

## **Module 9**

### **Personal Discipleship The Art of Mending Our Nets**







## Module 9: Personal Discipleship

*"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24*

*"When Jesus Christ calls a man, He bids him 'Come and die.'"*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### ***The Cost of Discipleship***

#### **Jason's Story & A Parable of "Discipleship" Gone Awry**

Jason (not his real name, but he is real) went to prison for a sex crime. While in prison Jason had a genuine experience with God. His life began to change. He studied, took Bible correspondence courses and became a respected leader of the Christian community within the prison. He knew his Bible and he knew how to lead people to Christ. He became a model prisoner and a model (if somewhat legalistic) Christian. His changed life so impressed the staff, counselors and chaplains that everyone made extraordinary efforts to get Jason paroled. Everyone agreed Jason no longer belonged behind bars. Their efforts were eventually successful and Jason was paroled and released. Then, to everyone's horror and disbelief, Jason re-offended. He lured an unsuspecting female realtor to an empty house under pretense of being a potential buyer, where he raped her at gunpoint and threatened to kill her. But then, in the midst of this horrendous act, God became real to him again. He left the woman (alive), went to a nearby tavern and waited for the police to arrive. He was arrested a few hours later and taken to the county jail. There he was befriended by a fellow prisoner, Larry Whiston (see Module 5a, *"The Off-Broadway Story."*) Jason was a broken man (now facing life in prison without any possibility of parole) as he told Larry his story of crime, sin, redemption and . . . more crime and sin. Two things emerged from their on-going conversations. First, Jason said, *"Larry, tell people it isn't enough for them to know their Bibles. Tell them they need to get to know the One Who wrote it."* Second, Jason came to the personal realization that his "white-knuckle" legalism had enabled him to fool everyone about what was really going on beneath the surface of his life. According to Jason, his outward legalism (working hard outwardly to be "spiritual" while insisting that everyone around him do the same) had fooled everyone . . . including himself. Sometimes self-delusion is the greatest delusion of all. And that delusion can even apply to the area of discipleship.

In Module 7 we looked at the Greek word *katartidzo* and the role of "mending nets." This word also appears in Luke 6:40 where Jesus said, *"A pupil (disciple) is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher."* The phrase "fully trained" is the word *katartidzo*. Here the word describes the process of a disciple becoming like his (or her) teacher. The role of a teacher is to help the disciple discover and learn how to mend the broken nets of his life. Jason's story is a parable of discipleship gone awry, of discipleship misdefined as Bible courses and Bible knowledge and misapplied in the form of "white-knuckle legalism" and outward performance. According to Jesus in Luke 6:40, true discipleship is a personal relationship between a teacher (e.g., a more mature believer) and a disciple (e.g., a less mature believer) in which the disciple learns from someone more mature how to mend the broken nets of his life. Could it be that one of the reasons why Jason failed, and why other people fail (in less dramatic ways) in their discipleship journey, is because no one took the time to look past his legalism (*"Look at how hard I am working to live a model Christian life!"*) and to teach him how to understand and mend the broken nets of his own life?

Fred, on the other hand, asked for help to mend his nets. Fred had grown up in the Aryan Nations, fallen into drugs at an early age, worked various jobs, became a "soldier" (enforcer) in the California drug world working for Columbian and Cuban drug gangs. He was a drug dealer, user and enforcer. I met Fred through our outreach in the West Central neighborhood of Spokane when he shot the third digit of his little finger off while cleaning an illegal gun which had been rigged to misfire and kill him - apparently both he and the gun were "loaded." I prayed for him while we waited for the paramedics and police to arrive). Fred became involved in our outreach, his life began to change, he made a profession of faith in Christ and we started a house church in his apartment. He called me one Saturday morning around 7:45AM. *"I had a bad night last night, and I almost went out and used. So I thought I better call you and talk about it."* Thank God for small words in the English language, words like "almost"! Stress from Fred's living environment had "pushed his buttons," re-igniting old pains and anger. When a former addict is confronted with such "challenges" the old tendency is to go out and "get loaded" on drugs as a means of "coping." Fred's "nets" were broken and he knew he needed help. And because his life was changing he responded not by falling back into old habit patterns, but by reaching out and asking for help to mend his nets. We talked about what was going on in his life, I shared briefly about what Scripture says concerning anger and forgiveness, and then we prayed together over the phone. We spent time mending one another's nets. And that is what discipleship is essentially all about.

And how about you? Are you masking and hiding broken, un-mended nets behind a facade of seemingly spiritual activity and "white knuckle legalism" ? It's time to get real. It's time to ask for help mending your nets. Or your discipleship will fail.

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### The Enigma of Discipleship

At what point in the life of the Church did discipleship get redefined from a personal relationship of net mending to become a program? For many Christians today the Kingdom of God has ceased to be a journey into the heart of God, a personal experience in spiritual net-mending, and has become a correspondence course, a curriculum, a class and/or a non-stop stream of seemingly spiritual activity (*"Hey, God, do you see how busy I am and how hard I'm working for you?"*)? At what point did discipleship become the impartation (or absorption) of information? When did the call of Christ change from *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"* to *"Come and sign up for my six week class on purpose driven fishing."*

The New Testament word "disciple" comes from the Greek word (*mathetes*). The word occurs 269 in the New Testament (but not after the book of Acts). It literally refers to a pupil, a student, a learner. To follow Jesus as His disciple means that a relationship exists between Jesus as our teacher and us as His student. It means that we each personally look to Him as He speaks to us and teaches us how to mend our broken nets, so that we in turn will be "fully trained" to teach others how to do the same.

Throughout His 3 years of ministry Jesus preached to tens of thousands, and many of those "tasted of the Powers of the Age to Come" by way of healings, deliverances and resurrections. As a result, many people "believed" in Jesus, *"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, beholding His signs which He was doing. But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to bear witness concerning man for He Himself knew what was in man."* (John 2:23-25) But when he ascended into heaven at the end of 40 days of post-resurrection ministry, the number of follower-disciples numbered between 120 (Acts 1:15) and 500 (1 Corinthians 15:6). Before His ascension into Heaven, Jesus gave instructions to His disciples, namely, that as they were going into all the world (it was His operating assumption that they would go) their specific instruction was "to make disciples." The charge of the Church, given by its Head - Jesus - is to make disciples. And we read in Acts 11:26 that it was "the disciples" who "were first called Christians in Antioch." Did you make the connection? To be called a Christian, one first had to be a disciple. Hmmm.

### The Cost of Discipleship

So, what was the distinction between being a "believer" in Jesus and being a "disciple" of Jesus? I has been suggested that a "believer" was someone who had embraced Jesus by faith. A disciple was someone who had embraced Jesus, but who had also left something significant in order to follow Him. Perhaps this helps to explain why the number of disciples at the close of Jesus' earthly ministry was small. Why? Because discipleship comes at a price. Jesus declared in Luke 14:27, *"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."* A cross was a Roman instrument of execution. The disciple of Jesus was someone who lived under a sentence of death, beginning with death to self. The grace of salvation is indeed "so rich and free," but we spend the rest of our earthly lives "paying for it." If this sounds like a contradiction, it is not. It is a paradox, an unresolved dilemma, two true statements held in constant tension without resolution on this side of eternity.

True faith, true discipleship and "free grace" all come with a price. It costs us nothing to believe; and yet it costs us everything to be His disciple. That is what Jesus taught. That is what Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood. In the 1930's and 40's Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a pastor in the German Lutheran Church and a leader of the anti-Nazi "Confessing Lutheran Church." He wrote and bemoaned the fact that the doctrine of "free grace" had deteriorated into a belief in "cheap grace"; the notion that one could believe in Jesus without having to pay the price of one's convictions in this world. Bonhoeffer believed that being a Christian, a disciple, meant that he must speak out against and actively resist Nazism. He did so, and was arrested and sent to a concentration camp. Those who knew Pastor Bonhoeffer in the final months of his life, spent in Nazi concentration camps, observed the peace and dedication with which he ministered to those around him up until the very day of his execution. Understanding the true price of free grace, and that it wasn't "cheap," Dietrich Bonhoeffer had died the death of a disciple long before his physical body perished on the gallows of his Nazi executioners, who saw but who never understood.

Contemporary Christianity sells "cheap grace" like a novelty item in a Christian bookstore, right alongside cheap mints wrapped in packaging that assures the purchaser of their usefulness in furthering their Christian testimony. It should therefore come as no surprise to us that contemporary Christianity also specializes in passive, vicarious discipleship where Christians live off of the spiritual experiences of others - a form of discipleship-by-proxy if you will. We enthusiastically quote cute cliches such as *"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."* Then we promptly proceed to give away "free spiritual fish" and later wonder why our people have no clue as to how to use their spiritual fishing poles for themselves (or if they even possess such poles?).

House Church, if it is to live up to its promise of truly becoming the Church that lives and meets in our homes, must reject both the passive spirituality of traditional church and contemporary Christianity and the legalism of a Christianity which sees spirituality and discipleship as a set of rules to be obeyed. We can no longer passively sit while others tell of how God has

spoken to them. We must now become intentionally active, asking God to speak to us, and doing those things which lend themselves to hearing God's voice. We must reclaim the biblical heritage of costly discipleship. We must reclaim the spiritual disciplines that have characterized genuine discipleship. We must begin modeling within our house church fellowships the active spirituality of people who daily fish in the ocean of God's Manifest Presence.

### **Wolfgang Simson's Ten Principles of Luke 10 Discipleship**

Wolfgang Simson has suggested that, based upon the model of discipleship seen in Luke Chapter 10 (and its parallel in Matthew Chapter 10) that there are ten basic apostolic principles of discipleship which we need to recover if we are truly to become a self-multiplying house church movement.<sup>94</sup> I believe that these ten principles provide us with an excellent broad outline of what was involved in New Testament discipleship:

**1. Apostolic Conversion** - Conversion must again be experienced not as a mere agreement on theological doctrines or happen in simple "pray after me" - prayers and raise-your-hands-moments, but as a radical and profound change of allegiance and ownership from Self to Jesus. God has gone out of his way not just to touch and bless us, but to literally and radically deliver us from sin and evil, a hell bound, self-centered life that brings glory to the flesh, not to God. From the very first moments of our lives as disciples, holiness, self-denial, humility, servant hood and the carrying of the cross must become our hallmarks. After a life changing encounter with Jesus, we need to be ready to sell everything for the pearl of great price, and remain or become radical in our commitment to our Lord. The result is a changed life, not a changed set of religious opinion; people dead to themselves and their ambitions, but ready to be commissioned into God's plan and dream. Without a deep conversion, discipleship and church will become a shallow religious process. A radical start, however, will provide the right first step for radical, lifelong discipleship.

**2. Baptism** - Baptism typically happened at the same day a person converted to follow Jesus.

**3. Filled With The Holy Spirit** - Peter answered at the day of Pentecost: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit". All this obviously happened the same day.

**4. Incorporation Into The Church** - A disciple does not live and truly enjoy an individualistic lifestyle, but becomes "added", a part of the family of God, the church. Either he joins an existing or emerging church in someone else's house (or life), or opens his own house to let Jesus live there from now on.

**5. Clean Start** - A new future starts with a clean and reconciled past. Too many Christians are "wounded warriors", confused, bleeding and weak, and stay so for many unproductive and self-centered years, unable to be useful for the tasks of our Master. Many Christians will need to undergo a "washing machine" experience to clear up the past, since many come from broken families and relationships, occult involvement, religious confusion and bondage, a life in sexual or financial immorality, and need to be cleaned through repentance, bringing back stolen goods, reconciliation, healing, forgiveness, exorcism, the breaking of generational curses, counseling, etc. Open wounds need to be dressed, traumas healed, persecutors forgiven, wrong teachings overcome. This happens through love, acceptance and forgiveness, deliverance ministry and experiencing God's undeserving grace personally. Only then does it make sense to truly begin working.

**6. Apostolic Foundations** - From our spiritual birth on we become part of God's Mission, God's apostolic agenda. It is His clear purpose to see all nations discipled. Instead of living a life continuously asking God to solve our next problem, we need to learn to become part of God's purposes; to do what He is blessing, rather than ask Him to bless what we are doing (Matt. 6:33). We need to catch his apostolic breath to be sent on a lifelong mission, to be blessed in order to bless others. It must become part of our bone and marrow to be utterly jealous for the purposes of God and His glory, so that Jesus can truly continue His mission through us. The book of Matthew is Jesus' own way of laying apostolic foundations in 5 teaching segments, starting with the most famous sermon on earth, the sermon on the mount (chapter 5-7).

**7. Financial Conversion** - People need to be literally delivered from the dominating financial principles of materialism, greed, jealousy, coveting and making money their false security or power-base. If anyone on earth, it will be the disciples of Jesus who need to show to the world that God, not money is the determining factor in life. Jesus gave us a crossroads: "You cannot serve God or money" (Matt. 6:24). The early disciples had learnt to crucify the spirit of materialism head on, sharing their lives and possessions with each other and those in need, and learnt to go into the harvest "with no money in their belts" (Matt. 10:9). Disciples will learn that "the resources are in the harvest," and discover how to break away from our dramatic limitation of trusting God (but only as far as comforting money is in the bank). Financial conversion is a willful

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<sup>94</sup>You can learn more about the Luke 10 equipping course which Wolfgang and others have built around these ten principles by visiting their website at [www.lukas10.ch](http://www.lukas10.ch). There is an English link there. Everything else is in German.

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breaking with the world's financial principles and embracing a New Testament financial habit to experience that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

**8. Gifts And Callings** - God is not sending out stereotypes, but equips each one of us individually to help us fulfill God's purposes through our lives. Disciples will learn how to appreciate and value the different giftings and callings in each other, how to function as a team and church with different gifts, and how to use God's tools to build His house for His glory. Through observation, prayer, prophecy and testing each other's fruits we will discover the passion, spiritual gifts and callings for each one, and some may even be called and prepared for itinerant equipping ministries (Eph. 4:11) in the future.

**9. Discipling Others** - Being a disciple ourselves is one thing, making others to be disciples is the next. Under the influence of Greek classroom-style teaching Christians became the students of professors (or teaching pastors) mastering subjects. Today we need to discover again the Hebraic model of being disciples of masters, who will help us to change our lives through their example. We need to learn not only to disciple people one-on-one, but to disciple whole groups, streets, gangs, villages, towns, cities, people groups and nations.

**10. Planting Networks of churches** - Jesus has instructed and commissioned His disciples to go and find "houses of peace" that are open for the gospel of the Kingdom because God has already prepared them. The disciples were to move in and to establish His presence by sharing lives for a short while with those ready to receive the Kingdom (Lk. 10:7). In the early days this became the main way of starting churches, the family of God on earth, and it will again be so at the end of time: workers will go out 2 by 2, and rather than inviting people to join their church, they literally bring the church to the people by planting it into households and groups that would be open for it.

### The Practicalities of Personal Discipleship

Needless to say (especially after reading the ten principles above) the practical outworking of personal discipleship means different things to different people. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church and leader of the Evangelical Awakening in England in the 1700s, established "rules" or "Directions" for personal discipleship groups called "Band Societies" within the Methodist Church. These "Band Societies" consisted of 2 or 3 believers who "banded" together to encourage each other and to hold one another accountable in areas of personal discipleship (You can view Wesley's "rules" for the "band" societies and the "United" societies on our website at [www.parousianetwork.com](http://www.parousianetwork.com) by clicking on House Church Resources and following the Wesley links). The purpose of this section is not to endorse 18<sup>th</sup> Century Methodist rules of discipleship (or their contemporary equivalents), but to demonstrate that the Church's understanding of the nature & requirements of personal discipleship have varied over time. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to pursue personal discipleship. Each of us must discover what it means for ourselves to be Christ's disciple. What we want to offer here is an outline of those elements of biblical discipleship that Scripture teaches and the Church has discovered to be timeless. How you incorporate them into your own walk with God on a daily basis is up to you. Consider the following.

#### Start With The Three "Pillars of Piety"

Jesus actually addressed the nature of personal discipleship with His disciples. In Matthew 6:1-18 Jesus warned His disciples about the danger of "practicing their righteousness" (i.e., their personal spiritual disciplines) publicly in order to be seen by other people. Jesus explained what He meant by giving specific instructions regarding three basic "spiritual disciplines": giving alms, praying, and fasting. These three spiritual disciplines have been referred to as "the three pillars of Jewish piety" and were expected of every pious Jew. Notice, Jesus did not attempt to abolish these practices. Instead He gave His disciples instructions on their proper exercise & observance:



**Charitable Giving** - In 6:1-4 Jesus gave His disciples instructions regarding personal acts of charity (the giving of alms to the poor). Let's place this in today's terms. In a traditional church of say 300 people on a Sunday morning you could go through the entire service, probably for weeks on end, without ever knowing that four pews away from where you are singing and worshiping God sits an individual or a family in deep financial distress with pressing needs that go unmet. Why? Because, if the truth be told, we are out of touch with all but a handful of people in the church. Out of a congregation of 300, we might be personally involved in the lives of how many? Probably less than a dozen (individuals or families). Or about the number of people in an average house church. Who do you know who is experiencing personal financial difficulty? What have you done to help? Or what excuses have you made for not helping?



**Personal Prayer** - In 6:5-15 Jesus gave extensive instructions regarding how we should pray. How much time do you spend in prayer? Prayer was so important in the life and ministry of Jesus that he often spent whole evenings in prayer (Luke 6:12; Matthew 14:23). On other occasions Jesus would "slip away to the wilderness and pray" (Luke 5:16). Frequently the disciples would find Jesus alone in prayer (Luke 9:18) or Jesus would take them away for a time of solitude and prayer (Luke 9:28). It should come as no surprise

that the disciples would eventually ask Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). So, how much time do you spend in prayer? (For more help on prayer & fasting, see Module 8)



**Devotional Fasting** - In 6:16-18 Jesus gave instructions regarding how His disciples (Both then and now) should fast. When was the last time you spent a day, or several days (or longer) fasting and praying for God's Kingdom purposes for your life, your family and your ministry? Jesus expected His disciples to fast on a regular basis. John Wesley, whom we have referred to on several occasions, fasted two day per week (every Wednesday and Friday, from sunrise until after 3:00PM) throughout his life. And he refused to appoint to the Methodist ministry anyone who refused to commit themselves to fast one day every week (preferably on Friday). From my own personal study of the history of revival and the role of fasting & prayer I can tell you that every great revival in the history of the Church has been preceded by earnest and prolonged periods of fasting and prayer on the part of God's people. I believe, as Jesus taught, that regular personal fasting should characterize the devotional life of every disciple.

The implication for personal discipleship is clear: Jesus expected that all of His disciples would regularly practice all three of these spiritual disciplines. Christ expects His disciples to regularly engage in personal acts of charity (the giving of "alms" or gifts to the poor). Similarly, Jesus expects His disciples to practice regular personal prayer. Jesus also expects His disciples to regularly practice personal devotional fasting.

### **Daily Bible Reading & Study**

If the Word of God is really going to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, then we must make the reading and study of God's Word a priority in our personal spiritual disciplines. What is your plan to personally read & study God's word on a daily basis?



If you need a guided reading program, *Walk Thru The Bible Ministries* offers a monthly Bible reading guide entitled "**The Daily Walk**" that will take you through the entire Bible in one year. A subscription to the monthly guide is available from *Walk Thru The Bible Ministries*. The annual subscription price for "**The Daily Walk**" is \$18 per year, and the guides are mailed out monthly. You can order on the web at [www.walkthru.org](http://www.walkthru.org) or call them toll free at 1-800-868-9300.

### **Personal Devotional Journaling**

A personal devotional journal is a written record of your discipleship walk with God. Most Christians today do not keep devotional journals (much of what we know of John Wesley's personal ministry comes from his extensive journals). We have included a sample journal page entitled "*Reflections On My Personal Journey Into The Kingdom of God*". You can make additional copies to use and begin keeping your own personal discipleship journal of what God is doing in your life and that of your house church.

### **Personal Introspection, Evaluation & Accountability**

There is a place in the Christian life, in our own personal discipleship, for personal examination of where we are in our walk with the Lord. Paul told the Corinthians, "*Test (examine, scrutinize) yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you - unless you fail the test?*" (2 Corinthians 13:5). For this reason we have prepared a series of questions entitled "*Kingdom Transformation Groups Accountability Questions*." These are questions which you can reflect on and answer, either alone or with one or two other people, as a means of building personal accountability in your discipleship walk. This also raises the question of who helps you mend your nets. To whom are you personally accountable?

### **Getting Started**

If the house church movement is to survive and thrive in the long term it will require the active radical discipleship of everyone involved. Any church, whether house church or traditional, is only as strong and vibrant as the spiritual lives of its members. The famous playwright, George Bernard Shaw (not a Christian), once put these words into the mouth of one of his characters, "*You cannot build a marble mansion from a mixture of mud and manure.*" Shaw was right. And you cannot build a strong New Testament church (of any kind) from a mixture of nominalistic professing Christians who believe that genuine personal discipleship is somehow "optional." ***It isn't!***

## Questions For Reflection And Discussion

- ⇒ Briefly describe and discuss your own understanding of what it means to be a “disciple” of Jesus Christ.
- ⇒ Do you agree with the distinction between a “believer” and a “disciple”? Why or why not?
- ⇒ What are you doing in your personal life (not your ministry activity) to set yourself apart as a genuine disciple of Jesus? Discuss what “price” you have personally paid in order to be a disciple.

## A “Personal Discipleship” Reading List

Banks, Robert J. *Redeeming The Routines: Bringing Theology To Life*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. 2001.

Eisenman, Tom. *The Accountable Man*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Eldredge, John. *Wild at Heart: Discovering the Secret of a Man’s Soul*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Waking the Dead: The Glory of a Heart Fully Alive*. Waterville: Thorndike. 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Ransomed Heart: A Collection of Devotional Readings*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 2005.

Foster, Richard. *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating The Great Traditions of Christian Faith*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco. 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco. 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Celebration of Discipline, 25 Anniversary Edition*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 1988.

Murray, Andrew. *The Believer’s Call To Commitment*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers. 2005.

Petersen, Jim. *Lifestyle Discipleship: The Challenge of Following Jesus in Today’s World*. Colorado Springs: NavPress Publishing Group. 1994.

## **Kingdom Transformation Group Accountability Questions**

A **Kingdom Transformation Group** is a group of 2 or 3 Christians meeting together once each week to share what God is doing in their lives and where they are on their personal journeys into the Kingdom of God. The goal is to pray for God to visit our homes, our neighborhoods and our community with His transforming Presence and Power. The “requirement” that participants commit themselves to meet regularly, come prepared to share honestly about what God is doing in their lives and to end their time together with prayer for one another and for God to send spiritual renewal and transformation to our community.

### ***Questions To Be Discussed At Each Meeting:***

1. How have you sensed God’s presence in your life during the past week?
  
2. Have you received a specific answer to your prayers? What was it?
  
3. Have you spoken with a non-believer about your faith in Jesus Christ? With whom?
  
4. To whom have you shown God’s love and compassion during this past week? Describe what took place.
  
5. What have you learned about God in your personal Bible reading this past week?
  
6. As a result of your Bible reading this past week, how have you determined to better obey God?
  
7. Specifically, what area of your life or your family do you feel that God most wants to change? What specific steps are you taking to make those changes?
  
8. What good habit do you feel God wants to form in your life or your family’s life? What specific steps are you taking to develop that habit?
  
9. What specific challenge are you facing in your life or your family this week, and how are you going to deal with it?
  
10. How has God used you and your family this week to further His Kingdom in your neighborhood? What role do you see yourself and your family playing in God’s plan to bring spiritual renewal and transformation to your neighborhood?
  
11. Someone once said, *“You will destroy with your character what you build with your gift.”* How has this been true in your life or your family’s life this week?

***Additional Questions For Personal Reflection During The Week (and discussed as time allows).*** The following questions were first developed by John Wesley when he was a student at Oxford University in the 1700s.

1. Did I consciously or unconsciously create the impression that I am better than I am (in other words, was I a hypocrite)?
2. Was I honest in all my acts and words, or did I exaggerate?
3. Did I confidentially pass on to another what was told me in confidence?
4. Was I a slave to dress, fashion, work or habits?
5. Was I self-conscious, self-pitying or self-justifying?
6. Did the Bible live in me this week?
7. Did I give the Bible time to speak to me every day?
8. Did I enjoy my times of prayer?
9. Did I speak to someone this week about my faith?
10. Did I pray about the money I spent this week?
11. Did I get to bed on time and get up on time?
12. Did I disobey God in anything this week?
13. Did I insist upon doing something about which my conscience was uneasy?
14. Was I defeated in any part of my life?
15. Was I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful towards anyone this week?
16. How did I spend my spare time?
17. Was I proud or arrogant?
18. Did I thank God that I am not as other people, like the Pharisee who despised the publican?
19. Was there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I going to do about it?
20. Did I grumble and complain constantly this week?
21. Was Christ real to me this week?

# Reflections On My Personal Journey Into The Kingdom of God

For The Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Where are you at on your personal journey into the Kingdom of God? Use the space below to record Scriptures you are reading each day, your daily prayer concerns (so you can see later how God answered), a key thought from any devotional material you are reading, and what you believe God is saying to you about your journey for that day.

## **Monday:**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Tuesday:**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Wednesday:**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thursday:**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Friday (Fasting Day):**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday/Sunday:**

What Scripture Am I Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who & What Am I Praying For Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Is My Devotional Reading Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What Am I Hearing From God Today?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**A Summary Of What I Heard From God This Week**

What Did I Hear From God This Week? \_\_\_\_\_

What Answer To Prayer Did I See This Week? \_\_\_\_\_

What Person Or Ministry Did I Help This Week? \_\_\_\_\_

Who Did I Share The Gospel With This Week? \_\_\_\_\_ Who

Did I Encourage This Week With A Word, Note Or Call? \_\_\_\_\_

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