotions.

Agape involves giving. It is a non-reciprocal love. It is neighbor-regarding; neighbor meaning anybody and everybody, even an enemy. Family, friendship, romance - all these loves are reciprocal - *agape* is not. It seeks the good of anybody, everybody.

Agape love is primarily concerned with other people's well being no matter what their response may be. This is the type of love Jesus demonstrated in John 13 when He willingly did a slave's work and washed the feet of his disciples. In fact, Christ goes on to say in John 13:34-35 that this will be the distinguishing mark of a true disciple. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Again, the Greek word for love is *agape*.

Read verse 34. What does Jesus say is our standard for loving others?

To Live By

Jesus is also our source for *agape* love. Read John 17:26 and rephrase it in your own words:

Paul defines the actions of this kind of love in Romans 12:9-21 and 1 Corinthians 13. (Read these passages aloud, substituting your name for "love" to personalize its meaning.) Make a list of what these Scriptures state about love:

Now go back to Matthew 22:37-39 and re-read it. What is the progression of our love?

To Live By

LOVE GOD

First we are to love God. How are we to express our love to God?

We are to totally love God with our whole being - all our

and

and

In other words, we commit every aspect of our life to obey and serve Him unconditionally. We can do this because we know of His love for us (John 14:21; 1 John 5:3).

LOVE OURSELVES

In love's progression, we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. That means that before we can have any love to give to others, we need to have an adequate and appropriate dose of self-love. Many people stumble here because they do not love themselves as God loves and accepts them. In fact many people cannot accept themselves and lack self-esteem. As a result they may have difficulty in loving others, especially in the areas they unaccepted in. Often the roots of our self-esteem or lack of it extend back to our childhood experiences. However, whatever may have been lacking can be fulfilled through a proper understanding and acceptance of God's love to us.

The following chart illustrates our identity completed in Christ:

To Live By

OUR NEEDS:

OUR IDENTITY
COMPLETED IN:

To Belong "I am what I am a part of"	John 1:12-13	God the Father = Security He adopted me into His family
To Have Worth "I am what is valued in me"	Romans 5:8	God the Son = Value Jesus died for my sins
To Be Competent "I am what I can do"	2 Timothy 1:7	God the Spirit = Power I am filled with His Spirit

LOVE OTHERS

The third aspect of our love is the most visible and is a result of the love of the other two. "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:7-8).

Why should we love others? Read 1 John 4:9-11:

Relationships are eternal things. What we gain in material possessions is lost or taken from us by circumstances, theft, "moth and rust", to death. But the currency of relationships is souls, and souls are eternal things. To love God and obey His Word brings eternal life and eternal reward. And He commands us in his Word to love one another (no option) because love is the food on which relationships thrive and grow. It would be that loving relationship which would be the sign to an unbelieving

To Live By

world that Jesus was sent from God (John 17:23).

God loved us so much He sent His only Son to die in our place (John 3:16 and 1 John 3:16). Because of this, we are commanded to love others with His love (Romans 5:1-8).

According to 1 John 3:16-18, how are we to demonstrate this love we have? Give examples.

Mission has been defined as doing the deeds of love as well as expressing the words of love: *demonstration as well as proclamation*. John 15:9-17 illustrates this definition: Demonstration - "As the Father has loved me, so I loved you;" Proclamation - "My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends," (vs. 12-13).

According to verse 16, what is to be the application of our love?

How does this apply to your life?

To Live By

This command "to go and bear fruit" is the fulfillment of our love as we carry out the Great Commission. The Great Commission must flow out of the application of the Great Commandment in our lives! It cannot be reversed!

THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission is found in Matthew 28:18-20. "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and *make disciples* of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Italics added.) The Great Commission is, (you) go and *make disciples*. This means passing on to others the Scriptural truths you have learned and experienced in your walk with Christ. It can only be accomplished by God's power and presence. Notice the promise of 28:18 and 20b. This can be illustrated by the sandwich concept.



What is the basis of this commission? (vs. 18)

To Live By

To whom is the commission directed?

Where are the disciples directed to go?

What does making disciples involve in this passage?

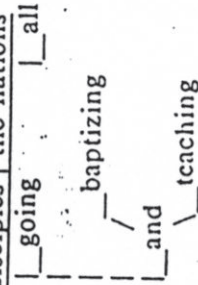
What promise does Christ make?

The Great Commission can be diagramed as follows: Notice the major emphasis is "make disciples." The (you) means it is understood rather than stated.

Matthew 28:18-20

Power: "All authority...has been given to Me" v.18

Command: (you) | make disciples | the nations v.19,20



Presence: "I am with you always" v.20b

To Live By

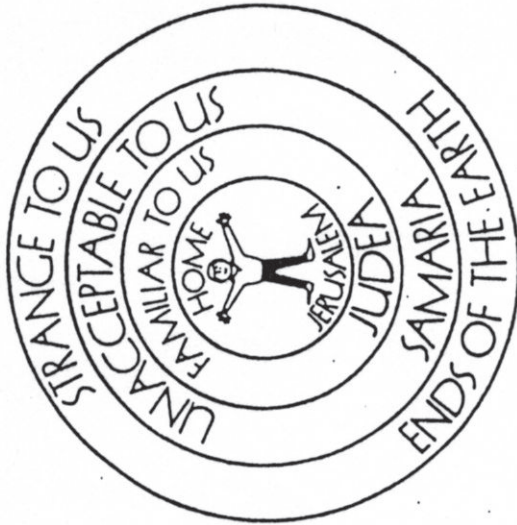
Christ has commissioned us as His disciples to go make disciples, and He promises to be with us. But how was this to be accomplished? The last instructions Jesus gave before ascending into heaven clarified His plan "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

PLAN

The disciples were living in Jerusalem at that time, and it was a major city of Judea. Judea was the country of the Israelites and Samaria was the area to the north of Judea. It was inhabited by the Samaritans who were despised by the Jews because they were considered "half-breeds" or Jews had intermarried with the Assyrians during the period of the exile. The ends of the earth to them would have been the borders of the Roman Empire. "Go therefore" (Greek word *porreuthentes*) means *to depart, to leave, to cross boundaries* - sociological boundaries, racial boundaries, cultural boundaries, geographic boundaries. This means we are to start with the familiar but not stop there; we are to 'go' across all boundaries with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To Live By

This can be illustrated as follows:



What is:
Your Jerusalem?

Your Judea?

Your Samaria?

Your ends of the earth?

POWER

Christ clarifies in this passage (Acts 1:8) how He will fulfill His promise to be with them "to the very end of the age" when He promises the disciples that they will receive power "when the Holy Spirit comes on you." We know from reading on in Acts 2 that this happened on the day of Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit of Christ filled each of them so that they could proclaim the gospel to Jews from "every nation under heaven." It is this same power which Christ promises to us as His disciples that will fill us and enable us to "go and make disciples."

The Great Commission was not an afterthought that Jesus sprang on His disciples at the last minute without fair warning before slipping into heaven before they had a chance to question Him about it. All through the gospels, Christ demonstrated how to cross boundaries. For example, read John 4:4-9. What kind of boundary did Jesus cross?

Christ crossed the cultural, social, geographic, and racial boundaries of His day to share His message of redeeming love. He asks us to do the same. his words in John 4:35 -- "Open you eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" -- have never been more relevant than now.

There are more people living today (5 billion) than have ever populated this planet! Yet over half have never even heard the Good News of Jesus's love for them. The 2.5 billion people who are Muslims, Hindus, or Chinese have only 3% of the missionaries. "Right now *worldwide* there are only 85,000 workers on the mission field - working mainly among those who have heard the Gospel before. This

figure includes missionaries from all over the world of every nationality. When you compare this number with the amount of Americans selling Avon or Amway products, it is staggering. Just in America alone there are 435,000 Avon sales-people (with 1,280,000 worldwide), and over 750,000 Amway product distributors (with over a million worldwide)! Do you realize that these two companies combined have 14 times more representatives in the United States alone than the Church of Jesus Christ has in the whole world outside of America?" There are still over 16,000 different and distinct people groups where not one single church is in existence. Of the 7,010 distinct living languages, 5,199 of them still have no Bible available in their own language. An estimated 80,000 unsaved people die every day - 3,333 every hour, 55 every minute - to face the judgment seat of Christ. ("Why You Should Go To The Mission Field," by Keith Green.)

We have two great statements to live by: the Great Commandment of love, and the Great Commission of going to share that love. "Then (Jesus) said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field'" (Matthew 9:37-38).

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!' He said, 'Go and tell this people'..." (Isaiah 6:8,9a).

To Live By

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

1. What does the Great Commandment mean to you?

2. How would you describe *agape* love?

3. How do you demonstrate your love for God?

Yourself?

Others?

4. If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be?

5. Do you have appropriate dose of self-love? What do John 3:16 and 1 John 3:16 have in common?

6. What does the Great Commission mean to you?

To Live By

7. The Great Commission is repeated five times in the New Testament. What does each mean to you?
Matthew 28:18-20

Mark 16:15

Luke 24:47-49

John 20:21

Acts 1:8

8. How can you practice the Great Commission in your personal spheres of influence?

9. What boundaries have you been able to cross over to share Christ's message of love?

To Live By

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, Ruth Tucker

In the Gap, David Bryant

Unconditional Love, John Powell

Kingdom of Love, Hannah Hurnard

Loving God, Charles Colson